

Group News



** 2017 * November * 2017 **

Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.unc-northernsynod.org.uk

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Working towards a just world for all

October marks the celebration of both Black History Month and One World Week, and both provide opportunities to encourage people to build a more equal, just, peaceful and inclusive world, says the Revd Dr Michael Jagessar, United Reformed Church Secretary for Global and Intercultural Ministries.

Black History Month provides us with an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the achievements and contributions of black people and black communities, and in the process to unearth the latent histories that shape our communities. The BBC documentary series *Black And British: A Forgotten History*, by historian David Olusoga, expertly captured how this history is often hidden and in some instances ‘whitewashed’.

Toni Morrison, the Pulitzer prize winning novelist, may have had a similar thought when she described her novels as ‘a kind of literary archaeology’ of the life stories that are missing from the written records – the dominant narrative. It is easy to argue that in most written records – fact and fiction – it is a white, male, heterosexual and able-bodied voice that dominates historical narratives.

Many from the minority communities have also internalised and retold those stories from the dominant narrative. Indian writer Arundathi Roy, captures this in an excerpt from her debut novel, *The God of Small Things*:

‘Pointed in the wrong direction, trapped outside their own history, and unable to retrace their steps because their footprints had been swept away ... [Chacko] explained to them that history was like an old house at night, with all the lamps lit, and the ancestors whispering inside. “To understand history,” Chacko said. “We have to go inside and listen to what they’re saying.”’

Black History Month invites us to hear what ancestors have said and done, and invites us to tell their stories – their struggles of life and living and faith and faithfulness.

One World Week offers hope and inspiration and encourages people to build an inclusive and peaceful world that safeguards environmental resources for future generations.

To those of every ethnicity who have fought for, and continue to advocate for the dignity of all human beings (especially the marginalised), Black History Month and One World Week say: ‘Your stories, sacrifices, and contributions will not be forgotten. We were all created in the image of God, and God’s offer of full life is for people from every nationality.’

Black History Month and One World Week say no to insular politics, fenced borders, xenophobia and migrant bashing, sexism, racism, the destruction of the earth, economic inequalities, and every form of discrimination and inequality that impoverish the one world we have been gifted with. Black History Month and One World Week is for all of us. Together we can make a difference towards a just, sustainable and peaceful world.

From URC website

Reformation 500

“The Heart of the Matter - then, and now”

Two study talks marking the 500th Anniversary

Zion United Reformed Church, Northallerton

Speakers

Rev Malcolm Hanson (former URC Assembly Moderator)

Rev Kevin Watson (URC Yorkshire Synod Moderator)

Sunday 10th November 3.00 - 5.15pm.

Refreshments included.

Synod Prayers

- 5th Nov For world-wide peace and acts of Remembrance this week Zion URC, Northallerton; Northgate URC, Darlington; Keld URC; Low Row URC; Revd Hilary and Revd Stephen Collinson
- 12th Nov St Paul & St John's URC; St Margaret's URC, South Shields; St Andrew's URC, Hebburn; Revd Helen Drummond
- 19th Nov St Andrew's LEP (Methodist/URC) Benton; Revd Gavin Hume (Meth); The Church of the Good Shepherd LEP (Anglican/Methodist/URC), Battle Hill; Revd Julie Mooney (Anglican)
- 26th Nov Advent as we prepare for Christmas PCM and the work of Mozambique Council of Churches Independent Churches Representative, Dr Mark Bonnington

Advent Retreat Day Saturday 25th November 2017

Reverend Ruth Crompton is leading an advent retreat day at The Sanctuary in Darlington. The day runs from 10.00am for 10.30am until approximately 3.15pm, the cost is £15 (£12 for concessions) and includes a light lunch.

Further details can be obtained from Judith or Hazel either by telephone on 01325 484 212 or e-mail at info@christian-retreat.co.uk. Places are limited and booking is essential

NB: Parking is very limited so if anyone is attending I am happy to provide a lift, I have room for two. Contact me on 01287 654 093.

Susan Griffiths

Synod Report

We had an early start 7 October and arrived at St Aidans by 9.20 in plenty of time for coffee and meeting friends which is one of the really good things about Synod Meetings. As the Moderator is unwell, he had nominated another Chairman, so Rev. Ron Forster, recently retired from Morpeth, found himself, with our agreement, in the job. He handled things very well and we sent greetings to Dave Herbert who is still convalescing from a heart attack. (We hope that he will be well enough to lead our Group Service on 17 December)

The retirement of the Chairman of the Managers of the Synod Trust, Rev. James Breslin, was marked by Ron presenting him with his P45 (!) as well as thanking him for his years of service in so many different areas of the Synod. The new Chairman Rev. David Grosch Miller was appointed to succeed him, thus ensuring that the Legal work of the Synod. continues to run smoothly. David who has experience as a Synod Moderator and still serves on many national committees has retired to our Synod. Praise be!

The Trust Officer, Andrew Atkinson, is currently concerned with the

detailed work now required, sadly, to unwind Ecumenical arrangements made when projects were set up. Oxclose Church originally involved ourselves and the Methodists has now become a fully Anglican Parish Church.

The work of the Synod is funded by the interest on Investments which pays for two thirds of the expenditure. The remainder comes from the Church levy which for 2018 will amount to £31.45 per member. There is a concern about the practical work needed to run Holy Island Church Centre since there is currently no Management Committee and the Minister there, Rev Rachel Poolman is very much on her own.

We heard news of Northumbrian Industrial Mission, working in Shopping centres, farming communities, the Airport and Schools. Was Jesus the first Industrial Chaplain?, wondered the speaker, Fiona Usher, who unfortunately had trouble with the technology showing her pictures.

Speaking of the West End Refugee Service (WERS) Lindsay Cross explained the work needed to rebuild lives, restore self confidence and assist many well quali-

fied people in their Job searches. Funding is, as ever, becoming more difficult.

In brief:

The final total for the Synod Refugee Fund for Syrian Refugees was £3938.

There are 12 Churches interested in providing paid work experience for young people in a scheme launched in March by the Children and Young People's committee.

Our chairman acknowledged the potential for confusion about the 3 new buzz phrases we keep hearing. *Way Forward, Growing leaders and Walking the Way.*

If you are still confused, *Synod Way Forward* is confined to Northern Synod and is about addressing the future reduction in ordained ministers and the need for growth in Lay Leadership.

The *Synod Way Forward* still seems a little vague and may take different forms in different places. The question was asked about why Vacancies need to be declared in the old way when we are moving forward to a new way. Our Synod Clerk Melanie Campbell explained that churches who want to use Way Forward should

first decide who to form a group with. She likened this to Speed-dating. Once churches are ready to form a group the scoping can be looked at for ministerial time. If there is a vacancy then that is the time to declare it on behalf of the whole group.

The *Growing Leaders* Course has been set up to address the need for growth in Lay Leadership. It has 31 signed up members meeting in four different places in the Synod.

Walking the Way is a new national initiative where we are asked to develop our discipleship and consider the following questions: 'What do we expect of someone who says that they are a Christian?' and 'What is the Church for?' In addition each church should have a copy of the book "Holy Habits" by Andrew Roberts. This is recommended for individuals, or church study groups, to work through. More copies can be obtained if wanted.

There is a Synod Newsletter which should be on your Church Noticeboard

Please think about coming next year. St John's Wideopen on 17 March

Jane Tomlin

Guisborough

For some time I have been using the Scripture Union 'Daily Bread' Bible Guide to help me in my personal exploration of faith. This year the society celebrates its 150th, anniversary which it is marking with the ambitious "'95 Campaign.'" This project can be simply described by the following quotation from their promotional literature:

It's estimated that a staggering 95% of children and young people in England and Wales aren't in church. So how are all those children going to hear the good news of Jesus? We certainly can't wait for them to step through our church doors. We need to step out and take the good news to them – to meet them where they are!

We are fortunate and blessed in Guisborough Church by having a small thriving Junior Church – so that we are part of that active 5% of children in fellowships around the country. I was a scholar, as a boy, in St Andrew's Mission, Thornaby, during the 40's to mid - 50's when, at that time, around 50% of children were attending some form of

worship. This level of attendance was achieved by the then widely held social convention whereby non practicing Christian parents sent their children to Sunday school. I enjoyed my time at the Mission: the lessons we had, the competitive scripture examinations, the outings and the devoted teachers leading us forward in faith. How things have changed. Now we have a multi faith, multicultural cultural, multi activity and more secular society – creating such a wide range of seeming diverse and attractive choices for our young people. Such is the challenge for Christians to present, to society, the idea that faith in Jesus is the 'real' option for the good life.

The Junior Church is led by Christine Robertson, who is also head of the Guisborough Montessori Nursery and Day Care Centre for infant children. In her work she is ably supported by Sandra Verrill, Joyce Basham and others. There are 10 children in the school with an attendance of around 6 or more each Sunday. These scholars are from the families of members and friends of the church and also from parents, in the local community, who have no connection with our fellowship. The credit for bringing in the latter

group is down exclusively to the efforts of Sandra Verrill who, for over thirty years or more, has attracted and persuaded parents, in her neighbourhood, to the benefits of a church led Christian education. So effectively being our number one evangelist.

In a recent service, on the 8th, October, we promoted the campaign: Freedom Sunday working against the scourge of modern slavery. The children presented their own contribution in the form of a dramatic sketch about Moses and the 'burning bush' – where God gives him the task of leading the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. Hattie and Charlie Thompson gave a feisty dialogue on this story ably supported by Caitlin and Marcus Ryan as the fire and the bush. An engaging performance for all of the congregation.

Similar presentations are given by the children on special occasions but the real work takes place when they leave the main service to work in their classes. The education in faith is very much based in practical activities – to learn something and then express their response in the traditional picture or model or something more imaginative. In the past Godly play was used as a teaching model but now the Roots scheme of work is used - so following the lectionary Bible passages

used week by week for adult worship. Christine often uses puppets to get a story across – a form of teaching well remembered by Charlie Thompson. "We learnt about the story of the rabbit, giraffe and the tortoise who were asked to go to the mountain. The tortoise was the only one able to make it – and so by this tale we learnt how not to judge people by their looks."

The Guisborough Church has a long tradition of working with children. Our earliest church record is of the baptism of James son of James and Mary Scott on 9th, May, 1799, by the visiting Evangelist, William Norris. James Scott was a schoolmaster at the Providence School and a lay preacher leader of the church at that time. In the census year of 1851 church attendance was also recorded showing that on the 31st March the minister the Rev Tim Taylder, from Cornwall, noted there were 20 adults and 6 children in the morning service and 50 adults and 10 children in the evening. By 1872 this had increased to an attendance of 64 in the morning and 100 in the afternoon – with the children being given a summer treat of an outing to Saltburn and 20 teachers to help out. During the ministry of Frederick Gillson, in the 30's, we had about 90 children and 10 teachers.

In more recent times, during the

Guisborough Calendar

Mon 27th Nov 7.15pm Church Meeting in the Hall
(note change of day)

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning
Thursdays 11.30am **Quiet Time in Church.** Prayers
and reflections with Maureen,
Madge, Ken and others. Details
on church notice board

60's, we tried an ecumenical approach by having a combined Sunday School with the Methodists, but this was changed after the experience of some years and to answer a need, from amongst the congregation, to have our 'own' Sunday school again. In the years following we managed a FURY group for teenagers, a pilots group and then a Guizkids, where children met together with young people from other churches once a month and other activities.

Whilst we can feel some pride in looking back on the achievements of our predecessors, it is crucial that our efforts are focussed on the future. A guiding light may come from the Scripture Union's present work where they say:

Reaching those beyond the church

has always been an important part of Scripture Union's mission, but this year, as we celebrate our 150th anniversary, we're making it our number one priority.

But by making this a priority, we're also facing a big challenge – just how do we share the good news with the next generation? How do we connect with those for whom the gospel is likely to be an alien concept?

However they can't take on this challenge alone. They need our support to go on a journey to ensure that many more children and young people get the opportunity to discover the difference Jesus can make to the challenges and adventures of life. Can we reach for that challenge here in the URC?

Ray Tunnicliffe

Handel's *Messiah*

Guisborough Choral Society will present music's greatest choral masterpiece as the climax to its 50th anniversary year. On Saturday December 9th at 7.30pm the choir will make the Methodist Church in Guisborough resound to the magnificent melodies, stirring choruses and beautiful arias of

the iconic musical experience that is the oratorio *Messiah* by George Friedrich Handel. With full orchestral accompaniment and top solo singers, this promises to be an unforgettable event.

Tickets are £10 Adults, £8 Concessions, £1 Under-19s and are on sale from Guisborough Bookshop or Greensleeves Music, www.wegotickets.com, or on the door (subject to availability).

	Vestry	Communion Door	Flowers
5th Nov	J Basham	M Baird	Mary Robson
12th Nov	D Beattie	M Houston	Dorothy Collins
19th Nov	M Burrows	The children	Vera Beattie
26th Nov	M Houston	J Reynolds	Moira Ward
3rd Dec	R Tunnicliffe	M Burrows	Lydia Reeves

Redcar

Church Bazaar

The annual Church Bazaar is to be held on Saturday 18th November. Donations of 'luxury' type items of food for the raffle, tombola prizes for and cakes on the day would be greatly appreciated.

Thank-you

A huge thank you to all who helped and supported the Fashion Show on the 14th October for the charity 'Circle of Life.' It was a lovely lively afternoon which many enjoyed.

Please come along on the day it is open from 11am until 2pm. Refreshments including soup and bacon butties will be available. Local crafts people will be selling at this event, also our own raffle, tombola and cake stall. We look forward seeing you!

Redcar Calendar

Sat 2 Dec 10.30am Memorial Service which will be followed by refreshments

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group in the Church

Thursday 10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre for coffee / tea, cakes and fellowship in the Church Hall

2.00pm Thursday Prayers at the home of Catherine Milburn

St Andrew's

Congratulations

Congratulations to Shirley on becoming a great grandmother to Esther Brigit, daughter to Jonathon and Nicola Moorese.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy future for the new family.

Shoe Boxes

Shoe Boxes are being prepared for this year's appeal. Leaflets are available from Shona regarding the contents for the boxes. All shoe boxes have to be taken to the collection point by the middle of November.

Annual Bazaar

The annual bazaar is on Saturday 18th November from 11.00am to 1.30pm. Offers of help plus donations are required for cake, bric a brac stalls, raffle, tombola etc. There will be teas, coffees, soup etc. Please come along and support us.

Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Coffee for Charity

17 Sep	Zoe's Place	£12.00
24 Sep	Rosemary Fund	£14.40
1 Oct	Teesside Hospice	£11.00
8 Oct	Boys' Brigade	£20.60

The Mission to Seafarers

...are in need of hats, scarves and gloves, so if you are a keen knitter, or crocheter, please consider this worthwhile charity. Over 90% of world trade is transported by sea, providing work for 1.5 million people. Locally you only have to look at the container lorries coming in and out of Teesport to realise how much we all rely seafarers for the goods we use every day. Many

seafarers are recruited in the Far East, little realising they may be sailing to much colder climates. They often do not have warm clothing, which is where the Mission to Seafarers appeal steps in.

I am happy to collect any items and forward them on or further information can be found at www.missiontoseafarers.org

Susan Griffiths

Preachers

	Marton	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	11.00am
5-Nov	Katherine Atha	Donna Moore Communion	Ken Harris
12-Nov	Ken Harris Parade	Margaret Harris	Norma Johnson
19-Nov	Jan Harper Communion	Guis Folk	Brian Stephenson Meeting
26-Nov	MartonWT	Keith Martin	Julie Martin

Material for the February Magazine to church editors by Sunday
12th November please

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