

Group News



** April * 2016 * **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Minister

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Dear Friends,

The events of Easter day and beyond are a far cry from the ministry of healing and wholeness, teaching and discipling, and bringing all kinds of people into the fold of God's love, that was the focus of Jesus' life up to that point. Just as the events of Easter are in complete contrast to the reflective calm of the 40 days of Lent.

At Easter we move from the quiet, contemplative days of Lent into the horrors of what Jesus went through on Good Friday. Then we move from the sense of grief and loss to the joy of knowing once again the result of that act of complete self-sacrifice, as we celebrate the raising up of God's son to new life. In a matter of days we encounter such differing and tumultuous emotions that besides the stone at the grave being overturned, we can find ourselves overturned, pummeled, exhausted with grief and yet then radiant with a joy that has no comparison. For all this Jesus went through for us... for me... for you... and its impact on us is immense. So it still is a touching and overwhelming reality for us two thousand years later, and the outcome is no less overwhelming - he did this for us! 'He conquered death, he is King of kings' as a well known Easter hymn reminds us. He did this for us...

I can't help but imagine what emotions were breaking God's heart in heaven as all this took place here on earth, with God's son's blood on our hands. The overwhelming sadness and grief, the heartache and loss as he turned away from his own son is those final days. God could not intervene. Jesus had to experience the fullness of death on his own, no neatly packaged miracle so that Jesus didn't feel the pain as the nails were hammered into his wrists and ankles, or the distress bursting in his heart with the fear of the unknown as he looked ahead to his certain and God ordained death. What must God have felt as his son cried out into the void, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why have you abandoned me?' What tears must have fallen in heaven?

When in life we find ourselves being pummeled and washed this

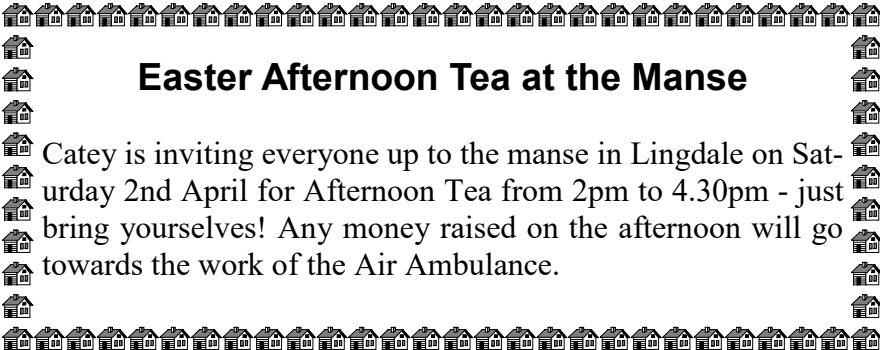
way and that with the tides of life, we can take heart that in knowing that God has been there, Jesus has been there. God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit has been there in the midst of such grief, such fear, such isolation from all that is good and right, caught in the midst of all that is bad and full of anguish. And they were there deliberately, out of choice, in order to remove from our lives all that is sinful, all that fills our heart with such pain, all that is overburdening us in our lives. They were there in order to set us free.

No matter what happens in our lives, when we live with Jesus in our hearts we can know that none of this can stay overburdening us because the joy and love of God’s resurrected Son is so overwhelming that it pushes the out of our lives all the bad and painful stuff which is too much for us to hold onto, too much for us to bear alone. Jesus hangs there on the cross with arms open wide ready to receive all that is too much for us... leaving us instead overwhelmed by his love.

So let us this Easter allow our lives to be overwhelmed with the love and care of God, who is carrying us on into better times, building the church, reclaiming and restoring one person at a time. Lord Jesus, lead us on, with such encouragement, to a place where we can daily know of your loving presence ministered to us through the love and care of others around us.

With overwhelming Easter blessings!

Revd. Catey Morrison

A decorative border consisting of a continuous line of small, stylized house icons with gabled roofs and windows, framing the central text.

Easter Afternoon Tea at the Manse

Catey is inviting everyone up to the manse in Lingdale on Saturday 2nd April for Afternoon Tea from 2pm to 4.30pm - just bring yourselves! Any money raised on the afternoon will go towards the work of the Air Ambulance.

Synod Prayers

Prayer Pointers

Sunday 3rd April - We pray for those still recovering from the effects of the flooding in the Lake District and in wider parts of Cumbria, as the work relentlessly goes on refurbish homes and re-build lives and businesses.

Sunday 10th April - We pray for the work of the Teesside Port and pray for those who are docked in our port who are far away from family and friends and everything that is normal to them. We bring before God the work of the Mission to Seafarer's who help to bring hope and comfort.

Sunday 17th April - Pray for those who need a little support and encouragement this week, and for God to show us all who we need to reach out to in our daily lives and also where to seek encouragement and support for ourselves.

Sunday 24th April - Pray for those caught up in the stress of preparation for exams, as GCSE's and A-level exams and university finals begin shortly. Pray for protection for young lives that the pressure will not become overwhelming, and they can see their futures ahead of them regardless of the results.



Local Mission and Ministry Review Update

You should all hopefully know by now that this summer we will have the opportunity to take stock of the work of our churches, the mission and the ministry of the churches within our Group through a Local Mission and Ministry Review (from now on known as LMMR). This will take place with Revd John Paul at the helm, so the review is in secure and skilled hands. He will have a team of three others who will also be helping us look at where our churches have come from the get to this point and where we are heading in our three churches in the Group, evaluating what is working and what is good, and highlighting areas of growth. Small groups representing the cross section of each church have been put together to prepare documents and then meet with the team. At the same time I will have my ministry evaluated through a Accompanied Self Appraisal. We now know that the review will begin in May and will be completed by the end of the summer. Let us see the positive in this review for I believe that all our churches at this time need a fresh perspective and new ideas for where we go from here.



Redcar

**Please help us to celebrate the Queen's 90th
Birthday**

With Afternoon Tea

Homemade sandwiches and cakes

On Saturday, 23rd April from 2pm until 4pm

Tombola Stall and Ukulele Band

Tickets £4

All are welcome

Donations of cakes and tombola prizes also welcome – thank you

Redcar Calendar

Tue 5th April 2.00pm Craft and Chatter in Church.

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Thursday Prayers at the home of
Catherine Milburn

St Andrew's

Quiz, Pie & Pea Supper Saturday 23rd April 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Raffle. Tickets available £6.50 from Doreen, Sheila, Eleanor or Joan.

Please do come along for some fun and to help swell church funds.

Ladies' Fellowship

We thoroughly enjoyed the slide show of St Paul's journey in Turkey at our last meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 12th April 1.30 to 3.00pm when Mrs B Brown will be giving us a talk. All welcome.

Thank You.....

I would like to thank everyone at the church for your most generous gift at last week's AGM, following my retirement from the post of Church Treasurer. For those who have not seen the present it was a lovely Hugo Boss wrist watch with matching cuff links. I shall wear them with pride.

Iris was overwhelmed by the beautiful floral display presented to her and also wishes to express her sincere thanks to you all.

George Hepburn

Coffee for Charity

21st Feb	Teesside Hospice	£12.00
28th Feb	Alzheimer's Society	£21.00
6th Mar	No Coffee - AGM	
13th Mar	Boys' Brigade	£27.50

Coatham House

The donations for Coatham House have now been collected to share among young, needy people. Please continue to support by donating tins, packets dried goods, tea, coffee, toiletries and detergents. A collection box is in the entrance hall every Sunday. These donations are very much appreciated.

Guisborough

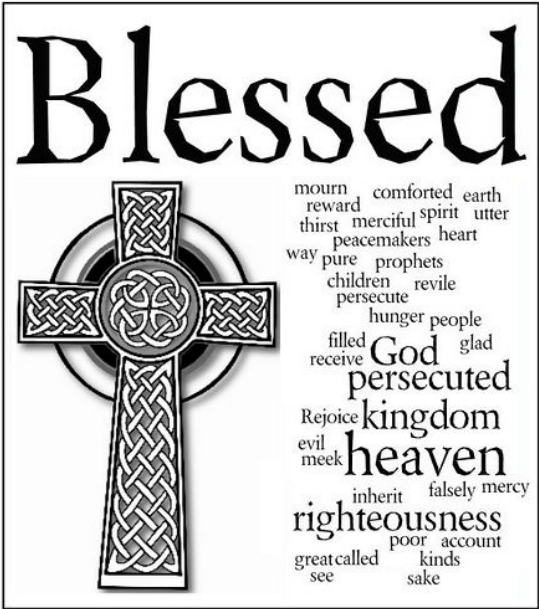
“Don’t look back.” was one of the themes for the parade service I lead at Marton recently. It is easy to say but not so easy to do. It doesn’t mean we should forget the past or fail to learn from experience, but it does mean we should not cling onto the past as this can stop us from living in the present or looking forward to the future.

This week sees the Guisborough Church AGM and the Spring meeting of Northern Synod. These are opportunities to look back and reflect but also to celebrate the present moment and to look forward to the future. This activity seems particularly relevant as we are beginning the process of LMMR (local ministry and mission review) as a church and as a group. We are asked to begin by looking at our Pastorate Profile which dates back 10 years to when we called Catey to be our minister. How much has changed since then? Have we moved on as much as we had hoped? What have we lost along the way? The most poignant change is the closing of our churches at Linthorpe and Lingdale. In our individual churches some activities have come and gone, while new ones have been taken up as the need arises.

Over the years we have often paused to take stock of where we are and where we want to be. Do you remember “Catch the Vision”, “Vision 4 Life” and Vision 2020? Do you still remember your Vi-

sion 2020 priorities for mission? I didn't think I did but I found my old booklet and Identity, Spirituality and Prayer, and Evangelism seem most familiar. Looking for a record of these decisions taken more than 5 years ago is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

As a denomination from the Reformed tradition, for our church life, we are expected to look back to the early church. In the Acts of the Apostles and Paul's letter we find a pattern for worship, meeting together and serving the community and we could do a lot worse than to look back at their example. However our challenge is not to remain stuck in the past but to keep pace with the changes in



	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
3rd April	D Moore	R Tunnicliffe	P Etwell	M Baird
10th April	D Beattie			H Tucker
17th April	J Reynolds			B Ward
24th April	D Cross			S Verrill
1st May	B Ward	J Reynolds	D Cross	M Sollett

Guisborough Calendar

Wed 13th April 7.30pm **Group Elders** meet in the Hall
Sat 30th April 8.00am **Bridge Prayer Breakfast** in
our church.

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning
Thursdays 11.30am Quiet Time – prayers and re-
flections with Catey, Ken,
Norma and others.

society and meet the new needs around us while holding onto our original values. It doesn't pay to dwell too long on past triumphs if it leads to thinking things will never be as good as they were. It also doesn't pay to dwell too long on past failures if it makes us afraid to start out on a new project.

Isaiah tells us God wants us to

“Forget about what’s happened; don’t keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I’m about to do something brand-new. It’s bursting out! Don’t you see it?” (Isaiah 43:16-21 The Message)

Paul in his letter to the Philippians tells us to be single-minded: Forgetting the things that are behind and reaching out for the things that are ahead. (Phi. 3:13 NET)

We can learn a lot from the past but we can also face the future with confidence.

As the writer of Hebrews says “Let us have confidence, then, and approach God’s throne where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it.” (Hebrews 4:16 GNB) Thank God for that.

Donna Moore.

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 9.30am	Redcar 11.00am
3-Apr	M Harris	C Morrison Communion	N Johnson
10-Apr	D Elliott Parade	M Harris	K Harris
17-Apr	J Harper Communion	K Harris	C Morrison
24-Apr	C Morrison	M Harris	D Moore
1-May	K Harris	C Morrison Communion	J Coulthard Communion

Material for the May Magazine to church editors by Sunday 10th
April please

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