

Group News



*** 2019 * April * 2019 ***

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

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

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‘How can they cry out to someone they have not believed in? How can they believe in someone they have never heard of? And how can they hear of him unless someone proclaims it to them?’ (*Romans 10 14-15*)

If we had been about in the year 1914 we would have seen, wherever we went, posters declaring the words ‘Your country needs you’. It was all part of the government of the time’s campaign to enlist new recruits to serve in the forces during the First World War; and incredible as it might seem to us today, in the light of what we know about the horrors of that conflict, young men signed up in their thousands, eager to be part of what they thought would be a great adventure. The reasons behind that are many, — partly it reflected nationalistic fervour, and partly dreams of heroism and glory, — but perhaps the underlying reason, and one cleverly exploited by the poster, is that all of us like to feel needed. This, more than anything else gives us a sense of worth and purpose in life.

So, when we read those words from Romans 10, we should catch our breath in praise and thanksgiving, for here we find God expressing His need of us! In Christ He has Good News for all the world, a message He wants everyone to hear and rejoice in; but in order to spread the Word and make real His love, He depends on our contribution. It may be a cliché and one that sounds quite amazing, but it’s nonetheless true that God requires us to be His hands and feet, His eyes and mouth, - His agents here on earth.

Each kind action we take for another, each time we are not afraid or embarrassed to speak His name to another — we are proclaiming the Good News of Christ.

Quite simply our God needs us!

Blessings

Jan

Synod Prayers

7 April:

St George's URC, High Heaton; St Cuthbert's LEP
(Methodist/URC), Heaton;

Revd Dr Grant Wilson

14 April:

St Mark's URC, Amble; Revd Alison Mills

21 April:

The work of Children's & Youth Work Committee and
Convenor, Mr Sandy Ogilvie and Synod Children's Work
Advisor, Mrs Hannah Middleton

28 April:

PCM, ministers in training at Ricatla Ecumenical Seminary
The RC Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, the Rt Revd
Séamus Cunningham



Synod asks for support for our partners in Mozambique through:

Christian Aid Emergency Appeal

Christian Aid launched an emergency appeal as Cyclone Idai caused death and destruction in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe

More than a million people have been affected by severe flooding in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe with the numbers rising rapidly as the full extent of the damage becomes clearer, Christian Aid has warned.

Cyclone Idai carrying heavy rains and winds of up to 170kmh (106mph) made landfall at the port of Beira, Mozambique's fourth largest city, on Thursday night (14 March), leaving the 500,000 residents without power and communications lines down.

The cyclone follows a week of heavy rains and flooding across South East Africa that has already killed at least 145 people in Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The President of Mozambique has warned that the number could exceed 1,000.

The cyclone moved across Mozambique to Zimbabwe over the weekend. Nearly 1.6 million people are estimated to live in areas that could be impacted by high winds and rainfall.

Christian Aid has released emergency reserves to help with the immediate relief response. We are working through our partners in Malawi and Zimbabwe to provide food, shelter, clothing, water, healthcare, sanitation, hygiene and psycho-social support services. Special needs for children, women, the disabled, elderly and vulnerable groups will be part of Christian Aid's focus. Christian Aid is appealing for much-needed funds to help people in desperate need of humanitarian assistance.

The Presbyterian Church of Mozambique, just as the whole country is in mourning caused by the cyclone idai. This cyclone devastated the providence of Sofala, the second largest that is in the centre of the country. This province suffered more in the biggest city of the border. I know that you also suffer with us. The humanitarian aid of all of us and of the countries around the world is being very useful for Mozambique. God bless you.

Rosa Ananias Mondlane Zavala

A Quiet Garden Trust Day in The Secret Garden at Northallerton

Tuesday April 30th 2019 - 10.00am – 3.45pm

Led by Revd Andrew De Smet

After Easter this year you are warmly invited to a day of exploring “Angels in the Garden.” The accounts of the resurrection appearances in three of the Gospels begin with angels in the garden, where the tomb is located, In the fourth gospel the risen Christ is mistaken for a gardener. In this quiet day in the lovely setting of the Secret Garden we will have space to ‘be’, and to ponder these mysteries. Three short talks throughout the day will give food for reflection by looking at the themes of the new life of Easter, springtime and of the spirit and “angels” as unexpected agents of new life. It will explore these as intersecting themes with the garden at this same time of year.

Andrew De Smet is an Anglican priest, counsellor/psychotherapist, and spiritual director. In the past he has been director of a retreat centre. He enjoys icon painting and gardening. This Secret Garden has its own integral Mindfulness Trail.

You are invited to gather for a shared silent home-cooked lunch of salmon, vegetarian quiche, salad and baguettes, with choice of pudding. There will be a space in the cottage if you have your own packed lunch and wish to talk!

There is seating in the garden; (a cushion may be a good idea!) You are welcome to bring your own chair if you have one which is portable and comfortable. Facilities of the church hall are available all day including helping yourself, freely to refreshments. There is disability access to all areas and a dropping off point for transport to and from the day. We look forward to welcoming you. Suggest you bring Bible, notebook, paints?

Name

Email Address

Phone number

Lunch or own picnic? Please indicate for catering purposes

Do you require a map for location of the garden and the car parks in the town?

Enquiries and booking please to: Ann Bowes 07766 733810 New Mills Cottage, Sessay, Thirsk, YO7 3NR ann.bowes@btinternet.com

Or Alexa Barber alexa@barberfamily.me.uk 01609 774425

There is no charge for this day, but should you wish to make an offering towards the provided meal (if you choose to have one,) that is fine, but not essential!

Synod Meeting

Kingston Park Church, just north of Newcastle, is a modern warm and comfortable building with a wide fan shaped sanctuary under a wood panelled roof. The feeling of being with 80 people, singing How Great Thou art was a good start to the day and the theme was God's Wonderful World.

The meeting began at 10.00am and ended at 4.30pm so this is not in any way a full report of what went on.

The Environment and Climate change were both referred to - the Moderator, Rev Dave Herbert explained some of the small actions he was taking to reduce plastic usage and believing that the consumer can bring leverage to this, such as using a solid bar of shampoo, a bamboo toothbrush, a wooden pencil, disposable paper bag, etc.

Synod now has a Green Apostle - Rev Trevor Jamison's time is divided between this and his ministry at St Columba's North Shields He challenged us to consider whether the Church should disinvest from any shares in companies extracting fossil fuels (coal, oil, fracking etc).

Youth Opportunities programme has become established with six work placements now offered at various churches to a young person, being paid (by Synod) the proper living wage for 10-15 hours per week for a year. We heard from Amelia, a photography student from Sunderland Uni, working at Roker, meeting as well as Church members, all the room users, she had created posters and a banner for various groups and fully involving herself in Church life and obviously enjoying the experience. This really is a Synod success story.

The Communications group has been working on a new logo and tag line for the Synod in response to the question 'How would you describe the URC?' which was discussed in October. One of the suggestions was: ***We are URC, progressive, diverse, accessible and inclusive*** A booklet is available with other ideas and feed back is welcome, please.

Church Buildings was the subject addressed by Rev David Grosch-Miller (Trust Chair) who is very concerned about the lack of forward thinking and adequate planning well before a building becomes an unsustainable liability. We do offer grants, some large, but he questions whether this is the right course of action. But much of the Trust time is taken up with church closures and decisions to sell.

Job vacancies:

1. Synod/Trust Treasurer - a job description is available.
2. M&M Committee needs a Convenor before Synod can devise the amount required by Church House for stipends etc and how to divide it up between churches.

Other matters — we heard about the difficulties facing rural churches and how some have overcome the usage of building issues. We also welcomed a speaker from the Fishermen's Mission, a charity dating back 120 years to help with the families living with this most dangerous occupation.

Churches at Belford, (Northumberland) and Blackhill (Consett) are both closing this year. I had not intended to speak but I was moved to do so at this point as there seems to be something missing here. We vote on decisions from Synod Executive and from the Trust about the closures and the buildings. It seems to me that we make no provision for the people — and often there still is a small worshipping congregation — which scatters or each one makes their own arrangements. There needs to be some form of 'Registered Fellowships' created to keep them in the loop. This has been mentioned before! How long do we have to wait?

I would recommend that more members come to a Synod meeting and see what the important issues are in the wider church. Alas, the next one might be difficult. It is on 5 October 2019 at Wooler URC about 40 miles beyond Morpeth! Donna and I are seriously considering B&B the night before!

Jane Tomlin

What is a 'Shedder'?

This is a Good News story!

Have you noticed the FRADE vans around the Middlesbrough collecting and delivering furniture? This is your local re-use charity, with showrooms and collection points Middlesbrough, Stockton, and Darlington. It began in Stockton 29 years ago to meet the desperate need for basic furniture for families in difficulties. Nothing has changed, except that the needs are greater than ever. What happens to furniture from house clearances, or that which is thrown out when replaced with the latest design, by those who can afford to do so? The obvious answer is to dump it. Problem solved! Indeed, FRADE has contact with the Centre at Haverton Hill and will intercept any furniture thrown out which can be recycled, re-used or repaired. 257 tonnes of usable stuff was rescued and diverted from Landfill or the Burner and more than 11,000 households were helped in one year, 2018.

The energetic and hard working manager realised that more could be done. Furniture had always been repaired where possible but this was something more. The Trustees supported her in the successful Lottery Bid for funds to create and equip a Mens Shed at the rear of the showroom in Marton Road to repair, make, renovate furniture and even more importantly, to bring together men with time on their hands and with not a lot of opportunity to meet others. Many are skilled people and there are others who are interested in learning new skills and perhaps finding retirement lonely. The eight work stations are occupied most mornings. Men working together, sawing, filing, staining furniture and making new friends, described as 'The best thing I've ever done' by more than one volunteer.

So it's all now official as on Friday 15th March the Middlesbrough Mens Shed was opened by the Middlesbrough MP - Andy MacDonald. He called it really important work and was delighted with the progress of this local Charity - something positive, he said,

and we then met some of the ‘Shedders’ and the workshop manager!

Just one more fact, *remembering nothing like this happens until someone makes it happen*, this Charity was founded in 1990 by a URC Minister and her friend from the Church of England. They saw a great need and ran it from a garden shed.....

They would both be so proud today, the late Rev Gillian Bobbett (then at Stockton URC) and Julia Roberts.

The Mens Shed is open Monday to Friday 10.00am — 1pm at 426 Marton Road.

If you are giving away good quality furniture or want any more information please ring 01642 608791

Jane Tomlin

Do We Believe What We Believe?

In the March edition of Group News Jim Robertson, in his article, makes some very pertinent observations about our faith and questions the essentials needed to attract others to follow Christ. He makes the crucial point that for many people Sunday worship ‘struggles to have relevance’ — it being so outside their normal experience. He adds that, while the while the world has changed and moved on, people still need to hear the Gospel’s message of love but do so we need to be brave, radical and authentic.....and make it accessible to all. To establish this position he asks: What is it we believe? Why? How does that affect how we live? And how can we communicate — (what the church really is) and much more. Crucial questions, but where can we find the answers?

There is no magic formulae to resolve this problem — because in the final analysis faith in Christ is hard, and always has been, as we constantly face the reality of the human condition of those seven deadly sins: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth. In today’s world we can see the effects of pride where strong traditional views and the refusal to accept change, in the name of justice and fairness, can cause terrible suffering. Then we have

unfair distribution of wealth; sexual abuse; a consumer culture encouraging desire for more things; food waste, while many in the world suffer hunger; constant wars and terrorism and with modern technology encouraging a too easy life.

These are the eternal problems that faith in Christ should give us courage and spiritual strength, with which to make our personal contribution towards their resolution. Seen like this it seems like a Mount Everest to climb, but all journeys start with a few small steps and we should all be able to do that.

The starting point for bringing people into the church must start with ourselves. We in faith may need to be re-evangelised to do the job. Way back in 2011 the URC Vision for Life project ended with the issue of evangelism. In March of that year we had a 'Day on Evangelism' led by Rev. Paul Stokes, of the URC Evangelism and Renewal Department. At one point he asked us to work in pairs doing a simple exercise where we were to imagine that we were on a train journey speaking to a stranger, who would be getting off at his/her destination in four minutes. During this time we were asked to explain the meaning of the Gospel. I was surprised to find myself struggling somewhat to get across the essentials of my faith. I was partnered with Richard Harris, of the former Linthorpe URC, who appeared to do so much better. Later I learnt that I was not alone in my difficulty with some people feeling that being expected to make a summary statement of faith, at a couple of minutes notice, was most unfair. But was it? In retrospect I must say no. It is essential that we are totally confident in our faith in Christ before we can expect others to follow him on the way to establishing God's kingdom here in our world.

In 2015 to 2016 there were a number of services, held in Guisborough and other churches of the East Cleveland Group, devoted to evangelism using the course 'Breaking Cover.' Out of this experience one statement seemed to stand out, namely: Do you believe what you believe? This question challenges us to confront our faith and get it into a good state of repair. Then, from such a

point, we will be fit to present the Good News of the Gospel to others in a convincing and effective way.

Jim then asks why? Why do we believe? A simple answer could be to think of Jesus' speaking about the Great Commandment: Love the Lord your God..... and your neighbour as yourself. In the that short declaration what more do we need to know? Everything about faith is encapsulated here and then reinforced by our Lord's Sermon on the Mount or the parable of the Good Samaritan - where the enemy, not the friend, is shown to be the one to offer help in a dangerous situation. This is why and if only such ideas could be communicated to a troubled world how much better for us and everyone.

But then we come to the really difficult bit — communication. Religion is going through a particularly difficult time at present with serious cases of abuse being revealed within churches and terrorist acts committed in the name of faith. This means, in modern terms, that we have serious 'image' problem that will not be easily be remedied.

If faith is to mean anything to a wider public then there has to be some obvious benefits. During Christ's Mission on earth the sick were healed, people were fed, the bereaved comforted, the authorities challenged and a message of hope was illustrated in simple word pictures that were vivid in presentation, easy to understand and memorable in a way that could prompt action. And it is in action — effective deeds that we will find a way to connect with an often indifferent public.

There is that famous saying that clearly defines such an approach: I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.

So we need to do something practical and beneficial and then maybe others will understand, see the merits, then join us in faith.

What must those actions be? There really is no limit although popular opinion and culture imply that there are certain areas where the church and Christians, effectively, 'need not apply.' In Guisborough we have the Bridge organisation that does good work

in the community: providing for youth, running a food bank, caring for the elderly — all good work but often done, unrecognised by the general public. But should we go wider than this into what may be considered as the area of politics?

In 2002, when there was the threat of going to war in Iraq, a proposal to send a letter of protest to the government was raised, but failed to be approved. Later, another proposal to protest against the poor treatment of the victims of the Bhopal disaster of 1984, by the Indian government, was sent off. Is this something that should be part of our church life? How important is it that the church's voice be heard clearly, in the public domain, on issues of political significance?

Recently, at the Guisborough Church meeting, it was agreed to consider having chairs to replace the pews and so be able to have a more flexible use of the church. This was allied with a wish to spend some resources on outreach into the community. This could be a challenging project and may test our fellowship to show whether 'we believe what we believe.'

Ray Tunnicliffe



Guisborough

Well, it's been a year since I last wrote in Group News and boy what a year, I think Peter and I have gone through every emotion possible, but still our faith remains strong.

We've been babysitting; not our grandchild Alissa but my sons dog Stumpy. Such a rotten name for such a pretty dog. She's called stumpy because she was born without a tail so she has a tendency to hop and wiggles her bottom oblivious of the fact she has nothing to wag. I let her out in a cordoned off area for safety and stood on the step watching her; well day dreaming really and I glanced at my neighbour's kitchen window adjacent to where I was stood. A penguin with a red top hat on, how sweet I smiled to myself as I looked at this small creature on the kitchen window ledge. Looked once more and saw a red capped washing up bottle, oh not a penguin at all. I had major surgery years ago and faced with a potential life threatening condition I promised myself if I got through it I would look for one nice thing every day that made me glad to be alive. I've managed it, it might be a flower I hadn't noticed, a verse I hadn't read before or someone's beautifully coloured hair. If it's the latter I would tell them they, would smile and I would too, it's nice to be nice. Today it was a penguin with a red top hat however fleeting the image was. So easy to smile or is it?

The world is full of wonder and beauty but only if you look at it in the right way. When you're depressed and it seems life has dealt you

	Vestry	Communion Door	Flowers
7th April	D Moore	J Basham	M Houston Hilary
14th April	J Basham		J Reynolds B Ward
Easter day	R Tunncliffe	B Ward	M Burrows S Verrill
28th April	J Reynolds		D Thompson M Sollett
5th May	M Burrows		B Ward A Meek

a bad hand your perception of wonder and beauty is distorted by negative feelings and emotions. This seems to be a fact that is brought to our attention daily in the news, radio, and gossip in the street. Suicide rates are increasing particularly in the in the 15-17 year age range. The media particularly facebook and twitter are read constantly and increasingly have played a large part in the increase of mental health issues. It seems that the written word via this medium is thought as the truth. My conscience is pricked because in nursing 'if it has not been documented it hasn't been done'. This ethos is being used everywhere. We document everything in this claim culture, have we gone too far!

Is the written word the truth if so then the internet should be flooded with positive messages to inspire our youth of today? Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28 -30.

Let this be our first message to our youth. Let this be the foundation stone on which we can build strength of self-belief and faith. Fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your god; I will strengthen you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10.

Guisborough Calendar

Thursday 18th April 6.30pm Maundy Thursday service open to all in the Group.

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

There are many readings in the bible which give hope. To be able to read such emotive pieces could give a little glimpse of sunlight where only shadows have been cast. Though many have left the church we are still able to provide these messages and others to filter through the plethora of negative messages and embed seedlings of hope.

Angela Etwell

Worship Night

with Graham Kendrick

St Nicholas Church, Guisborough

Saturday 4th May, 7.30pm

Graham Kendrick is probably the best-known popular Christian composer of contemporary hymns and Christmas songs over the past 25 years (including Beauty for Brokenness, The Servant King and Shine Jesus Shine). He performs with a 7-piece band.

Tickets £13/£15 from Guisborough bookshop (or www.ents24.com)

Guisborough Choral Society

Spring Concert

21st Century Composers

Sunday 7th April at 3.00pm

St Paulinus Church, The Avenue, Guisborough

Lauridsen's Exquisite Lux Aeterna & Dirait-On

Taverner's The Lamb & Song for Athene

Tickets £10.00 from Guisborough Bookshop (or WeGotTickets.com)

Redcar

Smartie Tubes

At the Church AGM it was decided to start fund raising for roof repairs. The congregation were asked to fill Smartie Tubes with loose change. Full Smartie tubes were donated by our local Tesco Supermarket. If any of

our regular attendees have not got their Smartie tube yet, please see Catherine, Elaine or June. If you don't want to eat the Smarties there will be plenty of volunteers to do it for you!

June

Easter Coffee Morning

Saturday 20th April 2019

Coffee & Hot Cross Bun - £1.50

Easter Egg Raffle, Tombola,
Cake Stall and possibly some
craft stalls

Everyone welcome

Thank You

A big thank you to everyone who baked, bought, attended and ate at the Scone Coffee Morning on 16th February. It was very well attended and we raised the sum of £300 for church funds, which included a couple of generous donations.

Redcar Calendar

Weekly

Thursday

9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30 Pop in Centre

Emphasising Ray's closing sentence from the February Group News, we may think and say "now is the right time and place to use the most misused three words of the twenty first century". O My and our God. We simply say thank you for all we have. The third commandment and Exodus also needs reading.

John Crowther

St Andrew's

Coffee Morning

Wednesday 17th April - 10.00am.

at St Andrew's

with chocolate tombola

Donations for tombola will be gratefully received. Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Tickets £2.00 available from Sheila, Doreen or Joan.

Shoe Boxes

Although there is still some time until we start organising our Shoe Box Appeal, we would gratefully appreciate any empty shoe boxes, please.

Thank you.

Coffee for Charity

17th February	Target Ovarian Cancer.	£19.00
24th February	Rosemary Fund.	£24.45
3rd March	Leprosy Mission.	£17.35
10th March	Boys' Brigade.	£29.85
17th March	Teesside Hospice.	£13.20

Middlesbrough Food Bank

Please continue to remember this much needed charity in the future weeks. In the summer months the donations of food etc. can decline but the need is still very much there.

In the New Year Rosemary wrote

A very happy New Year.

How is the weather in the north east of England?

I believe our loving heavenly father is keeping you safe and sound. How did you spend the festive season?

As for me I had a good Christmas with my family and this time I was a bit strong and healthy to celebrate Christ's birth with joy and gladness! On 31 December we had a family reunion, almost all family members with exception of Merab and Gideon came to the village to celebrate new year with me. The girls had planned to give me a surprise Thanksgiving feast! So the home was congested with grand nieces, nephews, and their parents. We all went to church on the New Year's Day for thanksgiving service and then to the Grand feast with relatives, well wishers and their neighbours. It was wonderful occasion as those I have helped in school took turns to give speeches in gratitude. The majority left home on 22 January but left me feeling so ill with a nasty bout of flu which kept me in bed for two weeks. I had a burst eardrum which discharged for a while but I am OK now and back in Kampala. I praise God that I survived the ordeal because the flu nearly shut up my chest for good.

Warmest greetings to my brothers and sisters at St Andrew's URC in Marton. I wish them all a happy and blessed new year.

With love in Christ Jesus,

Rosemary.

(Apologies for overlooking this item for the March Group News - Roger)

And for Lent Rosemary wrote

20th March 2019

Hi dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I was overjoyed to receive my financial gift you sent me via Western Union. Thank you so much for the love and care you have shown me all these years. You have been giving over and over without expecting anything in return. This is what. The Bible says that people will know we belong to God if we love one another. I have no proper words to express my gratitude to you, but praise God from whom all blessings flow, we love because He first loved us. As you ask that I use it to treat myself I will buy a nice gift for Easter, something that will always remind me of you. At my age you buy things that are old age friendly! God keep and bless you exceedingly for your love and support. I know it is more blessed to give than to receive, but I feel more blessed by my gift. Let us continue in love and fellowship.

With much love and hugs in Christ Jesus,

Rosemary.

St Andrew's Calendar

Sat 29th June 2.30p.m. Strawberry Tea Tickets £3.00.
Raffle and cake stall. Proceeds in
aid of church funds.

Weekly/Monthly

Boy's Brigade

Details available from church
elders.

Preachers

	Marton	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	11.00am
7-Apr	Norma Johnson	Guis Folk Communion	Brian Stephenson
14-Apr	Dave Elliott Parade	Ken Harris	Margaret Harris
Easter	Julie Martin Communion	Donna Moore Communion	Norma Johnson Communion
28-Apr	Jane Rowell	Ken Harris	Jan Harper
5-May	Donna Moore	John Horbury	Arthur Harbottle Joint Service, Comm

Material for the May Magazine to church editors by Sunday 14th
April please

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