

Group News



** December * 2017 **

** January * 2018 **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

May the warmth and
of the ^{joy} Christmas
Season
remain with you
throughout
the coming year.

Dear Friends,

How time passes!

My first letter to you to introduce myself as your ‘Pastoral Friend’ was a year ago! Much has happened in that time which I know the Elders of the Churches have shared with you. It has been a year of transition and you are now entering a new phase with the Elders busily working on the Church Profiles and a Group Profile to present to the Synod Pastoral Committee. It seems like a new chapter is now beginning.

Coming as it does in this season of Advent with its themes of looking to the past through the Law and the Prophets it also gives us a glimpse of the future as we look at John the Baptist and Mary and it reminds us that the people of God have never been static. There has always been change and movement and that by being attuned to ‘the new thing’ God is doing God’s purposes are revealed – of course, supremely, through the coming of Jesus Christ as the vulnerable baby entrusted to human care. It reminds us that God invests so much in us and invites us to take up the opportunities given to us work in collaboration to fulfil the promise of the Kingdom.

As we move through Advent and then on into Christmas I invite you to reflect that God has always chosen human beings – people like you and me – to carry forward the message of hope love and joy out into the world. For as I think through this last twelve months in terms of world events we are confronted by the worst that humanity can do in terms of violence, exploitation, corruption, abuse, and fear. Yet the Christmas story reminds us that all of that was present as the Joseph and Mary were forced to register themselves away from home and then flee from the anger of Herod after Jesus’ birth. It is into the worst that humanity can do that the ‘Word made flesh’ comes. It is into the darkest of places that the light still goes on shining and it is in the gentle hands of a mother and father that the hope for humanity lies.

What a story! What trust! What hope!

So in the changes and developments that will come in the next twelve months let us keep on telling each other the stories of our faith, Let us trust God and keep looking for the opportunities God gives us to bring hope into our communities and into the wider world.

Yours in Christ's service

Hilary

Synod Prayers

- 3rd Dec: The work of Ministries and Development Committee and its convenor, Revd Hilary Collinson; St Columba's URC, North Shields; St Andrew's URC, Monkseaton; Revd Dr Matthew Prevett
- 10th Dec: Stamfordham LEP (Methodist/URC), Revd Maureen Lloyd; Bellingham LEP (Methodist/URC); Falstone & Kielder LEP (Methodist/URC); Wark LEP (Methodist/URC); Deacon Anne Taylor (Meth)
- 17th Dec: St John the Evangelist LEP (Anglican/Baptist/Methodist/URC), Kingston Park, Newcastle; Revd Roger Mills (Anglican)
- 24th Dec: Christmas Worship across the synod; PCM, their retired ministers and those newly appointed to posts with PMC Northern Divisional Salvation Army Divisional Commanders, Majors Denis and Olive Lomax
- 31st Dec: West End Refugee Service & The North of England Refugee Service

Commitment For Life: 2017

It's that time of year again when we give thanks for the harvest and celebrate God's continuing goodness to us.

With that in mind, I'd like to remind us all that not all people are as fortunate as we are. Commitment For Life started out as the URC response to the government's failure to live up to its promise of 1% of GDP given to overseas aid. Originally called 'The 1% Appeal', the church asked its members to commit to giving 1% of their take home pay to one of 4 projects around the world

.We are supporting the project in Bangladesh, where harvests are frequently ruined and homes lost through horrendous flooding. This year is particularly hard for the people of Bangladesh as they struggle to help those refugees fleeing from Myanmar, (Burma, as was).

The name may have changed but the basic idea has not and folk are asked to commit to giving 1% of their take- home earnings/pension (or indeed what they can afford) towards this project. Each church can choose which of the 4 projects they wish to support, and regular info and updates are sent to the contact person. Posters and letters are available, so please check the notice boards.

Thank you for your continuing generosity, and please remember that Gift Aiding a donation makes it so much more useful, with no cost to ourselves.

Jan Harper

Traidcraft Shop

Unfortunately Jenny Medhurst has been unable to secure the use of a suitable property for the Traidcraft Shop this year. She is hopeful that the shop will return in 2018.

Guisborough

According to my computer this is my 120th newsletter since I was ‘volunteered’ to stand in for an ailing Ernest Dale way back in 1996. Actually Ernest was doing so much his job had to be divided between four of us. Naturally we hoped it would not be long before he would be well enough to climb back into the saddle. Then the rest of us could relax secure in the knowledge that the church was back in a safe pair of hands. But the Elders realised that we could not reasonably ask Earnest to go back to his previous punishing workload. The rest of us would have to take at least some of the load on a longer term basis. I drew the Church Secretary job. In the URC appointments are unusually for three years but I ended up serving for six. The policy is intended to avoid the risk of folk risk losing their freshness (Did I mention this is my 120th newsletter?).

Of course there are exceptions. Musicians tend to want to stay forever, which is a very good thing. Organists and good singers are scarce in small churches like ours. Even better the ones we do have are also quite good at covering for each other. But I do particularly remember one Sunday when no organist could be found and we had to sing unaccompanied. Frankly our performance was so pathetic it was embarrassing. At the time nobody actually said anything. But we all knew we would have to do much better next time. Either that chicken out and stay away.

	Vestry	Communion Door	Flowers
3rd Dec	R Tunnicliffe	D Beattie	Lydia Reeves
10th Dec	B Ward		The ladies
24th Dec	P Etwell		The ladies
31st Dec	J Reynolds	R Tunnicliffe	The ladies
7th Jan	J Basham		D Kane
14th Jan	D Beattie		M Houston
21st Jan	M Burrows		B Ward
28th Jan	M Houston		S Verrill

I'm glad to say nobody did chicken out. And the next time we did stand up straight, chest out, deep breath and sang. A miracle happened! The whole congregation together really did make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Of course some things are much more daunting. The first time you have to stand in front of the congregation and read the lesson is really scary. Especially if you are landed with what one minister described as 'the oo begats'. The long genealogies full of unpronounceable Hebrew names.

The really big challenge, the ultimate test of nerve, is the sermon. We found it less threatening to call it a reflection. The URC prayer handbook usefully not only provides a list of bible readings for each Sunday and also a short commentary on each passage. You don't have to use it, but it gets you over the blank page syndrome.

Over time we found we had a large pool of previously unsuspected

Guisborough Calendar

Sun 17 Dec	11.00am	Joint Service at Redcar; no service at Guisborough
Christmas Morning	10.00am	Short service of Lessons and Carols.
New Year's Day	from 11am	Open House at Oakley Close on , the home of Revds Ken & Margaret Harris.

Weekly

Thursdays	9.30am – 11.30am	Market Day Coffee Morning
Thursdays	11.30am	Quiet Time in Church. Prayers and reflections with Ken, Margaret, Maureen, Madge and others.

talent. And they mostly didn't have to be asked twice. Of course I was conscious that we were asking folk to do occasional services. It would be much more difficult if it was every week. That's when you really start to appreciate the value of a professional Minister

God Bless you all

Maureen Houston

Redcar

Thank You

A huge thank you to all who helped and supported the successful Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 18th November. It again had a lovely atmosphere and was enjoyed by many

Memorial Service

The Memorial Service will take place on Saturday 2nd December at 10:30am.

The service will be followed by refreshments.

Redcar Calendar

Sun 21 Jan Annual Covenant Service - more details to follow

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group in Church

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

 10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre for coffee / tea, cakes and fellowship in the Church Hall – all are welcome.

 2.00pm Thursday Prayers at the home of Catherine Milburn

St Andrew's

Congratulations

Congratulations to Shirley on the birth of Barney a new grandson and son for David and Carly. Best wishes to all for the future.

Christmas Social

Christmas Social is on Saturday 16th December at 7.30pm. Entertainment, teas, coffees, mince pies together with raffle, the proceeds of this for Christian Aid.

Hadrian's Wall

Thank you to all who sponsored me on my walk. I raised £125.00 for the Marie Curie charity.

Steven Etwell

Bazaar

Thank you to everybody who helped in anyway at our annual bazaar.

As a result of every ones hard work a total of £380 was raised for church funds.

Well done all.

Shoe Boxes

Many thanks to everyone who donated (money and items), knitted and helped us complete 46 shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse charity. We now have used up all our empty shoe boxes so please don't throw any out. We'll be very happy to take them off your hands for the 2018 appeal!!!

Coffee for Charity

13th Oct	Marie Curie	£23.00
22nd Oct	Shoe Box Appeal	£23.00
29th Oct	Riding for the Disabled	£25.00
5th Nov	Rosemary Fund	£11.60
12th Nov	Boys' Brigade	£28.09

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boys Brigade

Details available from ministers
and church elders



Preachers

	Marton	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	11.00am
3-Dec	Jan Harper Meeting	Ken Harris Communion	Margaret Harris
10-Dec	K & M Harris Toy Serv/Parade	Maranny Jones	Jan Harper

17-Dec Advent Group Service led by Jane Rowell
11.00am at Redcar URC

24-Dec	Margaret Harris Communion	Donna Moore	Norma Johnson
25 Dec		Lessons & Carols 10.00am	
31-Dec	Jan & Jane	Guis Folk	Norma Johnson
7-Jan	Donna Moore	Jan Harper	K & M Harris Communion
14-Jan	Norma Johnson Parade	Dave Elliott	Brian Stephenson Meeting
21-Jan	Jan Harper Communion	K & M Harris	Zetland Park United Service
28-Jan	Dave Elliott	Ian Smith	Jan Harper
4-Feb	Margaret Harris	Ken Harris Communion	Donna Moore

Material for the February Magazine to church editors by Sunday
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