

# *Group News*



*\* 2017 \* February \* 2017 \**

Part of the URC Northern Synod – [www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk](http://www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk)

[www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk](http://www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk)

This month's 'letter' comes from material written for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which this year used materials that focused on Germany and remembered especially the 500th Anniversary of the German Reformation and the call for reconciliation.

*It is a time of great change and uncertainty around the world as we confront difficulties such as climate change, migration of people across the planet and conflict spreading in many places. In the European context we see many of these issues finding expressions on our streets and these are indeed a cause for prayers for unity.*

*We need to pray for a greater vision of a united Church. With so many global and local issues confronting all of us every day, the churches witness needs to be strong and clear in its call for unity. We need to be resolute in standing together to witness to a Christ centred Church, in standing with those on the margins who have no voice and no power. Prayers for unity need to become daily prayers, so that we deepen Christ's life in each one of us.*

*Bob Fyffe, General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*

There are fifty million Christians in Germany who, traditionally, have mostly belonged to the Roman Catholic Church or one of the Protestant State Churches. Recent developments, particularly the reception of refugees and asylum seekers, have begun to change this balance and other Christian traditions are finding expression. Whilst that which unites the churches is stronger than that which divides, there are still areas of difference in which the churches remain self-absorbed or construct new walls. As the churches in Germany discerned how to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Luther making public his 95 theses, a way was sought whereby they could stand together. After extensive and sometimes difficult discussions, the churches agreed that the way to commemorate this reformation event should be with a Christusfest - a celebration of Christ. The churches of Germany found inspiration in *Evangelii Gaudium*, the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, which encourages acts of repentance and reconciliation, because 'the Love

of Christ compels us' (II Corinthians 5:14). The text from II Corinthians announces that God has, in Christ, reconciled the world to himself. The love of Christ compels us to be ambassadors of this reconciliation. This calls for a moment of repentance before we draw from the well of forgiveness. Such repentance acknowledges schism and division, names the reasons and acknowledges the walls of human sinfulness.

Reconciliation is enacted by dismantling the walls. Those who have been reconciled in Christ are called, in turn, to proclaim this reconciliation, in word and deed, to all the world. The world needs ambassadors of reconciliation who will break down walls, build bridges and open doors to new ways of life. Being such ambassadors requires the churches to offer concrete acts alongside our prayers.

The world stands in the midst of a refugee crisis. Tangible acts of help are just as necessary as praying together, in order to offer those who are fleeing their terrible situations some hope and consolation. God gives hope even in the most hopeless of situations. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, Germany experienced how a seemingly insurmountable wall could be brought down. The fall of this wall is a symbol of hope that, with the love of God, nothing is impossible. This 2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity gave voice to the desire for a celebration of the love of Christ as a means and motive for reconciliation. It enables the celebration of the love of God's grace as reflected in Luther's theme of 'justification of humanity through grace alone'.

By openly naming our guilt, the churches of Germany seek to encourage us to reach out towards opportunities for reconciliation. We hope that the wellspring of God's gracious reconciliation will overflow so that we may find peace and so that bridges may be built. It is our prayer that people and churches will be compelled, by the love of Christ, to live reconciled lives and break through the highest walls.

*Churches Together in Britain and Ireland*

# *Synod Prayers*

5th February The on-going dialogue between the five northerly synods as we explore ways of working more together

Trinity LEP (Methodist/URC), Ashington; St Andrew's & St Mark's LEP (Methodist/URC), Newbiggin-by-the-Sea; Revd Jim Magee (Meth)

12th February Synod Spring Retreat at Ampleforth Abbey from 14th – 16th

Oxclose LEP (Anglican/Methodist/URC), Washington, Waddington Street URC, Durham; St Andrew's Dawson Street, Crook LEP (Methodist/URC), Revd Ray Anglesea, Revd Christopher Humble (Meth)

19th February PCM, the four Presbyterian Societies: Men's, Women's, Youth and Activists Group (young marrieds) and for our own fund raising for PCM

Fair Trade Fortnight

Anglican Bishop of Newcastle Diocese, Rt Revd Christine Hardman

26th February Bedlington, Elsdon Avenue LEP (Methodist/URC), Seaton Delaval; Blyth URC; Revd Greg Thompson

*Women's World Day of Prayer*, Friday 3rd March, when the theme is 'Am I Being Unfair to You?' and material has been prepared by women of the Philippines

# Guisborough

Another New Year and a time for new resolutions – or is it? Some years ago I decided to keep a diary and then, at that point, I made my last New Year resolution: ‘*not*’ to start it on the 1<sup>st</sup>, January – sensing this would ensure the certainty of almost immediate failure should I have blundered into this rather obvious pitfall. Samuel Pepys, the greatest of all diarists’ did start his remarkable record of contemporary 17<sup>th</sup>, century life on this day, but in 1660 January was not the official start of the year – it was 1<sup>st</sup>, April. As the year 2000 approached it was noted that most existing computers only had the last two numbers designating the year set on the date function. This was viewed with alarm by numerous computer experts: the computers would be confused over which century it was, so systems would collapse: pension, salaries and benefits wouldn’t be paid – planes would fall out of the sky and so on. Big Ben chimed midnight and - nothing happened. The start of a new year is not, in itself, necessarily a historically significant occasion – and so we

**Guisborough United Reformed Church.**

**Memorial Service to celebrate the life of  
Ernest Dale**

**Saturday 25th February at 2.00pm**

to be followed by refreshments.

**All who remember Ernest are welcome.**

If you would like to make a contribution to the finger buffet afterwards please contact Donna Moore.



which one we would eat first. Such a simple decision and trivial. The talk developed to a point where we were asked to write about what we wanted out of life. A difficult call. After the break the discussion focussed on St Ignasias, a 16<sup>th</sup> century soldier, who during the course of his recovery from the wounds of battle came upon the idea of how to see the actions of God in your everyday life. Looking or rummaging for God in in your day was his expression. Emotions were considered important in this process – and so to quote: *“When your deepest desires meet the needs of the world” – so perhaps you have found God.* In this simple statement we have a good guide on how to find God – along with rummaging around the experiences of our everyday lives to find where our Lord has touched us, guided us, or asked us to listen, or to feel, and know what we must do for God at that time. It isn't a special occasion: a New Year or anniversary but our response and actions may lead onto something very special, significant or even historic.

We are in the season of Epiphany where we can see the light. ” *To be a light to the nations,*” as Isaiah says in his prophecy to the people of Israel. In the present state of the world we certainly need to have such a light and, as Christians, it should be us. Can we do anything now to fulfil that at least part of that task? Now that we are considering our future role in the community - as we look the questions posed by the Synod Local Mission and Ministry Review – this could be a time to reflect on the strength of our faith and how by working together we can build up our confidence in God and bring about success for Christ in the community.

Are we up for this challenge? I hope we are and so a Happy New Year to you all.

*Ray Tunnicliffe*

# *Redcar*

## **Fund Raising**

It would be useful to plan fund raising, social events and craft projects so we know what we are working towards. Anyone who would be interested in making suggestions, organising, offering help or just interested in what we plan to do please join us at the Chatter meeting on the 7th February.

## **Redcar Calendar**

Tue 7th February 2pm Chatter

### **Weekly**

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group in the Church

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Prayers at the home of Catherine Milburn

# *St Andrew's*

## **Condolences**

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of our friend, John Moorese. Over a hundred members of his family and friends gathered at our church for a celebration of his life led by Rev Ken Harris. Our thoughts and prayers remain with Shirley, David, Christine and family.

We also report the death of Audrey Wilson and ask that we also remember her family in our prayers.

## **Ladies' Fellowship**

The Ladies' Fellowship met on Tuesday 10th January when Dave Elliot told us of the hard work but enjoyment of being chairman of school governors at a local primary school. Thank you Dave. We look forward to welcoming you once again in the near future.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 14th 1.30pm to 3.00pm when Breda Collins of Coatham House will be giving us a talk. All welcome.

## **Coffee for Charity**

20th Nov. 2016	Embrace	£12.60
11th Dec. 2016	Boys' Brigade	£25.00
1st Jan. 2017	DEC Syria	£38.10
8th Jan. 2017	Boys' Brigade	£15.58
15th Jan. 2017	Embrace	£19.80

## A letter from Rosemary

8th Dec, 2016

Dear brothers and sisters at St Andrews,

Thank you so much for sending money to purchase a washing machine to ease my washing problems. I had sent a letter to you in September but it seems it never reached. I am sending this one hoping it will reach safely. I bought the washing machine in September. The remainder of the money was enough to install it a week later.

I am not sure whether it was a good product or not but that was what I could afford with the money at hand. It is working properly and my washing problems are over. Now I don't have to be stressed out and get muscle aches all over my body as was the case with manual washing. It also doesn't consume a lot of electricity. I don't know how to thank you for your kind gesture, but I am so grateful and thankful to God for you and all the help you have extended to me and my family for a long time. I still remember the joy and inspiration I used to get during praise and worship at St Andrews Church with all its congregation, whenever I came over for a visit with John and Shirley. Praise the Lord for using you as earthen vessels to channel his blessings to others in need. May God always enrich you with all that you need so that you continue to save and to minister to all others in need. I love you so much. May joy and peace fill your hearts. (2 Corinthians 9: 6-15).

Yours

Rosemary.

## **Doreen's Dingbats - Answers**

1. Midnight Mass, 2. Mixed Nuts, 3. Snowball, 4. Minced Pies, 5. Turkey Leftovers, 6. Frankin(s)ense, 7. Festive Season, 8. White Christmas, 9. Peace on Earth, 10. Seasons Greetings, 11. 12th Night, 12. Kisses under the mistletoe, 13. Opening presents, 14. Wrap-in(g) Paper, 15. Tinsel, 16. Hol(e)y/i Days, 17. No EL, No EL, 18. Presents under the tree.

Thank you Doreen for our annual Christmas Quiz. £22.00 was raised for church funds.

### **St Andrew's Calendar**

#### **Weekly/Monthly**

Boys Brigade

Details available from ministers  
and church elders

# *Preachers*

	<b>Marton</b> <b>10.00am</b>	<b>Guisborough</b> <b>9.30am</b>	<b>Redcar</b> <b>11.00am</b>
5-Feb	J Harper	D Moore Communion	K Harris
12-Feb	D Elliott Parade	K Harris	N Johnson
19-Feb	M Harris Communion	N Johnson	K Harris
26-Feb	J Harper	D Moore	M Harris

Material for the February Magazine to church editors by Sunday  
12<sup>th</sup> February please

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