

Group News



** July * 2016 * August**

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

The pastoral letter is written by our Synod Moderator to all the churches of the Northern Synod.

June 2016

Dear Friends,

It is now time to look back over the last (almost) three years and wonder where the time has gone! I would like to think we have spent those years well – reorganising committee structures, consolidating relationships and beginning the task of planning for a future of changing patterns of ministry. I have visited and led worship in almost every church and feel that I know many of you quite well and some of you very well indeed! It has been a happy time for me and though I'll be very sorry to say goodbye, I know I will be leaving you in the good and capable hands of a strong Synod Executive and the new Moderator-elect Revd David Herbert (his appointment has yet to be agreed formally by Assembly).

As I indicated at the last Synod meeting, and have done so since we held our Thinking Day in 2015, there are some challenges to be faced by the Church – not only here in the North East, but across the whole denomination. Indeed, across many other churches too. Smaller church congregations mean sharing a minister, as most of you already experience, but for a variety of reasons the number of ministers is declining too and every synod will have a reduced allocation to share around (we call this 'scoping'). We have 18 at present but by 2020 can only have 15. We have two pastorates vacant at present and four ministers will be retiring next year. This means that each congregation will have to share their minister even more and this isn't sustainable – not if we want our ministers

to stay fit and well! So, Synod Executive is drawing up some ideas for future planning and they will be brought to the next Synod meeting in October.

What will this mean for each congregation? I think it will mean several things but above all, you will need to be proactive rather than just sitting and waiting for something to happen or another minister to arrive:

- Every congregation will need to gather together to pray on a more regular basis to discern God's will about the way forward for them. If you underpin all you think about and do with prayer then I'm sure the Spirit will empower and enable you to do what is right and good.
- Every congregation might ask themselves whether joining in partnership with another church is a possibility. It is extremely hard to consider leaving your building – where your parents had their funeral, where you were married and your children baptised. But please ask yourselves: are *we* the church or is it the building? How much is your building helping you or holding you back from being part of God's kingdom?
- We are going to have to embrace the URC belief in the 'priesthood of all believers.' This means that the ordained minister is not the only one who can lead the church. You all can. Each congregation must ask: 'what exactly do we need a minister for? What is it that they have always done in the past that we could do for ourselves? And then ask for some training to do it! Then the ordained minister can be a gift to the many congregations they serve, rather than someone who rushes from one meeting to the next trying to keep up with the admin and running of every church.

- How many of you have been asked to help take part in leading worship but said: ‘Oh no, not me. I couldn’t!’ Remember Moses? He said he couldn’t possibly help God lead the people out of Egypt. But with God’s help he did. So can you and there are plenty of people around to help.

The future of Northern Synod is in God’s hands – helped by the committee structures and by your church meeting. How much do you commit to God? How much do you allow the Holy Spirit to empower and enable you, or do you leave her outside sitting on the church roof, or caged up and unable to fly? I think we are nervous of what the Spirit might do and in one of his hymns John Bell aptly describes the Holy Spirit ‘The enemy of apathy’. Brian Wren writes in one of his hymns:

*May the Spirit fill our praise,
guide our thoughts and change our ways:
God in Christ has come to stay.
Live tomorrow’s life today.*

May the Holy Spirit guide all your thoughts as you seek to change. Wishing you all God’s blessing for the future

With love and thanks

Lis Mullen

Synod Prayers

July

- For St Andrew's Dawson Street LEP, Crook; Revd Ray Anglesea; Revd Andrew Robinson
- For Lis, our moderator, as she retires from the synod.
- For the Staying Alive youth camp at the Seahouses hostel and all the young people taking part (28th – 31st July).
- For those involved in education as the academic year comes to an end.
- May we give thanks for the many festivals, fairs and shows celebrating the best of our regions culture, creativity and life.

Prayer

Great God we praise you and thank you,
For you created us with the capacity
to reflect all that is holy and good.

We praise you for the creativity, skills and gifts
that you have blessed humanity with.

We give you thanks for the many ways these gifts are used,
To bring joy and pleasure, Light and life into our world.
Through them may the radiance of your love be seen.

Guisborough

Together with others in literature, art, folk lore and the Bible, I delight in my garden. Friends and family know how much my Eden means to me. After 10 years of moulding and shaping, I am beginning to anticipate the results of previous years' planting ideas.

I find God in my garden. Its pace heals me, putting the hectic back into proportion; the colours and smells uplift me; the failures and challenges teach me and familiar bird song comforts me. This is the necessary refuelling process.

God of course does not stop at my garden gate; the hedges are not holding him in. There are so many other places where I miss God's presence. I forget to look. I don't see.

If I believe that God is present with me at all times, I must accept the challenge to look more carefully, to be more aware of his presence in less obvious places where I feel less comfortable.

I share this prayer by Ian Fosten with you from our Prayer Handbook.

Duty Rota

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
3rd Jul	P Etwell	J Basham	M Houston	M Ward
10th Jul	R Tunncliffe		M Ward	M Baird
17th Jul	J Reynolds		D Beattie	R Tunncliffe
24th Jul	D Moore		M Burrows	P Etwell
31st Jul	J Basham		D Thompson	J Reynolds
7th Aug	D Beattie	D Cross	J Reynolds	M Sollett
14th Aug	M Houston		B Ward	D Moore
21st Aug	R Tunncliffe		S Griffiths	B Ward
28th Aug	B Ward		D Cross	D Thompson

*If I only look for you in familiar places
I may miss you.....*

*If your kingdom is bounded by the limits of my experience
I may not encounter you in
the out field,
the left field,
the bright field.*

*So save me, surprising God, from being
unseeing, unaware or un-expectant, that I may know and follow
you through all that's quirky,
colourful or unforeseen.*

The holiday period may offer us wider opportunities to see and feel our Lord at work – wherever God's garden is found.

Joyce Basham

Guisborough Calendar

Weekly

Thursdays 10.00am – 11.30am	Market Day Coffee Morning
11.30am	Quiet Time in Church. Prayers and reflections with Ken, Madge, Donna and others

St Andrew's

Shoe Boxes Wanted

Over the summer if anyone is buying shoes or trainers we would be grateful for the empty shoe boxes.

We are already planning for the appeal later in the year with lots of hats and scarves knitted and toys already donated but we do need more empty shoe boxes.

Advance Notice

There will be a coffee morning at 8, Towthorpe, Nunthorpe on Wednesday 3rd August at 10.30am.

Raffle and Bring and Buy Stall.

Tickets £2.00 available soon from Doreen, Sheila or Joan.

Proceed in aid of church funds.

Rosemary

Since quoting the latest news from our partner in Uganda in last months Group News I have been handed a generous donation of £50.00 towards a washing machine for Rosemary. If anyone else would like to donate to help Rosemary so that she no longer need to struggle to hand wash bedding and towels in the kitchen sink, a collection plate and coppers envelopes will be available in church over the next few weeks. THANK YOU.

Shirley Moorse

Christian Aid

Grant and Steven, who did their annual walk for Christian Aid in early May, raised £225.00 for the charity.

Well done and thank you.

Coffee for Charity

29th May	Coatham House	£20.00
5th June	Riding for the Disabled	£23.65

Boys Brigade

Several of us, including Catey, were present at the Awards and Entertainment evening of the Boys Brigade on 13th May. It was pleasing to see so many youngsters enjoying themselves and demonstrating how they really had involved themselves in so many useful and worthwhile pursuits during the year.. It was so good to learn how much they have done in community service, leadership skills, and musicianship and so ,much more to earn the badges and Awards. .They also have to display commitment to the Company which has been led for 30 years by Colin Martin who was presented with a thank you gift.

At the same time, we need to congratulate Colin too for promotion in his career. (Yes he does have a life outside the BB!) He has been appointed CEO of the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys Foundation Trust having previously held the post of Deputy CEO and Director of Finance.

Well done, Colin. We just wonder how do you find time for BB?

Jane Tomlin

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly

Boys Brigade

Details available from ministers
and church elders

Redcar

Our Thanks

The Redcar Church family would like to thank all who have prayed and supported us in any way through our recent difficult financial problems.

Organ Recital

Rita held a well received Organ Recital by Mr Bob Chicken Thursday, 9th June. The event raised £114 for Church Funds – thank you to Rita and all who supported the event.

Redcar Calendar

Tue 5 Jul 2.00pm Craft and Chatter in the church
Tue 2 Aug 2.00pm Craft and Chatter in the church

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30 Singing Group in the church
Thursday 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

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 9.30am	Redcar 11.00am
3-Jul	J Harper	Guis Folk	K Harris Communion
10-Jul	M Locke	N Johnson Communion	Meeting
17-Jul	J Harper Communion	B Stephenson	Zetland Park United Service
24-Jul	M Harris	Guis Folk	N Johnson
31-Jul	MartonWT	D Moore	J Martin
7-Aug	K Harris	N Johnson Communion	B Stephenson
14-Aug		J Harper	C Morrison
21-Aug	J Harper Communion		N Johnson
28-Aug	D Moore	M Locke	M Harris

Material for the September Magazine to church editors by
Sunday 14th August please

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