

Group News



** July * 2017 * August **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Reflection on the ‘debt that is owed’ to Commitment for Life

The Rev Ruth Whitehead, Moderator of the South Western Synod of the United Reformed Church, reflects on her recent visit to Zimbabwe representing the URC’s Commitment for Life world development programme

‘I owe Commitment for Life a great debt. Of all the General Assemblies I have attended, the one at which I came nearest to standing on my chair and cheering was in 1992 when Commitment for Life was launched. The concept of learning about, praying for and giving to people in the developing world, through Christian Aid, stirred in me a desire for justice, action and committed giving.

‘Now, with the programme in its 25th year, I owe Commitment for Life even more, as I was chosen to be part of a group of six people who went out to Zimbabwe to see the work of Christian Aid. The partners included Silveira House and Dabane Trust (who I’d heard of) and a new name to me, the Institute for Rural Technologies.

‘It is a long way from my home town of Taunton to Bulawayo – over 7700 miles – yet the overwhelming sense I had in Zimbabwe was that I was meeting sisters and brothers in Christ. I am in debt to Commitment for Life for rekindling my sense of belonging to a world church.

There are so many stories I can tell from the days I spent visiting projects, but one stands out. We went to visit a group of villages who have organised themselves into a village bank, offering low interest loans to local people so that they can set up businesses – rearing chickens, grinding corn, making fencing, sewing, and so on.

‘Explaining the scheme, one woman told us that if someone could not repay their loan they would be brought before the village head. The village head decides whether to write off the debt (if the loss

in the business is not thought to be the person's fault), confiscate goods in payment, or ask the person to repay through community work 'until the debt be paid in full'. The phrase immediately made me think of the parable of the servant who is forgiven (Matthew 18: 21-35), where Jesus helps us think about our proper response to God's immense grace.

'I have come home from Zimbabwe more aware than ever of all the riches God has poured into my life and the debt I owe my God. Jesus' parable encourages me to seek ways to repay this debt in love of God and my neighbour (even one 7700 miles away).

'As for the debt I owe Commitment for Life, I will try to repay that by stronger advocacy on behalf of the poorest of our world and more sharing of the sort of stories that help people understand Commitment for Life more fully. I pray that as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Commitment for Life programme in the URC we will all learn, pray and give even more. Those who want to see a blog of our journeys will find it at the Commitment for Life Facebook page.

Group Service

Sunday 30th July

10.30am

Preacher

Rev Hilary Collinson

Guisborough URC

Please see your elders for help with transport.

Stockton URC

**150 Years Anniversary
Thanksgiving Service**

**Sunday 17th September
3.00pm**

The elders and members of the congregation invite local churches to join them for this service of celebration.

Synod Prayers

JULY

- 2 July Northumbrian Industrial Mission
- 9 July Synod Executive Committee and its convenor Rev Dave Herbert
- 16 July St James's URC, Alnwick; Warkworth URC; Rev Joan Grindrod-Helmn the work of LMMR (Local Mission and Ministry Review)
- 23 July PCM, their office staff at Church House, Khovo, Maputo
- 30 July The work of Pastoral Committee and its convenor, Rev Dr Grant Wilson Bishop of Durham, Rt Rev Paul Butler

AUGUST

- 6 August Ponteland URC; St John's URC, Wideopen; Rev Joan Ross retiring in August
Staying Alive Youth Event at Seahouses
- 13 August St George's URC, Morpeth; Great Bavington URC; Widdrington URC; Revd Ron Forster retiring in August
- 20 August St Aidan's URC, Hexham; Horsley URC; West Denton URC; Rev John Paul retiring in August
- 27 August RC Bishop of Middlesbrough, Rt Rev Terry Draine

A History of Linthorpe Church

Many of you will remember that Richard Harris Elder at Linthorpe handed out a short history at the Closing Service at Linthorpe in 2011. Since then he has spent many hours on research and written a longer history which he was unable to complete before he went into a Care Home. Without his computer he was unable to get any further with it. However, with much help from the proprietor of the Home and with encouragement from Shirley, his pastoral visitor, the manuscript was finally edited and prepared for the Printer. The Group has paid for the printing.

If you would like a copy (proceeds to the Synod Mozambique Fund) please contact me by phone or email 01642 592145 janeandmike-tomlin@gmail.com £4.00 (+ £1 postage)

Jane Tomlin

Growing Leaders Course

The URC nationally has rather belatedly realised that we are at a crisis point with regard to the number and spread of ordained Ministers, the traditional leaders of our congregations. This is especially true in Northern Synod where the number of Ministers is well below the quota we are 'allowed'

At last there is a recognition that we need to train Lay Leaders - not only Lay Preachers. The course which starts in the Autumn and lasts for 10 months contains much useful and challenging material as to how to lead and encourage others to lead also. Once trained, a congregation could choose to recognise this new form of non-ordained Leadership - and even be prepared to pay them! This idea has taken a long time to take root - but better late than never.

By the time you read this Jan Harper and I will have done the starter session. It is not too late for others to look at it by contacting Rev Jane Rowell, the Mission Enabler for the Synod.

Jane Tomlin

Guisborough

Fisherman have faith.

As some of you know I haven't always lived in Guisborough but spent my earlier days of life in Redcar.

My mother married a fisherman and most of my early childhood memories are to do with the seaside. The family of fishermen had a coble named 'The Daisy Ellen' and a big, yellow tractor which I often sat in [as it had a cab rather than open top], looking forward to the day when I could actually start it up and drive it along the beach.

Most days evolved around the tides. Working hours for fishermen are pretty antisocial hours, sometimes starting at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. I was about 4 years old when I first had the experience of 'farming the sea'.

Guisborough Calendar

Please note that morning worship at Guisborough is now at 10am.

Weekly

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

Setting out in the pitch black of night was quite a scary experience. Stars and moonlight were a blessing. With the breaking of dawn, an overwhelming feeling of been small, alone and insignificant in the vastness of water slowly subsided as the once nonvisible coastline would slowly appear on the horizon bringing relief and the hope of safety once we'd be ashore.

Once on the dry, sandy land of Redcar beach it was time to sell the catch. Several cobbles would be pitched like stalls, calling on the public to purchase their 'fresh fish'.

Several years later when I started reading the Bible for myself, I felt quite connected to the 'fishermen disciples'. Although that way of life was no longer an option for me due to a change in society and the economics of the region, reading about them making a living just as I remembered my family had, fixing their nets and having days of 'no catch' provoked some buried memories. Seeing what these 'fishermen disciples' went on to witness and achieve gave hope and strengthened faith, not only for my future but also for the fishermen in the community I grew up in and beyond. Fishermen have faith.

Shortly after I was baptised on April 12th, Easter Sunday 1998 in Redcar, I was moved to write a short lyric based on Luke 8; 22-25.

A Prayer For The Fishermen.

A storm brew up over the eastern coast
as the fishermen set out to sail.
The rain came down and the seas did roar
and the wind whipped up into a gale.
And there on the boat oblivious to all lay a man, sound in his sleep.
How could a man rest so calm, in a storm over waters so deep?

Panic attacked those men on the boat
as the fear of death tried to prevail.
Darkness crept into their hearts like a sin,
hope it was lost unto the gale.

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
2 July	M Burrows		D Beattie	M Ward
9 July	D Beattie		J Basham	J Reynolds
16 July	M Houston	J Reynolds	P Etwell	M Baird
23 July	R Tunncliffe		M Ward	R Tunncliffe
30 July	Group Service at Guisborough at 10.30			am
6 August	B Ward	J Basham	S Griffiths	M Sollett
13 August	P Etwell		R Tunncliffe	S Verrill
20 August	D Moore		D Houston	B Ward
27 August	J Reynolds		M Houston	D Moore

“Arise man of God, how can you sleep when in the deep we all may dwell”,

“Oh ye men of little faith, just one prayer can save you from hell.”

A prayer for the fishermen,

may your seas be calm with wind in sail.

May a guiding star shine bright above,
through those darkest nights leave a trail.

He stretched forth his hands and gave the command, skies and sea,
they did obey.

Who could control these waters that flow, wind and rain, night and day?

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Dates for Group Elders

Group Elders Meeting

Wednesday 26 July 2017 7.00pm at St Andrews

Elders Enrichment evening with Jane Rowell

Wednesday 16 August at St Andrews

Redcar

Thank you

Thank you to all who helped, contributed and supported our Afternoon Tea on June 17th.

Thank you to Rev Norma, and to all who took part in and those who supported the Musical Evening on 4th June. It was a lovely evening and raised £366 for Church funds.

Open Day

May Pepper is hosting her annual Open Day in aid of the Bible Society on Wednesday, 12th July from 10am until 6pm (35, Thirlmere Avenue)

All are welcome

Redcar Calendar

Weekly

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Payers at Catherine's – all are welcome.

St Andrew's

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jonathon and Ann May Etwell on their recent marriage. We send them our very best wishes for the future.

Christian Aid

Grant and Steven raised £205.00 for Christian Aid in response to their walk in Loftus last month. Well done both of you!!!

Coffee Morning

8 Towthorpe, Nunthorpe

Thursday 10th August

10.00am

Raffle and bring and buy stall. Tickets £2.00 available soon from Doreen, Sheila or Joan. Proceeds in aid of church funds.

The Strawberry Tea

Saturday 15th July

2.00pm

Cake stall and raffle. Tickets £3.00 available from Doreen, Sheila or Joan. Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Offers of help and donations for cake stall and raffle will be gratefully received.

Coffee for charity

21st May	Christian Aid	£25.00
28th May	Air Ambulance	£16.50
4th June	Moebius Research	£30.00
11th June	Rosemary Fund	£12.60

Change of staff at St Andrews

In April our cleaner and caretaker, Malcolm Newby resigned (retired?) from his post after more than 25 years. He had done a plethora of jobs round the Church, including the building and maintenance of the Organ (which is his profession), rebuilding the kitchen and a number of projects where he could work with wood - a new lectern, veneering the Communion table etc. We had a collection and gave him our thanks at presentation at worship on 7 May.

By that time we had already had a responses to the advert for the job and we welcomed Jason McConnell as our new caretaker/cleaner on 17th May. He has had to learn quickly how to cope with the many organisations using the premises, particularly the Dance Groups (His daughters belong to one of them!)

Meanwhile, we have come to an amicable arrangement with Malcolm who knows the building better than anyone else, that he will do specific maintenance jobs around the place as required.

So it's not entirely good bye to Malcolm but it is certainly a warm welcome to Jason!

Jane Tomlin

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boys Brigade

Details available from ministers
and church elders

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 10.00am	Redcar 11.00am
2-Jul	M Harris	B Clare	K Harris Communion
9-Jul	N Johnson	Guis Folk	C Milburn
16-Jul	A Woodall Communion	D Moore Communion	J Martin
23-Jul	D Elliott	M Harris	B Stephenson
30-Jul	No Service	H Collinson Group Service 10.30am	No Service
6-Aug	MartonWT	N Johnson Communion	J Rowell
13-Aug	K Harris	B Stephenson	M Harris
20-Aug	N Johnson Communion	Guis Folk	J Martin
27-Aug	D Moore	C Eddowes	N Johnson

Material for the September Magazine to church editors by
Sunday 13th August please

Group Editor – R Wheeler, 2C Gypsy Lane, Nunthorpe,

Middlesbrough, TS7 0DX.

Telephone: 01642 300546.

Email: roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com