

Group News



** March * 2015 * March **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Minister

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Dear Friends,

I have been asking the children at the school in Lingdale recently what questions they have about Jesus. The children know me well enough by now and they know that I sometimes come in to school to lead an assembly with my big yellow book of questions and answers about Jesus. I feel that it is important to encourage the children to tell me what they want to know about Jesus, or what they want to know about the church or God, because that way I can gauge what is important to them in their faith at their stage of life and help extend their understanding from there.

But another reason that I take the big yellow book of questions and answers about Jesus into school at this time of year is to help fill in the gaps of what happened to Jesus in between Christmas and Easter. Although in the church we understand the journey from Christmas to Easter, via our yearly Lenten journey, we need to remember that it is not so clear cut for those not accustomed to our church ways. In the church we also realise all that actually goes on in between the events of Christmas and Easter, and realise that it is Jesus' life in between which gives relevance to his birth and death and resurrection. Thus it is Jesus' life which inspires faith in us, rather than just his death, hence the need to not be seen to be jumping from Jesus' birth one month to his death three months later.

But I wonder whether we make this clear to those outside the church? That Jesus is yet more than a baby in a manger and more still than a man who gave his life on a cross! In his life in between he demonstrated his love and care and compassion for all people. He ministered to people of all ethnic backgrounds. He reached out with forgiveness to those who had gone off the rails. He re-established within society those whom society had left by the way-side. He took time out of his busy schedule to reveal himself and his heavenly plans to those society thought he shouldn't have bothered with.

His actions during his life on earth are the ones we look back to

and marvel over. These are the actions that we attempt to role-model and form the rules that we attempt to live our lives by. Jesus on the cross was the final showdown between heaven and earth, the final demonstration of that love shown throughout the whole of his life and ministry, but so much happened before that to bring explanation to that final showdown. So how can we get this across to those outside our churches this Lent? And how can we invite them to join us on our Lenten journey of discovery? How can we extend the invitation beyond Christmas and Easter services, and engage with the community in telling the whole story rather than just offering them the seasonal highlights? Maybe the church will only regain a relevance within the community outside the church when we remember to work at sharing the whole story of that baby born in a manger one winter time long ago.

Enjoy the chance to reflect on Jesus and his role in your life this Lent, but don't forget to invite others to join you on that journey to discover the whole, real life of Jesus Christ.

God bless!

Rev Catey Morrison

FAF Club

The FAF Club will next meet on Sunday 8th March and then again on Sunday 29th March due to no FAF Club being held in January because of snow, or February because of the minister's holidays.

It will be held at the manse in Lingdale for young people aged 11+ from 6.30 to 8.30pm.

All are welcome for Fun activities, Faith sharing and Food!



For Our Prayers

Synod Prayers

1st March Women's World Day of Prayer this week; Waddington Street, Durham;
Rev Steven Orange

8th March St Andrew's, Blackhill; Bethel, Chester-le-Street; Christ Church, Stanley;
Rev Gordon Brown; Rev Elaine Brown

15th March Mothering Sunday; Synod Meeting at North Shields this week;
Synod Moderator Rev Lis Mullen; Synod Clerk Mrs Melanie Campbell; Synod Treasurer Mr Danny Pigeon

22nd March Passion Sunday; St Cuthbert's Centre, Holy Island; its visitors and its management team;
Warden Rev Rachel Poolman

29th March Palm Sunday; PCM (Church in Mozambique): The churches of the southernmost presbyteries centred on the capital, Maputo; the English language service at the central church at Khovo;
Darlington Methodist District Chair Rev Ruth Gee

Group Prayer Pointers

1st March Pray for all those who are longing to see signs of spring coming, particularly those who are homeless and have had to bear cold nights outdoors. We think also of those who have lost their lives due to the cold this winter.

8th March We ask God to help us focus this week on our Lenten journeys and walking with Jesus in his life and minis-

try. Help us to spend time listening to God in prayer for guidance and encouragement in our journey of faith this Lent.

15th March Pray for our families this week, in particular all those who play, or have played, a mothering role in our lives. We give thanks for the hard work and care of all who support us throughout our daily lives.

22nd March Pray for those around the world who feel they cannot openly share the knowledge of their faith for fear of retaliation and violence. Pray for all those whose lives are in danger because of meeting up to worship with other Christians.

29th March Pray for our Lingdale congregation this week in the run up to the final closing service on Sunday. Pray for the people of the village as they lose this precious resource and in their upset at the closure. We ask God to use the closure of the church to challenge people to think again about their beliefs.

Prayerful Thoughts

How I love this view from the bedroom window Lord Jesus, I know it's not a lush valley or a picturesque sea shore or a field of poppies, it's just the back of houses and gardens neatly fitted together, and today especially beautiful, a crisp very still January morning and the shed tops all painted a silvery grey, and the sun glinting on the hedges and winter pansies, the only thing giving all away that it's not a painting is the odd seagull flying from roof top to tree and a plane striping the sky, this view special only o me.

For the joy of ear and eye, for the hearts and mind delight, for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight. Gracious God to Thee we raise this our sacrifice of praise.

F S Pierpoint Supplied by Catherine. (Redcar)

Group Accounts 2014

The figures for 2014 (unexamined) are included in this Group News for your information. You will see that we have taken £1357 from our reserves to meet the expenses of the Group in 2014 which came to £13399 and the income was £12042. The Reserves we have are largely as a result of the generosity of Linthorpe Church and this money is to be used for the benefit of the Churches. We have already agreed to make a subsidy in 2015.

The Group pays all Catey's expenses, Lingdale manse costs (Council tax, Water and maintenance) and all the costs of Preaching Fees. In addition Group now pays for Group News and no longer charges the Churches for this. The Group also pays for Communion Wine, offertory envelopes and has recently paid for new First Aid Boxes.

In addition if anyone would like to go on a Course or Retreat there is a fund to help with the cost. Please ask me

The Marton manse is still let at £700 pcm and the Elders are following up the wish of the Tenant to buy the house, as agreed in Church and Elders meetings..

The Group finance committee (Chair George Hepburn) which manages the money, meets twice a year and reports to Group Elders. Please ask if you have any questions at all concerning the finance .

*Jane Tomlin
Group Treasurer*



Group Accounts 2014

Income and Expenditure year ended 31 December 2014

Designated Funds:	General Fund	Manse Fund	Reserve Fund	Mal'son Fund	Total 2014	Total 2013
	£	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME						
Contributions from Churches:						
Guisborough	3,080	-	-	-	3,080	2,750
Lingdale	440	-	-	-	440	1,430
Redcar	2,200	-	3,430	-	5,630	5,350
St Andrews	4,884	-	-	-	4,884	4,070
	10,604		3,430		14,034	13,600
Grant from Synod	1,200	-	-	-	1,200	-
Net Rent 10 Farington Drive	-	7,192	-	-	7,192	5,012
Group News contributions	-	-	-	-	-	623
Compensation from Bank	100	-	-	-	100	-
Legacy - balance	-	-	-	-	-	64
Bank Interest	138	-	-	-	138	154
	12,042	7,192	3,430		22,664	19,453
EXPENDITURE						
Group Secretary Salary	1,200				1,200	-
Ministers' expenses:						
Rev Meg Robb (NI 2012/13)	-	-	-	-		29
Rev Catey Morrison	3,195	-	-	-	3,195	3,699
Rev Ken Harris	131	-	-	-	131	327
Fixed Car Allowance	1,366	-	-	-	1,366	1,366
Preaching Fees (note 1)	3,897	-	-	-	3,897	2,737
Group News costs	601	-	-	-	601	655
Manse costs Marton (note 2)	-	825	-	-	825	7,330
Manse costs Lingdale (note 3)	2,515	1,565	-	-	4,080	3,328
Christian Aid - Iraq	87	-	-	-	87	-
Grants	-	-	-	723	723	114
Admin costs.	219	-	-	-	219	186
Comm, Wine, Collect. Envelopes	188	-	-	-	188	-
	13,399	2,390		723	16,512	19,771
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	-1,357	4,802	3,430	-723	6,152	-318
Funds at 1 January 2014	4,473	5,356	15,993	4,557	30,379	30,697
Funds at 31 December 2014	3,116	10,158	19,423	3834	36,531	30,379

RESTRICTED FUND

Mozambique Fund (Synod)

Sale of cookery books	£124	
Paid to Synod	£124	-

These accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis

Balance Sheet - 31 December 2014

	2014	2014	2013
ASSETS	£	£	£
TSB Bank Current Account	8,769		13,316
Affirmative Deposit Fund for Charities	28,530		17,393
	37,299		30,709
Add Debtors (note 4)	36		400
Less Creditors (note 5)	-804		-730
	36,531		30,379
REPRESENTED BY			
General Fund	3,116		4,473
Manse Fund	10,158		5,356
Reserve Fund	19,423		15,993
Malkinson Fund	3,834		4,557
	36,531		30,379

Purpose of Funds:

General Fund pays all the normal running expenses of the Group

Manse Fund is for the general maintenance of the two Manses.

The net rent received for the Manse at 10 Farington Drive is added to this Fund as required by the Synod

Reserve Fund is to be used for any specific work and to underwrite any over-spends on activities.

Malkinson Fund is used for making Grants to anyone wishing to attend Church based Conferences Training courses or Retreats

Jane Tomlin
Group Treasurer
22-Jan-15

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2014

Note1	£	£
Preaching Fees	2014	2013
Guisborough	1140	721
Lingdale (3 years)	920	0
Redcar	630	750
St Andrews	1107	1155
Gift in lieu	100	111
	3897	2737

Note 2	Manse Fund	2013
Manse Costs (Marton - Let)		
Insurance	459	446
Boiler Contract	226	216
Gas Certificate	74	216
Renovations and Utilities	0	5447
Admin	66	1005
	825	7330

Note 3	General	Manse	Total	2013
Manse Costs (Lingdale Manse)				
Council Tax	1,511			1483
Water	384			377
Insurance	296			313
Boiler service and certificate	324			305
	2,515			2478
Roof, De-Humidifier, Window vents		1,565		850
	2,515	1,565	4,080	3328

Note 4		2013
Debtor (owing to Group)		
Preaching Fees refunded	36	302
	36	302

Note 5		2013
Creditors (owing by the Group)		
Preaching Fees	80	
Ministers Expenses (est.)	600	697
Synod	124	
	804	697

Lingdale

On April 5th at 5.30pm our little church in Lingdale will be holding its closing service. This will be an opportunity to celebrate over one hundred years of worship in the village and to seek prayers for the village's future. There will be opportunity to fellowship together with an afternoon tea prior to the service which will be available from 4pm onwards. We look welcoming friends from all our churches and beyond to this tea and service.

Guisborough

A dramatization of Tolstoy's *'War and Peace'* had a 10 hour airing on Radio 4 recently. Tolstoy is a fascinating character. In his early years he tells us 'I killed men in wars and challenged men to duels in order to kill them. I lost at cards, consumed the labour of the peasants, sentenced them to punishments, lived loosely and deceived people'. But gradually he changed adopting an unconventional lifestyle that shocked his noble peers. An article I read suggested 7 lessons for us all.

1. Keep an open mind. Tolstoy had the ability to change his mind. He witnessed horrific bloodshed in the Crimean War and became a lifelong pacifist. He came to believe that governments essentially served the interests of the rich and powerful (feels familiar!).

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
1st March	D Beattie	D Houston	J Basham	D Cross
8th March	J Reynolds		D Moore	M Ward
15th March	M Houston		D Houston	B Ward
22th March	R Tunnicliffe		B Ward	M Sollett
Palm Sunday	D Moore		P Etwell	M Houston

Guisborough Calendar

Tue 17th March 2.30pm Belmont Care Home service

Thu 2nd April Details of the Agape Meal on the evening of Maundy Thursday will be available shortly.

Sat 3rd April 8.00am We host the Bridge Prayer Breakfast.

Weekly

Thursdays 10.00am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning

Thursdays 11.30am Quiet Time – prayers and reflections with Catey, Ken, Norma and others.

2. Practise empathy. Tolstoy displayed an unusual capacity to step into the shoes of people whose lives were vastly different from his own. In the 1860's he adopted peasant dress and worked alongside labourers on his estate. He believed you could never understand the reality of other people's lives unless you tasted it yourself.
3. Make a difference. Tolstoy stopped writing *Anna Karenina* for a year in 1873 after a crop failure, to organise aid for the starving, and after the 1891 famine he spent two years working in soup kitchens.
4. Master the art of simple living. He rejected all organised religion and adopted a revolutionary brand of Christianity based on material and spiritual austerity. He gave up drinking and smoking and became a vegetarian. He inspired the foundation of utopian communities of simple, self-sufficient living (Iona community?).
5. Beware your contradictions. He preached universal love, yet was constantly fighting with his wife!
6. Become a craftsman. Tolstoy recognised that striking a balance

between mind and body was essential. He regularly put down his pen to plough the fields, and took up cobbling making and repairing his own boots.

7. Expand your social circle. Tolstoy interacted with people of different views and lifestyles. In *Resurrection* he pointed out that most people ‘instinctively keep to the circle of those people who share their views of life and their own place in it’. Cosseted within our peer group we may think it perfectly normal and justifiable to have multiple holidays abroad, to oppose same sex marriage, to bomb countries in the Middle East, and to indulge in ‘retail therapy’. Because we are inside circles of our own making we cannot see that that some of these things may be unjust, unfair or wrong.

Please remember that these are the lessons put forward in the article I read and not my own invention. I personally fall very short in all of these. But there are, I think, some points worthy of consideration. Some of the decline in organised Christian churches in the UK (like our own URC) is perhaps due to us being too tied to respectable conventionality. Or is it? And Christianity certainly isn't easy and it's becoming less conventional than it used to be.

James Robertson

Redcar

Easter Coffee Morning

**Saturday 4th April
10am till 12noon**

Includes Easter Egg hunt and Easter crafts, tombola and raffle.

Krysia needs donations of Chocolate Easter eggs for prizes as well as items for the raffle and tombola. Donations of cakes are needed on the day.

Coatham House

Kyrisia would like to give a big 'THANK YOU' to all who contributed to Coatham House in 2014. £60.00 was spent on food vouchers; 3 large goodies and fruit hampers were sent during the year. The office staff received a tin of biscuits at Christmas. The staff and guests at the Bed and Breakfast enjoyed a large tin of chocolates with their Christmas hamper. Everything will be shared between the Bed and Breakfast and the 11 Support Houses in the area.

This year we are hoping to collect clean or new pillows and duvets.

Thank you. Yours in giving

Kyrisia X

Church Flowers

If you would like to put flowers into church, maybe to remember or celebrate a loved one, a special anniversary or date or just because you would like to, please add your name and preferred date to the flower list or have a word with Norma Creek (or Elaine) - there are lots of dates to choose from and it is always lovely to have fresh flowers in church.

Thank you

Redcar Calendar

Tue 3rd March 2.00pm Craft and Chatter Group in the Church

Weekly

Wednesday 11.00am Singing Group (come at 10:45am if you would like a coffee first!)

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Prayer meeting at the home of Catherine Milburn.

St Andrew's

Ladies' Fellowship

The Ladies' Fellowship had a lovely talk from the Rev Margaret Johnson at our meeting on the 10th February. We really enjoyed our time with you Margaret.

Please note our next meeting will be on Wednesday (not Tuesday) 11th March at 1.30pm when Jimmy Anderson will be giving us a slide show on his travels.....Iceland!?!..Maybe.

All welcome.

Knit 'n' Natter

The next Knit-n-Natter will be on Wednesday 25th March, 1.00pm to 3.00pm. All welcome.

Coffee Morning

The coffee morning on 5th February raised £143.60 for church funds. Many thanks to everyone for their support.

Women's World Day of Prayer

St Cuthbert's Church, Marton

Friday 6th March - 2.00pm

Refreshments after the service.

All welcome.

Coffee for Charity

18th Jan.	Heart Foundation	£ 5.00
25th Jan	Riding for the Disabled	£20.00
1st Feb.	Leprosy Mission	£11.95
8th Feb	Boys' Brigade	£15.71



News from Uganda

This is to thank everyone who contributes when the Charity for Coffee after the service is the “Rosemary Fund”. This year contributions amount to £116.00. Additionally, some individuals choose to give personal direct donations; this year these have added up to £362.52 making a grand total of £478.52. Rosemary sends her heartfelt thanks to ALL OF YOU for this expression of generosity.

Most recent update from Rosemary, our sister-tutor partner, is enormous gratitude for this year’s payment from "my lovely friends at St. Andrew’s". Our support over a number of years has enabled her to ensure three orphan nieces have a good educational start in life. Both Natasha and Maureen have gained places to train at Jinja School of Nursing and Midwifery. One is government sponsored but the second will need to pay fees for the 2 1/2 year course. As Rosemary herself is due to retire later this year on a meagre public service pension I plan to approach some of our drug companies to enquire if they would consider funding one student’s training. Aphia, the third niece, is less academic and now lives with a half-sister and her husband.

Rosemary sends her love and blessings to us all.

St Andrew’s Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Third Wednesday	9.30am	Church Prayer Group
First Thursday	2.00pm	Home Prayer group at 31 Roseberry Mews
Last Sunday	After Worship	Traid Craft Stall
Boys Brigade		Details available from ministers and church elders

Preachers

	1-Mar	8-Mar	15-Mar	22-Mar	29-Mar
Marion	10:00am C Morrison Meeting	D Elliott Parade	C Morrison Communion	J Harper	C Morrison
Guisbo	9:30am K Harris Communion	C Morrison	N Johnson	C Morrison	D Moore
Redcar	11:00am D Moore Communion	C Morrison	J Martin	C Morrison Meeting	B Stevenson
Lingdale	5:30pm		C Morrison		C Morrison

Material for the April Magazine to church editors by Sunday 15th March please

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