

Group News



** March * 2016 * March **

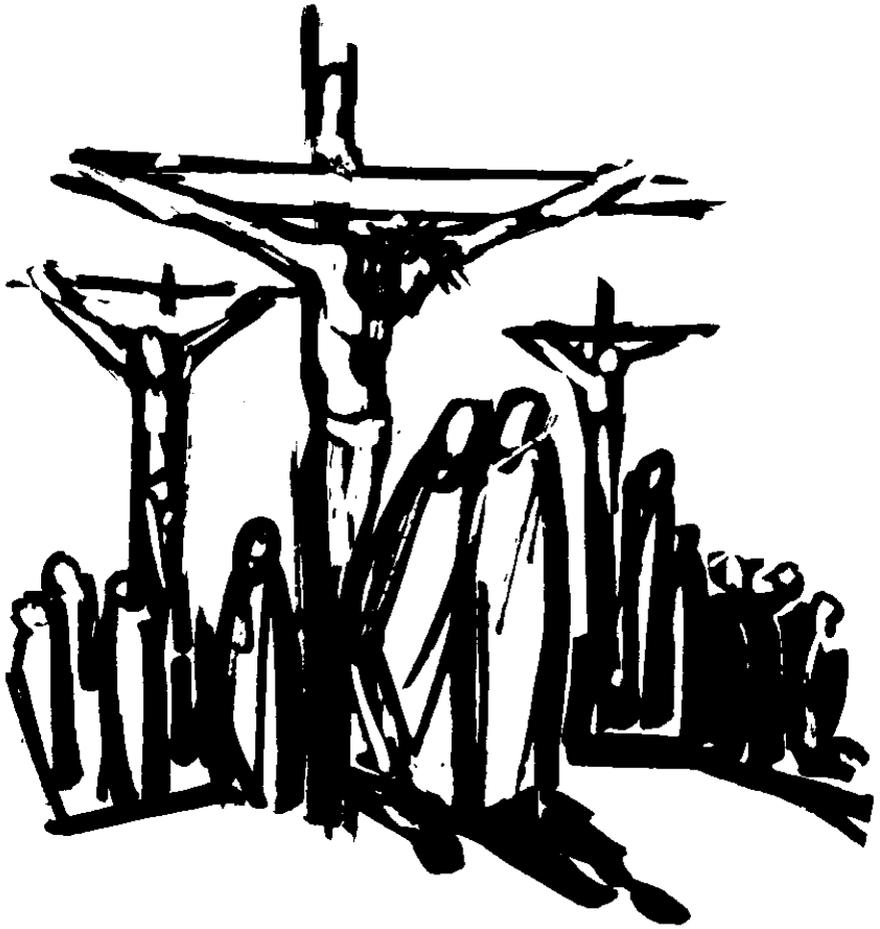
Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.urc-northernsynod.org.uk

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Minister

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Dear Friends,

In some stories, hope is wrapped up in the obvious and tangible elements of the plot, but other times hope is revealed through a surprise ending or a twist — giving new life to the story in foreshadowed glory. The Easter story is a vivid example that things aren't always as they seem. In a way, Easter is a celebration of the greatest story twist in history, one that's so subversive it changes everything for all time.

It's easy to gloss over the Easter story — we've heard it so many times — and forget the surprise and shock of the resurrection. It's easy to read through the Gospels without that “aha” moment it really delivers. We have the privilege of reading the resurrection into the teachings of Jesus — we know how the story ends — but for the disciples, for them the moments before the resurrection were steeped in fear, darkness and confusion. For the disciples, the resurrection provided an incredible twist — in *Sixth Sense* fashion — that made the story come alive in a new way ... past experiences began to make clarion sense. In a nut shell, it changed everything!

Eugene Peterson explains this in his book ‘Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places’, where he states that “The Christian life begins as a community that is gathered at the place of impossibility, the tomb.” The scandalous plan of God, revealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus, reveals to us that what we see is not all there is to see or to know. Easter tells us that a man convicted is not really guilty, and that a cruel instrument of torture and death is really a symbol of remarkable hope and grace. It also tells us that an empty tomb is what we should have expected all along.

On the surface, the story of Easter reveals a plot by the religious leaders of Jesus' day to take down a rebel once and for all. As Jesus is handed over to the authorities, the picture that's painted is that Caesar is king, his kingdom rules and the Roman cross would have the last say. Even homeless peasants with an unusually im-

pressive following and a supernatural track record would be trumped by the empire for rebelling.

The path to the cross was a willing conviction accepted by God in the most subversive act on Earth — a conspiracy to take on the sin of the world and launch a counter-kingdom that would overthrow every worldly empire. Not by violence or brute force, but by love and sacrifice — through Christ. Colossians tells us that with each step Jesus was making a public spectacle out of the pseudo powers and authorities and that, with the cross, he was triumphant. So what looked like defeat was actually ultimate victory. What looked like the end was actually a new beginning for them and for us.

And so on Easter Day, although maybe not surprised afresh, we should however be ready to celebrate our faith, our own redemption because of what Jesus did on that first Easter Day. And also be ready, having reached the end of our lenten journey, to share with others the revelations we have received from God afresh this year. For with God there are always surprises just round the corner if we are brave enough to follow him there and trust and obey - just like Jesus.

With Lenten and Easter blessings!

Rev Catey Morrison

A Pause in Lent - ‘Turning aside to God’

Instead of organising a quiet day, Catey is now proposing taking a small group of interested people to attend a quiet day at the Sanctuary, 66, High Street, Swainby DL6 3DG as part of our journey through Lent. The theme of the day is ‘Turning aside to God’. The day will begin at 10.30am and run until 3pm. Catey will arrange lifts from 9.30am and those interested in going need to speak to Catey as soon as possible as places will book up. Please ring Catey on 01287 851926, email her on our.rookery@gmail.com or speak to her in church.

For Our Prayers

Synod Prayers

- 6th March Mothering Sunday** - St Cuthbert Centre Holy Island; its visitors and Revd Rachel Poolman; Revd Ruth Gee Darlington Methodist District Chair. URC Mission Council as it meets this week.
- 13th March Passion** - Synod meeting at Jesmond URC this week. Synod Moderator Revd Lis Mullen,
- 20th March Palm Sunday** - PCM; Presbyterian Societies and their work in each parish and the English language service at the central church of Khovo;
- 27th March Easter Sunday** - For Easter joy in all our churches, our families, friends and neighbours far and near. Our new moderator, our ministers and elders and church workers.

Holy Week Services

This year there will be a contemplative Maundy Thursday Service to be held at our Guisborough church at 7.00pm. And on Good Friday there will be a Quiet Hour service at 3.00pm, the time Jesus breathed his last, which is to be held at our Red-car church.

All are welcome to both of these services.

Prayer Pointers

Sunday 6th March - We continue to pray for the hundreds of thousands of refugees affected by the harsh winter weather huddled in refugee camps across Europe and the Middle East, particularly those who are still unable to leave Syria and Islamic State held territories and begin their march for freedom.

Sunday 13th March - Pray for those whose are still unsure of their working futures with job uncertainty continuing to be a problem across our region. Pray for how we as churches can help support those **within** our congregations and those known to us in our neighbourhoods.

Sunday 20th March - Pray for those involved in charity work in our **community** and the pressures they are facing with so much need to be addressed and the challenges of seeking funding for their work.

Sunday 27th March- Pray for those who have been ill with seasonal illnesses or who are struggling with long term complaints and health problems. Pray for renewed strength, and encouragement for recovery.

Easter Afternoon Tea at the Manse **Saturday 2nd April, 2.00pm to 4.30pm**

Catey is inviting everyone up to the manse in Lingdale on Saturday 2nd April for Afternoon Tea from 2pm to 4.30pm - just bring yourselves! Any money raised on the afternoon will go towards the work of the Air Ambulance.



St Andrew's

Coffee morning

Wednesday. 16th March
10.30am - noon

8 Towthorpe, Nunthorpe

Raffle and Bring and Buy Stall.

Do come along for a chat and support church funds.

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

Quiz, Pie and Pea Supper

Saturday 23rd April
7.00pm for 7.30pm

Raffle.

Tickets £6.50 available soon.
Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Ladies' Fellowship

Ladies' Fellowship next meets on Tuesday 8th March from 1.30pm until 3.00pm. Jimmy Anderson will give a slide show on St Paul's journey in Turkey.

Our annual service for Women's World Day of Prayer will be held at Nunthorpe Methodist Church at 2.00pm on Friday 4th March.

All welcome.

St Andrew's Calendar

Wed 23 March 1.00-3.00pm Knit 'n Natter

Weekly/Monthly

First Thursday 2.00pm Home Prayer group at 31 Roseberry Mews

Boys Brigade
Details available from ministers and church elders

Coffee for Charity

24th Jan	Larchfield Community	£ 8.35
31st Jan	Moebius Facial Problem	£21.20
7th Feb	Leprosy Mission	£14.60
14th Feb	Boys' Brigade	£15.30

Guisborough

In recent years I have been persuaded to speak at a number of Burns' Suppers. It's always difficult to find something original to say on these occasions and this year I came across the views of Andrew Carnegie and what he thought of Burns. (By coincidence one week after my Burns' supper speech a short book was published 'The Tycoon and the Bard' by John Cairney on the same subject.)

Andrew Carnegie (1835-1917) came from a very poor background in Dunfermline and became one of the richest men in history, making his money largely from the steel industry in the USA. When he was 33 years old he wrote a memorandum to himself laying out his aspirations. He stated his plan firstly to give up work two years later and go to Oxford 'to get a thorough education', and secondly to give his surplus wealth to charity. The first goal was not achieved - he didn't give up work although he continued to believe that education was of the highest importance - but he followed through on the second. He gave away more than 90% of his wealth to all sorts of charities. (Locally, Middlesbrough library owes its existence to his benevolence)

Reading Robert Burns' work and life had inspired Carnegie when he was a boy and Robert Burns was his hero. Clearly Burns and

Guisborough Calendar

Tue	15th March	7.15pm	Church meeting AGM,
Thu	24th March	7.00pm	Maundy Thursday reflective service in the Hall
Fri	25th March	10.00am	Good Friday Walk of Witness departing from Salvation Army

Weekly

Thursdays	9.30am – 11.30am	Market Day Coffee Morning
Thursdays	11.30am	Quiet Time – prayers and reflections with Rev Ken and others.

Carnegie have much in common. Both believed strongly in education; both believed passionately in equality; and neither man had time for ‘airs and graces’. Burns was often disparaging about the upper echelons of society:

Ye see yon birkie ca’d a lord,
Wha struts and stares and a’ that,
Tho’ hundreds worship at his word
He’s but a coof for a’ that.

In an address at the unveiling of a statue to Burns erected by the citizens of Montrose in 1912 Carnegie called for greater taxation of the wealthy. He proposed that half of the wealth of millionaires should come to the state - ‘this, not as a punishment but for their own good, because it is just, and justice alone insures general contentment’.

It strikes me that in the 100 years since Carnegie said this we haven’t moved forward a lot; perhaps we’ve moved backwards. The statistics are horrifying. Oxfam’s 2015 report shows that the wealthiest 1% of the world’s population owns 48% of the world’s wealth. UK government statistics show that in GB the wealthiest

10% own 45% of total aggregated household wealth and the least wealthy 50% own 9%. As a church perhaps we should be doing more to campaign for a fairer world. As individual Christians when we vote or engage politicians in discussion perhaps we need to think more about what government policy will do for others, both at home and abroad, and not how it will affect us personally. Sometimes this is a hard thing to do!

It's great to see Catey gradually returning to activity. Her theme today (14 February) was forgiveness, a difficult and very personal subject. I was reminded of the inscription on a bench erected fairly recently on the Cleveland Way near Guisborough with an inscription 'Be kind, for those you meet are all fighting a hard battle'

James Robertson

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
6th March	D Beattie	D Houston	J Basham	D Kane
13th March	J Reynolds		D Moore	M Ward
20th March	M Houston		D Houston	M Houston
Easter Day	R Tunnicliffe		B Ward	D Cross
3rd April	D Moore		P Etwell	M Baird

Redcar

Date for your diary

Saturday, 23rd April we will be hosting an Afternoon Tea in celebration of the Queen's 90th Birthday. Please keep the date free and join us for homemade sandwiches, savouries and cakes. Entertainment by a Ukulele band. Tickets cost £4. Krysia and Linda are running a Tombola stall, therefore any donations for this to Krysia please. Donations of cakes will be greatly appreciated nearer the date-thank you

A letter of thanks...

Dear friends at the United Reformed Church, Redcar,

Thank you so much for all of your sponsors. Your generosity was quite overwhelming and will certainly help to make a huge difference to many lives.

We spent one cold, wet night sleeping out on the street which is nothing in comparison to what a homeless person has to endure. It only emphasised how lucky we are to have warm homes and beds and how terribly unfortunate they are to be living rough. It's very, very sad.

Thank you again for your kind support,

Alexandra and Ashleigh

Alix and Ashleigh spent a very cold and wet night huddled in a shop doorway on Redcar High Street raising money for Coatham House, they raised over £200. Very well done to both of you!

Redcar Calendar

Sun 13th March 11.45am The Annual General Meeting

Tue 1st March 2.00pm Craft and Chatter

Weekly

Wednesday 10.45am Singing Group

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Thursday Payers at Catherine's

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 9.30am	Redcar 11.00am
6-March	C Morrison AGM	K Harris Communion	N Johnson
13-March	D Moore Parade	T Locke	C Morrison Meeting
20-March Palm Sunday	K Harris Communion	C Morrison	M Harris
27-March Easter Sunday	C Morrison Communion	M Harris Communion	K Harris Communion
3-April	M Harris	C Morrison Communion	N Johnson

Material for the April Magazine to church editors by
Sunday 13th March please

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