

Group News



** May * 2013 * May **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Minister

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Friends,

According to statistics, the winter time has been one of the wettest, coldest and prolonged for a good number of years. At the present time there are the promising signs of spring, and it's wonderful to see new lambs in many of the fields around our countryside in spite of being the many losses experienced.

All this reminds me of the winter 'being experienced by the Christian faith worldwide', the numbers attending worship in all the major denominations declines year by year. For the Christian faith, the period we are in is that of Easter time, that time before the Ascension and Pentecost.

What were the experiences of the disciples and the followers of Jesus after the resurrection? The gospels tell us the disciples were a group of frightened men hiding away in fear of what might happen to them. Given the news by Mary that Jesus had risen was news that appears to be difficult to understand or even take in. We are then told that Jesus himself made a personal appearance in helping to see for themselves what he had spoken of during his ministry and his work with so many people. Even after these appearances, Peter appears to say 'I'm going fishing', but the Creator God, through the risen Christ, challenged Peter again through the words 'do you love me?', not just once but three times. Pentecost for the disciples and for their listeners was that time and moment when the full power and wonder of the Creator God's purpose for the whole of humankind was given in the gift that was promised by Jesus himself. The gift that was in his life could be found by the whole of humankind, Jew and Gentile, male and female. A gift that can still be given today.

During the last few weeks, new appointments have been made for the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church and for the Church of England. A new Pope from Argentina, and the appointment of the Bishop of Durham as the Archbishop of Canterbury. New voices which we have already heard during their installations which speak

of change and new opportunities. For the United Reformed Church in general, but for particularly the Northern Synod, there are indeed changes ahead. This could be the possibility of a reawakening of that Spirit that changed the lives of the disciples long ago, a gift that has never been taken away, but a gift through which our individual lives can be redirected and more readily focussed on that prayer that we pray ‘Thy kingdom come, thy will be done’.

Looking and seeing again into the story has to be our task together but also separate that makes up our pastorate and mission pastorate at the present time. It’s not a looking and seeing again for some, but for all of us together in our service to God and his kingdom.

I wish you all well.

Ken Harris

**Correction to the last month’s letter
(for some reason I got mixed up, probably in the busyness of
Easter!) –**

At the time of Jesus’ death, the Roman day began at 6am. This was the first hour of the new day. Thus with Jesus’ death, it is recorded in Luke’s gospel (Luke 23.44) that the darkness came at the 6th hour (12noon) and then Jesus breathed his last at the ninth hour of the day (3pm). By the time Jesus’ friends had sought permission and removed Jesus’ body from the cross and taken him to the tomb it would have been getting dark and without street lighting the women could not return to anoint Jesus’ body. At 6am (the first hour of the day) on the following day, the Sabbath day began, thus not allowing the women to do any work, even anointing a dead body. It would have been very early the next morning, i.e. very soon after 6am and the start of the new day after the Sabbath, before the women could go to the tomb and anoint Jesus’ body. This was the third day, as in Jesus died on day one, the Sabbath day two, and now this was the third day. In their thinking the spirit stayed around the body for three days, so by the third day Jesus was definitely as dead as he could be – thus it was completely earthly impossible what the women found that day! Praise God!

Catey

Synod Prayers

This year's Prayer Diary takes as its theme the United Reformed Church's Vision 2020 mission strategy, focusing on each of the 10 statements during the year. This month the theme is 'Community Partnerships'.

5th May Ecumenical social action programme Faith in our Community; Chair Ven Stuart Bain; Project Development Officer Mrs Bernadette Askins

12th May Christian Aid Week; Grindon; Church-Related Community Worker Mrs Helen Stephenson; Roker; St Bede; Stockton Road, Sunderland; Boldon; Revd Dr David Whiting; Time for God volunteers Tabita Lauenstein and Seangmin Soo

19th May West End; Jesmond; Robert Stewart Memorial, Newcastle; Rev Meg Robb; Church-Related Community Worker Ms Ann Honey

26th May Trinity LEP, Gosforth; Ministry Team: Mr Andrew Clark; Rev John Paul; Rev Eden Fletcher; Pastoral & Community Worker Ms Mary Bellshaw; St Andrew's LEP, Benton; Rev Peter Rand

Prayers for the IPM Church in Mozambique

Pray for the Departments of the Church: Administration & Finance, and Literature; Planning and Development; Evangelisation & Mission; and pray for all who work from the Church HQ at Khovo in Maputo

Manse Prayers

Join Ken, Dorothy, Norma and myself for a time of prayer and bible reading at 31, Oakley Close, Guisborough every Tuesday at 8.30am. All welcome.

News from the Persecuted Church

Lift up to the Lord, Ryan Stanten a 16-year-old Christian in Pakistan who has been charged with the country's most serious 'Blasphemy' offense. He was accused of forwarding to Muslim neighbours on October 2012 a text message containing material deemed offensive to Islam. The following day, an angry Muslim mob led by Islamic clerics ransacked the home where Ryan lives with his mother, Rubina Bryan. and set fire to nunneries household items. Ryan was subsequently arrested and charged under section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code, which carries the death penalty for using derogatory remarks against Mohammed. He denies sending the text, and there was no trace on his phone. Pray that our brother will be cleared and that his family will be protected from those who want to cause them harm.

From the Barnabus Fund Prayer diary

Pray that God would give strength to and bring0 justice for Mohammed Ali Dadkhah and other lawyers, activist and journalists who have been jailed in Iran for defending the rights of others.

From the Christian Solidarity Worldwide Prayer diary

Nathan i-pad Appeal Update

Can I thank everyone for your incredibly generous support for our son, Nathan, in our quest to raise money for a computer programme which runs on an iPad which will enable him to be able to talk

F.A.F. Club

F.A.F. Club next meets on Sunday May 21st 7th 6.30-8.30pm at the Lingdale Manse. A sleepover is also being planned for June/July, please watch this space! (Please ring Catey for information)

through pressing buttons that will speak for him. Nathan now has the ipad which he needs so much, and goes around kissing it and saying ahhhh! Thank you so much. We hope this will transform Nathan's life and his frustrations with communication.

Cateyx



Not so much a programme
More an experience

Take the first steps to making a difference!

A new video demonstrates the difference Training for Learning and Serving is making to people's lives. On the video, which can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/TLS-Video>, course members describe their TLS experience:

'I have gained an understanding of what God can do through me!'

'The most enjoyable part of TLS has been growing spiritually.'

'It's a long journey and there are difficult times but in the end you get to meet with God.'

'To have come across something with the 'wow factor' is wonderful!'

TLS offers opportunities to:

Examine your faith

Enrich your discipleship

Explore your calling

To make a difference in your life, your church and your neighbourhood

Modern:

We accept the collapse of the fabrics of our old Churches, the thieving of lead and objects from them, the commandeering and butchering of our scenery by the services, the despoiling of landscaped parks and the abandonment to a fate worse than the workhouse of our country houses, because we are convince we must save money.

John Betjeman English Poet (late 20th Century)

WHAT IS TLS?

- A spiritual journey
- A variety of courses on subjects related to Christian life and discipleship
- A diverse learning experience with opportunities for
- Reflective and practical work
- Personal and group study
- Local and residential gatherings

A fellowship of friendly people

YOU CAN DO TLS

- Just out of personal interest, to help you be more understanding and effective in your Christian discipleship
- To explore opportunities to serve God in the future
- To help you acquire United Reformed Church Assembly Lay Preaching accreditation

Because it doesn't matter whether you have some academic experience or none.

You can take the first steps to making a difference with

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

More details, including the current prospectus and application form, are to be found on the United Reformed Church Web-site at www.urc.org.uk

Or Contact the TLS Administrator, Mrs Heather Skidmore, 27 Yew Tree Road, Elkesley, Retford, Notts. DN22 8AY. Tel: 01777 838634. E-mail: tlsskid@btinternet.com who will be happy to send to you the TLS Prospectus and Application Form

Ancient

Just as through a tree we became God's debtors, so through a tree we receive the cancellation of our debts.

Irenaeus Bishop of Lyons, theologian (2nd Century)

Guisborough

At the time of writing I am in the middle of rehearsals for Shakespeare's play: "The Winters's Tale," to be performed by The Little Theatre Company from the beginning of May. Returning to the stage, after an absence of eighteen years is both an exciting and daunting prospect. The play is one of the Bard's later 'romances' and explores the theme of jealousy – where Leontes, King of Sicilia, mistakenly imagines his Queen has been unfaithful. The King's jealousy leads onto a train of events from the death of the Queen to an abandoned child; adventures in exotic locations and a statue coming to life to bring the play to a happy ending. Very popular when first performed, in Shakespeare's day, it is considered to be rather like a fairy tale for adults. I play the part of Antigonus, Prime Minister to the King, and come to an unfortunate end. This is signified by what is considered to be the most famous stage direction in dramatic history: "Exit pursued by a bear." However, I am well compensated for this tragedy by having a 'stage' wife played by a charming young woman about half my age – something real wife, Norma, finds very funny – as it appears to stretch the bounds of plausibility to the very limit.

In month's magazine edition there was mention of the evangelical project: "Blowing your Cover." This is a six session course designed to motivate and equip a church to present the Gospel to a 'needy' world. In essence the aim is to answer the question: "Do the people we are trying to reach understand what we are trying to tell them?" A practical workshop format has the objective of delivering on another question: "Are we connecting with the people we are so need to reach?"

Later in the year I hope to work with Catey this project to produce course leaders who can present the sessions with the context of the four churches in the group. Central to any success with practical

Guisborough Calendar

Wed 1st May 7.00pm **Monthly Prayers** at 1 Nidderdale Skelton.

Sat 11th May 6.15pm **Christian Aid Service** at Salvation Army Citadel

Thu 16th May 12 noon Elders' Meeting

Tue 21st May 2.30pm Service at Belmont View Care Home

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning

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

evangelism is confidence in our own personal faith. From there we have the real starting point from where we can have bring people to Jesus as a natural part of our church life.

This month is when we celebrate Pentecost: the Birthday of the Church – when the Spirit of God was given to Jesus' followers. Of the three main Christian Festivals: Christmas, Easter and Whitsun – it seems to be the least in public awareness. Yet it is because of this great event that we, as Christians are here today – and so it needs to not only celebrated but taken as point of encouragement for our local mission for Christ for the rest of the year. Nationally, 'Churches Together' have organised a Pentecost Festival for a number of years. This year it is described as "The Biggest Birthday

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
5th May	J Basham	J Reynolds	D Cross	D Harris
12th May	R Tunnicliffe		M Houston	M Baird
19th May	D Moore		D Beattie	V Beattie
26th May	J Basham		D Houston	D Collins
2nd June	J Reynolds	B Ward	P Etwell	D Moore

Party Ever.” Andy Frost - Director of Pentecost Festival talks about the event in enthusiastic terms: *"We are really excited about this new phase of Pentecost Festival. The Festival celebrates the Church's birthday and our dream is to see this important Festival rediscovered as churches across the UK host events that creatively and powerfully communicate the Christian faith. This is what Pentecost is all about!"* Perhaps we, in the East Cleveland Group, may consider joining in as a host church for 2014?

In the mean time let us greet the event with joy and enthusiasm. Let us hope that in our prayers we can hear God's call to work for him in new ways needed for our modern secular society. In Shakespeare's: "The Winters Tale" the story evolves from the emotion of jealousy, which is all about a lack of trust. Do we lack trust in Christ? If so, use Pentecost to restore it.

Ray Tunnickliffe

Redcar

Please join us to **CELEBRATE**

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY

of the **CORONATION**

at our **AFTERNOON TEA**

on **Saturday, 1st June** 2pm until 4pm

Entertainment by the ladies trio - Mes Amis

Sandwiches, scones and cakes

what they saw as an attack on the authority of the Bible.

Luther spoke of ‘This new astrologer wanting to prove that the earth revolves rather than the heaven or the firmament, the sun and the moon. It’s just as if someone in a moving carriage, or on a ship believes that the earth and the trees are moving and that he is motionless and at rest.

But such are the times we live in: he who wants to be clever must invent something all his own and what he makes up he naturally thinks is the best thing ever! This fool wants to turn the whole art of astronomy upside down! But as the Holy Scripture testifies, Joshua ordered the sun to stand still, and not the earth!’

At the beginning of May 1543, the final printing of Copernicus’ book was hurried on and a copy of the finished work was put into his hands on May 27th – an hour or so later he died.

So Copernicus had escaped the attention of the Inquisition unlike Galileo born twenty-one years later who proved Copernicus correct by the astronomical work made possible by the use of his telescope. Yet Copernicus’ book was put on the prohibited list of the Roman Catholic Church for almost two-hundred years.

Folk memories do last for my mother used to quote a verse marking an event over three hundred years old:

*‘Twenty-ninth of May,
Royal Oak Day.*

*If you don’t give us a holiday,
We’ll all run away’.*

It referred to the fugitive King Charles II, who hid in an oak tree in 1651 to escape from Cromwell’s troops after the Battle of Worcester.

Another one turns up in the hymn ‘All things bright and beautiful ... The rushes by the water we gather every day.’ These were of course used as an early kind of floor covering.

To stretch my point even further perhaps it is just possible that on the west coast of Spain people like my mother may still tell young children who don’t go to bed that the dragon – El Draque (Francis Drake) the fierce pirate will come and get them.

Sadly folk memories are fading. Not many young people can tell the significance of Pancake Tuesday, or why we eat hot-cross buns or Easter eggs, even though both items are for sale not long after Christmas. Yet three of our grandchildren still decorate hard-boiled eggs and roll them down a hill.

John Crowther

Lingdale

Other

A cleaning afternoon and Elders Meeting will take place on Tuesday 5th May 2013 – all welcome to join us for the cleaning element!

Book Club

The next meeting will be on 7th May at 7.00pm when we will be discussing Mansfield Park by Jane Austen.

Flower Rota

5th May – Mrs M Saunders
12th May - Mr T Waller
(In memory of Miss J
Scarth and Mrs B Waller)
19th May – Mr T Waller
19th May – Mrs J Scott
26th May – Mrs P Green
2nd June – Mr A Thompson

Memories Day

Thank you to everyone involved in our Memories Day. Over 100 people attended and Alison now has a lot of new photos for the site and £66.36 was raised for Church funds. A big thank you to Alison and her sister Wendy for providing the exhibition and a special thank you to Josh for keeping us supplied with frothy coffee all day!

Lingdale Calendar

Weekly

Tuesday 10.00am – 10.30am Prayers for our Community
10.30am – 12noon Community Café

3rd Sunday of the month 5.30pm Family Service followed by
F.A.F. at the Manse

St Andrew's

Quiz

We are holding a Quiz with Pie and Pea Supper on Sat. May 11th at 7.30p.m. here at St. Andrews. Tickets £6.00 available from Doreen, Sheila and Joan. There will be a raffle. Proceeds are in aid of church funds.

Ladies Fellowship

Our next meeting on Wednesday 1st May will be the last of the session so we will be meeting for lunch. The venue has still to be decided but will probably be the New Mill in Stokesley.

Christian Aid

We made, to date, £138.50 for Christian Aid at our Soup-a-Lunch on Wednesday 17th April. Many thanks to those who provided all the lovely soups (what a choice) and to those who came and gave us their support.

Grant and Steven are doing a walk in the Wye Valley on 16th May for Christian Aid. There is now a sponsor form on the church notice board. Please support them by adding your name to this list.

Thank you.

St Andrew's Calendar

Wed 29th May 1.00-3.00pm Knit and Natter

Weekly

Wednesday 9.30am Midweek Informal Worship & Prayers – All welcome

Sunday After Worship Traid Craft Stall (Last Sunday in month)

Boys Brigade Details available from ministers and church elders

From Rosemary in Uganda

Praise the Lord and a very very happy new year 2013 to you all. Thank God that we were all able to celebrate it alive and well. Please forgive me I had wanted to write to you but lost the newsletter and was not clear about your new address.

We are getting on well; we had a lovely festive Christmas season and new years day. There was no goat roasting this time! I have not had salary since December last year so we were a bit hard up but we managed to have some chicken and beef for the dinner. The children are back to school, Natasha and Maureen doing their 'O' levels this year and Apophia now in Senior 3. It was not easy to get their school fees so I had to get some soft loan to be able to foot the school dues and pay the rent. The Lord always takes care of everything. What would I do without Him on my side all the time. I pray these children work hard and use this chance to study well and get good results otherwise it will be a waste of time and resources!

Thank you for letting me know of donation. I pray you will be able to send it safely: please extend my heartfelt thanks and outpouring gratitude for those brothers and sisters at St Andrew's church for their generosity and unfailing support they have given me and my family over the years. God will reward them abundantly. I wish you all joy and peace in this new year With all my love,

Rosemary

Coffee for Charity

24th March	Teesside Hospice	£19.00
31st March	Teesside Hospice	£15.50
7th April	Daisy Chain	£18.00
14th April	Boys' Brigade	£34.60

Preachers

	5-May	12-May	19-May	26-May	2-Jun
Marton	10.00am Marton WT	M Robb Parade	N Johnson Communion	J Harper	L Bustard
Guisbo	9.30am D Harris Communion	K Harris	W Middlemas	L Bustard	N Johnson Communion
Redcar	11.00am J Harper Communion	D Moore	J Platten	C Morrison	J Harper
Lingdale	5.30pm K Harris	K Harris Communion	J Coulthard		K Harris

Material for the June Magazine to church editors by Sunday 12th May please
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