

# *Group News*



**\* 2018 \* November \* 2018 \***

The monthly magazine for:

**Guisborough URC**

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Part of the URC Northern Synod – [www.urc-northernsynod.org.uk](http://www.urc-northernsynod.org.uk)

[www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk](http://www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk)

## A Thought To Share

*'The fact is that we cannot help speaking about the things we have seen and heard'* Acts 4 v.20

What's the first thing we do if we have a bit of good news? Well, speaking for myself my immediate reaction is to want to share it. Whether someone has just got engaged, had their first child, - or their first grandchild,- earned promotion, or won a dream holiday, the natural and instinctive response is to rush round to a loved one, or pick up the phone, or write. Some folk have been known to share their news with a complete stranger such is their excitement. To keep good news to ourselves just doesn't seem right.

What then of the greatest news of all time, the message of Christ? Do we burn to share that? Do we, like the disciples, find that we simply can't stop ourselves talking about it? That's what Peter and John found in the days of the early Church. They knew the risks of speaking out and if they'd had any lingering doubts these must surely have been dispelled by their reception at the hands of the chief priests and elders. Yet, despite every effort to silence them they just knew that they couldn't keep quiet.

The problem we have today, of course, is that the gospel is not news in quite the same way; most people are aware of the Christian message, even if they have little knowledge of what it's all about. We are confronted by a world which is convinced that it's all old hat and irrelevant to their lives, and a world in which today's news is forgotten tomorrow. Consequently we won't get far, if anywhere, by quoting the Bible at people, or trying to teach them the dogma of our denomination, - nor by repeating parrot-fashion the creeds. The Bible is important to us, - and the creeds are important to us, - but no-one was ever argued into Christianity. We need to take a leaf out of the disciples' book and tell of the things that we have seen and heard, and what Jesus has done

in our lives. If Jesus is important to us, then we need to seize whatever opportunities that come our way and say so!

Blessings

Jan

## *Synod Prayers*

### **4th November:**

PCM, their churches of the Central Presbytery and the Presbytery of the North. In these regions life can be very tough as resources are scarce

The Anglican Bishop of Whitby, the Rt Revd Paul Ferguson

### **11th November:**

For world-wide peace and acts of Remembrance this week  
Zion URC, Northallerton; Northgate URC, Darlington; Keld URC; Low Row URC; Revd Hilary and Revd Stephen Colinson

### **18th November:**

International Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians

St Paul & St John's URC; St Margaret's URC, South Shields; St Andrew's URC, Hebburn; Revd Helen Drummond

### **25th November:**

St Andrew's LEP (Methodist/URC), Benton; Revd Gavin Hume (Methodist); The Church of the Good Shepherd LEP (Anglican/Methodist/URC), Battle Hill; Revd Julie Mooney (Anglican)

## **Holy Habits – Book Club**

The next meeting of the Holy Habits Book Club will take place at Guisborough Church on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November at 7.15pm.

We will be discussing the chapters on Breaking of Bread and Eating Together. As well as looking at the chapters themselves we will also be looking at the bible passages suggested, so it would be helpful if you could look at them prior to the session.

You don't need to have attended the previous meeting to come along to this session. If you would like more information please give me a ring on 01287 654 093.

*Susan Griffiths*

## **Synod Report**

We began with the words of Brian Wren (R&S 339) 'Great God, your love has called us here' to the glorious tune Abingdon by Erik Routley. Every verse is pure poetry - do take the time to read it With pictures of the Dales on the screen to accompany prayers led by Stephen and Hilary Collinson the mood was set for a good day.

The theme of the day was Encounters, remembering that all encounters have the power to change both sides when coming together, however briefly.

There were some major decisions taken and reported on:

- The reasons for the change in our Investment Managers to CCLA with the best explanation of ethical investment that I have ever heard. CCLA will be far more proactive than the previous IM in sorting out those Companies where we would not wish to invest. We need investment managers as we could not do 'Ethical' on our own. We are too small to have any clout.

- The Budget for 2019, asking for a Levy £32.17 per member which now represents only 16% of the Synod's expenditure.
- The money to be spent on the St Cuthbert's Centre Church on Holy Island which is a Synod responsibility. £100,000 to eradicate woodworm: £10,000 p a to underwrite the cost of the project every year:. Improvements to the Manse: The need to ask for an further period of special category Ministry there so that the experience of the Island can be properly shared by the Warden, Rev Rachel Poolman, with visitors from all over the world. It was a surprise to me to discover that the URC does not own the Church there but rents it on a full repairing lease for £25p.a. until the 2090's!
- The new Synod Youth Rep Ali Greaves, currently at Northumbria University, spoke with great eagerness about wanting to get in touch with all the young people in the Synod. She has been a URC member all her life, going to Church in Rochdale with her parents ( I asked myself, how can we support her enthusiasm and energy which was so good to see.)
- The national Church & Society Secretary Simeon Mitchell spoke with great intensity about some of the real injustices in our world today where we ought to be more actively involved. He referred to three areas. The hostile environment in the Home office leading to endless checks aimed at keeping people out - even when they are destitute. The Windrush generation scandal and Universal Credit. We were asked to examine our own attitudes to poverty - how many are convinced that laziness is a prime cause? Many UC claimants are actually working very hard in badly paid jobs or on zero hours contracts. This was very challenging indeed. The root of poverty lies in injustice as the OT prophets pointed out. Our response needs to be to become more involved ourselves - and to keep supporting the food banks and signing petitions. The way we are living now is destroying society. Simeon works with the Joint Public Issues team with three

other mainstream churches all determined to lift the profile of the Churches - who else speaks out for the hungry?

There were many opportunities to talk with those around us discussing who our Church has contacts with outside the Church, who do we exclude from our churches? what would we take with us on a journey to remind us of the Church?.

Darlington Northgate church looked after us very well, excellent scones and home made cakes.

We had lively closing worship with Sing Hosanna!

However, the power point presentations accompanying the speakers were not operated as smoothly as they could have been and after having had to rush to get there for 10.00am the meetings seemed to start somewhat casually at 10.15!.

Let's see what happens at St John's, Kingston Park, Newcastle on 16th March next year

*Jane Tomlin (Synod rep for St Andrews)*

PS please read the hymn 339

## **Offeratory Envelopes 2019**

The 2019 envelopes will shortly be issued. They have a new message on the front, reminding us all to give, even for those weeks when we are not able to be at Church. The envelopes are labelled as previously for the East Cleveland Group. This is only to save money by ordering them in bulk.. However, please be assured that each Church has its own numbers and the money given goes to your own Church and **not** to the Group.

Thus: Guisborough has 1-18      Redcar has 19-30      St Andrews has 31-45

*Jane Tomlin*

## Facts and figures

As we look at our future and at budgets for 2019 both at Church and in our own lives, here are a few facts to think about. Each Church has to raise the money for Ministry & Mission, the costs of running the Synod, and the costs of the Group, mainly preaching fees.. These figures are now agreed. Here they are!

	<b>Guisborough</b>	<b>Redcar</b>	<b>St Andrews</b>
Ministry & Mission	7,392	6,684	15,840
Northern Synod Levy	676	611	1,448
East Cleveland Group	1,281	1,223	2,825
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9,349</b>	<b>8,518</b>	<b>20,113</b>

If we were able to Call a Minister during 2019 the only increase would be the payments to the Group as we would have to pay Minister's Expenses.

*Jane Tomlin*

# Guisborough

## Growing old gracefully

A few weeks ago M was asked to lead our Thursday morning prayers. Looking through Her collection of Prayer Handbooks she found a prayer which started 'Lord I am growing Old' I thought now that's something we could use in a newsletter. Of course when it came to point of actually setting pen to paper. I was unable to find the originals. So what follows is at least all my own work

Sooner or later if you live long enough everyone has to face growing older, My brother Ian and his children were among the unlucky few who didn't They were lost in a car crash early one morning on the Alnwick bypass. The Sun was hovering just above the road blinding the oncoming drivers. The road turned, Ian didn't.

You can imagine the rest A terse

call from the police . Can you come and identify the bodies? An unsuccessful race to get there before my father to spare him the pain of seeing the mangled remains of his son and three small grandchildren. An emotional funeral. But the most difficult thing I found was that that there was nothing for me to do, nothing at all. I just felt empty Not a nice feeling,

What little there was belonged to an errant wife who had found a new boyfriend and a messy divorce had seemed immanent But that was all fifty years ago, and you have to draw a line and move on. Otherwise you end up like Queen Victoria having a miserable life and still failing to honour the person you have lost. The best way to do that is to serve the living.

When I went to university I among others was awarded a scholarship in memory of Lord Kitchener. Now sixty years later the Kitchener Fund still helps young men with the cost of studying at university. That's what I call an enduring memorial. And by the way I really did read up on the mans rather remarkable life, no kidding. It seemed to be the very least I could do!

But returning to my subject. All too often we associate physical beauty with youth. The cosmetic industry sells us the dream of eternal youth.

But expressions such as mutton dressed up as lamb hint at a different reality. Nor is the problem confined to notions of physical beauty. The worlds leading Physicists have often done their best work by the time they are thirty. And, this being a Church Magazine, I must point out that Jesus himself completed his earthly mission by this early thirties, although his teachings still resonate round the world two thousand years later.

What can we learn from all this? Nobody is too old, or too young to have something worth listening to. Jesus taught that we learn best if we approach with an open mind. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings was one way he put it.

Over the years I have heard many preachers. Some inspiring some deplorable (not many of those I'm glad to say) But among the very best was a Methodist sheep farmer called Harrison who lived somewhere out on the moors. He claimed he did not prepare his sermons. He just stood up and said whatever the Lord put in his heart at the time. Cracking good sermons they were too. I often wondered if his secret *was living a life as close to that of Jesus time as a man can manage in the modern world*

God Bless you all

*David Houston*

## Guisborough Calendar

Thu 8<sup>th</sup> November 7.15pm Holy Habits Book Club  
 Tue 27<sup>th</sup> November 7.15pm Church Meeting in the hall

### Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning  
 Thursdays 11.30am **Quiet Time in Church.** Prayers and reflections with Maureen, Madge, Ken and others.

	<b>Vestry</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Door</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
4th Nov	R Tunnicliffe	M Baird	M Burrows	Mary Robson
1th Nov	B Ward		D Thompson	Dorothy Collins
18th Nov	P Etwell		B Ward	Vera Beattie
25th Nov	S Verrill		D Beattie	Moira Ward
2nd Dec	D Moore		J Basham	Lydia Reeves

## Mission to Seafarers-Christmas Shoe Box Appeal

I thought it would be a good idea to continue our ‘Mission to Seafarers’ theme which Susan led on Sea Sunday, by participating in their Christmas Shoe Box appeal. If you would like to fill a shoe box, please see me for further information and a list of suggested contents for the box.

I have a contact in St Nicholas’ Church who has kindly agreed to take our boxes along with theirs to Tees port for distribution among those who come into the port and use the mission around Christmas time.

The last date for bringing the shoe boxes to church will be Sunday 25th November

*Barbara Ward*

# *Redcar*

## **The Nearly Christmas Bazaar**

Please join us for our Annual Bazaar on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November from 11am until 2pm. Refreshments will include tea, coffee and home-made soup and bacon ‘butties’

Donations for the Raffle and Tombola will be greatly appreciated please and cakes and savoury items on the day.

A number of crafts people will be again supporting us.

Look for forward to seeing you!!

## **Redcar Calendar**

### **Weekly**

Wednesday 10.30am Singing Group

Thursday 9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre for refreshments and a chat

**1.45pm** Thursday Payers at Catherine’s – all are welcome

<b>Date</b>	<b>Door</b>	<b>Vestry</b>	<b>Communion</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> November	Margaret	Elaine	Catherine & Mary
11 <sup>th</sup> November	Brian	Catherine	
18 <sup>th</sup> November	Norma	June	
25 <sup>th</sup> November	Kryisia	Elaine	
2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Brenda	Catherine	

# *St Andrew's*

## **Harvest**

Thank you to everyone who gave harvest donations for the Middlesbrough Food Bank. We also collected £30.00 from coffee donations.

There will still be a collection box in the vestibule every Sunday to collect items for this much needed charity.

## **Annual Bazaar**

Our annual Bazaar is to be held on Saturday 17th November from 11.30am to 1.30pm. Donations for cake stall, tombola, raffle, bric-a-brac etc. will be gratefully received. Also offers of homemade soup. Proceeds are in aid of church funds but to make a success of this event we do need "helpers".

## **Shoe Box Appeal**

We are now preparing shoe boxes to take to the collection point. These need to be taken by the middle of November at the latest so if anyone has any donations will they please give them to Shona, Eleanor or Joan S by then.

## **Christmas Social**

The Christmas Social to be held on Wednesday 15th December at 7.30pm. There will be carols, quiz etc. together with coffee, tea and mince pies. Proceeds from the raffle will be donated to Christian Aid. Please do come along for a lovely evening.

## **Toy Service**

The Toy Service is to be held on Sunday 9th December when the Salvation Army will be with us to collect our gifts.

Please bring unwrapped new toys together with wrapping paper. Many thanks.

## Coffee for Charity

23rd Sep	Rosemary Fund	£20.00
30th Sep	Shoe Box Appeal	£20.00
7th Oct	Rosemary Fund	£22.50
14th Oct	Middlesbrough Food Bank	£30.00

## Preachers

	<b>Marton</b> 10.00am	<b>Guisborough</b> 10.00am	<b>Redcar</b> 11.00am
4-Nov	Donna Moore	Norma Johnson Communion	Jan Harper Communion
11-Nov	Jane Rowell Parade	K & M Harris	Norma Johnson
18-Nov	Jan Harper Communion	Jane Rowell	Brian Stephenson Meeting
25-Nov	Margaret Harris	Guis Folk	Ken Harris

Material for the December/January Magazine to church editors by  
Sunday 11th November please

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