

# *Group News*



*\* October \* 2015 \* October \**

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)

## **Minister**

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Dear friends,

Last month the pastoral letter was kindly provided by Lis Mullen as part of her support to the Group following Catey's absence. Whilst it had been hoped that Catey would have returned to work after a short absence she is not yet ready to take back the reins so it has fallen to me as editor to write in the magazine.

At home I have just had a week on the wrong side of the medical fence; instead of handing out the advice and prescriptions, I was supporting Eleanor in obtaining health care. It is always interesting, if that is the right word, to see life from the other side; and on this occasion we spent a few days when the medical establishment seemed to be trying its utmost to be inefficient and obstructive. Eleanor had symptoms and scan results that failed to match up leaving my colleagues with decisions about whether to believe the patient or believe the technology. Eventually my colleagues started to listen, performed a small neurosurgical operation to replace a shunt valve and Eleanor was rapidly returned to normal health, even if with an unusual hairstyle! It was a very pleasant surprise to visit her in hospital the evening of surgery to find her sat up and back to her normal bright self. Now a few days later she is well on her way to full recovery.

Events like these will occur in all our lives and give us an opportunity to reflect on our own values and behaviours. As a practicing doctor, how often do I fail to listen to my patients properly and give them the help and support they need or deserve? I am sure there are many occasions I could have done better, listened better, explained better or even quite simply got the diagnosis and the treatment right. Whilst it is my job to provide health care to the best of my ability, it is also my duty to reflect on occasions when things go poorly in the hope that I can learn for the future.

As church are we able to stand back from our church life and reflect on what we are doing well and doing badly? We are all part on a family in Christ, and as members of that family we have

hopes and fears, rights and responsibilities. In our church life, our home life and our professional lives we need to be prepared to reflect on the contribution we are making, the rewards we are receiving and whether they are appropriate. We are often reminded that relationships require work and commitment if they are to be sustained over the long term. Life in the church is no different; if the family is to survive and flourish then all the limbs are needed and all have to play their part.

Like I encountered the health service from a different perspective, as a frustrated relative rather than the doctor; in our church life we need to be prepared to look at our worship and church life from different perspectives. In Catey's absence there has been a need for others to take on duties that fall outside their usual remit, and allow us to see people contributing beyond their usual roles. In these changes there is an opportunity to reflect and learn from what has happened and hopefully see things from a new angle and allow us to learn, to change, and to develop God's kingdom.

Yours in Christ

*Roger Wheeler*

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### **Islamic State's territory**

The Islamic State group (IS) came to international attention last year when its militants began seizing territory in Iraq and Syria. In June 2014 IS declared a caliphate with their leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as caliph. The title "caliph" is used by Sunni Muslims for the supreme political and religious leader of the global Muslim community and dates

back to the immediate successors of Muhammad in the 7th century. There has been no caliph since the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate in 1922

The aim of IS is to expand the rule of their caliphate to cover all the territory that has ever been under Islamic rule. IS enforces strict Islamic law (sharia), with women required to be com-

# *Synod Prayers*

*4 October*

Mission Committee; Convenor Revd Meg Robb

*11 October*

Synod Meeting this week; Moderator's Secretary Mrs Wendy Watson, Trust Officer Mr Andrew Atkinson, Finance Officer Mrs Helen Hogg, Ecumenical Officer Mr Andy Lie

*18 October*

Berwick; Crookham; Wooler; Chatton; Erskine & St Cuthbert's, Belford & North Sunderland; Revd David Herbert; Revd Mary Taylor

*25 October*

PCM: Churches of the Central Presbytery and the Presbytery of the North – large tracts of the country where Church and other resources are scarce; hopes for good outcomes from elders' training; Bishop of Whitby, Rt Revd Paul Ferguson

## **The aim of IS is to expand the rule of their caliphate to cover all the territory that has ever been under Islamic rule**

pletely covered and the Quranic punishments implemented, such as amputation, flogging and crucifixion. Although sharia allows Christians to live under its rule as a subjugated minority, IS appears not to tolerate a Christian presence of any kind within its territory. Describing Christians as “crusaders” it has killed or kidnapped many, for example along the Khabur river in north-east Syria in February. It has sold Christian women as slaves. In Ramadan in June/July this year it offered a slave as a prize for memorising parts of the Quran

[www.barnabusfund.org](http://www.barnabusfund.org)

# Guisborough

As we come to the end of a somewhat questionable summer, I'm looking forward to the yellows and bronzes of Autumn. D and I have had a very 'away' sort of summer with six too hot weeks in Austria and Germany. It's a part of the world we love and where we have made many local friends. The mountains are truly majestic. The villages are pretty. The churches little jewels of the Baroque.

I like to look round the grave yards and find all the family names. Very few people move away from their home areas so you can find many generations of the same families buried together. There is one church in particular that we visit every year where eight people we knew are buried. It is a rather special place to us.

Now that we find walking difficult, we tend to head from the top of cable car to the nearest 'Mountain hut' This can be just a table under the eaves of a barn. Or It might be a full sized restaurant with overnight accom-

modation for climbers and skiers (and even passing tourists like us). If the weather is good everyone picks tables outside and admires the view. When it's bad we gather inside where with luck there may be music. The fare tends to be local of course. Something we really like is erdebeermilch (strawberry milk) rich and creamy and very sweet. Totally wrong for diabetics, but hard to resist.

A week after our return we were off to Iona with Catey and the kids, and a fair number of people from The East Cleveland Group. What did we really know about Iona? Only that It's a long way from Teesside. Four trains two ferries and one long bus ride across Mull. Add that the first bus from Guisborough arrives at Redcar Station after the train has left.

All Cateys arrangements worked like clockwork and it was a great help that Rays wife ferried us all to Redcar. We really didn't know what to expect. I know D was worried we might be letting

## Guisborough Calendar

Wed 7<sup>th</sup> October      7.30pm    Group Elders' Meeting  
Sun 11<sup>th</sup> October      6.15pm    Churches Together Harvest Service at our church

There is no service at Belmont Care Home this month.

### Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am    Market Day Coffee Morning  
Thursdays                      11.30am    Quiet Time – prayers and reflections with Ken, Catey, Maureen, David and others.

ourselves in for a bunch of  
American style hot gossellers. A  
thought that may well have kept  
quite a few husbands away. But  
that sort of worry evaporated  
almost as soon as we walked  
through the Abbey door. The  
whole place felt very relaxed  
and friendly. The short stay people  
(us) came for just a week.  
Others for anything up to three  
years. Iona describes itself as a  
Community which you have to  
experience to understand. Everyone  
including visitors has one  
or more daily tasks. Our task-  
force (the others) was on duty at  
breakfast

We got up early to lay the tables,  
make the porridge and toast, and  
heat up the coffee before the

herd arrived to sample our  
wares. Don Beattie appointed  
himself Chief Toast Master. And  
great mountains of toast appeared  
and disappeared every  
morning in short order. There  
was even honey. Food was simple  
but plentiful and nobody  
complained. As in many religious  
communities there was a high  
proportion of people with special  
dietary needs. All seemed to be  
coped with successfully. Next on  
the agenda came a short morning  
service in the Abbey. You didn't  
have to go, but nearly everyone  
did. We would have missed it if  
we hadn't. There is something  
magical about the place. Maybe  
it was the acoustics which made  
our

voices resonate deeply, maybe it was the fine old Scots hymns, or the new ones composed by John Bell.

Where was I? Oh yes after morning worship half of us Otters washed and dried while the rest peeled and chopped vegetables. There seemed to be an unending supply of both. But at least when it was done that was us for the rest of the day. Having jobs to do mixed everyone up and we quickly got to know most of the others. Not their names or where they came from or denominations, which seemed unimportant, but what they were like as people. Maybe that's what being a community is all about.

Something else we learned was that if you are offered help, smile and accept gracefully. You will allow someone to feel good about themselves, and just maybe you struggling to do cope

on your own would hold up the whole party.

The weather on the West coast is famously bad. In the week before we left the forecasts became gloomier and gloomier. But on the day the clouds went over the top of Iona and the weather vented its wrath on the high hills of Mull. We had rain overnight but very little during the day. The midges too kept their heads down, except one afternoon when they woke up and gave us a demonstration of just how bad it can be if you are unlucky.

We were also blessed with good weather for a trip to Staffa to see Fingal's cave. A blue sky and a deeper blue sea. Enough wind to make the trip seem adventurous as the boat rocked alarmingly from side to side. But miraculously nobody got sea sick and nobody fell overboard. Mind I think most folk were hanging on pretty tight. The island looks just

	<b>Vestry</b>	<b>Communion</b>	<b>Door</b>	<b>Flowers</b>
4 October	J Basham	B Ward	D Cross	D Collins
11 October	D Beattie		R Tunnicliffe	P Etwell
18 October	D Cross		M Ward	R Tunnicliffe
25 October	R Tunnicliffe		B Ward	K Harris
1 November	M Burrows	J Basham	D Beattie	M Houston

like the photographs although the basalt columns were bigger and blacker than I expected, definitely bigger than the Giants Causeway in Ireland. The sound of the water flowing in and out of the cave really did remind me of Mendelsohn's overture. But I'm not sure I would have wanted to be there in a storm.

On our way back the boatman turned aside to investigate flocks of gannets and Manx Shearwaters wheeling and diving into the sea from quite a height, presumably in pursuit of bait balls of small fish. The top avian predators were skuas (bonksies) who stole the fish from out of the mouths of the smaller birds who had actually caught them. The other fishermen attracted by the bait balls were three Minke whales coming up from underneath. It made for a perfect day

The week passed all too quickly and it was time to leave. The evening before we had a farewell service. D and I were dragooned into a scratch quire. Trained by a very handsome young Danish con-

ductor. He kept saying how well we were doing. And you know it worked! The power of positive thinking! We processed out of the church singing a Xhosa Chant, and lined up in the cloister to allow the congregation to pass between us picking up the chant as they came. It was all very emotional. Iona was an experience I would not have missed.

You will realise I could go on forever. But I might bore you, and I must leave space for others to tell you of their Iona. And I hope they will.

*God Bless Maureen Houston.*

**Guisborough Choral Society**  
**Remembrance Concert**  
**Saturday November 7th - 7.30pm**  
**St. Nicholas Church, Guisborough.**

On Remembrance Day weekend Guisborough Choral Society will present a very special Remembrance Concert featuring the Dishforth Military Wives Choir. The concert will include Gustave Fauré's *Requiem*, as well as a full and varied programme of remembrance-themed works, readings and the playing of the Last Post.

Tickets are £10, £8 concessions, £1 under-19s  
Available from Guisborough Bookshop and  
Greensleeves Music in Chaloner St, or  
[www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com)

# *St Andrew's*

## **Annual Bazaar Saturday 14th November 11.30am - 1.30pm**

Helpers needed and also donations of cakes, raffle and tombola prizes together with items for bric-a-brac stalls. Also offers for homemade soup for the coffee shop will be gratefully received. Proceeds are in aid of church funds.

## **Ladies' Fellowship**

The Ladies' Fellowship met on 8th Sept. to discuss the agenda for 2015/2016. It was lovely to meet up again and share an afternoon tea.

For our October meeting we are having a theatre outing to Darlington to see South Pacific.

## **Shoe Box Appeal**

We are at that time of year once again! Already empty shoe boxes are being covered with Christmas paper and now we require items to put in them. Lists of these items are available, if anyone is willing to donate, from Shona, Eleanor and Joan. The cost of sending each filled shoe box is now £3.00 per box..

We hope you will help us to send many shoe boxes which give such happiness to so many children.

## **St Andrew's Calendar**

Wed 28th Oct 1.00-3.00pm Knit 'n Natter All welcome.

### **Weekly/Monthly**

First Thursday 2.00pm Home Prayer group at 31 Roseberry Mews

Boys Brigade Details available from ministers and church elders

**Deferred  
Quiz, Pie and Pea Supper**

The Quiz, Pie and Pea Supper planned for Saturday 10th October has been deferred until early next year.

**Coffee for Charity**

16th.Zoe's Place	£18.00
23rd.Teesside Hospice	£11.00
30th.Children's Trust	£12.00
6th.Chemotherapy Unit North Tees	£12.00

*Redcar*

**The Annual Bazaar  
Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November  
11am until 2pm**

Donations of the following would be gratefully appreciated: food for raffle hampers, items for a tombola, cakes on the day.

**Commitment for Life**

Commitment for Life envelopes for Israel and the Occupied Territories envelopes will be available on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October.

THANK YOU!

**Redcar Calendar**

Tue 6<sup>th</sup> October      2.00pm    Craft and Chatter

**Weekly**

Wednesday      11.00am Singing Group (10.45am for coffee!).

Thursday      9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre

2.00pm Prayer meeting and Bible study at the home of Catherine Milburn.

# *Preachers*

	<b>Marton</b> 10.00am	<b>Guisborough</b> 9.30am	<b>Redcar</b> 11.00am
4-Oct	M Harris	C Morrison Harvest/Commun	C Morrison United
11-Oct	C Morrison Parade/Harvest	tba	
18-Oct	C Eddowes Communion	M Harris	K Harris
25-Oct	K Harris	J Martin	J Harper
1-Nov	J Harper	C Morrison Communion	C Morrison Communion

Material for the November Magazine to church editors by Sunday  
11th October please

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