

Group News



**** 2019 * September * 2019 ****

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

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Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.unc-northernynod.org.uk

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Pastoral Letter

'Let everyone give as their heart leads them to do, not reluctantly, or because it is expected of them, - for God loves a cheerful giver'

I think that there are few things in life we like less than having something done for us out of duty! What might otherwise have been a valued act of service brings instead a sense of humiliation: what appeared to be an act of friendship becomes a cause of irritation or even rancour; what seemed to be a hugely generous gift feels suddenly like a tarnished trinket, all but worthless in our eyes. We want people to respond to us not because they feel they have to, but because they want to. We want their dealings with us to be transparent, rather than hiding some ulterior motive, Being patronised is something we don't want!

And we need to bear that in mind when we come to our relationship with God. All too easily the service we offer Him becomes a matter of duty, rather than a privilege, - and a habit rather than a joy. We don't intend for it to be that way of course, nor are we always conscious of it happening, but, little by little the sparkle in our faith fades and the spontaneity that once characterised our relationship with God has become a routine, - of going through the motions. We bring our offering because it is expected of us, - we read our Bible because we feel guilty if we don't, we say our prayers because we feel we ought to, - and we hope that God won't notice!

Is that truly what God means to us? Is that really what He wants from us. I don't think so!

He loves us unconditionally, and showers gifts upon us, and what He wants is for us to love Him, serve Him and worship Him, - not because we must but because we may. He wants us to offer our discipleship not because we should, but because we can. And if we're bringing these things before Him for any other reason than sheer joy and gratitude, then maybe it's time to stop and think; for it might just be that God feels as we might in His place....that He'd rather we didn't bring it at all.

Blessings

Jan

From Church House

From: The United Reformed Church Finance Committee

Date: August 2019

To: The members and friends of each local URC congregation

‘THANK YOU’ for what you help us achieve together in God’s name

The purpose of this letter is to say ‘**Thank you**’ to each and every one of you for all that you do for the Church and, especially, for your help in **raising over £19 million in 2018 for the URC Ministry and Mission Fund**. For Christians, any giving of ours is in response to the amazing generosity of God in pouring out his love through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and through his risen life in the world and the church today, through the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it is important to say ‘thank you’.

The United Reformed Church is like a big family – about 46,000 members in 1,400 churches served by just under 400 ministers. In any thriving family, the members support each other and want the best for each other. In the URC, we are all seeking to ‘*Walk the way: live the life of Jesus today*’ – and to enable others to do so as well.

For most of us, this idea of the church as family is most easily seen in the life of our own local church. That is where we regularly worship God and also seek to serve our own community and share God’s love with them. There are 1,400 different ways in which this is happening and a colossal amount of worshipping and witnessing and working for the kingdom happening in URC congregations across our three nations. **‘THANK YOU’ for all you do for the kingdom in your local churches.**

A crucial part of what your local church does, like any family, is support you in all that you do in your daily lives. That is where we all ‘*Walk the way*’. **‘THANK YOU’ for all you do for the kingdom in your daily discipleship.**

But the wider family of the United Reformed Church is more than the sum of its parts. We belong to each other under God and through our sharing of resources as well as burdens, opportunities as well as challenges, we achieve more together. You can get a flavour of this from the reports of the last Mission Council on the URC website – from new resources for Pilots and children to disinvesting in fossil fuels; from the challenge to be better at safeguarding to the need for a new General Secretary. **‘THANK YOU’ for all you do for the kingdom through the wider**

Church, including your giving which enables your church to give to the Ministry and Mission Fund.

You might ask ‘how much should I give?’ That is a matter for you. The Church has sometimes suggested 5% of after tax income, but that is only a guide. If your church is looking at ‘Holy habits’ then one of those covers giving. If not, there are other resources on the stewardship pages of the URC website.

The URC Finance Committee is responsible for the oversight of the finances of the central United Reformed Church. Each year, our local churches raise more than £19 million for the Ministry and Mission Fund. Over 80% of this money is used to pay for stipendiary ministers and church related community workers and their training.

For a long time, the number of ministers in the United Reformed Church has been falling at roughly the same rate as the number of church members. What has fallen more dramatically over the years has been the average size of URC congregations – now around 35. So, the challenge which is exercising people across the Church is not so much a shortage of ministers, but how to make the best use of the ministers we have got in the context of small, often widely dispersed, congregations.

It is an extraordinary demonstration of commitment and generosity that the average giving per member to the Ministry and Mission Fund continues to go up each year. Although the number of URC members has been going down by a few percent each year, the total amount raised has been going down much more slowly. The total raised in 2018 was less than 0.5% lower than the total for 2017. These contributions are voluntary but they are not optional. They are an expression of our commitment to each other. The United Reformed Church could not function without them. **‘THANK YOU’ for your church’s contribution to the Ministry and Mission Fund.**

NB: the contribution to the Ministry and Mission Fund requested from each local church is a matter for its Synod. The central Church is not directly involved.

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter then please speak to your church treasurer, who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help then they will get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Hardie
Treasurer

John Piper
Deputy Treasurer

Synod Prayers

1 September:

The work of the URC (Northern Province Trust Ltd) and Convenor, Revd David Grosch-Miller and Secretary, Dr Andrew Hamnett

8 September:

St James's URC, Newcastle; St Andrew's URC, Kenton; West Denton URC

15 September:

Longframlington URC; Rothbury URC; St Andrew's URC, Glanton; Revd Ed Butlin

22 September:

Peacemaking Sunday

29 September:

PCM, Lay training and evening classes at Khovo in Maputo

Northern Baptist Regional Minister, Revd Dr John Claydon

Synod meeting (5 October)

Moderator's Secretary, Mrs Wendy Watson; Trust Officer, Mr Andrew Atkinson; Finance Officer, Mrs Helen Hogg

Holy Habits – Book Club

We've worked our way through the Holy Habits book and have had some interesting discussions on the way, thank you to everyone who attended.

If anyone is interested in continuing with a Bible Book Club please let me know. Probably following the same format of meeting every other month for about an hour (or maybe a little longer if we have a lot to say) and looking at a book, or part of a book, of the Bible.

Susan Griffiths

Guisborough

Holidays and beyond

As I write, at the beginning of August, I am wondering how others look on this summer month.

School pupils no doubt see a number of weeks stretching ahead without early rises, exam pressures or homework. The school holiday means that many Grandparents however, fill a gap this month, adopting a caring role, supporting parents balancing work and children .

Businesses in the town will be hoping for visitor numbers to increase, good footfall, a boost to sales before the good weather ends.

Some of you may already be enjoying that long anticipating holiday with family or friends or planning the next away day to places of interest.

Holidays take us away from our usual responsibilities and routines. For most of the rest of the year we have our days mapped out to varying degrees in a number of ways; by the duties of a paid job, caring for those we love, holding an important post in a voluntary capacity to name a few.

I spent a weekend away at the beginning of July at a textile workshop summer school on dyeing and printing.

I enjoyed a very busy 3 days led by an enthusiastic tutor with a group of those interested, as I was, in learning new ways of working with colour and fabric. New experiences with people I had not met before – out of my normal routine.

Guisborough Calendar

Tuesday 24 September 7.15pm Church Meeting,

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. Details on church notice board

I woke on Monday morning back home to see my usual routines in a slightly different way. Regular routines support the activities and responsibilities of 'everyday'. I could look on what I sometimes resent as a chore in a different light after some serious R & R (even if it was only short).

I know how important a break away can be to refreshing a personal outlook and keeping a good balance to mental wellbeing when duties return.

Here is part of a prayer from Daily Devotions by Revd John Ellis, Past Moderator of General Assembly. He is thinking of the responsibilities given to the apostles in spreading the Gospel and of our tasks too.

God of mystery and surprises
help me to serve gladly where you have called me.
In achievement and in despair,
assure me that you have a purpose.

I hope that you feel ready for the work of everyday when the blue skies and sunshine of the beach holiday picture on the August page of the calendar turn to a quiet flowing stream showing the first tints of orange in the overhanging branches!

Happy September

Blessings Joyce

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
Sept 1st	D Beattie	R Tunncliffe	D Houston	See board
Sept 8th	M Burrows		M Houston	
Sept 15th	P Ewell		J Reynolds	
Sept 22nd	B Ward		M Burrows	
Sept 29th	S Verrill		D Thompson	
Oct 6th	R Tunncliffe	P Ewell	The children	

St Andrew's

Rosemary Update

While on one of her early visits to us - I think 1994 - Rosemary, our friend from Uganda, was introduced to St. Andrews. It was 'love at first sight' on both sides!

Over many years she has single handedly raised and educated three orphan nieces(no benefits/grant schemes available from her government). In her retirement she has had the satisfaction of two nieces qualifying as nurses and the third just completing teacher training.

Her selfless generosity using our annual donations entirely on the girls prompted us this year to request she spent the money to benefit herself.

She writes "I have bought a stove which uses gas or electricity as this will save me lighting the charcoal stove which does no good to my wheezy chest. Bless you all in your thoughtfulness and Christian love."

Shirley Moore

Strawberry Tea

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported the Strawberry Tea on 29th June. £162.35 was raised for church funds.

Coffee Morning

**26th September 10.30 am
8 Towthorpe, Nunthorpe.**

Raffle

No Bring and Buy Stall.

Instead it would be appreciated if "coffee drinkers" could bring a tinned or packet etc. food donation for the Middlesbrough Food Bank.

All proceeds will go to the food bank.

Tickets £2.00 available from Doreen, Sheila, Joan or please just come along.

Coffee for Charity

23rd June.	Rosemary Fund.	£20.00
30th June.	Shoe Box Appeal.	£17.00
7th July.	Macmillan Cancer.	£36.50
14th July.	Zoe's Place.	£20.30
21st July.	Shoe Box Appeal.	£20.00
28th July.	Kidney Research	
4th Aug.	Middlesbrough Food Bank.	£14.61
11th Aug.	Rosemary Fund.	£21.00

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boy's Brigade

Details available from church elders.

Redcar

Macmillan Cancer Relief

Coffee Morning,

Friday 27th September

2019

from 10.00am– 12noon.

At the home of
June Haverson,
27 Buckingham Road,
Redcar TS10 1ET

All are welcome.

Duty Rota

	Vestry	Door
01 Sep	June	Brenda
08 Sep	Cath	Brian
15 Sep	Elaine	Brian
22 Sep	June	Brian
29 Sep	Cath	Brian

Golden Anniversary

At this golden anniversary time of the first man to land and walk on and a start to the exploring of our natural satellite in 1969, here are a few facts:-

The moon has no dark side, just the side not half lit by the sun

We can liken its monthly movement to a horse galloping around a circus ring. It has a large black patch facing those outside the ring. So its “dark side” means the not visible side.

Our little finger nail at arm’s length easily covers a full moon.

A rising full moon looks larger when close to a recognisable object such as a ship at sea or a chimney pot on the skyline.

The moon in art is always much too large. For instance an Italian restaurant in Saltburn with its wall painting of Venice.

John Crowther

The Robin Sang

The robin sang, the flowers bloomed all nature played its part,

The only discord in this scene was man’s reluctant heart.

The Creator’s manual he ignored so a path of pain he trod

Thinking that he knew the best man turned away from God.

The mess we’re in has been self-made, all answers lie with Him,

A world of beauty now laid waste, infected with man’s sin.

But knowing that these things would be God had another plan,

Though undeserved and full of grace in love He reached to man.

His Son His own Beloved One came down upon this earth,

He died, He rose, He ever lives to give to man rebirth

Heaven and earth will pass away, a new Creation formed,

Where birds will sing, the flowers bloom and all will be reborn.

Megan Carter

Redcar Calendar

Weekly

Thursday

9.30am Prayers

10.00-11.30 Pop in Centre

Preachers

	Marton	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	11.00am
1-Sep	Jan Harper Meeting	Donna Moore Communion	Norma Johnson Communion
8-Sep	Dave Elliott Parade	Maranny Jones	Jan Harper
15-Sep	Jan Harper Communion	Margaret Harris	Ken Harris
22-Sep	Brian Stephenson	Ian Smith	Catherine Milburn
29-Sep	Norma Johnson	Philip Gray	Jan Harper

Material for the October Magazine to church editors by Sunday 15th
September please

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