

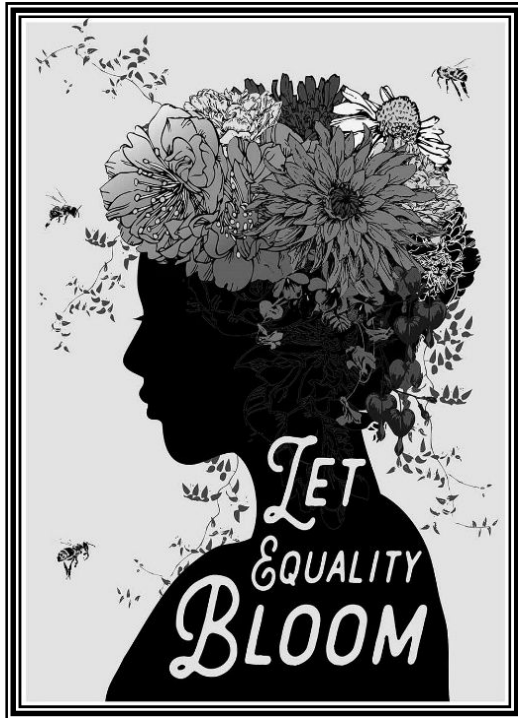
Group News



** June * 2018 * June **

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk



I Am Not My Hair (Featuring Pink)

*I am not my hair
I am not this skin
I am not your expectations, no (hey)*

*I am not my hair
I am not this skin
I am the soul that lives within.*

Every black woman has a ‘hair story’. Part of that story is bonding or fighting with her mother over washes and combings (because little black girls need help to groom their hair). Part of that story is going through her teens and experimenting with hair straighteners, hair colour, cutting, colour, curling and uncomfortable rollers and hours under the hair dryer.

Every woman has a ‘body image’ story. Concerned about looking ‘good’, struggling with someone else’s definition of ‘good’. Too fat, too slim, too short or tall or dark or fair or straight or curvy. We may not think that our look defines us but other people do! So, we struggle to look or sound in a way that meets YOUR expectations. YOUR expectations at work or church, on the streets, in private. YOUR expectations of what kinds of abilities are normative and which ones are not.

Every Christian has an ‘identity’ story. Perhaps it’s the moment we REALLY heard the Word that we are ‘made in God’s image’... really heard it in our spirits. The moment it occurred to us that we are already beautiful and articulate and accomplished, already. Per-

This reflection, is one of a series produced by the World Council for Mission (www.cwmission.org) that explores the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost through the medium of a song, itself an outpouring of the Spirit, voiced in praise or protest, announcing the alternative world we see as the Spirit’s gift.

haps the moment is not an event but a process, a kind of spiral that takes us back to the place of hearing the Word again and again, each time with a greater sense of knowing.

Yet even in wanting to apprehend this sense of wholeness that the scripture speaks of (made in God's image), we know that in our environment, our community, the images fed to our minds, are in conflict with the wholeness that in our spirits we believe to be God's truth.

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you. (John 16: 12-15)

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost signifies the extending of God's redemptive process to all people. The movement of the message of Christ beyond the Jewish community. The Holy Spirit is the agent of the new birth (John 3: 5). How amazing that Christ's truth speaks to us today, about the salvation of our souls as well as the redemption of our sense of self. India Arie's song is not simply about hair. It is a commentary on the issues of race, history, gender, culture, hegemony, social exclusion, cultural misappropriation that dominate our attention and concerns. Even though we want to love ourselves, all these messages say that we do not. The song celebrates finding satisfaction in who we are regardless of our inability to meet the expectations of others, giving up the struggle to 'look right' and focusing our energies on learning how to 'be right'. We can 'be right' in Christ.

In my 40s I stopped straightening my hair and then I grew locks. In my 50s I cut it really short and finally found the phrase to answer the many questions of 'What are you doing with your hair???'.

Now I say ‘My hair should serve me, I should not serve it’. Waking up to the truth about ourselves is also part of our testimony.

When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. (John 15: 26-27)

Prayer

God in whose image we are made, your Holy Spirit came to guide us to all truth. May our spirits hear the truth that we are beautifully made and that we are called to use our lives to bring beauty to your world. We surrender our insecurities at the cross of your love, we reject the messages that tell us that we are not good enough and offer ourselves to be redefined in the light of YOUR expectations for us.

Yvonne Dawkins (from Jamaica)
Deputy General Secretary for Programme in Council for World Mission

Synod Prayers

3rd June: Environment Sunday

Trinity LEP (Methodist/URC), Gosforth; Revd Peter Holwell (Methodist) and Ms Mary Bellshaw (Community Worker) who are part of the ministry team there Chair of Newcastle Methodist District, Revd Stephen Lindridge

10th June: PCM, the churches in the Limpopo presbyteries in and around Gaza Province

The Anglican Bishop of Berwick, the Rt Revd Mark Tanner

17th June: Refugee Week (England and Wales) 19th – 25th June

24th June: Stockton URC; St Columba’s URC, Billingham; St Andrew’s Mission, Thornaby; St George’s URC, Hartlepool

Guisborough

Some of you may know that I am a member of URC Music, ‘an organisation within the URC of people who believe that music is a vital part of Christian worship and that every worshipping community should be encouraged to develop a range of traditional and new music to enhance its prayer, praise and meditation’ .

When I joined, not long after I moved to Guisborough, there was a branch in the North East, and I did managed to go to one or two meetings before it closed due to lack of support. Nowadays, most branches are in the South, and some of these, alas, are slipping away.

However, every two years, we have a Celebration Day, and although, once again, they have mainly been in the South, I was lucky enough to attend two, one in 2008 in Christ Church, Port Sunlight, and one in 2015 in West Park, Harrogate.

At Port Sunlight (often featured on Songs of Praise) after the business meeting we were taken through two anthems by the Director of Music of Liverpool Cathedral, enjoyed an impromptu organ recital at lunchtime, and ended by a wonderful service which contained one of Alan Gaunt’s (our President) hymns. (incidentally, that morning walking up the path to Christ Church, with this rather pleasant gentleman, I was edified to hear him addressed as ‘Mr Gaunt’ !).

Three years ago, I enjoyed a weekend in Harrogate. Westgate church was very welcoming, and after worship by the minister Rev John Campbell, we were thoroughly drilled in John Rutter’s songs by Marilynne J R Davies, brilliantly accompanied by one of the West Park organists. I have only ever played John Rutter’s music once and found it fiendishly difficult, so I very much admired this lady, who rounded off her accomplishments with an organ recital.

The next day, some of us returned to join with the West Park congregation in their Harvest Festival.

As part of the membership of URC Music, I receive a magazine twice yearly with many interesting articles. I was tempted to include some of the words of wisdom from these, one in particular on choosing hymns, called ‘not a Hymn Sandwich’, but I hesitate to offend anyone.

We have quite a broad range of music at Guisborough, thanks to the very varied worship leaders we have. From the base of Rejoice and Sing we make various forays into Worship Today, Mission Praise, Junior Praise, supplemented by print-outs from Church Hymnary 4 (the Church of Scotland book), and the New Methodist hymn book.

I may be mistaken, but I think there is only one person in the Guisborough congregation who reads music, but others can follow the line of the music and can tell whether to go up or down, and some know how to recognise ‘fast notes’ and the meaning of various signs and dots. And I’m sure that’s the case in the other churches. . Is this Ernest’s real legacy?

As you know, I play at least three pieces of music during the service. I generally play something quiet and contemplative in order to generate the right mood for worship I have inherited many books of Ernest’s organ music, and have been using Bach’s Chorales of two lines which are just right for the offering. However, I decided on a change last Sunday, and played Chopin’s Raindrop Prelude. I would love to be able to use Ernest’s book of Bach Prelude and Fugues, but they are beyond me at the moment. They fit in

	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
3rd June	M Burrows	J Reynolds	B Ward	C Templeman
10th June	M Houston		D Beattie	J Basham
17th June	R Tunnicliffe		J Basham	M Sunley
24th June	B Ward		P Etwell	M Houston
1st July	P Etwell		M Ward	M Ward

so well: the quiet prelude for these moments of personal prayer after the Bible goes out, followed by the more stirring fugue to enable us to get ready to face the world again.

Let us all play our part in making the worship in our churches a worthy offering to God.

Madge Baird

Guisborough Calendar

Tue June 12th 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

St Andrew's

Congratulations

Congratulations to Jonathon and Annmay Etwell on the birth of their baby son, Austen Alex.

Also to new Grandma and uncle - Grace and Steven. We send our very best wishes and prayers to them.

Strawberry Tea

Strawberry Tea to be held on Saturday 30th June 2.00pm. Cake Stall and Raffle. Tickets £3.00 available Doreen, Sheila or Joan or just come along on the day. Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Christian Aid Walk 2018

On the 5th May 2018 Steven and I set off on a nine mile hike on a Christian Aid Walk from St Leonard's Church in Loftus. It was a hot sunny day. There were 55 of us taking part in the walk including Grace who hadn't walked with us for a few years.

We walked through Loftus and on to the fields and farms overlooking the surrounding area. We saw some archaeological digs along the way and we were given a bit of history about them from our walk leaders. We walked through Holywell Farm and down into a valley at Loftus Woods where we saw a lot of bluebells as this is the season for them. Next on to Handale Abbey where the group had a history talk about that location. Then we went along Tickhill Farm and Waupley Wood.

At 12.30p.m. at Liverton Village Hall we were welcomed by the villagers to a lovely soup lunch. By 1.30p.m. we had sett off down Liverton Road, along Rosecroft Lane and in to Rosecroft Forest where we saw a lot of wild life.

Then it was back to Loftus and back to our cars ready to go home again at 3.00p.m.

Grant Sutherland

Well done, and many thanks to Grant, Steven and also Grace.

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boys Brigade

Details available from ministers
and church elders

Dementia Awareness - A Journey for Us?

The recent Creative Responses to Dementia event in North Ormesby which I attended gave much food for thought on how churches can better cater for the spiritual needs of the increasing number of people living with Dementia, and their carers. It was encouraging to hear what is already happening across the North East and Cumbria and, with the projected increase in numbers of those affected in an ageing population, this has to be recognised as an area of future need and opportunity.

We heard from the Dementia Co-ordinator from Churches Together in Cumbria, a local carer and Faithfully Ageing Better worker before dividing into workshops covering Worship and Dementia, Music and Song, Reminiscence, Spirituality, and Stories for the Soul. After lunch we were introduced to Livability which provides Christian support for those with disabilities, followed by discussion and a Q& A session.

After Roger's address at St Andrews on 6th May, I believe that this could be the way God is urging us to move on and outwards in a world of change. We should commit this to earnest prayer, be encouraged by what is happening as locally as Ormesby and the number of leads already available to help.

Shirley Moore

Coffee for Charity

22nd April	Daisy Chain	£25.00
29th April	Larchfield Community	£15.00
6th May	Air Ambulance	£14.00
13th May	Boys' Brigade	£32.45

Redcar

Easter Pascal Candles

One of the memories from my time – the 1940's in Ruswarp Village School, is that King Alfred the Great made tall candle clocks with hour numbers on them.

We may compare Easter candles to these, for they remind is of Jesus' life on Earth.

A line of a hymn sung earlier in the year says, 'Still to come the Mystic Close.'

That event, the crucifixion, is marked on the lower part of the candle by five nails pushed into the candle.

The Easter Candle therefore reminds us of His life as seen in the weekly readings and the spoken words from the Lectionary. That is Advent Sunday and all the weeks to the last Sunday after Trinity.

So we journey with our Lord on our yearly pilgrimage drawing nearer to the Life to come.

John Crowther

Redcar Calendar

Weekly

Wednesdays	10:30am Singing Group
Thursday	9.30am Prayers
	10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre
	2.00pm Thursday Prayers at Catherine's

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 10.00am	Redcar 11.00am
3-Jun	Jan Harper Church meeting	Rosemary Taylor Communion	Julie Martin
10-Jun	Brian Stephenson	Ken Harris	Jane Rowell
17-Jun	Norma Johnson Communion	Donna Moore	Margaret Harris
24-Jun	Ken Harris	Norma Johnson	Catherine Milburn
1-Jul	Margaret Harris	Ken Harris Communion	Jan Harper Communion

Material for the July/August Magazine to church editors by
Sunday 10th June please

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