

Group News



*** 2018 * September * 2018 ***

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

56 Westgate, Guisborough, TS14 6AY: Church Secretary 01287 637273

Redcar URC

Station Road, Redcar, TS10 1RQ: Contact 07742 720 090 .

St Andrew's URC, Nunthorpe and Marton

Cypress Road, Marton, TS7 8PD: Church Secretary 01642 315206

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

This month our minister's letter is from our friend and recently appointed interim moderator, Rev Norma Johnson.

Let me tell you a story of a king, king Darius. One day he brought together his three closest men who both guarded and advised him in order to decide which one of them should be his chief adviser. It was suggested that they each wrote down their answer to this question, 'What is the strongest?'

They would all write down their answer, put it in a sealed envelope and the envelopes would be put under the king's pillow for him to open the next morning.

One had written '**Wine is the strongest**' because a man is brave under its influence and is ready to kill and make trouble and in the morning he cannot remember anything about it.

The second wrote, '**Women are the strongest**' because men will do anything to please her and keep her happy.

The third, by the name of Zerubbabel, wrote, 'It is true that the king is great, that men are many and that wine is strong, but who rules over them, who is the master? Surely it is Women.'

Zerubbabel then went on to speak about '**Truth**'. 'Sirs, we have seen that women are strong, the earth is vast, but Truth also is great, it is stronger than all else. The whole earth calls on truth for in it there is no injustice. There is injustice in wine and kings and women, in all men and their works; but Truth abides and remains strong for ever. There is no favouritism, no partiality in truth; in her judgement, there is no injustice. Hers are strength and royalty, the authority and majesty of all ages.

Praise be to the God of Truth! The king said, Zerubbabel you have proved to be the wisest, ask what you will. Zerubbabel answered, 'Remember the vow you made when you came to the throne; you promised to rebuild Jerusalem and you also made a vow to rebuild the temple. This is what I ask of you, that you fulfil the vow you

made to the King of heaven.’ The king granted his request and Zerubbabel praised God saying, ‘From you come victory and wisdom, yours is the glory, and I am your servant. All praise to you for you have given me wisdom.’ His fellow Jews praised the God of their fathers who had given them leave and liberty to go up and build Jerusalem and the temple which bore his name.

Story taken from the Apocrypha, 1 Esdras 3:4 – 4:4 (abridged)

How and with what shall we build the Church of Christ whose foundation is Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone. The cornerstone of a foundation connects the walls and bears the weight of the building on itself, holding the entire structure together and now he connects us all by dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit. The Church was built upon the solid foundation of Christ’s teaching as the people met regularly to hear the apostles teach, to share the common life, to break bread and pray.

Recently we were given the good news that the East Cleveland Group could declare a vacancy. One of the first tasks we set about is to prepare a Church Profile, in our case three profiles, one for each Church, and consider how we connect with one another within the Group. It’s a time to consider not only how we see ourselves but how others may see us. When we look in a mirror we see an image, other people see the real me. Let’s take an honest look at ourselves, our weaknesses as well as our strengths for what we leave out of a profile may be more telling than what we put in to it. A goal needs a plan and a process and during the first process I invite each member to spend five minutes a day to pray about it. My intention is to produce a small prayer card which will be available at our Group Service on the 9th September.

Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life.’

May we continue to support and encourage one another as we seek to be the Church of Christ and reflect his love in the world.

God Bless,

Norma

An Article from Footsteps:

HomelessnessWhat can we do?

I often walk past people who have been sleeping rough and I wonder how best to help them. The main question I have is about why they are there.

Recently NECAT (North East Churches Acting Together) held a day conference for people from across the Churches in the NE. Mel, our Synod Clerk, and I both attended. No one really answered my wondering in specific ways but I came away understanding more about how some people do come to live on the streets. One speaker did talk of how many find family life difficult and can no longer remain at home, including the story of a young 12 year old, whose parents sent him out regularly to prostitute himself and then take his earnings back to mum and dad!!! I find it quite shocking and hard to imagine in some ways as my own upbringing was so good in comparison but, in other ways, due to my time as a teacher in a primary school, I am aware that many children do not find the safety and security in their homes that is theirs by right.

At the conference we were encouraged not to judge the homeless but to give to them. The hope was that The church in Crook has been a place of love, worship and prayer for 150 years. St Andrew's Dawson Street was built in 1868 and with other Methodist churches joining over the years had we would give money but I have always struggled to do so because I don't want to be feeding drug or alcohol addictions. But two major ways in which, we as individuals, as congregations and as a synod can engage is through prayer and also by taking on the Government to ensure that good housing is available for those who are in need.

We could give funding and other aid to projects, one of which is the Key Project run by churches in South Tyneside. Set up way back in 1992, it is an organisation which enables young people aged 16 – 24 to learn the skills to live independently. It employs

some staff but also uses young people, mainly students, as volunteers. In 2017 some of the achievements were that 121 young people received housing advice and guidance, 36 families used mediation to resolve their issues and concerns, 477 food packs were given out, 66 young people were supported in their first flats (www.keyproject.org.uk)

Another initiative is Green Pastures Community Benefit Society, an ethical organisation which looks for folk like us to invest our cash so that property can be purchased to house the homeless. There is an interest rate of no more than 5%. The project has, at present, 1000+ investors, 900+ people have been housed and partners ensure that the rent on these properties is paid and that the houses are maintained well. Could we, as individuals or as congregations or as a synod become involved? www.greenpastures.net/invest

In Gateshead, Oasis Aquila Housing is a Christian charity supporting families and individuals who are homeless or vulnerably housed. www.oasisaquilahousing.org

Nightstop North East is a venture whereby vulnerable young people or adults are offered a bed by couples or families who have a spare bedroom. Advice is offered as these folk are encouraged to find their own homes and people with drug or alcohol addictions are not helped in order to protect the volunteers offering room.

Homelessness isn't confined to those living on the streets for many families find themselves having live in hostels. Also many individuals and families live in rented housing which is not really fit for purpose and this issue is also being addressed by some agencies The festival was opened by Baroness Hilary Armstrong and Jean Cowing JP. Many visitors and guests enjoyed the festival's weekend of And, of course, there are many refugees within our synod who need to be housed. There are several agencies across our synod helping here (West End Refugee Service in Newcastle along with others). Action Foundation was one we heard about at the conference learning that not only are hosts and rooms found but

also daily bus tickets given out along with advice and help as refugees move into their own accommodation
www.actionfoundation.org.uk

The main theme I picked up during the day was that we need to take on board DIT rather than DIY. DIT is Do it Together and, of course all the projects mentioned are about empowering people to find and enjoy good quality homes. And if we can relate all of this to 'Walking the Way' we would need to consider what Jesus would do so that we can be living his life tod

Meg Robb

Taken from Footsteps - newsletter of Northern Synod

Synod Prayers

SEPTEMBER

- 2nd Sept: The RC Bishop of Middlesbrough, the Rt Revd Terry Draine
- 9th Sept: The work of the URC (Northern Province Trust Ltd) and convenor, Revd David Grosch- Miller and Secretary Dr Andrew Hamnett
- 16th Sept: St James's URC, Newcastle; St Andrew's URC, Kenton; Revd James Breslin
- 23rd Sept: Longframlington URC; Rothbury URC; St Andrew's URC, Glanton; Revd Ed Butlin
- 30th Sept: PCM, Lay training and evening classes at Khovo in Maputo Northern Baptist Regional Minister, Revd Dr John Claydon

Holy Habits – Book Club

The first meeting of the Holy Habits Book Club will take place at St Andrew's Church, Marton on Thursday 13th September at 7.15pm.

This will be an introductory session, so you don't have to have done any reading beforehand. There will be some spare copies of the book available if you don't have your own.

If you would like more information please give me a ring on 01287 654 093.

Susan Griffiths

Autumn Retreat at 'The Sanctuary'

(situated in a quiet road close to Darlington Town Centre)

Saturday 20th October

10am to 4pm

Come for the Morning 10 – 1pm or All Day

Cost £5 includes refreshments throughout the day

Lunch extra or bring a packed lunch

To book or find out more please contact Norma

01642 481423 or 07528828822

email norma.johnson@talk21.com

Guisborough

Seeing and Believing A Creative Quiet day at Keld URC

If you identify summer as the season of freedom to have adventurous days out, then my summer might have begun on 27th June this year. I sincerely hope that as you read this in September, you too have joyful memories of a summer of sunshine with friends and family in places of your choice.

Revd Stephen Collinson, joint minister for Tees/Swale group of churches, had 3 dates planned for Reflective days based at the Keld Resource centre. This date in June was the first. Those of you who know the village of Keld can picture the chapel with the newly refurbished Resource Centre opposite. The Centre is showing an exhibition of Stephen's photographs of the life in the Dale and it was a most comfortable base for our day.

We come to this place – to find inspiration in nature's beauty and the peace of remoteness.

We come this day – for a time specially set apart from our daily round.

We come with a purpose in mind – to find something of you, God, speaking to us in what we see and what we do.

The day began with introductions and a time of shared prayer (as above). There were only 4 of us in the group - Meryl White, a non-stipendiary minister and her husband Graham, Stephen and me.

Meryl and Graham had already spent a week exploring the area and were spending their holiday in the Manse. They had travelled from their home between Bath and Bristol. As the day progressed we heard more about Meryl's worship family who meet in the listed Upton Cheyney chapel. As minister, her dedication to the spiritual welfare of this congregation was evident. The practical

Guisborough Calendar

Tue 25th September 7.15pm Church Meeting in the hall
Sun 23rd September 10.00am Harvest celebration with Revd
Ken Harris

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 oth-
ers. Details on church notice-
board

obstacles to be overcome included a constant need for repair of the building, a lack of any heating (hot water bottles provided) and a small, aging congregation.

Through the morning, there was stimulation for all senses in walks from the village. The meadows were being cut so the sweet smell of warm grasses filled the air. A small blue tractor was about the business of lifting the rows of flat stems, swishing them around to dry in the heat of the day: the rhythm of the machinery a sound track to my walk.

Each of us came to the lunch break with some vision/focus to share. Stephen and Graham were photographers, Meryl wanted to explore lino printing techniques and I had brought some threads and fabrics for who knows what!

The countryside of the upper Dales where Keld sits was on that day a vision of God's beauty. We were surrounded by images from Psalm 104, verses from which Stephen had chosen for further reflections leading us perfectly into a peaceful time of afternoon creativity.

By the close of our time together, we all had thoughts and images to share – some spoken or planned but others in print, photo or stitch. Surprisingly, although we all chose to use these different media, there was some continuity across our inspiration. Aware of everything had stimulated our senses and we found that we had some shared focus.

The field patterns had suggested the care and protection of a Good Shepherd. The photographers had recorded roads and tracks including people coming in and going out which to them suggested living the Christian life. The stone used in the landscape and buildings could be an example of permanence and strength in the Christian community.

Our final prayer provided a gentle end to our day together.

*Although the day is now ended,
 as we return to our homes and routines,
 may the joy we have had today and the inspiration that has
 fired us,
 stay with us as we continue to seek you through our creative
 endeavours
 and give voice through them to our faith in you. Amen*

Thanks to Stephen, Meryl and Graham – great company for an adventurous day.

Ps. Upton Cheyney chapel has a website. Their minister Meryl and her congregation need our prayers.

Joyce Basham

	Vestry	Communion	Door
2nd Sept	B Ward		D Beattie
9th Sept			
16th Sept	P Etwell		J Basham
23rd Sept	D Moore	D Beattie	P Etwell
30th Sept	J Reynolds		M Ward

St Andrew's

Quiz, Pie and Pea Supper

Saturday 8th September
7.00pm for 7.30pm

Tickets £6.50 available from Sheila,
Doreen or Joan.

Raffle

Proceeds in aid of church funds.

Strawberry Tea

The Strawberry Tea held on 30th June raised £201.00 for Church funds.

Many thanks to everyone who helped and supported this event. It was a lovely afternoon

Shoe Box Appeal

Just a reminder that we will be participating in this appeal once again for 2018. There will soon be leaflets available instructing what can and cannot be included in the boxes. Hopefully we will be able to send a many boxes as we managed last year.

Coffee for Charity

17th June	Daisy Chain	£21.50
24th June	Kidney Research	£31.00
1st July	Children's Liver Disease Foundation	
8th July	Rosemary Fund	£20.90
15th July	Embrace	£20.00
22nd July	Teesside Hospice	£18.00
29th July	Rosemary Fund	
5th August	Leprosy Mission	£17.25
12th August	Macmillan Nurses	£23.00

Redcar

God on the move down aisle twenty-three in Tesco

A number of years ago we were asked as individual churches what we visualised for our churches and I said a plan to help the homeless, the abused, the less fortunate and the persecuted. James Ch v27 What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this, to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering. This vision has been in my heart ever since, we bring it to our Thursday afternoon prayers.

That vision began to take shape on Monday 11th June down aisle twenty-three in Tesco. Barbara Thompson, from Newcomen Methodist Church in Redcar, stopped me, as she knew I was a member at Redcar U.R.C. She explained that Churches Together in Redcar required a hall in the centre of the town so that refugees, who had been housed close by, could get together regularly to socialise.

The vision became a reality on Thursday 26th July. Barbara and I both felt the presence of God that morning in Tesco, the strange thing is that although I am always in Tesco on a Monday morning, Barbara never is, but something, and call it whatever you like, divine intervention maybe prompted her to shop at Tesco that morning.

Fourteen years, quite a wait but worth it just to hear the happy buzz in our hall on a Thursday afternoon.

Ecclesiastical Ch3 v1 – Everything that happens in this world happens at the time God chooses.

Catherine Milburn

Jack's Diary

Hi everyone! I've been taking medication so I'm back! Seems an absolute age since I put pen to paper, do you realise that it is eleven years since the first 'Jack's Diary.' I don't see Polly much these days, but wee Jack is still with us, he's old like me, and completely blind, but quite sprightly and he always knows when I am near 'cos his little tail wags like mad!

There is a new love in my life, her name is Ruby and she is beautiful although a bit flighty. She has no interest in me whatsoever which is a bit of a downer as I have always been very popular with the ladies. Which reminds me: while out walking last week with Alex, doing my favourite walk, down

the back alleys, (I know all the best places to hang out!) there was a full length mirror leaning against a wall and I caught a glimpse of myself. Oh my, I still have it – that special something and let me tell you it's not only the humans that I make happy. A couple of weeks ago Boo the ginger 'moggy' from next door but one ran over to me and gave me a kiss! Now I call that celebrity status, you are never too old!!

Joshua Ch14 v108 - 111:

Caleb speaking: 'Look at me I am eighty-five years old and I am just as strong today as I was when Moses sent me out. I am still strong enough for war or for anything else.' – Good News Bible

Catherine Milburn

Redcar Calendar

Weekly

Wednesday	10:30am Singing Group
Thursday	9.30am Prayers
	10.00-11.30am Pop-in Centre
	1.45pm Prayers at Catherine's – all welcome

A year of extremes? – my personal view

We have and perhaps are still enjoying hot, dry weather. The flowers and the growth of fruit and other crops is good yet rain is badly needed for a good harvest and for the reservoirs. We have enjoyed the tennis, although the football didn't give us quite the result we hoped for. Making up for those, we applauded the consideration and care given by a past Middlesbrough player who is still a **star**.

We may not like those numerous insects. Yet all the little moths in our homes are not a health hazard as are the buzzing black flies. As I write a very small insect moves across the page. It is a fraction of a millimetre across yet still a miracle of God's creation. Extremes too in the media, can we change 'Brexit' into a swear word to be avoided?

On the international scene surprising and sometimes controversial links have been made. No more provocative war-games in the Korean peninsula is an encouraging move towards World peace. Yet too much and too quick changes on the international scene may worry us for we like to know in which direction we are going. For President Trump is thin ice for our feet.

From the *Child's Garden of Verse*, in the July, August edition of Group News I gave an inanimate object human qualities. This was very unscientific. We had a sleepy, frosty yet fiery sun. It was in bed looking like a blood red orange. SO I will just write 'guilty.'

John Crowther

Ceremonial Headgear – a light hearted but true piece for Summer

There are many special hats worn on working days or for more special occasions. The world-wide church has a number of these worn by bishops, priests, deacons and other Church ministers are also recognised by their dark coloured or black clothes. Two hats worn by Catholic and Anglican priests are birettas and Canterbury Caps.

I was secretly amused when in a local restaurant I saw a waitress wearing what appeared to be a biretta in the centre of which there was a small black pom-pom. But I was mistaken it was her black top-knot hair bun in just the right place so her hair resembled a biretta. I soon realised I was wrong for as yet the Roman Catholics do not have women priests. When I told the lady about my misunderstanding she was amused and agreed with me.

Word meanings constantly change

Is the Bible now more difficult for young children to understand?

For was Moses into computers? He brought two tablets down from Mount Sinai and they were not to be swallowed like the ones I was given as a child.

Tablet can also be bought in the Lake District and in Scotland.

Comments on the June Magazine

The cartoon showing the upside down Ark plan reminded me of the upside-down lived in boat as described in the Dickens' novel 'David Copperfield.'

The sun and moon were not drawn too large in the drawing as usually happens.

John Crowther

Preachers

	Marton 10.00am	Guisborough 10.00am	Redcar 11.00am
2-Sep	Brian Stephenson	Bill Middlemiss	Norma Johnson
9-Sep	Hilary Collinson Group Service	No Service Group Service	No Service 10.00am St Andrew's
16-Sep	Norma Johnson Communion	Guis Folk	Donna Moore
23-Sep	Jan Harper	Ken Harris	Rosemary Taylor
30-Sep	Ken Harris	Margaret Harris	Jan Harper

Material for the October Magazine to church editors by Sunday
16th September please

Group Editor – R Wheeler, 2C Gypsy Lane, Nunthorpe,

Middlesbrough, TS7 0DX.

Telephone: 01642 300546.

Email: roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com