



# *Group News*

## **Minister**

Rev Meg Robb, 10 Farington Drive, Marton (326343)

Rev Catey Morrison, 31 Torcross Way, Redcar (471778)

*\* May \* 2007 \* May \**

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

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Dear Friends,

Have you ever been in a situation when on meeting someone, although you are aware it is someone you know, you can't quite place him or her? Sometimes it is because that person has acquired a new image with a new hairdo, even a different hair colour. Weight loss or weight gain could contribute. Whatever, it usually takes a while to realise who the person is and what has changed.

Well, that's how it was for the disciples during their post Easter meetings with Jesus. However you understand the resurrection, and we weren't there, it seems that it took the disciples some time to realise that here was Jesus with whom they'd just spent the better part of the last three years. He was different; he had a new image, an image that no amount of new hairdos or even cosmetic surgery would ever bring about in us. And yet...

The book of Genesis tells us that we are made in the image of God. And, of course, we now that that image is marred. But in Jesus, the man, we see how the truly human life should be lived and in the risen Christ we recognise that the mortal becomes the eternal.

Now I'm never going to be fully Christ-like whilst on this earth but it is my aim, as a Christian, to move, with the Spirit's help towards that goal. And just as we all need to make regular visits to hair-dressers when we find our hair difficult to control, we all ought to take regular checks on whether image as Christian has gone a little wild and needs some attention. And whilst for those who are subject to baldness there is no longer a need to keep their locks in check, we all of us constantly need to groom our Christ-like image.

Wouldn't it be good if a family member or a friend could see a difference in you? It may not be that they would see a physical difference but a change in the way you live, that you are calmer, more joyful, kinder, more thoughtful. Maybe they would see how you live according to God's ways of love and justice. All of that should cause others to think, at the very least, and who knows it may eventually lead to someone to recognise Jesus... because that someone can see him at work in you.

Every Blessing,

Meg

# *Synod Prayers – May*

- 1 Hexham United Reformed Church. Rev David Bedford's birthday
- 2 Haltwhistle United Reformed Church, sharing resources with the Roman Catholic Church
- 3 Bellingham LEP: URC/Methodist North Tyne Group. Rev Gordon Brown's birthday.
- 4 Falstone and Kielder – North Tyne Group
- 5 Wark LEP – North Tyne Group
- 6 Mr Peter Smith, lay preacher in Tynedale
- 7 For small congregations, that they may be affirmed and their strengths celebrated
- 8 Rev Tony Ritchie's birthday
- 9 For all engaged in training, both teachers and learners. Rev Nigel Goodfellow's birthday
- 10 Local Churches Together groups
- 11 The North East Oecumenical Course at Durham, and those training for ministry there
- 12 The North East Churches Regional Commission
- 13 Christian Aid Week (13-19 May)
- 14 For our larger congregations enabling everyone to discover a sense of belonging
- 15 For our links with the world church, both formal and informal
- 16 Rev Janet Flawn's birthday
- 17 'Jesus no longer bound to distant years in Palestine, but saving, healing, here and now'
- 18 Rev Kevin Watson's birthday
- 19 For our Synod's contacts in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
- 20 We give thanks for ecumenical services regularly held locally
- 21 Rev John Pugh's birthday
- 22 For all on the Training for Learning and Serving programme
- 23 North East Christian Churches Together
- 24 For those we have contact with the United Protestant Church of Belgium
- 25 Rev Ann Jackson's ordination anniversary
- 26 Pilot Companies in our Synod: those children who attend, and all who lead
- 27 'O breath of life, come sweeping through us'. Pentecost, the Church's birthday
- 28 Bishop Kevin Dunn, Newcastle and Hexham Roman Catholic Diocese
- 29 Give thanks for signs of new life in the Church around us
- 30 That as a church we may make more use of the opportunities provided by the internet
- 31 Tynedale Mission Partnership

Pray for your own local church and the community in which it is set.

## **Ancient**

All our power for good is derived from God

*Cyprian - Bishop of Carthage (3rd century)*

## **Manse Prayers**

Tue 1<sup>st</sup> May Marton  
Tue 8<sup>th</sup> May Guisborough  
Tue 15<sup>th</sup> May Marton  
Tue 22<sup>th</sup> May Guisborough  
Tue 29<sup>th</sup> May Marton

Manse Prayers are open to all. They begin at 8.00am and are held at the following venues:

Marton 10 Farington Drive  
Guisborough 31 Oakley Close

## A Clear Conscience

According to a story recounted by Stuart Chase, writer and lecturer, a certain young man enjoyed a good position in a bank. Everyone liked him; he was a favourite with the bank officials, and he was popular with all the members of the board of directors. Undoubtedly, promotion and a brilliant future were in store for him.

Then, from a source outside the bank where he worked, came a proposition that appeared very attractive. In his proffered new work he would get considerably more money, and he was strongly attracted to the possibility. However, the proposition involved some questionable side lines which caused him considerable concern.

One morning at the breakfast table he informed his mother about the whole situation, and asked her what he should do. His fine old Christian mother sat at the table for a long while, with her head bowed in silent prayer, and then, with her eyes sparkling with resolution and with a smile of confidence upon her face, she responded: "My son, when I come to awaken you in the morning, I shake you hard, and you don't stir. I shake you hard and you moan a little.

I shake you harder still and you open one eye: and then I shake you really hard, and you awaken. My boy, I would not like to come some morning to awaken you, and find you already wide awake with a worry on your brow!"

The son found no difficulty in deciding the question.

*Anonymous*

## Contentment

If you're always wanting something else or something more – your will miss the happiness behind your own front door... All you need for heart's content can be created there. Heaven's where you make it – all around you everywhere.

Tomorrow is a landscape that is hidden from your view – so waste no time in wondering what it will hold for you... Take what life now offers with a quiet and thankful mind. In your own small corner many treasures you will find.

Don't despise contentment. It is something rich and rare – in an age of restlessness, frustration and despair... It is an achievement; in itself a victory: to make a world within a world and live contentedly.

*Patience Strong*

## A Lenten Discipline

So what's the big deal about living without supermarkets in Lent? What are you trying to do? What's God got to do with it? Is there anything about self-denial or sacrifice in it? What's the down-side? Isn't it a bit gimmicky?

There's no denying that the change in modern shopping has been to the detriment and in some cases the demise of the small shopkeeper. It has also had an impact on our farmers who get squeezed so hard on pricing, uniformity and appearance of their produce. This is the second time we've attempted to stand in solidarity with them as a Lenten project so yes, it can be done, but no, it isn't easy-but does have its bonuses! It makes you think market shopping, search out farm shops, farmers markets, private fishmongers, nearest Camphill Village community and what else can the milkman provide us with? Our experience is that shopping needs more planning and needs to be done rather more often with further to travel. The plus points:-many extremely friendly assistants who really live up to the name; meals of really succulent meat and delicious breads though not quite such a positive story of fruit and veg, with less variety at the greengrocery. The reduction in packaging means automatically "slimming the bin". It's more difficult, however, to buy fairly-traded goods (though Threshers do now stock fair-trade wines) and not possible to obtain the low-fat, low-sugar options at small retailers. On the all-important issue of costs-overall, very little difference is our verdict, but for anyone who normally uses the check-out "cash back" facility-beware of running out of money!-and carry a cheque book as well as a card!

So will this change our shopping habits in the long-term? Yes the memory of such wonderfully tasty food will spur us into continuing to use the Larchfield Community shop, balancing the convenience of supermarket with others' needs. And the God question? If we accept our God is a God of justice he would surely endorse such an initiative, so maybe it's a contribution to our discipleship? As for the self-denial bit-yes, CHOC ICES!!!

*Shirley and John Moore*



# Christian Aid Week 13th – 19th May

## Resisting the hurricanes

Chus works with Christian Aid partner Aprovehni, putting down tyres and filling sandbags to strengthen the river bank. This vital work helps his community to live with the effects of climate change

### Christian Aid/Eduardo Martino

'We definitely have more hurricanes and floods than we used to. I've lived here all my life and it wasn't like this before. Strong winds and big waves from the sea cause more floods now.'

*Dominica Echevarría*

Jesús Antonio Echevarría, usually known as Chus, is 15 and lives with his sister Dominica and her husband in the San Luis la Herradura area of El Salvador. This area is particularly prone to natural disasters. Hurricanes are a growing threat, and the low-lying land is very susceptible to flooding.

Chus's father died when he was a baby and he sees his mother only occasionally. He has been brought up by his sister and her husband. The family live in three huts close together. Chus shares a hut with his brother and the family's livestock. Chus's hut was battered by Hurricane Stan in 2005, and this has left holes in the roof. The family survives on just a few dollars a day.

Chus likes to get involved with his community in a practical way, and has worked on the local river bank with Christian Aid partner Aprovehni. He has always wanted to do this, although he was initially told he was too young. However, his enthusiasm paid off and he was allowed to work, in return for some food. He is seen in the picture opposite strengthening the river bank with tyres and sandbags. In the aftermath of Hurricane Stan he helped to make up food parcels for other families.

Chus is not the only member of his family to be involved with Aprovehni. His sister and brother-in-law play an active part in analysing what needs to

be done in the community, organising working groups, and carrying out practical work on the river bank and drainage channels. Even his seven-year-old cousin, Jackeline, participates in Aprovehni's workshops, which use sport and art to help children forget the trauma of hurricanes and earthquakes. She has also taken part in rubbish-collecting brigades.

Aprovehni encourages people to get involved in, and take responsibility for, protecting and developing their own communities. Its work includes reducing the risks created by natural disasters, reducing environmental pollution and responding to emergencies. The changing climate is creating a situation that calls for an urgent response. The increased frequency and intensity of hurricanes and subsequent flooding demonstrate the catastrophic effects that climate change is already having on some of the world's poorest people.

Archbishop Oscar Romero memorably referred to the 80 per cent of El Salvadoreans living in poverty as a 'crucified people'. Romero worked tirelessly on behalf of poor people, speaking out against injustice and oppression. This brought him into conflict with the government and the military. He was assassinated by the army in 1980.

Chus is just one of these 'crucified people'. Yet with the help of Aprovehni, he is helping to save lives. Although he is poor, he is helping people to adapt to climate change and to live with the effects of natural disasters.

A gift of just £6/€9 to Christian Aid would enable Aprovehni to clean a well after a flood. However, your support will be giving so much more than this. You will also be paying for the education and training of the local community – people who can make an immediate difference, particularly young people like Chus.

Please help poor communities around the world grow a better future this Christian Aid Week. (UK registered charity number 1105851 Company number 5171525 [www.caweek.org](http://www.caweek.org))

# Linthorpe

## We missed you at the Prayer Day!

or those of us who were there, it was a day of renewal and refreshment, - of learning about prayer... of having time to pray. So often, for many of us, prayer is that list we roll out at the end of the way, - usually when we're tired and our concentration is not at its best. Prayer, at its best, is better than that and deserves better than that. God deserves our best and Sat. March 17<sup>th</sup> gave all of those who were there an insight into how that best could be achieved.

Catey opened the day with an intro and prayer and there was opportunity for quiet prayer and reflection. A whole hour, with guidance if needed, of silence. It was a real blessing to have time to be silent, time to be still - a jewel in a world of noise, bustle and stress.

After lunch there were opportunities to choose from 3 workshops, which gave time to explore various forms of prayer more deeply.

And finally there was another time of quiet personal prayer.

It was a special day, and one, which, I hope, will be repeated regularly. Thanks to Meg and Catey and to those who led the workshops.

*Jan Harper*

### Modern Cynic?

Christians don't normally lie, only when singing hymns.

*ex Church of Scotland treasurer 2007*

## Moderator's Visit

Wednesday March 28<sup>th</sup> was another special occasion, when Rev Elizabeth Caswell led a mid week worship at Linthorpe. Rev Caswell is this year's Assembly Moderator and is quite an inspirational lady. Meg led the service and Rev Caswell preached the sermon, which was on the theme of how we are called to make a difference in whatever small way we can, if we trust, love and believe in God.

Although the event clashed with some football match or other (!!) there was a good congregation who were in good voice!

*Jan Harper*

## Coffee After Worship

18<sup>th</sup> Mar – Macmillan Nurses

*£6.80 – Helen Kettlewell*

25<sup>th</sup> Mar – Macmillan Nurses

*£8.30 – Helen Kettlewell*

1<sup>st</sup> Apr – Childrens' Liver Disease Society

*£26.00 – Stuart & Dorothy Knox*

15<sup>th</sup> Apr – Breathe Easy

*£13.50 – Betty Harris*

Thanks to all who contribute so generously to these and the other worthy causes

## Rotas

	Vestry	Porch
6 <sup>th</sup> May	J Haverson	S & D Knox
13 <sup>th</sup> May	A Piercy	S Mapplebeck & C Tovey
20 <sup>th</sup> May	J Harper	M Tilley
27 <sup>th</sup> May	R Harris	J Haverson

## Scripture Readers

6 <sup>th</sup> May	S Mapplebeck
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Parade
20 <sup>th</sup> May	B Potter
27 <sup>th</sup> May	F Rowe

## Church Flowers

6 <sup>th</sup> May	Christine Tovey
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Brownies
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Rosemary Wynn
27 <sup>th</sup> May	Ida Steveley

# Guisborough

I was rather taken aback when Maureen reminded me I had offered to do this month's newsletter. I hadn't written it down and these days if it's not in my diary it doesn't get done. It's been a rather busy month for me and for the church. I only managed to attend two of the lent services organised by Churches Together, one being at our own church with several of us taking part. I was offered the opportunity to give my testimony but, in preparing, I felt it was rather self-indulgent and I wasn't sure how useful it would be to others. Paul speaks in his letters of aspiring to the gifts that build up the church. People were very kind afterwards, in letting me know they found it helpful, and it was quite a surprise to hear my own words quoted back to me on the following Sunday. We all tend to think we have nothing important to say but others may hear our words and find some meaning we had not imagined. Our words may be just what they needed to hear at that moment. Ernest often tells of his surprise, on meeting a former pupil, when they tell him what an important influence he had on their lives, something he never imagined at the time.

My last week of term at University was closely followed by Guisborough Choral Society's 40th anniversary concert. It was good to see some of

you there. One who was much missed was Ernest, conductor for 10 years and a fine tenor. Some of you will already know about his accident and subsequent hospital stay. I am very relieved to say that he has made a rapid recovery and was in his usual place on the organ for Easter Sunday.

This Holy Week our ministers provided short lunchtime services, due to work commitments I only managed one. Ken also provided a Lent Bible Study on the Psalms. Numbers may be small at these events but I always remember Jesus' words "where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be with them."

Catey led us in our Maundy Thursday re-enactment of the Last Supper and really brought it to life. I couldn't help wondering as we passed round the bread and wine in reverent silence whether the disciples had been as silent, perhaps overpowered by Jesus' sombre mood, or were they busy asking each other "what does he mean by this?" , or were they still chatting and relaxed after a celebration meal not really understanding what was going to happen.

On Friday morning many of us joined the Churches Together march of silent witness from the Salvation Army Citadel to the Market

## Guisborough Calendar

Sat	5th May	8.00am	Prayer Breakfast – Guisborough Christian Fellowship at 32, Thames Avenue.
Sat	12th May	10 – 12noon	Farmers' Market – Church Open Day. Volunteers welcome.
Sat	19th May	10 – 1pm	Elders Conference – Port Clarence Community Centre.
Sun	20th May	10.00am	Guiz Kids – Guisbro' Churches JC's joining together at Prior Purselove Sports Centre.

### Weekly

Tuesdays	12.30pm	Bible Study
Thursdays	9.30am – 11.45am	Coffee Morning
Thursdays	11.30am	Prayers and reflections with Catey, Meg, Ken and some of us

Cross. This year the sun smiled on us, the sound system behaved impeccably and we had the security of a police car escort at the rear as we walked up Westgate, holding services at each church along the way. I was most moved as we were singing When I Survey the Wondrous Cross and I noticed a lady had just walked out of the florist with flowers in her hand but had stopped in the street to join her voice to ours. We were reminded by Kath Bowe, Methodist minister, that Jesus was crucified on the town rubbish dump so that we didn't have to end up on the rubbish dump of life.

Our Easter Day was filled with joy. Catey led an all age service with many of our young people eager to take part answering her Easter questions. Helen Senior was accepted into membership. She has already become a valued part of our congregation and we are always glad to see her when she can be spared from her duties as a district nurse. We all enjoyed some chocolate eggs afterwards, all except the diabetics who were sorely tempted but

stood firm. The recent clement weather meant we were back in the church again and this looks like being permanent. I think it did us good to worship in the hall; it shows that as a fellowship we are not dependent on the building.

Helen lent me a book called Marley and Me about a naughty but loveable Labrador. I read the final chapters while ill in bed with 'flu' and got through several hankies. The sad ending reminded me of my own dog, Gipsy, who is ageing fast in front of my eyes. I try to give her more of my time and I need to be more patient, not presenting her with any nasty surprises or hurrying her when she seems slow. Many of my friends and family are also getting older, as are members of our churches, we all need to remember to do the same for them.

*Donna Moore.*

Date	Vestry	Communion	Door	Flowers
6th May	D Houston	M Baird	M Houston	B McDonald
13th May	R Tunnicliffe		J Reynolds	V Beattie
20th May	J Basham		D Beattie	M Sollett
27th May	M Burrows		M Robson	D Collins

## *Redcar*

### **Beetle Drive with Faith Supper**

**Saturday 26th May 2007**

From 6.00pm

Adults £2.00 Children £1.00

Members of other East Cleveland  
Churches very welcome.

### **Visit of Rev Elizabeth Caswell**

Approximately twenty people attended the service hosted by Linthorpe Church, at which the General Assembly Moderator, Rev Elizabeth Caswell gave the address, so quite a disappointing turn out!

I was surprised when looked at my watch and realised that she had been speaking for 30 minutes, she was so easy to listen to, I really wish that all of you could have been there to hear and to meet her.

*Catherine Milburn*

## Prayer Day

Thank you to Marton Church for hosting the Prayer Day on 17th March. I found the whole day spiritually uplifting. Meg had written a dialogue about our Wednesday Prayers, which inspired the writing of a prayer. I was deeply moved by a brightly coloured print of what K

saw as the crucified Jesus comforting a woman – it was in fact Jesus washing the feet of Peter, which I just could not see until it was explained to me, and just thought ‘wow!’ but you would have to see the print to understand.

Coffee, tea, biscuits and tasty home made soup were kindly provided. A wonderful day.

*Catherine Milburn*

## Redcar Calendar

Wed 9-May	7.00pm	Elders Meeting (rearranged from 26th April)
Sat 19-May	10am-1pm	Elders Conference at Port Clarence Community Centre
Sat 26-May	6.00pm	Beetle Drive

### Weekly

Thursday	9.30am	Prayers
	10.00-11.30am	Pop-in Centre

## *St Andrew's*

### Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning to be held at the home of Albert and Margaret on Thursday 24th May 10.30am till noon. Raffle and bring and buy. Tickets £1.00 available from Una and Margaret. Please come along and support this event which is in aid of church funds.

### Ladies Fellowship

We had a lovely talk and computer slide show on the Holy Land from Meg at our last meeting. Thank you Meg for doing this at short notice. Our next meeting, which will be the last of the session, will be our Annual Dinner. Please meet at Kirby College at 5.30pm on Wednesday 2nd May 2007.

## St Andrew's Calendar

Fri 4-May	7.30pm	First Friday Prayers at St Mary's C of E
Thu 24-May	10.30-12noon	Coffee Morning Albert and Margaret McGarrell

### Weekly

Wednesday	9.30am	Prayers
Friday	6.15pm	Boys Brigade
Sunday	After Worship	Traid Craft Stall (Last Sunday in month)



## Chris' Update



Hello from the centre of the universe otherwise known as London. First of all I'd like to thank all those who sponsored me for the "Cover To Cover" reading the entire Bible beginning to end out loud none stop! This between me and the rest of the team took 79 hours and 20 minutes! We raised around £1000 which will be going to support youth ministry in the Kingston Borough.

### What's new?

Since I last wrote a lot has changed and God never seems to stop moving. I always thought I'd return home in September but God has decided otherwise. As now through listening to God and his will in my life I'm now not moving back but have a place at Roehampton University studying a foundation degree in "Ministerial Theology" and along side that a job at Kingston URC as a part time youth worker and worship leader.

### So what do young people know about God, the church and Christianity?

What do young people know of God? And why aren't they in the church? Questions recently asked by Churches all over the country, especially here at Oxygen and in London with the gang culture evolving. The gang culture itself leaving devastating consequences of young people being beaten up, stabbed, or worse shot.

When I and the team thought about the question we came to the conclusion that although we did a lot of youth work the only way we would get a true view of what your everyday young person thought would be to outside of our work. We decided that we'd take 40 American missionaries and take them to the streets of Kingston and the surrounding areas to ask the young people of Kingston what they knew and thought about God, the church and Christianity. The results said a lot. Most young people had no idea who Jesus was and saw the church as pointless and boring. When we replied and told them who Jesus was and what the church was about they just simply

were amazed they had no idea and wanted to know more. It was as if they had never heard before and when we asked them most replied they hadn't heard. This must send alarm bells ringing not just for here in Kingston but all over up and down the country. As it's not as if Kingston is unique in this problem as seems to be a prevalent throughout the country, with all my colleagues within London and beyond agreeing. This made me think its all well doing big youth events, local youth groups, youth services, cell groups etc, but we have a real need as the church regardless of anything to get out in to the "real world" and to meet the people where their at on the streets as that's where the lost are. As the church we are here to share in fellowship yes, but we are also here to be disciples of God, spread the truth and show people the salvation of Jesus Christ and the only way we can truly do this is to find all those who don't know him. The way to find those who don't know on the streets is not to expect them to come to us in the church but go out onto the streets and meet them where their at and take God's life changing message out to the world like Jesus did. As it's not people don't want to know, they just simply never been told which excites me. This is because it means that the amount of potential the church has in the community is immense and as individuals and the church we can be the ones to spread the word, be a light and change peoples life's for the better in a world of uncertainty and darkness. This can only be a good thing and make our times of uncertainty in the church the most exciting in a revolution of the church.

### ADVANCE NOTICE

## Die and Dea Supper

with musical entertainment

to be held on

Saturday 2nd June at 7.15pm

Price – £2.00

*Proceeds in aid of church funds*

*Chris Wheeler*

# *Lingdale*

## Flower Rota

6<sup>th</sup> May Mrs M Curnow  
 12<sup>th</sup> May Mrs H Dunstan  
 20<sup>th</sup> May Mrs P Griffiths  
 27<sup>th</sup> May Miss S Griffiths  
 3<sup>rd</sup> June Mr B Dove  
 If anyone else would like to be included in the flower rota please let me know – Susan.

## **Mission Partnership Elders Conference**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May  
At 9.30am

## **Irish Blessing**

May there always be  
 Work for your hands to do,  
 May your purse  
 Always hold a coin or two.

May the sun always shine  
 On your window pane,  
 May a rainbow be certain  
 To follow each rain.

May the hand of a friend  
 Always be near you,  
 May God fill your heart  
 With gladness to cheer you.

## **Lingdale Calendar**

### Weekly

Wednesday 11.00am – 12noon Coffee  
 12noon – 1.00pm Soup and Roll

## Modern

We don't call it sin today, we call it self expression

*Baroness Mary Stocks advocate of women's rights (Late 20th Century)*

# *Preachers*

	<b>6-May</b>	<b>13-May</b>	<b>20-May</b>	<b>27-May</b>	<b>3-Jun</b>
<b>Marton</b>	9.30am C Morrison	M Robb Parade	D Harris	C Morrison	J Harper
<b>Lintho</b>	11.00am J Harper	M Robb Parade	K Harris Communion	C Morrison	K Harris
<b>Guisbo</b>	9.30am M Robb Communion	K Harris	M Robb	M Robb	C Morrison Communion
<b>Redcar</b>	11.00am M Robb Communion	C Morrison	C Morrison	M Robb	J Lamplugh
<b>Lingdale</b>	6.00pm M Robb	C Price Communion	M Robb	K Harris	C Price

Material for the June Magazine to church editors by Sunday 13th May please

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