

THE REVIEW

JUNE 2021



A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER GARDEN TO LIFT YOUR SPIRITS.

**WADDINGTON STREET UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
DURHAM CITY DH1 4BG**

Church Website: www.durhamurc.org.uk



Dear Friends,

“Your mission, should you choose to accept it...” So begins each episode of Mission:Impossible. And guess what, the task does prove to be difficult but doable. The Mission, which is far from Impossible, is achieved just in the nick of time!

Our mission as Christians is also a matter of choice. Jesus does not brow beat us into doing what is truly impossible. Nor does our faith mean that we have to fit into one mould: just as the world is broad and wide, so there are many ways that God calls us to participate in God’s activity.

The mission is not ours but God’s: it’s not up to us to save the world, or the church, or ourselves—Jesus has already taken care of salvation. Faith means accepting that fact and co-operating with the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, to move in partnership with God.

Now, ‘mission’ is a word which can fill church folk with dread! As a Mission Enabler in my previous pastorate I know from experience that people bring to mind all sorts of misconceptions when the word is mentioned—more activity, more work, more meetings, or (shock, horror) more door-knocking... No wonder many choose not to accept the mission.

But mission is **God’s** activity in the world, the ongoing work which does not depend solely on our efforts. We can opt to block the movements of the Holy Spirit, putting our way above God’s way. Or we can choose to co-operate with God’s purposes, drawing alongside the ongoing work of the Spirit, and participating in the community of God. The way this works out in practice depends on our strengths and abilities, and the one who has created us knows full well how we can contribute in our own way. None of us need to fit uncomfortably into a mould. But if we do choose to accept the mission of God, the beginning and end is prayer.

Prayerful mission, should we choose to accept the privilege and honour of walking the way of God today, is both a launchpad for us to discern our role in God’s activity and it is an end in itself: to be with God is its own reward. This way is the Way of Life walked first by Jesus and continued through disciples ancient and current.

This mission which we are invited to join in with is open-ended, open-minded, and open-hearted. But it isn’t impossible. It can be as simple as looking out for each other, listening to people (including those we disagree with), and learning to love all the more. While it may well be the case that further activity is necessary to be faithful to what God wants us to do, the foundation for this work must always be prayer.

Our mission, therefore—should we choose to accept it—is first and foremost to pray. So, please pray with me for wisdom as we discern the way forward. Already I have seen unexpected paths open up in all the churches across my area. This for me is a tentative sign that God is indeed at work. We need to make sure we’re co-operating with and not working against God’s purposes. Do join with me (in your own way) to pray with God in order to reveal the ways in which we could join in with the mission of God today.

Yours faithfully,

Marcus

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS

Ministerial Services – Revd. Marcus Hargis is contactable in the following ways:-

Phone: 0776 949 2629 and 0191 366 4930 (messages can be left on either).

Email: marcushargis@outlook.com For routine pastoral matters, please first approach your Elder.

Time of Sunday Services – 10.45 a.m.

COPY DATE FOR THE JULY REVIEW IS – SUNDAY 20th JUNE 2021.

Please be aware when submitting articles that our Church Magazine goes on the website and is available for anyone anywhere in the world to read.



Services lasting 40 minutes have resumed in the Church.

As before, numbers will have to be limited to allow for adequate spacing between members. It will also still be necessary to book in through Val Hodgson –

by email if possible valhodgson2159@gmail.com

or telephone – **07418027266** by the preceding Thursday.



Another fundraiser

John and Hillian Durell, who might otherwise have been organising an afternoon tea, are offering weekly online articles (by email) entitled ...

From our Lockdown Kitchen. These articles will provide memories

connected to the making and eating of delicious food and include the recipes for us all to try and perhaps make for future fundraising events.

Sign up now by sending an email to johncdurell@gmail.com.

All donations for access to the weekly articles will go to our nominated charities of St. Cuthbert's Hospice and Christian Aid. Please support this enterprising fundraising idea if you can.

It was agreed that Janet Thornborrow would take responsibility for collecting donations for access to John and Hillian's articles and that donation envelopes would be left in the church.

Contact Janet on Email jthornborrow@outlook.com or mobile is 07541956778.



THANK YOU

Just wanting to say a big thank you to you all for our Golden Wedding good wishes, cards, flowers, bubbly and chocolate.

We really appreciate all the love, prayers and support we have had for ourselves and our family over the past 50 years. How time flies!! We feel very blessed.

Kath and Sandy

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND CHURCH NEWS



CONGRATULATIONS ...

Isabel Howie's great grandchild has arrived safely.
He is called Charlie Matthew Hill, born 16th April.

His parents Abigail and James Hill are delighted, as are first-time grandparents Sharon and Richard Skilbeck, as well as Uncle Lewis. Some members will remember Sharon and her twin sister Michelle.



WERS Update

The West End Refugee Service continues to support large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in Newcastle. Many of you, for a long time now, have helped with financial support, clothing, toiletries and food supplies. Their Clothing Store is still CLOSED but they are very grateful for any support with everyday toiletries such as shower gels, shampoos, toothpaste, toothbrushes etc. and household cleaning products, hand sanitisers etc.

Non-perishable food items such as pastas, rice, tinned foods and biscuits are also much appreciated.

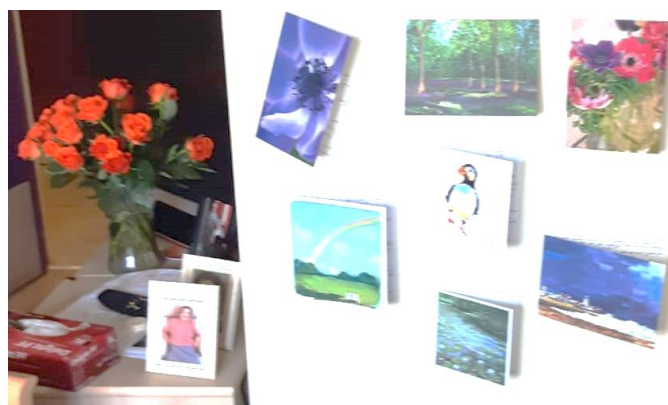
For further information on WERS and the work they do visit www.wers.org.uk

Our COLLECTION BOX for WERS is in the church vestibule.

Thank you. **Kath Ogilvie**



Ian Graham's new address is: Room 1, Brancepeth Court Nursing Home, Hill Lane, Willington DL15 0PR. Those that wish to visit Ian can make an appointment for a pod visit by telephoning the home on 01388747698. Below is a photograph taken in Ian's room by Janet Thornborrow.





EDITOR'S LETTER

DEAR READERS,

What a great pleasure it was to have Marcus preside over Communion and preach an uplifting sermon on Sunday 16th May when we returned to church following the last lockdown. We were blessed by the induction as Elders of Val Hodgson and Richard Phua and the return to active Eldership of Janet Sarsfield. All three will be great assets to the Church. Peter Galloway's playing of the organ added greatly to the service even though we are not yet allowed to sing hymns. Peter surprised us after the service by telling us he had been in the Capitol restaurant in Claypath and seen our photograph on the wall there. He showed us the photograph on his phone and we remembered that when Les was Mayor of Durham City he cut the ribbon to re-open the newly refurbished restaurant which we entered via a red carpet – a lovely memory brought to mind thanks to Peter being so observant.

We heard of the sad death of Douglas Melville, husband of Yvonne. You can read Marcus' words at the funeral, in Durham Crematorium on 27th May, in this issue of The Review. Our deepest sympathies go to Yvonne and her son Stuart and his wife Jeana.

I am very happy to have returned to St. Cuthbert's Hospice shop in Claypath, Durham, where I have been a Volunteer for many years. They are short of Volunteers, particularly for some afternoons, and would welcome more help. Anyone who is interested should contact Karen, the shop Manager, on 0191 370 9364 for further information. Volunteering there is quite flexible and involves as many hours as you can do, not necessarily even every week. Full training is provided.



If you were surprised to see a dog in Church recently, let me introduce you to Peppa, a miniature poodle and soon to be Hearing Dog. Peppa was so well behaved in Church that I did not know she was there until I passed her on my way out. Sylvia and Ian Warburton have had her living with them and have been training her with the help of a Trainer who instructed them via video links. Peppa came with a supply of her own special food and her training includes treats for working. She has enjoyed running free at some point on her daily walk. Well done to Sylvia and Ian who used the time during lockdown to train Peppa who will be an asset and a good companion.

Peppa has passed all her sound training now and an owner has been selected for her. Peppa will jump on her owner to wake her in the mornings when the alarm clock goes off. If Peppa hears the door bell, phone or cooker timer she will alert her owner by sitting down in front of her. If the smoke alarm goes off Peppa will lie down in front of her owner to warn of danger.

My thanks to anyone who has contributed to this month's Review and, please, keep on sending your articles in to me - it is very much appreciated. **Lucille Thomson**

The next issue of The Review will be published on **Sunday 4th July 2021**.
Contributions please to Lucille Thomson at church or BY POST or **Tel. 0191-3861052**
or e-mail **lesthomson@talktalk.net** – no later than **NOON on Sunday 20th June 2021**.



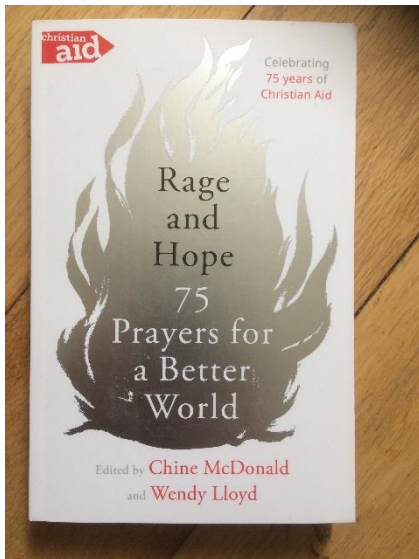
Notes from Elders' Meeting on Wednesday 5th May 2021
(held on ZOOM on line)

1. The meeting opened with a reading from Philippians chapter 4 verses 4 to 9. These verses offer the peace of the Lord to alleviate our fear and unease, with the promise of His support to do all that is true and honourable. The reading was followed by prayer.
2. It was agreed that Janet Thornborrow would take responsibility for collecting donations for access to John and Hillian's articles entitled "From our Lockdown Kitchen" and that donation envelopes would be left in the church.
3. Sandy and Helen Cooper have made positive progress in organising the Zoom option for the service in the church on the 16th May 2021.
 Currently the Wi-Fi signal is more than adequate and there is no cost involved.
 The hope is that our Zoom services in Waddington Street URC will be offered across our group of churches.
 The meeting expressed gratitude to Sandy and Helen for all the work.
 It was noted that the use of Zoom during services will maintain contact with those of our church and others who are unable to attend in person on Sundays.
4. We are making progress towards eco church accreditation
5. In addition to members of our church family encouraging Ruth Crofton to publish her weekly thoughts and prayers the elders were pleased to note that Jesmond URC has offered its support too.
 It was noted that it will be a long procedure to publication, but all profits from the venture will go to charity.
6. The group Sanctuary 21 are offering prayers of support for all churches across Durham and asked for specific details of the hopes and dreams of our church. These will be included in their prayers of intercession. Marcus is to respond to this request on our behalf.
7. Kath reminded us that Christian Aid week was approaching.
 Fred Robinson was promoting the use of e-envelopes. These can be obtained from Christian Aid's website or else via Fred.
8. District Reports were given with those mentioned to be remembered in prayer.
9. The meeting discussed updates to our website and progress towards its redesign.
10. Marcus' induction will take place on the 31st July 2021 at 3 p.m. at Denewell Avenue URC.
 It is being planned in accordance with the Covid-19 safety restrictions that will be applicable at that time. The arrangements will be finalised at the end of June and then details will be provided to the churches in our group.
11. During the time of the pandemic, bookings for our church premises has been suspended.
 Many of the groups who used the church building are very keen to return. The meeting decided that subject to government restrictions bookings could be made for the 1st September 2021 onwards.
12. The next elders' meeting will be Zoom online on Wednesday 2nd June 2021 at 7 p.m.

(Janet Thornborrow)

Celebrating 75 years of Christian Aid

“Rage and Hope.” A New Prayer Book



Last year the western world celebrated VE Day, the end of the World War II in Europe. In an address by The Queen (broadcast May 2020) the Queen paid tribute to the men and women at home and abroad who, in the words of her late father George VI “had sacrificed so much in pursuit of what he rightly called a great deliverance.” In an earlier speech (5 April 2020) the Queen told the British people they would overcome the coronavirus outbreak if they stayed resolute in the face of lockdown and self-isolation, invoking the spirit of World War Two. “We will meet again”, she pointedly said in a direct reference to the most famous British song from the war years of the 1940s.

As Christians we believe in life after death, we invoke the message of ‘We’ll Meet Again’; the promise of eternity cannot be shaken by unforeseen circumstances such as

wars or global pandemics. But as Christians we also believe in life before death, as the strapline of Christian Aid puts it. Christian Aid was born into the social and economic vacuum that followed the Second World War, with finances of European countries in disarray and a wave of refugees sweeping across Europe. In response to Jesus’ great commands, both to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves, Christian Aid’s work during the last 75 years has expanded to bring humanitarian relief and development across the globe. It has educated succeeding generations on the causes of poverty and advocated for countless victims of injustice, those without a voice. In these days of global uncertainty, changing climate and dwindling financial resources, the need to support this ministry has arguably never been greater.

To commemorate 75 years of Christian Aid, a new prayer book has been published entitled “Rage and Hope”, edited by Chine McDonald and Wendy Lloyd. It is a prayer book like no other. From Climate Injustice and Black Lives Matter to Violence against Women; from Discrimination against Dalits in India and the Coronavirus Pandemic to Inequality in Myanmar; Rage and Hope is a call to collective lament and prayer. Full of defiance and determination, it is an invitation to join Christian Aid and followers of Jesus around the world in a united chorus of Rage and Hope.

Bringing together voices from different contexts and cultures around the world, this is a collection of prayers of lament for the injustices of the world, and prayers of hope for the world we want to see. With a foreword from Walter Brueggemann, one of the world’s leading theologians, it also features contributions from leading writers Rhidian Brook, John Bell, Maggi Dawn, Principal of St Mary’s College, Durham and Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham. Published by SPCK, Rage and Hope also includes a prayer from Dr Rowan Williams, chair of Christian Aid and the former Archbishop of Canterbury. This book of prayers comes highly recommended.

Ray Anglesea,

May 2021



Douglas James Waddell Melville (1953 to 2021)

It seems ironic that the start of the service was delayed by a technical fault with the live streaming technology. Given Dougie's love of gadgets and computers, and several work colleagues present from his IT Department, we began with the joke that the crematorium staff had indeed tried turning it off and on again...

Douglas James Waddell Melville, Dougie, was born in 1953 at Falkirk Royal Infirmary to parents Agnes and Jimmy. Together with sisters Christine and Ann they lived in the area of Carron and then Carronshore within the town.

Sadly, his father passed away when Douglas was nine years old. But he got on with living as best he could, attending Larbert High where Dougie excelled at swimming as well as gaining qualifications to join the Civil Service when he was seventeen.

He went to London as a young lad from a Scottish village and lasted only a few months before coming home: the big city was not for him. It was years later that he twigged what had really been going on at the male hostel he lived in. Returning to Falkirk, he then worked for Carronvale Building Company, training to be a Quantity Surveyor. He enjoyed the work until one day he was walking across the roof joists of a hotel they were building when he froze! Once he had been helped down by two burly builders, he decided that would not be the career for him. Douglas then joined the Civil Service in Glasgow for National Savings. As a young man he was thrown in to manage a section of forty strong Glaswegian women of all ages. He said you took your life in your hands walking amongst them as they would think nothing of grabbing young men for a laugh and 'de-bagging' them; pulling their trousers down. It showed they liked you: no 'me-too' then!

As technology advanced, Douglas took an interest in computing, took the required ADP and Bristol exams, and moved sections to specialise in that role. Meanwhile, Douglas and Yvonne met each other (or were set up) at a mutual friend's engagement party. They did not click straight away as Dougie was too busy setting up the music for the party and he ignored Yvonne's chat—she says, 'You cannot compete with buttons and wires where Douglas is concerned'.

Still, they did indeed click eventually, and Douglas got some stick for going out with a girl who lived in Edinburgh! But he didn't mind and on 25th September 1976 they got married. On that day the gloriously long, hot summer of that year came to an end with wind and rain. And then, during their first years together: the historic church they married in was demolished; the minister died; and the reception venue burnt down. Not good omens, but the Melville's' carried on, lasting forty-four good years. Dougie and Yvonne's lives were enhanced with the arrival of Stuart in November 1982 and six months later they moved to Durham where Douglas gained promotion to head the team setting up the computer centre for National Savings.

Settling into Durham, Dougie had many interests: from rifle shooting to folk singing to trainspotting. As an aside, Dougie must be the only person who could take photos of nearly all brick nettles (that's toilets) on the North York to Durham lines. Dougie also helped Stuart and Yvonne with their interests: encouraging Stuart in football and karate; and supporting Yvonne with the Caledonian Society and Waddington Street Church. Although not a member of either, Douglas was accepted by the Society and adopted as part of the church family. He loved helping with IT, generously giving his time and skills. He especially enjoyed meeting with the students of Josephine Butler College with stories and personality to mix with all ages.

Dougie's love of tech and gadgets kept him sane and he was happy to share his knowledge and skills with everyone. His work and colleagues at the Land Registry gave him a platform for his skills and ability to make friends. He loved helping people and being part of the team. These friends and colleagues were paramount in keeping him going throughout his illness.

Yvonne says, in conclusion, that "Stuart and I will miss him more than words can say but we have our memories. We now realise how many lives Douglas touched and hope you all will share your memories too."

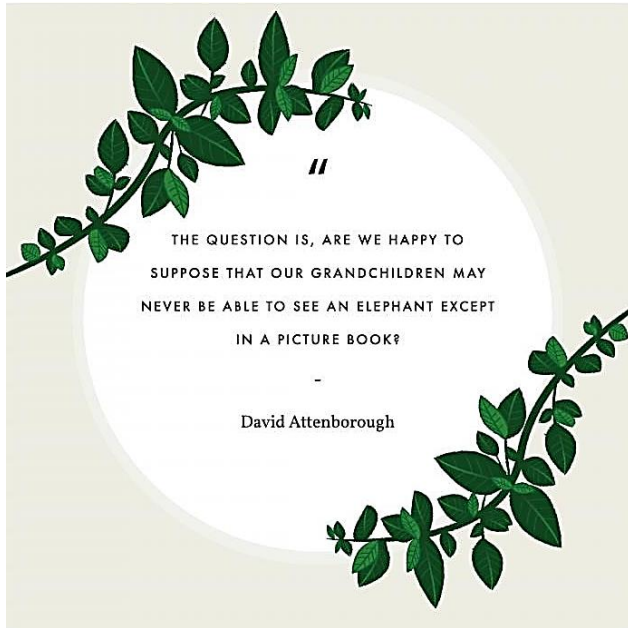
[The service at Durham Crematorium was conducted by our Minister, Reverend Marcus Hargis.]



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Feel no guilt in laughter, he knows how much you care.
 Feel no sorrow in a smile that he's not here to share.
 You needn't grieve forever, he would not want you to ...
 He'd hope that you can carry on, the way you always do.
 So talk about the good times and the ways you show you cared;
 The days you spent together, all the happiness you shared;
 And in remembering these moments, you will never be apart
 For the memories of Douglas's life will be held safe – within your hearts.

The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.' Psalm 24:1



As Christians we believe that the earth belongs to God and that as stewards of this gift of creation, we are tasked with safeguarding it, not only for our generation, but for those who will inherit it from us. There is a long and deep tradition within the Christian churches of adopting simple lifestyles which impinge as little as possible on the finite resources of the earth as an expression of Christian discipleship and trust in God. Now more than ever, with global warming, environmental issues such as pollution, deforestation, use and abuse of natural resources and the destruction of natural habitats we need to consider our impact on the earth and the creatures we share it with, and look at how we can adopt simpler lifestyles in keeping with our Christian values in order to protect the harmony of creation.

With that in mind, it was agreed at a recent Elders' Meeting that a working party be set up to look at how we, as a church, could commit to making positive changes in our church life, as well as individually, that demonstrate our care for creation. Thus, we have decided to explore the possibility of working towards obtaining accreditation as an 'Eco Church' through a Christian charity called A Rocha.

Eco Church – an A Rocha UK Project

A Rocha UK (ARUK) is a Christian charity working for the protection and restoration of the natural world and they are committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment. Underlying all they do is their faith in the living God, who made the world, loves it, and entrusts it to the care of human society. Their vision is for churches of all denominations to care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully. A Rocha work with churches through their Eco Church programme.

Eco Church is an Award Scheme for churches in England and Wales with accreditation at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. At the heart of Eco Church is a unique, online survey that enables churches to both record what they are already doing to care for God's earth, and to reflect on what further steps they can take, and then act accordingly.

The answers a church provides collect points towards their Eco Church Award – the more your church does, the more points you get! If your score does not gain you an Eco Church Award straight away, the idea is to complete further actions in order to gain the points necessary for an Award. For example, you can switch to a green energy company or start using Fairtrade tea and coffee supplies to gain Eco Church Award points.

The survey takes you through five key areas of church life:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

This free online survey and supporting resources are designed to equip churches to express their care for God's world in their worship and teaching; in how they look after their buildings and land; in how they engage with their local community and in global campaigns, and in the personal lifestyles of their congregations.

We do hope the congregation think Eco Church accreditation is worth pursuing. Please do speak to your Elder or a member of the working party if you would like more information, or to express any opinions or concerns you may have. The working party comprises Revd Marcus Hargis, Sue and Fred Robinson, Mina English (one of our students), Revd John Durrell and Helen Cockburn.

**A pastoral letter from the Revd Joan Grindrod-Helmn
Convenor URC: Northern Synod Pastoral Committee**

A YEAR ON....

In March 2020 the Synod Pastoral Committee said thank you and goodbye to Rev. Stephen Collinson, who was retiring and stepping down as convenor of the committee. A new convenor, that would be me, had to step into his shoes. Ordinarily this would be a tough task with a learning curve, but COVID arrived and threw us all into a tailspin. As convenor I have yet to meet with the Pastoral Committee in person, all our meetings moving to Zoom. Some parts of the learning curve have been steep and some have been completely new with issues that have had to be addressed in different ways than our traditional structure allows.

Pastoral Committee, a group of volunteers from across the Synod, usually helps churches in their search for a minister or CRCW, looks at groupings and tries to help where it can. With assistance from Synod staff, we try to keep up with what's going on in the churches, in SENE, or with people having health or family issues. We are often the first port of call when a church or minister is in need and so we are sometimes directing people to the right person or committee for their particular needs. To me the hardest part of the committee's brief is when there is nothing we can do. We can try to provide information or support, but sometimes our hands are tied and that is a very difficult place to be when we want to help.

Over the past year the churches in the Synod have faced enormous challenges, but there are positives to be drawn as well as the negatives. Hearing many stories from our churches, all I can say is **YOU ARE AMAZING! THANK YOU!** So many individuals have been so generous with their time and their money to keep our churches alive. We have shown to our communities how important work can be done and how we can pull together for the common good. We have shown that we are more than Sunday Christians. Your energy and your creativity in these months has been wonderful to see and read about. Your commitment to the welfare of the whole community, from the oldest to the youngest, from the highest to the lowest has been breathtaking. I thank you that you have shown me what missional discipleship is in action, not necessarily in a big old building but on railings, park benches, car parks, community centres and so many other places. I also thank you for your creativity and sense of adventure that has led to an explosion in digital church. As a minister I don't get to hear other services very often, but this past year has given me the luxury of being able to drop in on many services in our Synod and around the world. Have you? I have been humbled by the thought and hard work that has gone into producing these services, and the rich variety of talent we have among us.

I am well aware, as we come out of lockdown and with vaccinations on the rise, that as our churches try to reopen some will have great difficulties. A year has passed. We are all older, we are more tired, and we may have lost some of the members we so cherished. We look to the "new normal" that seems to change weekly and are tempted to throw up our hands in despair. But we have shown that we can be adaptive, we can be creative, we can be adventurous, we can be spirit filled, we can be community servants, we can be disciples wherever we are. We are not Sunday Christians, we are the church. A year has passed. I am certainly older and greyer, but hopefully a tiny bit wiser as to how the Pastoral Committee, Synod and URC works. Call upon us all when you are in need. We may be able to help, though sadly sometimes we are not able to help, but we do try.

Thank you for being the church in Northern Synod. Pray for each other in this stressful time, as some will be blossoming and others may feel life slipping away. God isn't finished with us yet, no matter what form we might take, we are a part of God's plan.

URC Northern Synod E-Newsletter Issue 51: 30th April 2021
[Thanks to Revd Ray Anglesea for forwarding the above letter.]

Ascension Day 2021: Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, Gateshead



I spent six months in 2018 at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead. As you walk through the main hospital entrance into a light and spacious atrium your eyes are immediately drawn to a hanging wall sculpture.

The artwork is called *Faith* and was designed by Gateshead-based artist Joseph Hillier. The installation is modelled at over twice life size (standing straight the figure would measure almost 12 feet), weighing in at more than half a ton (83 stone). The steel sculpture is intended to bring public art into the heart of an innovative new unit which provides state-of-the-art emergency care for people in Gateshead.

As I walked past the sculpture many times to the lifts or to buy a welcome cup of coffee during long afternoons, I began to look at the sculpture in more detail. It gradually dawned on me, to my eyes at least, that this sculpture hanging in such a high and lofty position on the atrium wall, bathed in sunshine, resembled Christ's ascension. The resurrected and exalted Christ, is remembered today. Christ returns home to his father. Healed. Christ still with his wounded hands and feet takes all our earthly pain, our Covid loss and sickness – our humanity - into the heart of God. Rather than finding a hospital chapel to pray in before stained glass, a cross and candlesticks, I found myself praying and sometimes singing before this sculpture – “Crown him the Lord of love, behold his hands and side, those wounds yet visible above in beauty glorified.”

But as I looked further at the sculpture I found the face of the sculpture, Christ if you like, looking down on me, and like his disciples in the Gospel accounts of the Ascension, Christ pressing me to take his message of love and compassion, of humility and service to the ends of the earth, well at least to my local church environment. A bi-focal faith perhaps? Me looking up at the wonder of the biblical event, Christ the King, the healed Christ - and yet - Christ looking down on me? Such an image reminded me of the very last book of the Bible where there's another breath-taking and wonderful scene. It's a dramatic picture of heaven descending and God coming down to earth. The Ascension followed by, if I can use such a word, the Descension. It's a vision of the fusing of heaven and earth when the two worlds, once separated by sin and evil, finally become one. It's nothing less than the answer to the Lord's own Prayer for the earthing of heaven. The mission of Jesus is complete – heaven and earth are at last reconciled. The Kingdom has finally come. His Kingdom present here, perhaps, in the healing ministry of the Queen Elizabeth hospital?

As Christ in the sculpture looks down on the hospital, a further wonder of the Ascension story I am reminded of is the promise that the Holy Spirit will be given to the disciples. 'Stay in the city' says Jesus 'until the Holy Spirit is poured out upon you.' In one of the New Testament letters, the Ascension is likened to the triumphant return of the emperor, emblazoned with battle honours, who showers gifts on his grateful army. And pre-eminent among the gifts that God gives us is the Holy Spirit, God here among us, God within us, God between us, God before and behind us, empowering us for life, for service, for mission, for art, for science, for discovery, for holiness. The Spirit opens up to us all the wonderful God-given possibilities that lie beyond our dreams or our imagining. Yes, the disciples were not the same after the Ascension. And neither can we remain unchanged by what we have seen and heard. I cannot remain unchanged by the healing gifts found in the medical teams of this wonderful hospital.

I like what the sculptor Joseph Hillier sums up in a press release when the statue was unveiled. "My intention was to use my ability as a sculptor coupled with an innovative use of contemporary technology to make a figurative work, which transforms any sense of trepidation at our approach to a hospital into wonder and excitement. I want the work to present an image of a human body which overcomes the laws of physics, to become weightless, as in a dream. The piece creates an image of humanity, surpassing the bounds of possibility to create a sense of faith in the hospital, as a place where the human body is understood and can be successfully treated."

Ray Anglesea

Ascension Day: 13 May 2021

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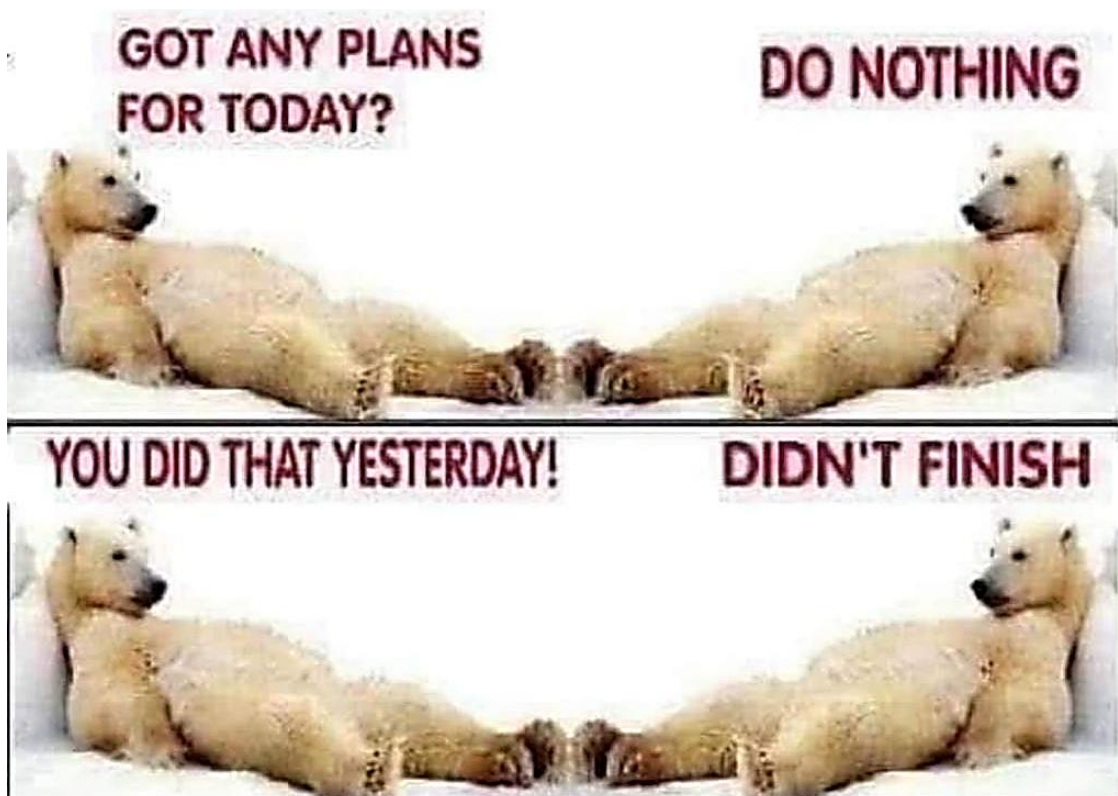
*From February 2021 issue of the Bethel Newsletter – another version of - **You Are Unique.***

Think of all the people who live or ever lived on our planet since the very beginning of time. None of them is like you! What a miraculous thing it is to be you! Nobody has the same combination of talents, abilities, sorrows and opportunities. No one has the same friends, family jokes, acquaintances. Nobody's finger prints are the same. No one has the same concerns or goals like you. No one! You are unique!

Accept and enjoy this uniqueness. You don't have to pretend to look more like others expect you to be. Don't be afraid to be different. No one in the world has the same things going on in his mind, soul, spirit as are going on in yours. It is a gift only to you. Treasure and share your uniqueness, nobody can speak your words. Nobody can smile your smile. No one can bring the same unique impact of you to another person. Wow, what a precious and special person you are. Enjoy your uniqueness, let it flow out among your family and friends, all the people you meet. Give yourself away and be inspired by the fact that you are **UNIQUE!** Love yourself and your uniqueness.....you are the only one of **YOU!** Once you are gone from this life.... there will never be another you.

Thank you to Jill Lee for this one.

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In Memoriam – HRH Prince Philip

I was privileged to represent the United Reformed Church at a service held in Durham Cathedral on Tuesday 20th April 2021 at 5.15pm. The programme described it as “Evensong: A Celebration of a Royal Life – marking the death of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh KG, KT, OM, GCVO, GBE, DCL (Dunelm) 1951.”

As you would expect, it was a highly formal occasion, with some sixty of us guests spread out (thanks to Covid) throughout the vast enclave of the cathedral. The event was led by the Dean of Durham, the Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett, who was at pains to make us all feel welcome and at home. The service itself consisted of a series of prayers, psalms, hymns, anthems and bible readings (lessons), all of which lasted some 45 minutes. The lessons were read by HM Lord Lieutenant of County Durham, Mrs Sue Snowdon (Job 19. 23-27) and by the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Durham, Councillor Katie Corrigan (John 14. 1-6). The prayers were led by three Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Participants from St John’s Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Bishop Auckland – Imogen Samuel, Rebekah Lees, and Alice Chilvers. The address was given by The Right Reverend Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, who spoke approvingly of the many occasions that Prince Philip had visited the county and of the inspiration that attended his visits.

For me, the highlight of the service was the prayer given by one of the young people from Bishop Auckland, which went as follows:

God of time and eternity,
 whose Son reigns as servant, not master;
 we give you thanks and praise
 that you have blessed this Nation,
 the Realms and Territories,
 with Elizabeth, our beloved and glorious Queen.
 Grant her your gifts of love and joy and peace
 as she continues in faithful obedience to you,
 her Lord and her God,
 and in devoted service to her lands and peoples,
 now and all the days of her life;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

I sensed that I heard the voice of Her Majesty’s now departed liege man of life and limb whispering approvingly from the shadows behind the nearest pillar – “Hear hear.”

Ron Todd

ROTAS ... SUNDAYS 2021 ...**PREACHERS****JUNE** 6th Revd Marcus Hargis**JULY** 4th Revd Marcus HargisJUNE 13th Revd Ray Anglesea
COMMUNION

JULY 11th Mr. Ken Dilley

JUNE 20th Pauline James

JULY 18th Maranny Jones

JUNE 27th Dorothy Thomson

JULY 25th Mary Tribe

Date	Elders	Door Duty
June 6th	Mrs. K. Ogilvie Mrs. Y. Melville	Mrs. W. Surtees
13th	Mrs. D. Jackson. Mrs. V. Hodgson	Miss B. Tinsley
20th	Mrs. K. Clasper Mr. R. Todd	Mr. & Mrs. L. Thomson
27th	Mrs. H. Cockburn Mrs. J. Thornborrow	Mrs. K. Clasper
July 4th	Mr. S. Ogilvie Mr. R. Phua	Mrs. H. Cockburn
11th	Mr. D. Shirer Mrs. J. Sarsfield	Mrs. K. Ogilvie
18th	Mrs. K. Ogilvie Mrs. Y. Melville	Mr. and Mrs. R. Todd
25th	Mrs. D. Jackson Mrs. V. Hodgson	Mr. M. Reay

Please arrange your own replacement if unable to carry out your duty on the given date.

RANDOM THOUGHTS

“LAZY is such an ugly word. I prefer the term selective participation!”

“I have put a lot of thought into it and I just don’t think being an adult is going to work for me!”

“It’s strange how drinking 8 glasses of water a day seems impossible but 8 cups of coffee goes down like a chubby kid on a seesaw.”

“The more you weigh the harder you are to kidnap. Stay safe. Eat cake.”



JOIN HANDS, JOIN HANDS

***Join hands, join hands, join hands
And circle this Church.
Together we will work for God,
For Jesus we will search.***

***Join hands, join hands, join hands
And circle the town.
Open your hearts, open your minds.
See the barriers come tumbling down.***

***Join hands, join hands, join hands
And circle the world.
By word and by deed come to the Lord,
As His banner is bravely unfurled.***

***God smiles down upon us,
From Heaven above,
For we are His children,
In need of His love.***

[L. Thomson]