



Northgate News

April - May 2025



Letter from Minister

Dear Northgate URC and Friends,

New Heavens and a New Earth: 17 “See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. Isa 65: 17-18.

Spring and summer calls to mind the time of year where new things are the order of the day. We look around and delight in the new life in the flowers and fields around us, daffodils and crocuses – the early signs of new life in our gardens. As we creep out of winter after a long, very cold and extensive time the signs of new life bring with them real joy and hope.

Newness brings with it expectation and possibility. With God in our lives the divine list of potentials is endless. Nature demonstrates to us that God can bring about newness every season and change when needed.

When a volcano erupts it destroys everything in its path and leaves the landscape devastated. But what is fascinating is that with time the landscape begins to heal, it changes and is restored to good health. But often not with what was originally there but rather with new species that offer the landscape nutrition and protection that it needs in order to fully recover. The new plants nourish the soil in a new way to bring about a healed land that can flourish again.

As we approach and enter Easter our spirits are lifted by the landscape of summer on the horizon, warmer days and spring flowers maturing.

But with it too we walk with Jesus through the hardest experience of his life, we share the joy of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the excited crowds singing ‘Hosanna’ (Palm Sunday). We feast and share his last supper with his disciples (Maundy Thursday), we shed tears in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus, we stand witness as he is unjustly arrested and watch a sham trial with crowds baying for blood. And then the unthinkable, his death upon the cross (Good Friday), and relive the moment the world is altered, and the skies are darkened, and death surrounds us with its relentless grief.

The volcano has erupted and life around us looks bleak, bare and lifeless.

In our grief we will drag our worried bodies to the tomb with the women to tend to the needs of our lifeless Saviour only to discover that the miracle of new life greets us. The life that we are reminded of every year in our gardens, when bulbs push through the wintery ground and bring with it colour, life and expectancy of something new. HE LIVES. That Jesus has risen! We celebrate Easter Sunday and the Resurrection.

Just like the volcano that brings with it a new landscape in place of the old, Jesus offers us eyes that are wide open, hearts that are poised for the work of God in our lives and our church. Who knows with each Easter what newness God invites us to, how the landscape of our community life will change and evolve and offer something fresh and new.

As we embrace the spring and summer to come may it inspire us to always strive to look for new ways of expressing our faith and service to the community, with the hope that earth and heaven will one day be one, ‘for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy.’ Isa 65: 18.

Easter blessings,

Nadene

From The Editors

Deadline for the next magazine will be on:
Saturday 24th May

We are continuing to struggle for articles to fill the magazine. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with anything you would like included.

Get in touch at: vickimilligan@live.co.uk
We hope to hear from you for the next issue.

Church Meeting

Wednesday 9th April
7.30pm
Downstairs Hall

GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

Following the Church Meeting it was agreed that we should update our church database and look to produce a new address/contacts list.

It is now 7 years since we last collected data under GDPR and for some of us addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances have changed, and records are out of date. Data Collection Forms are available at the back of church, or if you let me know, I can send you a copy via my email (m_thomson2@btinternet.com) fill in the attached form and return it via email or to me in person. Members who are not on the email circulation will be visited by their Elder or Pastoral Visitor to gather the information.

Any questions please ask.

Meg Thomson

Knitted Harvest - Update

The knitted Harvest is growing slowly.

The craft group hope to help it to increase after the Spring Fayre is over. I am now on to tomatoes and apples.

There is a box with wool and patterns in Church. If you would like to help. Pat, Elizabeth and Anne will direct you to it.

Looking forward to seeing a few more cabbages soon.

Everyone is welcome to help create the Great Northgate Harvest Display

Maranny

Just for a laugh...

What do you get if you pour hot water into a rabbit hole?

Hot cross bunnies!

Preachers for April/May

April

6th - Rev Nadene Snyman (Communion)
13th - Derek Jackson
17th - Rev Nadene Snyman (Maundy Thursday)
20th - Rev Dr J Ellison (Easter Day/Communion)
27th - Rev Nadene Snyman

May

4th - Rev John Durell (Communion)
11th - Eve Mortimer
18th - Rev Nadene Snyman
25th - Rev Stan May

1st June - Dot Thomson (Communion)



Dates Minister is Away

Minister in Residence at Keld April 19-26th
Minister's Synod Conference May 19-22
Annual Leave May 27-1 June

If you have any emergency while Nadene is away please contact your pastoral elder.

Nortgate's Prayer Letter

Northgate's Prayer letter is continuing but under a new champion, Maranny has taken on responsibility for continuing to create it.

Anne did a wonderful job of sending it out over many years and my thanks go to her for giving me a good foundation to continue it.

It is early days and I am still working on it.

I would like some feedback though. If you did receive it and don't now, please let me know. A few people did decide to leave the group. If there is anything you feel should be changed, I would welcome your comments.

It will not be going out on the same day every week and some weeks it may go out twice!

Requests for people (You do need the person's permission please) and situations gratefully received. Remember Prayer changes things!

Blessings, Maranny
Maranny.jones@btinternet.com

Brain Teaser

What five letter word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

The Hind's 50th Wedding Anniversary

Dougald and Iona, the adult offspring of former Northgate minister Robin Hine & Ann Hine send word of a celebration for their parents' 50th wedding anniversary this summer. A wide invitation is made to friends and family to join them at the Secret Garden, Mile Tree Ln, Wisbech PE13 4TR on Saturday 28 June from 2:45pm. Further details and the possibility to RSVP are on a dedicated website: <https://golden.earbydragons.net/>

Important: A login password is required: ThamesDitton1975

Dougald and Iona are also keen to collect memories and reminiscences, so if you would like to contribute photographs, recorded messages, or simply a written note, they can be reached via dedicated email: annandrobinfiftyyrs@gmail.com (The party is not a surprise. But we are making the arrangements to avoid burdening my parents.)

Kind regards,
Iona

Commissioning Service For Dot Thomson

As many of you will be aware I recently completed the URC's Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers course. The course was a mixture of in person lectures at Luther King House Manchester and lectures via zoom. During the two year course we covered a wide range of subjects, some more challenging than others.

We delved into Genesis in our old testament biblical studies and Mark's Gospel in the new testament biblical studies sessions, we investigated how using hermeneutics can help us see beyond the text.

We looked at service planning, the use of bible readings in worship and experimented with different styles of prayer, we had a deep dive into the hymn book and the use of music in worship, and sessions on intergenerational worship to name but a few of the topics covered. We had an eclectic mix of lectures covering a wide range of other related issues:- amongst them I found the session on The theology of buildings intriguing, the session on the use of Icons illuminating and sessions on inclusion and diversity challenging.

The course was hard work but well worth the effort. I did not always agree with the tutors and regularly found myself asking the questions 'why do we do it like that' or 'does it have to be done that way'. The tutors encouraged us to ask questions and to think about what we do and how we do it, however, they never told us what to think, just encouraged us to think for ourselves.

I must give a massive thank you to Harry B for being my mentor throughout the course. He encouraged me to continue when I felt like giving up, he supported me when I was struggling and upheld me in prayer. Thank you Harry. Thank you also to all of you who encouraged me when I led worship – even when things did not go quite as planned.

My Synod Commissioning service is at the end of April, and I invite you all to join with me as we celebrate this achievement.

Preaching, sharing God's word with others is a huge privilege and I continue to be challenged, encouraged, and amazed by God's great gift of love to us all. Thank you for allowing me to share that with you.



Invitation

Saturday 26th April 2025

2.30pm

**Northgate United Reformed Church Darlington
Commissioning Service**

Northgate URC invite you to join them as they celebrate the commissioning of Dot Thomson following her successful completion of the United Reformed Church's Assembly Accredited Lay Preachers course.

The service will be followed by refreshments.

RSVP dtheating@ntlworld.com (for catering purposes

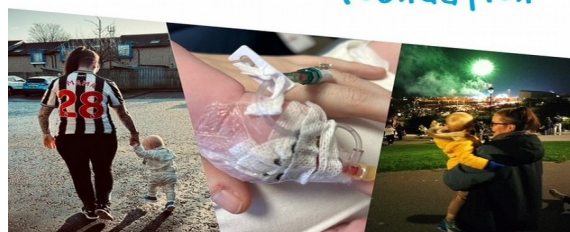
Great North Run 2025

Lucy Milligan is pulling on her running trainers again this time to raise money for The Great North Children's Hospital. Lucy & Vicki's son receives regular care from the team based in Newcastle for his underactive thyroid and has done since he was 8 weeks old. Lucy's nephew has also received outstanding care from the hospital as a baby. This year's run also falls on what would be her parents 40th Wedding Anniversary if her Mum hadn't suddenly passed away 8 years.

Anyone who would like to donate online please visit the link below:
<https://ajbellgreatnorthrun2025.enthuse.com/pf/lucy-milligan>

Anyone who would like to donate via sponsor form please see a member of the Milligan family.

Thank you.



KELD CHAPEL Study Days 2025

10.30am - 3.00pm
(Bring your own lunch)
Cost £10

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Revd Godfrey Nicholson

3 July

Revd Kim Plumpton

30 August

Revd David Herbert

25 September

To Book Contact Dot:
dthearing@ntlworld.com

Northgate United Reformed Church

Holiday Club

Wednesday 16th April
10.00am - 2.00pm
(Lunch provided)

Cost £1

Theme:



Arts, crafts, drama, music, ...

Luke 24 ²They found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the tomb,

For more information ring Meg Thomson on 07773 866451)