

Deadline for
next Contact
Magazine:
May 21st
Next issue will cover
June and July

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Hand to
Barbara Farrington
or any Elder

Place in
the labelled folder
on the bookcase at
the back of church

Minister
Rev. Murray
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The
**United
Reformed
Church**

Contact

Congleton United Reformed Church



April/May
2013

Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends,

In chapter 13 of John's Gospel, the writer begins his account of the last supper by describing how Jesus knelt and washed the disciples' feet, before asking them to do the same thing for each other.

It was in fact a command to care for each other, a looking ahead to the time after Easter (a time we are now in) when Jesus would be present among them as the risen Christ, and so a powerful symbol of the power of the risen Christ in the community. Christ's presence in the community not only makes it possible to have a deep and meaningful relationship with God but also enables us to have the love which makes us care for our neighbour. We have his example before us, and his continuing presence motivates us to treat others with respect and to be responsive to their needs.

That is what should happen, but inevitably we often fall short of this ideal. Someone famously (or infamously) said, about thirty years ago, that there 'is no such thing as community'; it is not easy to keep the needs of others in mind with such a view of the world, particularly when times are hard; the economy continues to flat line, jobs are harder and harder to come by and wages, benefits or pensions continue to be stretched often beyond breaking point. At such times the temptation is to err on the side of caution or seeming common sense rather than really have faith in the idea of a 'community' which supports and looks after its members.

Regular Weekly Activities

	TIME	ACTIVITY	CONTACT PERSON
Mon	5.15pm	1st Congleton Rainbows	Pauline McKeown
	6.15pm	4th Congleton Brownies	Pauline McKeown
Tue	10-12am	Café in the Foyer	Jean Cook
	1.10pm	Keep Fit for the not-so-fit	Pauline McKeown
	7.30pm	Study Group	Cynthia Muncaster & Marion McGuinness
Wed	10am	Mums and Tots in the hall	Chris Astill
	2pm	Bible Study in the Foyer	Carol Booth
Thur	8am	Prayer Meeting	Check venue each week
	7.30pm	Study Group	Bob Booth
Fri	10-12am	Café in the Foyer	Jean Cook
	12.30-2.30	Chat and Make group in the foyer	Lisa Spencer
Sat	10-12am	Café in the Foyer	Jean Cook
	10am	Music Practice in Church	Jean Cook

Services for April 2013

April 7th	All age worship led by Bob Booth, 10.30am	Joint Communion service at Well-spring, led by Rev. Pam Butler, 6.30pm
April 14th	Worship led by Margaret Stacey, 10.30am	Joint service at URC led by Carol Booth, 6.30pm
April 21st	Communion led by Rev. Murray George, 10.30am	Home service led by Bob Booth, 6.30pm
April 28th	Worship led by Carol Booth, 10.30am	Home Communion service led by Rev. Murray George, 6.30pm

Services for May 2013

May 5th	All age worship led by Bob Booth, 10.30am	Joint service at Well-spring, led by Rev. John Fisher, 6.30pm
May 12th	Worship led by Rev Bill Farquhar, 10.30am	Christian Aid CTC service at Trinity led by Rev. Phillip Berry, 6.30pm
May 19th	Pentecost. Communion led by Rev. Murray George, 10.30am	Pentecost. Home service led by Carol Booth, 6.30pm
May 26th	Worship led by Margaret Stacey, 10.30am	Joint communion service at URC led by Rev. Murray George. 6.30pm

Services for beginning of June 2013

TBC

Because of this, this model of care, made explicit in Jesus' command and indeed in his life, is as vital today as it has ever been. Caring for each other enables us to support each other in our work for God's kingdom in the wider world, and it shows the wider world that it is possible to care for each other. And this is incredibly powerful; it enables loving in concrete and practical ways, allowing us to take account of the needs of others and our own needs.

As we move through the Easter season, let us keep this model of mutual care in mind; not self-sacrifice, but caring for others as we care for ourselves; not worrying so much about being 'better' ourselves, but being as concerned with loving others, and showing that love, and so placing Jesus' loving command at the centre of our lives.

Your friend and minister,

Murray

Prayer chain requests to Carol Booth until further notice 01260 272580

Launch of CONGLETON URC WEBSITE

People from near and far can now discover and explore Congleton United Reformed Church through our website. If you have a computer or other means of accessing the Internet you can have a look yourself! You can find us on:-

<http://congletonurc.org.uk/>



April 2013		
Tues 2nd	7.15pm	Elders meeting
Friday 19th	5.45–9pm	Barn Dance in hall
Mon 15th	7.15am	Financial Annual General Meeting in foyer

May 2013		
Mon 13th	7.15pm	Elders meeting
Mon 20th	7.15pm	Social Committee meeting at Ruth Hughes' home

Summer 2013		
June 10th-16th		CTC Bible week. See Bob Booth for more details.
June 27th	7.15pm	Church meeting in the foyer.
Sat 13th July	All day	Coach trip to Southport. More details nearer the time.
Sat 17th Aug	TBC	BBQ in Church grounds. More details nearer the time.

“The Bible is so good. If it isn’t true, then it ought to be.” Anon

“No-one ever graduates from Bible study until he meets it’s author face to face.” Anon

Tony is our Health and Safety Officer and will be visiting all our user groups when he has formulated a form for signing regarding the reviewed fire policy. New lease holders will have to sign this form in the future before the agreement to the lease is given. Thanks were expressed to Ron Cook and Tony Hall for all their work with the property and Rev Murray pointed out the enormous task they had and the fact that more people were needed to share the load. A supportive committee is needed and will be part of Stewardship 2013.

Ron Cook reported that all electrical appliances were due for testing including at The Manse.

Tony Hall will be in touch with Mr. Andrew Martlew Synod Property Officer regarding the snag list at the Manse.

The frequency problem with our microphones has been sorted out.

The roof repair is ongoing.

Junior Church

Eric Smith reported. Synod Children and Young People’s coordinator from Mersey Synod had a very good meeting with various elders and staff recently. Open school with Marl fields Junior School is planned again for the summer term.

Good Practice is under review as are also CRB checks.

Next Junior Church meeting is 21st March 2013.

Social Committee

Friday 19th April 5.45 - 9pm. A Barn Dance is planned. Plans to be finalized with outside catering. Further details will be given in the Church notices.

Website

The website is now developing nicely. More photographs are needed.

Elders’ election 2013.

Lisa Spencer and Bob Both were elected for a period of 3 years. Lisa will be ordained and Inducted and Bob Inducted on Sunday 24th February, 2013 at 10.30am. Service.

Church Officials list 2013.

The list was updated for the next 12 months.

Correspondence. Nothing to report.

Other business.

Diary dates were reviewed
Lenten Course - Exploring Prayer beginning 20th and 21st February full details in the Newsletter Contact.

The date of the next meeting will be on Monday 15th April 2013 at 7.15pm. In the Foyer. And will be the Financial AGM.

The meeting closed with The Grace at 8.40pm.

Barbara Farrington - Church Secretary

**UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,
ANTROBUS STREET, CONGLETON
Church Annual General Meeting dated
21st January, 2013 in the Church foyer.**

Rev. Murray George was Chairperson and there were 20 Members present. Apologies were received from - Lisa Spencer. Alan Bowers. Tricia Smith. Hazel Sherwin. Robin and Daisy Hughes.

Rev Murray led the opening devotions. With a reading from Micah 6: 6-8 and followed with the question "What does the Church require of you?" followed by prayer.

Two volunteers were invited to count the votes at the Elders election. Eric Smith and Muriel Fraser were appointed.

Other business not on the Agenda Diary dates.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed as being a correct record.

Matters arising -

A welcome team is to be formed and will be part of Stewardship 2013.

It was envisaged that we may need to purchase a Braille Bible and hymnbook for the use of anyone who had the need to use them in church. Graham and Sylvia who are attending family worship are quite happy to listen and as Graham knows most of the hymns has no need of a hymnbook.

Gluten free bread has been used successfully in Holy Communion and it was agreed to mention it in the notices.

The agreement to leave the church ramp open at all times has received a good response.

Internet and communications research is ongoing.

Membership. Della Bordsley has become a Church Member and Rev. Murray has received 2 suggestions of names which he will follow up in due course.

The parking scheme is now working well.

The church meeting dates were reviewed.

Pastoralia.

Reports were received and prayer offered for our Church family in need.

Reports

Minister.

Rev. Murray reinforced his opening question "What is GOD asking of us in 2013?"

Finance.

Muriel Fraser reported We had sent £350 to Crisis for Christmas £125 had been given at the carol service with Rode Hall Silver Band.

Property.

Tony Hall reported. The quinquennial recently had required a Fire Engineer to be consulted regarding our fire extinguishers, blankets etc., to be brought up to date. This will take place in 2 or 3 weeks and a fee is expected.

Prayers for our Church as written on the Prayer Tree

"We pray for more members to join the congregation and know the joy of fellowship."

"I hope that we attract more children and that they bring their parents."

"That we grow in love and care."

"For our beautiful church, love, hope and kindness."

"I hope God will be with us and guide us so we can come to know and love him more and serve him well."

"We pray for our church to grow in God's love."

Do you put glue on your cotton wool or on your cardboard tube? This was a problem for 29 6 and 7 year olds from Marlfields Primary School who visited URC in March. Fortunately most children got it right and didn't get into too much of a sticky mess when making a fluffy sheep.

They had heard the story of the Lost Sheep when sat on the dias in Church and had met the shepherd in the story. They took part in a dramatisation of the story by helping to find the lost sheep. Later they heard the story of the houses build on sand and rock and leaned the song "The wise man build his house upon the rock". They watched an experiment to see if wind (hairdryer) and rain (watering can) would move a lego house on gravel and sand. The house on the gravel stood firm but the sand did move!

The children had a great time and the helpers were most impressed with how responsive the children were. Three more classes will be visiting URC during the summer term.

Pauline McKeown

Perichoresis—The Trinity—The Divine Dance

**Come to the Barn Dance on April 19th
and learn more!**

Sets of three face sets of three round the room. Hold hands and dance in a circle and they are one; then separate and in threes dance a figure of 8, they are separate but still one. (Perhaps you recognise this as a version of The Dashing White Sergeant, a Scottish reel)

Each set of three takes hands and approaches the next set of three and the dance begins again. In glorious rhythm they are coming together then separating.

In "The Divine Dance" we can sense the Trinity acting as one and as three. As in the reel there are moments of hand holding solidarity and other moments of interweaving. Thus we see the three persons in one God.

Although motionless they appear to move in the perfect relationship. Through their dance of love God's glory is revealed to us. There is a great dance going on and you and I are invited to join in.

**Written by Ruth Hughes after reading Ann
Persson's book "A Circle of Love"**

Barn Dance

Congleton URC

Friday 19th April

5.45 — 9.00pm



Tickets from Ruth Hughes
£6 adults, £2 school children

Price includes pie and pea supper plus desert
Tea/coffee provided, or bring your own alcohol