

*Where you can be yourself  
with God!*



## **MCC Does IDAHO!**

After popping into the Pound shop on Grainger Street to buy an air horn, I made my way up to the Monument. I could already hear the drums of Bangshees. Passers-by were commenting on the drums. There was a small crowd already around the monument and I found people from MCC, Stag and Mesmac and people I had seen at previous demonstrations. One stall was handing out yellow whistles for the "Minute of Noise".

Just before 1 o'clock, our pastor, Cecilia called us to order, explaining the reason for IDAHO. Actor David Bedella then spoke about how much has been achieved since IDAHO 1. He then talked on how much needs to be done about those countries which criminalise homosexuality.

Then the NOISE began, yellow whistles, rattles, drums and my air horn (although the gas soon cooled down so I had to stop to warm it up). This certainly startled a lot of the Public coming up from the Monument Metro and just walking around.

Then the SILENCE. But remember our struggle doesn't end here. Put "Anti-gay" and search on the internet. See how many sites there are; how well they are organised so that a small, vociferous micro-minority can lobby judges, politicians or officials; how they collect funds for lawyers. We need to be as well organised.

Two observations on the day:

1. There seemed to be no overt hostility to the demo perhaps we should have had banners explaining IDAHO.
2. There were 2 two young boys about 13, I don't know whether they were gay or not, but they were quite happy to wear rainbow stickers and participate in the NOISE. How I wish I had been able to do that when I was a young teenager.

Bob Bell

**International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO)** was established to mark the World Health Authority's decision in 1990 to no longer classify homosexuality as an illness – but also to recognise that this was neither the beginning or the end of the journey against homophobia.

There are still 77 countries where being gay is a crime; 14 of which still impose the death penalty for sexual acts between gay men. MCC is working in Nigeria, Jamaica and many countries in Eastern Europe where violent homophobia is tolerated or even legitimised by the state.

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| <b>Find out about Regional Conference</b>      |
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**No Newsletter next month—back in August!!**



## Bible Feature

### God Don't Make No Junk!

Congratulations to Claire and Annette on their Civil Partnership and Blessing! They are now away on honeymoon and I have the honour of writing the feature which Claire has made her own!

In my early years in MCC, there was a guy who used to preach quite often at Living Springs MCC. He told us of a poster he had at home which read:

*I know I must be someone  
'cos God don't make no junk*

Although I have forgotten the contents of all the other sermons, this phrase has stuck with me.

At MCC Newcastle, and at MCCs around the world, we believe that God loves each person unconditionally, regardless of who they are or how the world views them.

However, the sentence from the poster means more than that. Each of us is made in the image of God and each of us is someone with particular gifts, skills and talents. We each have our own place in the world and our own way of making a difference.

Paul wrote a lot about this in his letters. He talked about each of us being part of the Body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12: 27). Imagine if your body was only made up of eyes, or just hands. It would not work and would not be recognisable as a body at all.

This is Paul's point. We are all different. We all have things that we are great at doing and things that we are definitely NOT good at. We all find some activities give us real joy and satisfaction, whilst others bring on stress and frustration. I would rather preach to 2000 people than cook a dinner for 12!!

Paul writes about some of these differences as "spiritual gifts". He gives lists of these in different places in his writings, e.g. (1 Corinthians 12: 4 -11, 27—31)

These are gifts from the Holy Spirit, which are to be used "for the common good". (1 Cor 12:7) The Holy Spirit has given different gifts to different people.

Some of the gifts, like the gift of administration, are easy to understand. Others, like the gifts of prophecy, are more unfamiliar. It's easy to imagine being able to use the gift of administration, but do we still have the gift of prophecy in the 21st century? And do I need to wear a hairshirt and eat locusts like John the Baptist if I have it???

There are a few things to think about, that will help you to understand what spiritual gifts that you may have.

1. Notice what comes naturally and easily to you and also what you don't like doing! Remember this is not a pass/fail experience. It is just as important to know which gifts you do **not** have, as well as knowing what your gifts might be.
2. What gives you joy or satisfaction? What do other people ask you to do, because they know that you are good at it and they trust you to do it well?
3. Where do you like to be? Some people like being high visible and "up front". Other folk prefer to work quietly in the background. Do you like doing ministry in the community, or do you prefer to be based in the church itself?
4. Look out for when you say "It's just common sense." or when you hear someone else say it! This often means that someone is doing something that is so natural to them, that they can't imagine anyone doing it differently.

Spiritual gifts are an integral part of each of us. It is something that we do naturally, often unconsciously, because it is so much a part of us. It can be a real surprise that other people don't see the world in the same way.

When we use our spiritual gifts, we feel different inside. We may feel joy, or peace or a deep feeling of fulfilment, even though we might be really exhausted on another level from working so hard. Using our gifts helps us to grow spiritually and also makes a huge difference to those around us.

In August, there will be a variety of opportunities to find out what your particular spiritual gifts are and how you might use them in ministry.... Everybody has them, 'cos God don't make no junk!

Cecilia Eggleston

## Diary Dates for June 2008

Every Sunday—service at 6.30pm St James URC Church Hall  
For further details of any events below please phone/text 07770 543407  
or email [admin@mccnewcastle.org.uk](mailto:admin@mccnewcastle.org.uk)

**No Newsletter next month—back in August!! Diary dates for July will be publicised**

| <b>Date/Time</b>   | <b>Event</b>   | <b>Other information</b>                                      |
|--|--|---|
| Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> June – after service                  | Social – The Squash  | Mikee and Jonny's, Heaton                                     |
| Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> June 12.30pm<br><i>Provisional</i>       | Tea with Dorothy outing. Laing Art Gallery Newcastle         | Meet 11.45am at La Boca Café. See Roger for details           |
| Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June .30pm                         | “The Good Book Club” – refresher Bible classes               | Church office, St. James URC                                  |
| Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> June 8.00pm                           | Monthly Taize service  | St. James Church  |
| Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> June 2 – 4pm                        | Tea with Dorothy – a cuppa and company                       | Martha and Mary café, Chillingham Road, Heaton, Newcastle     |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> June 4.30pm                           | Scarborough group meets                                      | Worship and fellowship meal, Scarborough                      |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm                        | The Singing Kettle – hymn singing and tea/coffee             | Emily's home at Heaton, Newcastle                             |
| Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> June 10.30am                       | Marsden Grotto, South Shields                                | See Abby for details  |
| Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm                          | Praying People – a chance to improve your prayer life        | Teesside. See Emily for more details                          |
| Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm                             | Art and God – finding spiritual inspiration through the arts | St. Antony's Priory, Durham. See Cecilia for more information |
| Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm                        | Meditation group   | Eric's home, Jesmond Vale, Newcastle.                         |
| Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> June 12.30pm<br><i>Provisional</i>      | Tea with Dorothy outing. Laing Art Gallery Newcastle         | Meet 11.45am at La Boca Café. See Roger for details           |
| Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm                        | The Singing Kettle – hymn singing and tea/coffee             | Emily's home at Heaton, Newcastle                             |
| Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> June Time tbc                      | Wimbledon Wii party  | George's home, Stockton.                                      |
| <b>Wed 18<sup>th</sup> June – Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July</b> | <b>Cecilia on annual leave</b>                               | <b>Wherever it is warm and sunny!</b>                         |

**Visit our website for updates and amendments throughout the month.  
[www.mccnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.mccnewcastle.org.uk)**

Region 4  
**REGIONAL CONFERENCE**  
*7th - 9th November, 2008*  
Birmingham, UK



MCC Regional Conference happens only once every 3 years, and is the chance for MCCers from all over the region to come together to learn, worship and enjoy fellowship together.

As Region 4 covers all of Western Europe and Africa, it is not that often that a conference happens in the UK, so this year is particularly exciting for us. Anyone is welcome to attend, and there will be something for everyone, including different worship events, workshops on all aspects of church life, speakers, and the chance to meet and network with MCCers from Europe, Africa and beyond.

It promises to be a really exciting conference, based around the theme of being equipped and prepared to do God's work. We also have a vote at the conference, which our Lay Delegate carries, to decide on business and policy affecting the denomination.

The cost of registration is not yet fixed, but likely to be under £100; we hope to organise a mini-bus or coach, depending how many people want to go, to minimise the cost of travel, and, as you can stay anywhere you like in Birmingham (from campsite to 5\* hotel!), accommodation costs are variable. The total cost is therefore likely to be around £200, so **get saving now!** Watch this space for more details, or speak to Emily if you are interested.

Emily Watson - Lay Delegate

***We Have a New Church Office!!***

MCC Newcastle has now moved the church office from its shared space in Pink Lane, to its very own space at St. James Church. We would like to thank Lesbian Line for sharing their office with us and wish them well in their new home. Thank you for Katie Harris for finding all the office furniture, and for Katie H, Katie M, Ruth, Barbara, Emily and Barbara who moved it all into the office!

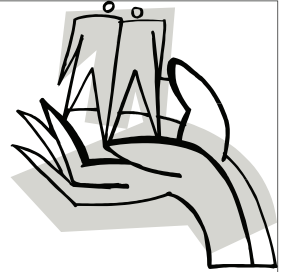
During the week, you can get to the church office through the church car park. On Sundays, you can find it by climbing the stairs in the hallway between the church hall and the toilets.

The office will be used for the administration of the church and for small meetings. The office angels Michael and Margaret minister there on a Monday morning.

Please note that the church's new postal address is now:

**MCC Newcastle, St. James' Church, Northumberland Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JF**

## Pastoral Care at MCC Newcastle



At the recent AGM, we as a church agreed on our ministry priorities for 2008/9.

The following aims were agreed for pastoral care (under the heading 'genuine care giving');

*As we continue to grow in number, we want to make sure that we offer a variety of different ways of showing people in our congregation that we care about them. We could do this by:*

- *Making sure people know what pastoral care is available to them*
- *Ensuring good communication within the church, so that pastoral concerns are passed on to those offering pastoral care*
- *Keeping healthy boundaries*

The members of the pastoral care group are currently Bridget, Cecilia, Ian, Jessie, Jonny and Roger. The make up of the team has changed significantly in the past few months and we as a group are trying to work out ways of improving the way pastoral care is offered within our church community. Part of this, in keeping with the above statement, is to make sure people know who we are and what we aim to do.

Over the next few months, we will try to introduce some initiatives that make pastoral care more accessible and more flexible, so watch this space for further information!

For the time being, if you feel you need to discuss something with a member of the pastoral care group, you can leave a message on the church phone 07770 543407, or speak to one of us directly, and we will endeavour to either help you ourselves, or point you in the direction of someone else who can.

*Jonny Caudle*

## *News from Rev. Delores Berry*

Many of you will remember the visit last October from evangelist, gospel singer and hat wearer extraordinaire, Rev. Delores Berry. She became extremely ill whilst she was in the UK and had to go back to the USA early. She was carrying a very severe infection and had also fractured her spine. Dolores has had a long and very slow recovery, but recently sent out an update, saying that she was in much better health and was starting to walk again.



She writes: *"They (the doctors) believe your prayers have helped! I know that you are a major part of my healing.*

*You have been so good to us! I'm still reading and rereading cards and letters you've sent me. Some of you have sent cards that are so big I had to put Judy on a ladder so that I could read them. Send more! Judy looks good up there!!!*

Dolores still has an infection in her left foot and hip pain, however, she has just completed her first visit to a church since becoming ill. You can contact Delores through her web site:

[www.revdeloresberry.com](http://www.revdeloresberry.com)

## Art and God

*"The light for which the world longs is already shining. .... It is shining in many a soul, and already the new order has begun within the kingdom of the heart. ... "* Thomas R Kelly, 1941

This was the start of "Art and God", a poem by Thomas Kelly. The evening shared some of this light - some of the delight in the world. We read out poems - classic and contemporary. It was amazing how we found connections with what was shared. "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (W B Yeates 1865-1939) was new to some and recited off by heart by others. It created a picture in my mind of a beautiful cabin by the sea - surrounded by all that nature could offer and filled with stillness and peace. "Newcastle is Lesbos" by Julia Darling brought the sights and sounds and places of Tyneside back to memory.

Music and songs were played in between the poems. These ranged from Billy Bragg's "Sexuality" to M People's " Search for the Hero Inside You", and Van Morrison's "In the Garden." We closed with Nina Simone's "Feeling Good", and by then I really did feel positive and warm inside. For me, Maya Angelou's poem soaked into my being and as I got up to leave after the chat and refreshments I felt, bold and sassy and proud. Thank you to Roger for all his hard work in preparing our time together.

Join us again for another Art and God. Each will be unique. Bring your friends. Explore, experience; query and enquire. God's light is already shining among us be surprised where illumination can happen.

The next "Art and God" will be on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm at St. Antony's Priory, 74 Claypath, Durham DH1 1QT. Chris Wardale will be leading a meditation using art. See me for directions or visit [www.stantonyspriory.co.uk](http://www.stantonyspriory.co.uk)

John Lawson

## Tea with Dorothy

"Tea with Dorothy" meets at Martha and Mary's café from 2pm – 4pm on the first Saturday of every month. It is situated in Chillingham Road/Simonside Terrace, Heaton, Newcastle.

"Martha and Mary's" was the brainchild of Elisabeth Screen, of St. Gabriel's church in Heaton. It is run now as an outreach community project by Heaton Churches Together.

Primarily a social occasion, "Tea with Dorothy" is an opportunity for LGBTs who are over 50 to meet up over a cuppa and have a good chat. We have a group of regulars and Eric makes sure that we have plenty to eat and drink. This month we are branching out and visiting the Laing Art Gallery to look at two different talks connected with the exhibition on Love – "Love is a Mystery" and "Happily Ever After". You can see details of these in the church diary or contact Roger via the church phone.

Since "Tea with Dorothy" started, more men than women have come along. Hopefully, in the future, more women will venture putting their foot through the door and redress the balance.

Margaret Bell



## Pastor's Report May 2008

The big news of this month inside the church has been the move into the new church office!! As many of you know, we have shared a space with Lesbian Line for several months. This was great in many ways - we had a place for meetings and for doing the church administration. However there were a few disadvantages. The office was VERY hard to find and, especially at night time, very difficult to get into!

There was a limited amount of space, which made it difficult to house church paperwork and for two different things to go on in the office at the same time. The new office is for MCC Newcastle only. It is bigger than the other office and there is a bright new shiny doorbell to let people know that you want to get in!

Outside the church, the big news was the IDAHO rally at Grey's Monument, in the centre of Newcastle. MCC had a great turnout, with at least 17 of us there blowing whistles and making a noise. The crowd was between 70 - 100 strong and it was a great opportunity for us to have a very public presence as a church that believes in justice and human rights. Several people talked to me about our ministry after the rally. It is moments like this that we can see the importance of having a church that stands with the LGBT community. Our next big outreach opportunity in Newcastle will be Pride, which is on Saturday 12th July. There will be other Pride events on Teesside later in the year.

As well as these two most exciting events, the ministry of the church continues to grow and develop. One of the big challenges as the church grows, is to ensure good communication. There are certain meetings that are now happening on a regular basis to try and make sure that information is shared and activities/events are co-ordinated.

Ministry team leaders meet once a month. At these meetings, we catch up on what has been happening in the different ministry areas, such as social team, worship, outreach etc. We share diary dates, so that we can plan ahead and not clash. We also take time to share any pastoral concerns. Jonny, from the pastoral care group, also attends these meetings and he can pick up any ongoing pastoral issues.

The Pastoral Care Group meet once a month to ensure that pastoral care is being offered to those that want it, and that there isn't duplication of effort. (We don't want our pastoral care to be like buses - none for ages, then too much all at once!). As you can read elsewhere, we are also looking at how we can make sure people in our church family do feel cared about.

The Board also meets once a month. As we are a new board, we are familiarising ourselves with how the church is organised and the different policies that we have in place. The Board is responsible for the financial health and administration of the church. It is also the body that looks to the future and makes sure that MCC Newcastle is moving towards its vision.

I attend all these meetings, and chair the ministry and Board meetings. It is a source of constant joy to see so many people engaged in ministry, serving God and God's people. We have a wealth of gifts, skills and experience in this congregation, and I know that there is more to be uncovered yet!

I also represent MCC Newcastle at the LGBT Issues Network, which organised the IDAHO rally, and the steering group for an LGBT Centre in Newcastle. These meetings are great places to network and to work in partnership with other organisations. IDAHO shows what can happen when we work together!

God bless

*Linkia*

**Phone or text  
07770 543407**

**MCC Newcastle  
St. James Church  
Northumberland Road  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8JF**

**Registered charity  
number  
1093009**

**Please feel free to contact any of the  
church leaders by email or leave a message/text  
on the church phone 07770 543407**

|                   |                            |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Abby Brown        | Social Team                | social@mccnewcastle.org.uk       |
| Jonny Caudle      | Pastoral Care/Music        | pastoralcare@mccnewcastle.org.uk |
| Claire Denham     | Newsletter Editor          | newsletter@mccnewcastle.org.uk   |
| Cecilia Eggleston | Pastor                     | pastor@mccnewcastle.org.uk       |
| Helen Fenwick     | Board Member               | contact@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| George Gardner    | Social Team                | social@mccnewcastle.org.uk       |
| Alison Kaine      | Board Member/Set Up Team   | setup@mccnewcastle.org.uk        |
| John Lawson       | Outreach Tees/Welcome Team | welcome@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| Andy Lumsden      | Board Member               | contact@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| Katie Marsh       | Treasurer                  | treasurer@mccnewcastle.org.uk    |
| Michael Wardle    | Worship Rota               | worship@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| Emily Watson      | Lay Delegate               | aydelegate@mccnewcastle.org.uk   |

#### **Other Useful Contacts**

|                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Prayer requests                   | prayer@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| Counselling Team                  | counselling@mccnewcastle.org.uk |
| Stewardship                       | stewardship@mccnewcastle.org.uk |
| Photos and history                | photos@mccnewcastle.org.uk      |
| Library, DVDs/CDs and Study packs | resources@mccnewcastle.org.uk   |
| Web Team                          | webgurus@mccnewcastle.org.uk    |

#### **Our Mission**

The Metropolitan Community Church in Newcastle upon Tyne  
is a Christ-centred and inclusive community, with a commitment to spiritual and personal growth  
through worship, prayer and action.

We seek to provide a welcoming and accepting atmosphere,  
and aim to proclaim Christ's message of liberation for all.

We work towards a transformation in the understanding of Christianity  
and its relevance to contemporary society.

MCC Newcastle would like to extend a very warm welcome to all readers. We hope you enjoyed our  
newsletter which is published on a monthly basis and can be found in colour on our website at  
[www.mccnewcastle.org.uk](http://www.mccnewcastle.org.uk)

However, we are obliged to state that nothing in this newsletter either; written, said or otherwise, purports  
to represent the Metropolitan Community Church in general. If you have any comments about either con-  
tent or presentation please contact the Editor who welcomes any contributions but reserves the right to  
edit as deemed appropriate.