

A Mandate for Mexico!!!

July 2010



At the time of writing our Lay Delegate, Charlotte Norton, is flying across the Atlantic on route to Acapulco, Mexico. Charlotte will attend, as our representative, the 2010 MCC General Conference where denominational business will be conducted and where opportunities will abound for our Global Communities to worship, connect and learn together.

Charlotte gathered the views of MCC Newcastle members via democratic process at a Mandating meeting held on 13th June. All members had a voice and a vote and contributed to decision making on crucial issues such as;

- the election of someone who will lead MCC as Moderator for the following six years
- a review of MCC's structure and consideration of recommendations for the future.

Charlotte heads to conference with a clear mandate from MCC Newcastle members!

Sunday 20th June commemorates a fabulous Latino Themed Worship Service where many needed little encouragement to 'Shake their Maracas for Jesus'. After worship, a Mexican themed Fundraising Social was held at Mikee & Jonnies home. Huge thanks to them for their generosity in allowing a sizable group of sombrero wearing, maraca shaking, margarita drinking fund raisers to run amok in their home in the name of a good cause!

Charlotte and Hannelie used their abundant gifts of creativity to provide what can only be described as an eclectic bric-a-brac stall offering a fine selection of novelty cacti plants, latino t-shirts, Mexican bubble blowers and much more. . .

Party goers were treated to an outstanding Mexican banquet of chilli and veggie-chilli burritos with all the trimmings and Helen B contributed her 'killer hand-made margaritas' (I know because I drank one and lost moderate sensation in both legs). Dessert included stunning home-made Santa Muerte Cakes and anything retrieved from the ground after the piñata had been violently assaulted (unsuccessfully) by many and finally tamed into submission by George stomping on it!

Party games continued with a team challenge quiz (the quiz was easy, the challenge included whole team consumption of Mexican Chilli Tomato Juice, Chilli jellies and chocolate covered Mexican giant ants). The winning team embraced all challenges with gusto and impressed everyone with their advanced plasticine modelling of Mexican icons against the clock. A gifted congregation we are indeed!



All in all, everyone had a wonderful time and a whopping £440 was raised for 'Mission Mexico'. Charlotte will use some of the proceeds to pay for subsidence during the conference and all surplus will be donated to the Mexican 'Casa Alianza' charity; an organisation working with street children in Mexican cities.

'Felicidades!' to all who donated time, money or enthusiasm to such a wonderful cause. It is truly incredible what we can achieve as a congregation whilst having fun! Charlotte will be in our thoughts and prayers until she returns safely from Conference.

All Your Diary Dates, Events for July

PLUS

Pastor's Reflection

Bible feature:



Football and God ?

CLM - all you ever wanted to know!

YAM's Euro-vision fun



Pastor's Reflection—June 2010



We seem to be officially having a summer this year! The telltale signs are all there - the smell of burnt offerings sacrificed on barbecues, sun burnt faces, and, of course, the threat of a hosepipe ban in the NW of England.

For me, summer is also about the challenge of growing veg. (Stop yawning!!) The whole saga starts with the sowing of seeds. How many to sow? Will they all come up? At what stage do I give up and re-sow the whole lot? Germination seems to be an entirely random business - there is no way of predicting how many seeds are going to push their little green shoots through the soil into daylight.

Then there is the ongoing battle with caterpillars, slugs and pigeons who all think my vegetables are a fair target for their attention. Added to that is the tedium of regular weeding and you begin to wonder if the effort is all worth it.....

.....Yet somehow it is!! There is something quite miraculous in how a tiny seed ends up being a whole carrot, or how a one inch long bean grows to become a 7 foot bean stalk.

Our whole life is like growing veg. All the time, we are being planted with new ideas, thoughts, concepts. Some don't really take root, others might cause us to change our behaviour for a while, and some have a significant impact and can change our whole lives.

If you look back, you may be able to identify some of these moments. Perhaps they impacted on the life choices that you made at the time, perhaps they strengthened or maybe challenged your faith.

Every so often, it is worth taking time to review our internal garden of ideas and beliefs. What are the ideas and beliefs that are strong and healthy, and help us to grow? Which were useful in their time, but now need to go? Which ones are actually no good at all and are taking time and energy away from us?

As people of faith, we are called to live "in fullness". Part of that means taking time to

cultivate those ways of behaviour that help us to live better lives - lives where our body, mind and soul are in balance.

Gardening works for me because it takes me out of my head and re-connects me with my body. I enjoy the feel of the soil in my hands and the sense of achievement that I can get from just clearing a small patch of earth. At the same time, it can act as an excellent discharge for the stress and pent up energy that I am carrying in my body.

Happily, God made us all different and there are as many different ways of restoring balance as there are people.

This month, I invite you to

- re-start doing something that used to give your life balance (but you have stopped doing)
- identify a thought or idea that you still carry around even though it is no longer helpful
- find something that is still miraculous for you and give thanks for it.

God bless

Pinkia

News from Bath

Thank you to everyone for the cards, prayers and support for our move to Bath. Monica has settled in comfortably and is enjoying the summer that she wanted – plenty of time with family and friends in the sunshine.

We are being supported by the local hospice, Dorothy House (!). I have been on a Carer's course and we are both enrolled on a course which will teach us how to cope practically with the different symptoms of Monica's illness.

I hope to be with you all for Pride weekend. Have a great summer!



Bible Feature

What has Football to do with God ?



No one could happen to ignore that the World Cup starts on 11th June 2010. Even if you detest football we all will be subjected to a month of football matches with twist and turns, unexpected results, brilliant goals, tears of joy and despair, and dare I say the dreaded word.... penalties !

I am an obsessive football supporter. I was married at the Riverside Stadium the home of my favourite team, Middlesbrough. Even Cecilia our Pastor calls it "my other place of worship" and referred to my love of Jesus and Middlesbrough Football Club in a recent sermon about our tattoos.

Now what's all this got to do with God? The answer is; everything in heaven and on earth has got to do with God. It may come as a surprise to you to discover that many famous footballers players not only worship God, but actually praise the Lord for their gift. On a recent visit to my local bible shop, I found a magazine at the checkout desk. I was drawn to it because it had a head line 'The Ultimate Guide to the 2010 World Cup.' but not only that, it was different from all other world magazines I'd seen, because it had on the front page 'God, Glory and Goals'. I attentively picked it up and the lady said "That is free", without further ado, I grinned and put it in my bag.

The magazine was produced in association with www.CVM.Sorted.Com (Christian Vision for Men). If you're male, it is an excellent website for things topical and, yes, to do with men. I know its not very inclusive but hey, I emailed them to seek permission to use copy and photos and they were very obliging, so I'll forgive them.

There are interviews with some big names in football, for example, Marcos Antonia Senna da Silva, who is a Brazilian, but dual nationality allows him to play in midfield for Spain. Senna was 25 years old before he found God, after being invited to church. After suffering serious problems with both knees he has astonished doctors by still playing at the

top level. Senna said "The difference that Jesus makes in my life is everything. Quite simply he makes all the difference. There is nothing I can do without Jesus in my life. Jesus is everything to me."

Scorchio calls the next footballer 'defender of the faith'. He is the Italian defender Nicola LeGrottaglio. Who says his key verse in all the bible is *John 3:16* 'For God loved the world so much that He gave His only son so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but have eternal life.' Nicola is rich and famous and he explains why he needs Jesus in his life "I think it is the rich, even more than those who are not rich, who need Jesus most." If you already have everything in the sense of material riches, and if you are famous, you soon realise that this is not enough, that all things cannot ever be enough. Your soul needs spiritual richness, because we are part spirit, made in the image of God, we need to be reconciled with our creator." Amen to that Nicola !

My favourite all time player for Middlesbrough FC is Juninho who also happens to be a Christian.

Tim Howard the Everton and USA goalkeeper has suffered from Tourette's since the age of ten. He believes God has not only helped him to get where he is in football, but has also given him the opportunity to help other people who have the condition. He says " And yet, if it all went away tomorrow, I know I would still have peace. That probably sounds crazy to most people, but that's the kind of peace Christ gives. It is rooted in his love and surpasses all understanding. You can experience this same sense of and peace too. All you have to do is ask for it!" Tim has also been heavily involved with Athletics in Action, the sports ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ. Spoken like a true evangelist Tim!

Finally, Tim puts faith in the right place when he says "God is more important to me than winning or losing, whether I'm playing or not. Everything else is just a bonus."

I'll really try to remember that if England lose !
Claire Liebig-Denham

Writing for Health

Writing is for everyone

Realistic and accessible

In every way

Talking, writing and sharing
If you don't share, that's OK too

Nobody feels under pressure

Getting the best out of people

Free flow writing helps

Organise your thoughts

Remedy difficulties with a pen

Healthy happy people

Energised by the experience

All supporting each other

Learning about ourselves

Thinking feeling

Health of mind and body

"Penandtonic" wants to hold different workshops which will include Life stories, reminiscing, episode writing (snapshot stories), making life posters and creating artwork and/or memory books. We also want to include some sessions where participants can invite and include the stories of friends/families.

The group is currently gauging interest as well as looking out for suitable venues for groups to meet. Please take a look at their website.

www.penandtonic.org

MCC Newcastle Financial Report

Every week, people give generously to the ministry of MCC Newcastle through the offering plate at Sunday worship, or through the bank by Standing Order.

We also receive donations from time to time.

Do you know that every MCC congregation is financially independent? We send a percentage of the offering that is given in MCC Newcastle to support our ministries MCC worldwide

Sunday service	Attendance April	Attendance May
Week 1	31	33
Week 2	21	44
Week 3	29	24
Week 4	35	23
Week 5		31
Average Sunday attendance	29	31
No. of different individuals attending over month	39	45
Offering in plate	£168.76	£388.01
Offering through standing order	£1950	£1950
Total monthly offering	£2118.76	£2338.00
Budget for 2010/2011	£41365.00	
Total income to end of May 10	£5574.47	
Total expenditure to end of May 10	£6060.07	

Your generosity has enabled us to advertise two new staff posts this month!

We will be able to reach out to more people through these positions.

If you would like to start a Standing Order or want to sign a Gift Aid form, they are available every Sunday by the kitchen hatch!

OPA! LAHVE! and DRIIINK!

So perhaps the title doesn't make too much sense so here is the explanation....! The evening of the 29th May was one of the most important dates in my calendar – It was that joyous event of the Eurovision Song Contest.

This year the contest was watched by the YAM group (plus a few extra's!) at Cassie's house. With enough food to feed an army, and many comfy chairs and cushions, Cass, Charlotte, Claire, Keith, My Friend Chris, Becca and Doris, and myself sat down to watch the show, this year taking place in Oslo in Norway. The show started with a reprise of the winner last year, Alexander Rybak, who beautifully sang and played his violin (I have a thing for violinists so was quite pleased!)

Then we went through the 25 countries. We were all disappointed by the British entry who was out of key and the song was pants, but enjoyed some of the others – in particular Germany who's star sang in English, with a strange accent – hence the LAHVE meaning love! Greece was an amazing and began a catchphrase still lasting now of OPA!

Once all the countries had performed, the voting began, we voted Germany, Greece, France and Belarus (for the amazing butterfly wings!!!)

Throughout the night drinking games had been played – any time there was a wind machine, dodgy English accent, or random lyrics that obviously mean something in the language spoken in a country but not in the English translation; people had to drink. When the results started to come in, anytime there was a political vote drink also had to happen. This is where the word DRIIINK came in. anyone who has ever watched the Eurovision will know that political votes come thick and fast so Charlotte, Cass and the others began to become very drunk!

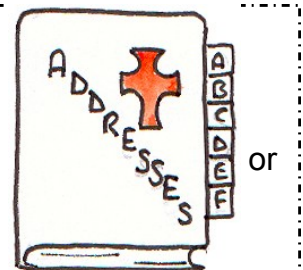
In the end Germany won and we came last, not surprising, but very much to Claire's disappointment – being married to a German and also having much animosity within the football world between our two countries Claire was dreading going home to see Annette!

All in all though a great night was had by everyone, so we can only really say thanks to Cassie for hosting and thanks to everyone for coming – it was great!

George x

Keeping in Touch with MCC Newcastle

Have you moved house lately? Perhaps you have changed your email address upgraded your mobile. Please let Cecilia or Margaret know, so that we can update your details on the church database and keep you up in touch with MCC Newcastle – thank you!



We Created A Life That Matters

A Reflection by Cass

For the second year MCC Newcastle has run a course called Creating a Life That Matters (CLM), which is "Metropolitan Community Church's transformational spiritual development curriculum". Which sounds very impressive, but what does that mean?

For 19 weeks on Thursday evenings 7 students, along with our leaders have been tucked away in Room 1, studying and talking about our relationships with the Sacred, ourselves and our passions. In other words trying to work out who we really are and what our place in the world is or should be. Who is God to *us*?

By connecting with one another we journeyed deeper into our understanding of what it means to be a spiritual being, questioning what we believe and why. We had the chance to look with guidance at what our calling may be, or how our beliefs may have previously been used to hurt us in the past and how we can move on to make that experience a positive force in our lives. Sometimes we received answers, quite often we ended up with more questions, but we always left at the end of the night with something to think about.

The most important part of the course for myself, and I believe for the others, was the fellowship during the months we spent together. I don't believe any of us knew each other too well before October, but I believe that now we have a connection that will last, if only due to sharing so many stories that it may be unwise to get on the wrong side of someone!

Lastly I'd like to thank Cecilia, Charlotte W and Hannelie for giving up their Thursday evening to instruct, guide and gently prod us along the path. And also to my fellow graduates; Vicki, Keith, James, Gabrielle, Helen and Carole for sharing with me that laughs, tears and bafflement at various Americanisms in the text.

CREATING A LIFE



THAT MATTERS

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

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 content or presentation please contact the Editor who welcomes any contributions, but reserves the right to edit as deemed appropriate.

Events and Activities

New this Month!

Pride – on parade, in the park and at Sunday Service 17th/18th July

Get ready to strut your stuff. Join the Parade at the Civic Centre, Newcastle, then enjoy all the delights of the Pink Picnic in Leazes Park. We will have a stall at the park, so please let Helen B know if you are able to lend a hand, even just for 30 minutes.

Our Pride service on **Sunday 18th July** will be fabulous! It will also be our CLM graduation!

Pilgrim's Walk – Sunday 31st July

Enjoy the fantastic scenery as you walk from Durham Cathedral to Witton Gilbert. Open your senses and make art as you stroll. See Hannelie for more details about this wonderful adventure.

Sunday Worship

MCC Newcastle meets **every Sunday** for worship at 6.30pm. We meet at St. James United Reformed Church, Northumberland Road, Newcastle NE1 8JF in the church hall. Our worship services are open to all.

Worship on Wednesday – WOW!!!

The monthly **Taizé service** is a quiet reflective style of worship involving singing of simple chants, often in Latin, and periods of silence. It is a perfect way to take some quiet time out from a busy week. Jonny is leading this worship on Wednesday 14th July in the main church. Taizé stops over the summer.

Kairos Service – Kairos means “God’s special time.” This is our free flowing worship experience. For more details and future dates, see Mikee, Charlotte W or Hannelie.

Going Loco down in Acapulco!

Our Lay Delegate, Charlotte N, is carrying MCCN’s vote to UFMCC General Conference in Acapulco, Mexico at the end of June. Find out what happened at the conference and how Charlotte used your vote at her feedback meeting on Sunday 11th July, before worship.

Socials

YAM (Young Adults Ministry) is for everyone from 18 – 30s. We have a social once a month. In July we are having a “Gleek” Party, with themed karaoke and a Gleeathon (every episode in *Glee* series one, back to back!) George is your host for this musical extravaganza!

For more information, phone/text the church phone (Cecilia or one of the church leaders)
07770 543407

or visit www.mccnewcastle.org.uk

MCC Newcastle, c/o St James Church, Northumberland Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JF

MCC Newcastle July 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall Lay Delegate Conference feedback 4.30pm With refreshments!	12	13	14 Taize service 7pm main church This will be the final Taizé service for now.	15	16	17 Northern Pride Come and join us on the parade and in Leazes Park
18 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall Pride Service and CLM Graduation	19	20	21	22	23 YAM Social Gleeathon! 7pm George's, Thornaby	24
25 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall	26	27	28	29	30	31 Pilgrim's Walk and Art Adventure Witton Gilbert 10.30am at Durham Cathedral, led by Hannelie