






From Dreams to Action!!

In the last issue of the newsletter, you will have read our draft Core Values and our Draft Mission statement. During Lent, we are considering each Core Value in our Sunday worship and thinking about how we can truly live out our Core Values as a faith community.

This weekend the Board of Directors of MCC Newcastle met to discuss how we can “put legs” on the ideas and dreams we shared in our Harvest for Our Future process. We looked at our financial commitments and compared those with the new aspects of growth that you all talked about.

We have come up with a bold idea to take MCC Newcastle to the next stage of our development together. The Board ask that you

-  **hold this idea in prayer**
-  **give us your feedback on our idea – we REALLY want to know what you think!**
-  **consider how you might support this idea through your committed giving.**

In Harvest for Our Future, many people wanted us to reach out more effectively to let even more people know about MCC Newcastle and about God’s inclusive love for all people. At the same time, it was clear that people value the warm welcome that they receive in church and the feeling that we are a caring, fun loving community. “Bigger but the same” was how one person described their vision for our future. We want to grow bigger without losing our family feel.

Some people expressed concern about the limited number of hours that we pay our Pastor (currently 22.5 hours per week) and whether we could find ways of using her time, gifts and talents to better effect.

The Board listened carefully to all your feedback and now have this proposal for you. For the year 2010/2011 we would like to increase the hours that we pay our Pastor AND create two other part time paid posts:

Administration and Communication (7 hours per week) – At the moment, Cecilia is responsible for much of the day to day administration of the church. This position would take over that administration and also help in improving communication within and beyond the church – for example, producing and sending out new publicity material and working with our Web guru to make sure the church website is kept right up to date.

Congregational Care Co-ordinator (10 hours per week) – As a congregation, we are great at caring about each other, providing support in many different ways. However, as we grow bigger, it is good to have one person who is overseeing pastoral care – from making sure that newcomers feel really welcome, to ensuring that regulars and members are supported during times of ill health or other issues. *Continues overleaf*

All Your Diary Dates, Events for March

PLUS

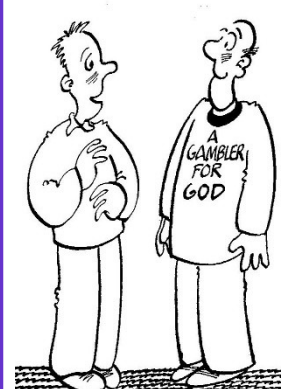
Bible feature ; How is Lent going for you?

A Duo of Concerts; George goes to see two top Christian Bands

Join our newest ministry! MCCN Amnesty International

Financial Report

A reflection on Lent by Margaret



I bet you twenty quid you daren't wear it to church on Sunday?

Board's Report continued – February

This post is NOT about offering all the care. It's about helping those of us who have a caring ministry to be supported and effective in what we do. Part of caring is also about having fun together. This post would make sure that there are plenty of opportunities for us to get together as a church family for meals and other social events.

Pastor (27 hours per week) – As Pastor, Cecilia is able to be a highly visible and active presence in the community. She is a gifted teacher and has a passion for helping people to find the right ministry for them. She is really good at taking your ideas and setting them out in a vision for the future, then putting in place the practical organisation that is needed to make it happen.

By increasing her hours and relieving her of some of her current responsibilities, we know that Cecilia will have more time to be present at key community events and meetings, will increase the profile of MCC Newcastle and will therefore encourage more people to become part of our church. Increased publicity also means that more people will choose MCC Newcastle for blessings and naming ceremonies.

She will also have time to develop more opportunities to help us grow in ministry, such as offering a preaching course, or helping to partner with another organisation on a social action project.

We are excited by this proposal and hope that you are too! Some of you will already be asking

“Can we afford it?”

The budget for **2009/2010** was **£35,520**. We anticipate that we will be **on budget for income** and under budget for expenditure by the end of this financial year. In fact, the Board has been extremely cautious in our spending this year, mindful of the current economic situation. Because of this, we anticipate an **underspend of about £4000** by the end of the financial year. This means we can build on this next year and expand our vision and ministry'.

In order to put this staffing structure in place and to meet other increases in expenditure, such as the rent for our worship space and for the office,

we are proposing to increase the budget for **2010/2011 to £38,000**. This is a modest increase and we know that as a generous congregation, you will rise to meet this challenge.



The Board is also looking at ways that we can increase our income through grant aid and decrease some areas of expenditure which no longer match our ministry priorities. The two new posts would initially be for 11 months, so that we can evaluate them and not over commit ourselves financially.

In the near future, we will be writing to each of you, asking if you will consider increasing your committed giving to help us achieve this next stage in the growth of our shared ministry. If you do not currently give financially on a regular basis, through either standing order or through Gift Aid envelope, we will be asking you to consider starting to do this.

God is calling us all to do great things – let us know what you think of our idea to grow and reach out to the communities that we are called to serve!

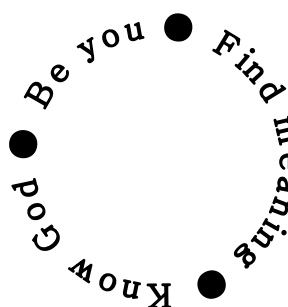
MCC Newcastle Board of Directors

Helen B, Katie, Richard, Charlotte N, Cecilia

Our Draft Core Values and Mission

At MCC Newcastle, we value:

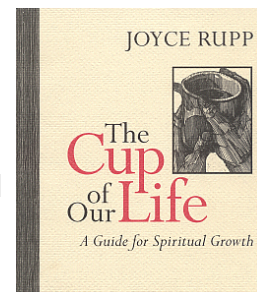
- the fabulous and the beautiful in each of us
- a warm, safe, welcome home
- worship that deepens our intimacy with God
- the strength we have together when we are each doing what we are passionate about
- love, fun and laughter





Bible Feature

How is Lent Going for You ?



Ok so it will be the third week of Lenten Group in Teesside as I write this. There are seven of us in the group and it has been going well thus far. I pray enlightenment upon the two other groups in that are being held in the North east by MCCN at Newcastle and Durham. Our weekly groups are following the above book by Joyce Rupp which is a guide to spiritual growth.

The book is written in six chapters each one having seven days. The idea is that the group meet on a weekly basis to discuss any aspect of the last week they feel they need to whether good or bad. How they are getting on and, if you they struggling with any or even all, of the book, to seek reassurance or guidance from your particular group. Fortunately, the group on Teesside are a tight-knit bunch, and I'm sure I speak for everyone when I say, we feel comfortable expressing deep rooted emotions or discussing things about days we have found particularly challenging.

For those of you who are not following the book, may I just take a short while to tell you what the gist of it. You choose a cup which becomes a symbolic vessel to you. After blessing the this cup it is used as a tool to represent your inner spirituality. .

Each week has a theme of sorts and each day there is a short essay by Joyce about something that has occurred in her life relating to that day, so for example the first day about your belief that you are made by God and are good, beautiful and a love song. So, the breath prayer is:-

Breathing in....I am
Breathing out...a love song



You then reflect, using the cup as a symbol of the theme for the day, she quotes scripture and next, in my view, is the most difficult part, you keep a journal of your thoughts, emotions and God. Finally, you are given a prayer and something to say or do throughout the day.

There you go...sounds easy doesn't it! Or is it ? The first week our group found it uplifting and it was a standing joke that 'you were a love song'. However, by the second week the

importance of the task in hand had started to manifest. The emphasis was about our struggle in and I can recall 'receiving' & 'trust' were the main topics of some heavy weight discussions. I've rationed myself to one bottle of red wine per week for lent but I must admit, a had a couple of glasses after that session.

The third week is called 'The Chipped Cup'. As I host the group, I started this task with great relish and enthusiasm. The group enjoyed the first week and it left everyone with a great sense of goodness as we left we called out to each other laughingly "remember, you are a love song".

The second week the tone of the group was very different spending time in deep discussion about 'receiving' and 'trust'. However, I was not prepared for what the book was going to bring me in the third week. As I read the introductory essay I began to cry and understand the spiritual enormity of the book. I continued with my daily practise until the third day 'the cleansed cup'. It was then I realised, my hereto belief I lived with a strong spiritual connection with God, was in question. And It wasn't only my own belief, but others believed it too. The only person I wasn't fooling was God !

The next group meeting, I broke down and confessed I had got no further than the third day. I needed help. A couple of people in the group, who I now recognise as being far more spiritually mature than me, suggested I look for a 'Spiritual Director' and gave contact details to seek one should I wish.

I was always so confident that when the 'Rapture' came, I would be taken by Jesus Christ. If this book is genuinely and faithfully practised, it has the potential to change your life, your relationship with yourself, others and most importantly, with God. Wow...Joyce Rupp is a modern day disciple.

Claire Liebig-Denham.
God Bless. xx

**Make A Difference
Join Our Group!**



amnesty.org.uk

Most people have heard of Amnesty International. It is a campaigning organisation which champions the human rights of individuals all over the world.

“Our purpose is to protect people wherever justice, fairness, freedom and truth are denied. “

I have been a member of Amnesty since I was a teenager and have been active in all sorts of campaigns. It doesn't have to be difficult, it may be as simple as sending a Christmas card to a political prisoner to remind them that they are not forgotten.

I am starting an Amnesty International group at MCC Newcastle. I hope that we will meet once a month over a cuppa and discuss what campaigns and action we are going to take. Often this will be sending a letter or an email in support of an individual. It really is easy to do.

If you would like to become part of the group, talk to me at church on Sunday or email me at mccnamnesty@googlemail.com

Sometimes it is hard to think that we can make a difference in the world, but we really can!

As Margaret Mead, anthropologist and writer said:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Looking forward to changing the world with you!!

Cass

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.

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!

Sunday service	Attendance January	Attendance February
Week 1	14	30
Week 2	18	25
Week 3	34	16
Week 4	24	30
Week 5	31	
Average Sunday attendance	24	24
No. of different individuals attending over month	51	39
Offering in plate	£456.50	£116.29
Offering through standing order	£1850	£2050
Total monthly offering	£2306.50	£2166.29
Budget for 2009/2010	£35,520.00	
Total income to 13th March 2010	£33,466.84	
Total expenditure to 13th March 2010	£26,735.45	

Thank you for your generous giving!!
With your offerings, we are also able to support the ministry of MCC worldwide, through our monthly giving to the denomination



Phatfish

A Duo of Concerts!

Two Saturdays in a row in November were taken up by church folk heading to concerts around the country!



Martin Smith

...starting with a YAM social to Durham, to the concert of rock band PHATFISH. This group have been around for over 15 years and have some great rock songs, some fabtastical worship songs and some brilliant pop songs. Starting as an acid jazz group with two percussionists and a rapper, to a guitar led rock band has taken a long time but this has led them to become one of the most influential British Christian bands. They have appeared at numerous festivals throughout their time and have made many appearances on the God Channel and on BBC's Songs of praise. The concert was in a "warehouse church" in Durham featuring a tuck shop with sweets and pop! The concert was in the main church hall and as soon as we had settled in our seats Charlotte, Hannelie, Maddy and myself were up dancing around, clapping and singing. Lou Fellingham (the lead singer) has a beautiful voice and this was demonstrated all the way through the concert but in particular at the end with one of their most successful songs - 'There Is A Day', which was my particular highlight!



Lou Fellingham

The following week, Me and Claire ventured to Leeds to see Delirious. Arguably the most successful Christian band in the world, having performed in over 30 different countries, releasing over 16 albums of music, Grammy nominated, several singles in the UK top 20 mainstream charts and multiple Dove-awards (Christian music Oscars!). The band began in 1993 and after 16 years they have decided to disband to pursue solo projects and spend time with families - much to the upset of Claire.

We arrived to a very long queue outside the O2 Academy, but parked near the front of the queue, right next to where my brother and his friend were queuing so we managed to queue jump and get near to the front of the concert - much to Claire's liking! They played many of their greatest songs from their early days to the latest. Playing some of mine, Claire's and Will's (my brother) favourites made it even more enjoyable! My personal favourites were their songs Deeper and History Maker. It is a great loss to the Christian music world but I would not have missed this concert for the world, as much fun as all the concerts I've been to this year this was the best, completely, without question and there is no comparison!



During their song 'Here I am send me'



Their farewell tour

Both were great to see and if you have never heard either groups music, you can listen online at you tube and ask around at church, I know there are a few of us who both delirious and phatfish CDs - they are definitely worth a listen, although as I hope I have portrayed - they were much better live!!!

George x

P.S. "They were flipping awesome folks !!!" Claire. xx

What Lent Means to Me - Margaret

"Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?"

For me, this runs right through Lent in our preparations for Holy Week and Easter. Matthew's gospel (Chapter 3) had Jesus' answer to all the temptations that Satan had thrown at him. "Go away Satan. The scripture says: Worship the Lord your God and serve only him." Satan today tempts people with much the same temptations he used against Jesus.

Services in Lent are often full of the above imagery and symbolism:
"Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison" - Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Lenten hymns paint the same sort of picture:
"Listen, listen to the cry of my solemn litany"
"Forty days and forty nights thou wast fasting in the wild"
"Christian, seek not yet repose, hear thy guardian angel say"

Most denominations keep Lent, but the degree to which they do varies. High Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have a stark and bare feel to them at this time - you can tell as soon as you go in. There are no flowers, statues are covered in purple, the colour of penitence. Altar frontals are either purple or sackcloth. People meet in each other's homes or churches for prayer and study of a chosen book. MCC Newcastle is offering such a course.

Lent reminds me a lot of Advent. The same call to prepare and to self examination. Mark's gospel, (Chapter 1) "Someone is crying in the desert. Get the road ready for the Lord; make a straight path for him." Attending services, prayer and study are disciplines in themselves.

Liturgy and worship in Lent get to me in way I can't always put my finger on. Going to an Ash Wednesday service and having ash imposed on my forehead..... Being in a church when all is quiet and I'm the only one there.
The sense of Jesus's alone-ness and desolation and is more immediate then.

I wish you a blessed and meaningful Lent.

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.

Registered charity number 1093009

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!! Come and be part of our vision morning – a chance to share your ideas and thoughts on what are the bedrock beliefs that make MCC Newcastle the faith community that we are. What is the symbol or song that sums up who we are together? Be part of this fantastic experience on **Saturday 27th March in the main church** – and let's let lunch too!!

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.

This Month!! Our sermon themes for Lent are based on the draft Core Values that have been developed using all the feedback from Harvest for Our Future – where we have been sharing ideas and dreams about what God is calling us to do and be in the next ten years.

The **Scarborough Group** meets on the **second Sunday** of every month at 4.30pm at the Westborough Methodist Church, Scarborough. Join us for worship and a fellowship meal.

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, so see him for more details. The Taizé service is in the main church every **second Wednesday**.

Kairos Service - Come and enjoy this free flowing worship experience. Sing and pray as the Holy Spirit moves you. Another opportunity to go deeper with God. For more information, talk to Charlotte W or Mikee.

Socials

YAM (Young Adults Ministry) is for everyone from 18 – 30s. We have a social once a month. This month we are celebrating YAM's **6 month birthday** with a murder mystery party at George's house in Thornaby! RSPV essential (talk to George, Charlotte N or Cass)

Squash – How many people can we squash into Mikee and Jonny's home in Heaton?? Join us for a whole church social after worship on 14th February

Spiritual Growth

Lent Book Groups – We will be using the “**The Cup of Our Life: A Guide for Spiritual Growth**” by Joyce Rupp. Order your copy now so that you can join the journey through Lent! See the February newsletter for more details!

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

March 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Cecilia on leave	2	3 Lent book group Heaton 7pm AND Thornaby 7pm	4 CLM – Rediscovering Relationship with Myself 7pm Room 1	5 Lent book group Witton Gilbert 7pm	6
7 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall 3 rd Lent	8	9	10 Lent book group Heaton 7pm AND Thornaby 7pm	11 CLM – 7pm Room 1	12 Lent book group Witton Gilbert 7pm	13 YAM Social Murder Mystery Party at George's (RSPV) 6pm Thornaby
14 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall 4 th Lent	15	16	17 Lent book group Heaton 7pm AND Thornaby 7pm	18 CLM – 7pm Room 1	19 Lent book group Witton Gilbert 7pm	20
21 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall 5 th Lent	22	23	24 Lent book group Heaton 7pm AND Thornaby 7pm	25 CLM – 7pm Room 1	26 Lent book group Witton Gilbert 7pm	27 Vision morning – come and share the dream!! 10am St James with lunch to follow
28 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall Palm Sunday	29	30	31			