

Kairos Kicks Off

It was a dark Wednesday evening when 10 people were gathered quietly in a church. Some had arrived earlier than others to get the setting right. People had come from various parts of the region. Some from home, some from work but they were all there for the same purpose.

Sound like the start of a ghost story? No this was for something new and exciting, something that had been awaited for quite some time.

On Wednesday 2nd November the first Kairos Service was held in the main church. Ten of us gathered, not quite sure what was going to happen and how the service would progress. We started with a time of quiet to gather our thoughts, after whatever the day had held for each of us and then moved into a time of sung worship. We sang traditional hymns and newer songs, all telling of what a great God we have and how we want to worship her and be in her presence. In our own ways we were moved closer and deeper to God.

I myself was amazed at how from the opening, quiet and readings and then the sung worship all fitted together, ...and I had prepared the order! I could see God's hand very closely in the preparation and was greatly blessed by this and realised how much God was directing the time even before we had met. For me this was a reminder of how much God loves me and wants to meet with me on a more intimate and individual level.

The service then moved into a time of worship through prayer. We prayed in our hearts and out loud. We gave thanks for who and what God has done for us, for those in our lives in need, for ourselves and where we were at, for whatever was on our hearts. We listened to what God was saying to us and how much he wanted to meet with us in our lives and hear from us and our needs, to be our best friend whom we talk to like any other and to whom we tell our deepest thoughts, needs, wants and desires; maybe like we do with no-one else.

This time of praise, prayer, listening and both quiet and verbal worship then leads into a time of praying in smaller groups. Prayers for each other and those in our lives, for healing and guiding. One of our number then shared their thoughts from a passage in Revelations, all totally unprepared but fitting with our earlier thoughts and prayers and linking with where we were. We closed this time with a final song to send us out remembering whom we had met with.

So the start of something new had begun. Something I know some have waited quite some time for.

For those of you who couldn't make it this time, don't worry, we will be meeting again. Watch this space for a date in the New Year when, once again, Kairos will return. Will it be the same as described here? Yes and No. Yes we will go deeper through songs and prayer; No, because God doesn't always take us in the direction we expect!!



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opportunity**

Financial report



Cass and George

Pastor's Report – October 2009

Harvest for Our Future has well and truly begun! On Harvest Sunday, we gave generously to feed others in the city and also started our journey into our own future. People have been filling the ideas boards at church and there are Vision Parties, where you can share your ideas too.

On the boards we have been thinking about the following:

- What activity or ministry at MCC Newcastle do you value most?
 - What 3 words best describe MCC Newcastle?
 - If MCC Newcastle was an image or a symbol or a song....what would it be?
 - Who is MCC Newcastle specifically called to reach out to?
 - What will MCC Newcastle be like in 10 years time? (let's dream a little)
- What seeds do we have to plant NOW in order to achieve that vision?

People have been writing their thoughts and ideas on post its and adding them to the boards. So far, worship is one major aspect of our life together which is highly valued. "Church is cool" could be the best three words used to describe MCC Newcastle and "An army of ordinary people" is one of the songs which symbolise who we are.

Don't miss out on your chance to join in the discussion about our future together. As we listen and learn from each other, the Holy Spirit has the chance to be heard too and we will discern what God is calling us to be and do over the next 10 years.

Another of the aspects of MCC Newcastle that people really value is the warm welcome that we offer. This is a tricky thing to get right – we don't want to overwhelm someone by being too friendly, but we don't want to leave them completely alone either! Some people are excited to be in worship with us for the first time, others are terrified!

Members of the Welcome Team invite all first timers to complete a contact form – they don't have to! If they give us their address, the Welcome Team sends them a card to bless them and to thank them for worshipping with us. Now we are taking this welcome to the next

stage. Imagine that you are back at the beginning of your MCC journey. You've now come to worship a couple of times and may have some questions about MCC

Newcastle, about the way we worship, perhaps the way that the wider MCC denomination got started. Three new leaflets have now been developed:

- Who we are and what we believe
- What we offer and how you can get involved
- Being an inclusive church

These three leaflets were drafted with the help of people in the congregation who are themselves quite new to our faith community. Thanks to Sarah D, Helen C and to Gabrielle for their great ideas on layout and content. We hope these leaflets will help people to settle into MCC Newcastle more easily and understand more about how we grow together in God.

As you may know, I spent five days in USA at the beginning of the month, attending a meeting of the MCC Structure Review Team. The work of this team is drawing to a close, as we will present our report to the Board of Elders (MCC's spiritual leadership) at the beginning of December. It is a great honour to do ministry like this for the wider denomination.

Most of you will not know that our very own Mikee is also working on a denominational team. He is part of the Church Revitalisation Initiative (CRI). This project works with congregations in MCC that are struggling for one reason or another. It is a chance for skilled people from other MCCs to share their knowledge and experience. Mikee is using his language skills and his experience in worship to support MCC Köln.

Harvest for Our Future is a great way of sharing what we already know is good and dreaming about how we can offer more, in our congregation, in the North East, in the world!

God bless





Bible Feature

The Journey of God's Message

Amos Chapter 8 speaks of Israel's doom. *Verses 9-10* says "The time is coming when I will make the sun go down at on and the earth will grow dark in daytime. I, the sovereign Lord, have spoken. I will turn your festivities into funerals and change your glad songs into cries of grief. I will make you shave your heads and wear sackcloth, and you will be like parents mourning for their only child. That day will be bitter to the end."

This was the prophet's words in the early days of God's message to be interpreted in terms of fear and punishment. The ultimate punishment God could think of was to make us mourn like mourning for the loss of an only child (sound familiar?).

The same theme is to be read in *Psalms 52* but there is a mellowing in *Verses 8* which goes "But I am like an olive tree growing in the house of God; I trust in the Parent's constant love forever." There is a shift in emphasis by God to concentrate on His love instead of His fear !

I can just image God pondering on how to steer human (my children) minds and deciding the only way forward with these people is "I am just going to have to spell things quite clearly for them. There is too much talk of fear and not enough about my love". In fact, if you read the last chapter of *Amos* talks about such a mellowing of God. Read *Chapter 9 Verses 11-15*. Maybe God had toyed with this idea of love a thousand years earlier.

God came up with a master plan worthy of a genius (well what it would be except for The genius!); The Lord thought "What is the ultimate sacrifice I could make to show my children just how much I love...I know, I will send *my* only son."

And Jesus came
And Jesus loved
And taught us how to love each other
And in Him God was well pleased.

No where in the bible is made clearer to us than *Luke Chapter 10 Verses 38-42* where Martha does all the running around whilst her

sister Mary sits at Jesus' feet listening intently so His teachings. Jesus tells Martha "Martha, Martha! You are worried and troubled over so many things but just one is needed. Mary has chosen the right thing, and it will not be taken away from her." What Jesus is trying to tell Martha is that we all may have busy lives but the only message is the ultimate message from God and that message is love.

Now that was over 2000 years ago but God is still using people, places and events to get the message of love across to us.

I read a book called 'Communication With God' by Neale Donald Walsch in which he is having a conversation with God. In the prelude to the book God (speaking through Neale) God tells the world that throughout history a handful of people have had the courage and time to really listen to God. The few that have listened, and shared, have gone onto to change the world. God then gives examples such as Muhammad, Buddha, Moses, Dalai Lama, Mother Theresa and of course Jesus.

God goes onto explain that all you have to be is to be, and all you have to be is me. It doesn't require action but simply an acknowledgement. I have been seeking this admission forever. When you grant me admission, you let Me into your life. You admit that you and I are one. This is your ticket to heaven and it says on it "ADMIT ONE". (allegedly God circa 1995).

And as we, as God's children, evolve with God's message, we learn to love rather than fear. God teaches us to open our hearts instead of closing them, to learn more about the Parent's desires for us as children.

You have to be prepared to listen though, like Mary listened to Jesus in Luke. You have a choice to make; listen to God and learn to love OR refuse to listen and be ignorant and in fear.

Never forget that God gives you free choice. You have to select for yourselves. I know which I've selected and I listen to God.

Claire Liebig-Denham

A Huge Harvest Thank You!

It took two crates and several large bags to transport all the harvest fare to the People's Kitchen – everything from 30 tins of vegetables and 25 cans of soup, through to all the ingredients for making a fabulous cake and a carrier bag full to bursting with pasta. The volunteer who helped carry all our gifts into the kitchen said that they had been “down to the tiles” the previous week.

It is heart warming to think that so many individuals around Newcastle and beyond had collected food and donated it to this organisation.

Several people in MCC Newcastle donated smaller items which would be suitable for feeding one person, rather than 200 at a time. These items were donated to the West End Refugee Service to give to individuals there.

A huge thank you to everyone who gave so generously and to Margaret, who helped sort and pack it all for delivery.

Footballers Wanted!



Lesley is getting a five-a-side football team together. If you are interested in having a run about on a pitch, get in touch via social@mccnewcastle.org.uk or 07770 543 407. You don't need experience, just enthusiasm!

If we get good enough, we might enter the five-a-side tournament that is held as part of the Hartlepool Gaymes next summer!!

If you know a good place for the team to practice, that would be great too!

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.

Most people who are UK tax payers also sign a Gift Aid form which allows the church to claim back tax from the UK Government.

The Board is committed to letting you know about the financial health of the church, and this report will become a regular feature of the newsletter from now on.

If you would like more detailed information, please contact our Treasurer, Katie at treasurer@mccnewcastle.org.uk

Sunday service	Attendance Sept	Attendance Oct
Week 1	35	28
Week 2	36	31
Week 3	26	33
Week 4	29	28
Average Sunday attendance	31.5	30
No. of different individuals attending over month	61	49
Offering in plate	£224.24	£175.66
Offering through standing order	£1905	£1950
Total monthly offering	£2129.24	£2125.66
Budget for 2009/2010	£35,520.00	
Total income to end of Oct 09	£16,985.02	
Total expenditure to end of Oct 09	£15,841.31	

***Thank you for all that you give!!
If 10 people increased their giving by £10 per month, that would be £1200 over the year.
Could you be one of the 10?***

The Pilgrim's Tale by Cecilia Chaucer



It was an odd feeling, arriving at the door of Durham Cathedral to be a pilgrim in the 21st century, wondering what it must have been like for the thousands of pilgrims who had made their way before me. Hannelie was the pilgrim guide for the day. We moved in through the heavy wooden doors, across the cathedral aisles with their magnificent columns and out into the ancient cloisters. We crossed the river, stopping to try and drop pennies onto the ledge below the bridge, and walked out into modern Durham.

At the entrance to a hidden vale, beyond the towering viaduct, we stopped for the first time to attune ourselves to all that was around us. Hannelie offered tiny little pieces of card (about an inch square) and we used these to collect fragments of the beautiful autumn creation around us, sticking them onto the card to form mini-masterpieces. We also got a length of cotton on which to tie items we found along the way, so that we had prompts to remind us when we told of our epic journey when we got home (I was singularly hopeless at this part, all the things I tied on, fell off!)

As we walked through this almost silent green vale in the middle of Durham, we reached a fork in the path and Hannelie deftly created a marking out of twigs to show other pilgrims which route we had taken.



We wandered through a housing estate and across a busy road (Health and Safety all being taken seriously) and I collected my first conkers of the season – very pleasing! Finally we were out into open countryside with magnificent views. We stopped to do a sound map – noting the noises that we heard, which direction they came from and how they made us feel. As we moved into the next field, we saw our first fox of the day, dashing between the two fields and quickly hidden from view.

We had lunch sitting on the ruins of Beauzpaire Priory, admiring the autumn colours in the trees below. As I sat on the stones, I thought of all the hopes and prayers that had been soaked into these walls over the years. Once we finished our lunch, Hannelie invited us to consider the sounds inside our souls and draw what God might be saying to us. This is called a mandella (or mundella) Once again, she pulled out crayons and card out of her knapsack and we sat in companionable silence, listening for God in that sacred space. I found it hard to draw what was inside for me at the time, but I have kept my mandella and it seems to make sense now. We also saw our second fox, a huge dog fox bounding over the wheat in the field. What an amazing sight!

I confess to needing a small nap at this point, but we gathered ourselves up and started the final part of our pilgrimage, along a gentle and winding river. Our destination was the church at Witton Gilbert. This is perched at the top of a hill at the edge of the village. Hannelie had been entrusted with the church keys, so that we could look around. The congregation there have prepared some simple and beautiful meditation guides to use as you look around the church and the graveyard.

Finally, the pilgrim's reward – tea and cake!! I collapsed in a happy and rather muddy heap at Hannelie and Charlotte's home and spread my treasures out on their coffee table, whilst Hannelie brewed up. My mini-masterpieces showed the rich array of colours and textures that are available to us if we will only take the time to enjoy God's creation, my sound map reminded me of what feeds and what disturbs my soul, the mandella showed me the state of my soul and what I needed to give attention to, and the conkers were shiny and smooth – what more do you want! Well - cake obviously, which was just fab!



Thank you for Hannelie and Charlotte for putting this wonderful pilgrimage together. It was a rich and rewarding experience.

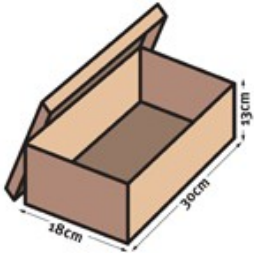
Operation Christmas Child - We are nearly there!



Thank you to everyone who has already donated toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap and flannels for Operation Christmas Child. Toys, scarves and gloves and socks are also appearing in the box at the back of church. November is for crayons and drawing pads. It is also time to pack your own individual shoebox.

Boxes for girls and for boys are needed - especially very young children aged 2-4, or older children 10 - 14 years old. Gloves, scarves, toys and sweets are all welcome, but please don't include chocolate (which may melt), money or anything that has camouflage colouring on it - even on toys.

We will bless our boxes as part of our special service on **Sunday 21st November**. Please bring your box on that day.



We will be visiting the warehouse in Byker to pack the boxes for shipping on **Saturday 28th November**, so let Abby know if you would like to attend. It is a wonderful experience to see the generosity and thoughtfulness of so many people, packed into shoeboxes to be sent all over the world!



Lunch will be served at Cecilia's and Monica's home afterwards, so let Cecilia know if you will be coming!

My Beautiful Launderette!!

Do you love washing and ironing? Are your shirts crisp and your linens a joy to behold? If so.....
We need you!

MCC Newcastle has some beautiful altar cloths and they are in need of some tender loving care. If you are willing to take responsibility for making sure that the altar linen is as beautiful as your clothes and can lift wax out of tablecloths in a trice, please let Cecilia know!

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

Christmas Services

Each year, we add to the range of services that we offer to celebrate the birth of Jesus

Saturday 6th Dec 10.30am - a chance for children from all the congregations who worship at St James to help decorate the St James Christmas tree in the main church.

Wednesday 16th Dec - 7pm Blue Christmas service. Christmas is not a happy time for everyone. A time for reflection and remembering, a time when it is ok not to be merry. Main church

Sunday 20th Dec - 6.30pm Our Annual service of Lessons and Carols. Come along and bring a friend! Main church

Thursday 24th Dec - 6.30pm Christmas Eve Crib Service. A quiet reflective service, welcoming in the Christ Child in the winter darkness. Main church

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.

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.

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**.

Socials

YAM (Young Adults Ministry) invites **everyone** to join them for an evening of great live Christian music. Phatfish are playing Durham. Meet YAM in the market square at 6.30pm. Tickets are £8 for adults and £5 for students and those over 60.. Please contact Charlotte N by Sunday 1st November if you would like to go! laydelegate@mccnewcastle.org.uk or via our Facebook group.

Tea with Dorothy (TWD) is a group for the more mature amongst us. We have two TWD groups. **Tea with Dorothy in Newcastle** meets on the **first Saturday** of every month, from 2 – 4pm at Martha and Mary's Cafe, Chillingham Road, Heaton. Pop in for a cuppa and a chat.

Spiritual Growth

Advent groups are starting soon! Look out for one near you. We will be following in the footsteps of NE saints!

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 November 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30						1 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall All Saints - Harvest for the Future
2	3	4 Kairos Service 7pm main church	5	6	7 Tea with Dorothy Heaton 2 – 4pm A social for the more mature among us Vision Party at 7pm Mikee and Jonny's. Share food and dreams for the future of MCCN	8 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall Remembrance Service
9	10	11 Taizé Service 7pm, main church	12 Vision Party at 7pm, Charlotte and Hannelle's share food and dreams for the future of MCCN	13	14	15 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall
16	17	18	19 Creating a Life that Matters (CLM) 7pm	20	21 YAM! Invites everyone to see Phatfish 7.30pm Durham	22 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall
23	24	25	26 Creating a Life that Matters (CLM) 7pm	27	28 Operation Christmas Child Warehouse visit, Byker. Time tbc	29 Sunday Worship 6.30pm, church hall 1 st Advent Deadline for articles for news-letter