



What A Superb Gay Weekender!

It was Teesside's turn to host a celebration of LGBT life, only this time, it was in honour of those who live in and around Middlesbrough. The programme took place between 10th-14th September and included such events as 'Readings, Questions and Answers' with authors Paul Magrs (Something Borrowed) and Helen Sandler (Diva Book of the Dead and Undead). The following evening 'The SuperGay Film and Theatre Evening' included a short film made by the local LGBT community about life in Middlesbrough, exploring our culture, history, building and humour. That was followed by a play 'A Twist of Lemon' which reflected the experiences of LBi women of life and relationships.

On Friday night there was the long awaited 'Drag Idol' in which the best performer of the night won an i-Pod Nano ! This was followed by the 'Pout for Pride' where an entourage of performers kept us entertained well into the night. (and believe you me, can those Boro lads pout !)

The big event for me was The March followed by the Fun Day. As usual, John and myself had made sure we booked a stall for the Fun Day. I arrived at 10.30am to discover we had booked 'a pitch' so there was no cover, indeed not even a table provided. Eventually I did manage to scrounge a little table and left John to set it up in his gifted creative usual manner. I hot-footed to where the March was going to start. Patrick, Morgan, Cecilia, Monica and Lucy were all waiting with baited breath for MCCN flag which had been taken and used at Greenbelt. Flag on broom handle, secured by an aids ribbon and a safety pin, we were all set to go !

It was the first time that Teesside had held a march like the one in Newcastle some weeks before. But this was my home town and I was determined to make as much noise as I could. Cecilia carried the flag, I blew my whistle, the drums banged and echoed throughout Middlesbrough. We had our fair share of drag queens, football teams and police and fire brigade. It was every bit as good as Newcastle had been, but for me, this was special.

The Town Hall flew a rainbow flag ! It didn't rain ! The Mayor, Ray Mallon (known for zero tolerance) opened the day with a supportive speech and a good look at our flag !

We lost our table and had to buy a paste board and sheet. Hey! but it was a fabulous day for evangelising and we got ten contact details from people interested in our church and many other exchanges of names, emails etc. Teesside's LGBT community is spiritually aware and just need waking up!

The weekend was rounded off with a huge party in one of the well known gay pubs. I didn't need a party, I'd had mine by marching with MCCN flag and having the chance to tell LGBT from my home town about the love of God and just what this church has to offer them....Party On ! By Claire

All Your Diary Dates for October

Pastor's Report for the month

Bible Feature; Do you Serve the Lord

George writes a special article about his Greenbelt adventure

'Nightstop' A Charity for housing kids. Could you help ?



Outreach Team



Ray Mallon opens M'bro pride



Taking in the atmosphere



Bible Feature



Do You Serve the Lord? walk the walk and talk the

The recent 'Angels of the North' campaign has been so much about serving the Lord and the 'spiritual gifts parties' culminating in our 'Ministry Fair' was about finding out just what gifts God has given you and, most importantly, using them. It has been made quite clear to us that God has given each of us gifts. But do you know yours and do you use them to proclaim the Gospel on earth ?

On 10th September 2008 scientists started a five billion pound experiment to recreate the 'Big Bang' (origin of the universe), to show what it was made of a billionth of second after it occurred. Scientists were hoping to discover the unknown particle that to date remains just a theory (nicknamed the 'God particle' because it is thought to be so fundamental to the evolution of the universe) .

There was much hype in the media regarding the experiment, some people believing it would trigger off real big bang. As I listened on my local radio to what people would actually do if they had minutes to live, I wasn't surprised to hear comments like "I would borrow loads of money and spend it" or "I would tell my boss to stuff his job". What did amaze me was the amount of people that just wanted to spend it with the ones they love. I thought to myself, "If I'm going to meet the Creator, I want to be with my birth and church family singing worship songs."

We have all been offered the opportunity to attend a spiritual gift party where our pastor , Cecilia, explained just what a spiritual gift is, and a little about the completing the current spiritual gifts survey. Some of the common gifts are hospitality, evangelism, pastoral care, administration, leadership, arts or writing. It will come as no surprise to learn that my top two gifts were evangelism and writing ! It is not rocket science...see how it works.

In *1 Corinthians Chapter 12* Paul explains what spiritual gifts are, the variety and unity of them. Paul also explains that all the gifts are given and needed in order to sustain Christ's church. Significantly, Paul teaches that there is no order of importance in spiritual gifts; they are all needed if the church of Christ is to flourish.

In *Verse 12* Paul explains it like this; *"Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ."*...*Verse 17*; "If your whole body was just one eye, how would you hear anything? If it was just one ear, how could you smell anything?"

Verse 21; *"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you', nor can the head say to the feet, 'I don't need you'.*

Verse 27 sums up what he's driving at; *"Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it."*

In my judgment, you cannot possibly understand why God gave each of us our certain gifts and, what to do with them, unless you've read this chapter. So please take a short moment of your time to read it if you can.

In *Chapter 13* Paul pulls it all together with the powerful message that ambition for more gifts is fine but they are not one ounce of use without love ! Read it for yourselves and high drama stuff.

There are two more verses in *Chapter 13*. Firstly, about the importance of spiritual gifts in the community and finally, he cannot resist on giving some advice upon regulating them! (Well, it is Paul)

So what does all this mean to YOU ? Are you using your God given gifts in your life ? You may well be using them in your daily life, for example, at work. You may well not be using yours at all. The key is finding out what your own gift and then utilising it for the greater good, love and in service of God.

Take time to find out what gifts God has given YOU and then use them to serve the Creator. I guarantee you will feel a whole better within and outside yourself. Oh yeah, and if you should have a few moments before you come face to face with the 'big boss in the sky', I can promise you you'll be greeted like a child of God for doing so.

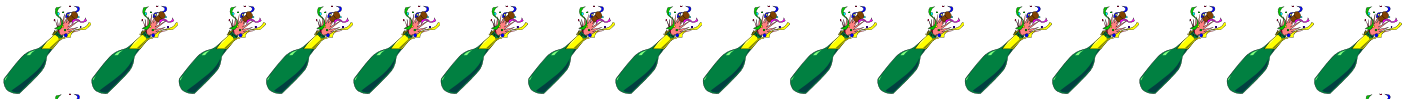


By Claire Denham

Notice Sheet for October 2008

Every Sunday— Worship 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

Date/Time	Event	Other information
Wed 1 st Oct 7.30pm	“The Good Book Club” – refresher Bible classes	Continuing our journey through Acts. Church office, St. James URC
Friday 3 rd Oct 8pm	Monthly Taize service	St. James Church
Saturday 4 th Oct 2 – 4pm	Tea with Dorothy – a cuppa and company	Martha and Mary café, Chillingham Road, Heaton, Newcastle. See Eric for more info.
Sunday 5 th Oct 10.45am	Joint Harvest service with St. James URC – in the church	Bring your gifts of food for local charities
Sunday 5 th Oct – after service	Squash – relax and mingle at our monthly social time	Mikee and Jonny’s home, Heaton. Newcastle. See Mikee for more info.
Tuesday 7 th Oct 7.30pm	Prayer Party – a chance to gather in prayer together	Alison’s home, Central Newcastle. See Alison for more info.
Wed 8 th Oct 5pm – 7pm	Tea with Dorothy - Sunderland	Age Concern, Sunderland. See Roger for more info.
Thursday 9 th Oct 7.15pm	<i>New!</i> Enquirers’ classes – find out more about MCC worldwide and MCC Newcastle. Church office. See Cecilia for more info.	These classes are open to everyone, however if you are thinking of becoming a member, you must attend all three classes.
Satur 11 th Oct 10.30am	Dog Walk – Jesmond Dene. Meet by Pets Corner.	See Abby for more details or email social@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Sunday 12 th Oct 4.30pm	Scarborough group meets	Worship and fellowship meal, Westborough Methodist Church, Scarborough
Sunday 12 th Oct – after service	Wilderness People Book Launch and Exhibition	Come along and your free copy of our book” St. James Church
Wed 15 th Oct 5pm – 7pm	Tea with Dorothy - Sunderland	Age Concern, Sunderland. See Roger for more info.
Thurs 16th Oct 7.15pm	<i>New!</i> Enquirers’ classes – find out more about MCC worldwide and MCC Newcastle. Church office	These classes are open to everyone, however if you are thinking of becoming a member, you must attend all three classes.
Friday 17 th Oct 7.30pm	<i>New!</i> Movies with Mikee – share a film, discuss the meaning. This month – “Dogma”	Mikee and Jonny’s home, Heaton. Newcastle. See Mikee for more info. Bring your own popcorn!
Tues 21st Oct 7.30pm	Prayer Party – a chance to gather in prayer together	Alison’s home, Central Newcastle. See Alison for more info.
Thurs 23 rd Oct 7.15pm	<i>New!</i> Membership class – thinking about becoming a member?	Church office. See Cecilia for more information.
Saturday 25 th Oct – Wed 29 th Oct	Cecilia on leave	My brother and sister-in-law are coming over from Australia!
Saturday 1 st Nov 2 – 4pm	Tea with Dorothy – a cuppa and company	Martha and Mary café, Chillingham Road, Heaton, Newcastle. See Eric for more info.
Visit our website for updates and amendments throughout the month. www.mccnewcastle.org.uk		
<u>NEW</u> POSTAL ADDRESS MCC Newcastle St James URC Northumberland Road Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8JF	A Christ centred and inclusive community’	Phone or text 07770 543407 if you would like this sheet in a different format Registered as a charity in England and Wales, No. 1093009



INVITATION TO A PARTY AND BOOK LAUNCH



The 'Wilderness People' book launch will be held on Sunday October 12th after the evening service, which coincides with the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.



All are very welcome – there will be a party with free refreshments and free copies of the book for those who attend.



There will also be an exhibition of art and memories!



MCC – Want to Know More?

On Thursdays in October, we will be having our Enquirers' classes and Membership Class. These classes are open to anyone. You may be a member who would like a chance to remind yourself about the history of MCC Newcastle and learn more about our denomination. You may be interested in MCC, but don't want to commit yourself more at the moment. You may be ready to make a formal commitment in membership to MCC Newcastle. Whatever your reason for attending, you will be most welcome! Each class is two hours long and is a mixture of discussion, chatting in small groups and watching some DVD clips.

The first two classes are for anyone: the third class, Membership, is for those who are seriously thinking about becoming a Member of MCC Newcastle. If you are thinking about becoming a Member, you will need to attend all three classes. If this is going to be difficult because of work commitments etc, please let Cecilia know.

Changes on Board

Emily Watson, who was our Lay Delegate and Helen Fenwick have both stepped down from their positions on the church's Board of Directors. On behalf of MCC Newcastle, the Board would like to thank them for all their hard work in this ministry. The Board is responsible for the finance and administration of the church and will be looking to co-opt members in the next month or two, to serve until the Annual General Meeting in April. If you are a Member of the church and would be interested in learning more about the ministry of the Board, please talk to Cecilia, Alison, Andy or Katie M.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Mikee Wardle, who was elected as MCC Newcastle's Alternate Lay Delegate recently. Mikee will carry the congregation's vote to our Regional Conference in Birmingham next month.

If you would like to book for Regional Conference, go to www.mccnewcastle.org.uk and follow the links!

Did the Sun Rise for George at His First Greenbelt ?

Read on and find out...



It was my first time at Greenbelt this year, and although having been to Christian festivals before, I'd never been to one like this!



George & Cass waiting in queue.

My Greenbelt experience started very very very early on the Friday morning when Cass, Anna Coombs and I left my house for the trek down to Cheltenham. After a quick stop for buying pillows,

alcohol, and MacDonalD's breakfast, we finally arrive at the campsite around lunch-time to find Mikee, Ruth, Katie, Hannelie and Mazi and their tents already put up. We unloaded my car and as I put up my tent, everyone else erected the gay-zebo (a super huge gazebo kindly donated by my dad!) followed by gin and tonics and raiding the programme for what we wanted to do.



Erecting Gay-zebo

Then it was off to explore! The tiny tea tent, beer tent and many tasty food stalls meant I was never hungry or thirsty! It was clear that it was the largest Christian festival I'd been to and it was clear there was something for everybody.



Sunday Service

The Sunday service communion was an amazing event, despite the rain. It was amazing to see



George practises for communion

about 10,000 people having communion together, everyone coming together to share in that sacred meal was a very moving and beautiful thing.

Ruth, Claire & Annette at Sunday Service



Beer & Hymns

One of the best memories comes from the beer and hymns night – never have I been in a place when rousing choruses, Christian messages and pints thrust high have been combined with such an amazing crowd – its no wonder people were packed in there!



Some of my other highlights were the 'Outerspace' meetings (LGBT Christian group), seeing the amazing Christian speaker Phillip Yancey and developing a big big big crush on Seth Lakeman (a folk singer, and very pretty man!) A had a personal highlight when I 'came out' to someone I grew up with (and then Andrew and his wife Charmaine hanging out with MCCN for the rest of the weekend), which was really nice.

It wasn't all great – I went and bought new clothing as the mud filled the site until it was nearly up to your knees – I need to invest in wellies for next year!

Considering it was a Christian arts festival – I didn't see that much music, or much in the way of arts, however I have next year for that – I'll definitely be back!

By George Gardner



Rainbow Angel



Rainbow Spirits



Taking a Lift



A girl needs to wash her hair

See You All Next Year Folks !

Youth charity calling out for local volunteers to help change young people's lives - NIGHTSTOP



Nightstop North East, a project run by youth charity Depaul Trust, is looking for volunteers that are willing to help make a difference to the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in North East area and are holding a key information event on the 11th October in Whitley Bay, to encourage people to get involved and find out more about what becoming a volunteer involves.

Nightstop North East helps young people who are in an immediate housing crisis by providing safe accommodation in the homes of volunteer hosts on a night by night basis. This service is invaluable and Nightstop projects around the U.K provided over 5,200 bed nights over the last year, keeping young people off the streets and out of danger.

We are searching for people that want to make a lasting difference to a young person's life and that can offer a spare room and a secure environment for a young person to spend the night, whilst we work on finding them more permanent accommodation. In return all our volunteers receive full training, an expense allowance and 24 hour support.

If you are interested in becoming a host then please come along to our information event on Saturday 11th October to talk to our staff and ask any questions. No previous experience is needed to become a host, just a desire to help young people. The event is being held from 1pm -4pm at the Church Hall at the Methodist Church on Oxford Street in Whitley Bay, NE26 1AD.

It is estimated that over 75,000 young people become homeless in the UK each year, often through no fault of their own. Family breakdown is the most common cause of youth homelessness and young people can find themselves alone and desperate in their time of need, without the family support that is essential to a young person.

Peter Taylor a current Nightstop volunteer says: "Having spent an amount of my time complaining about the position of the housing

system and the lack of help for homeless people from the state and local authorities I decided that, as someone with a spare bedroom, it was time that I also did something active to make a difference. Of all the people I have housed, I have never felt unsafe or threatened within my own home. I get an awful lot from hosting. I meet many people and feel as if I really am making a difference."

If you can't make the event but are still interested in finding out more, please call Liz Fry or Tracy McDonald on call 0191 2536161

Please see www.depaultrust.org for more Information

Do You Want to Make Difference?

MCC Newcastle has often been involved in social justice work—making a difference in the lives of others, locally, nationally and internationally.

Many people supported the MCC Youth Ministry Team's trip to the Dominican Republic. The food that we offered at our Harvest Services has gone to the West End Refugee Service and the People's Kitchen. Some of us have supported asylum seekers in our own congregation and in other MCC churches.

However, there are many other things that we could do that would make a difference:

Letter writing campaigns—through Amnesty International, for example

Email petitions and online campaigns

Organising a Fair Trade stall at worship once a month, so that people can easily buy Fair Trade tea, coffee and of course CHOCOLATE

If you are interested in this sort of ministry, then please contact Claire newsletter@mccnewcastle.org.uk or talk to Cecilia

Pastor's Report – October 2008



How do you measure spiritual growth? This question has been in my head for a while now. Some of it is about **quality**. Sometimes, when we are worship together, there is a change in atmosphere, perhaps through the way that we sing a particular song, and you can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in the room. There isn't a "HSometer" on the wall, but several different people will comment on the powerful nature of the worship that evening. We are open to the Holy Spirit and we grow.

Some of spiritual growth is also about **quantity**:

- more people attending worship on a regular basis
- more people committing themselves to use their spiritual gifts in ministry
- more people attending mid week events on a regular basis .e.g Prayer Parties, the Good Book Club, Taize service etc

Let me share some numbers with you.

In the table below, you can see the average attendance at Sunday worship over the summer. The second column shows how many different people came through our doors in the month.

Congregants = anyone who comes to church on a regular basis and sees themselves as part of our faith community.

Visitors = individuals who visit us on occasion, for example, parents of congregants.

Returners = people who stopped attending, but have started again.

Newcomers = individuals who have come to us for the first time and expressed interest in coming back.

Of the 7 first time visitors in June, 4 have continued to attend church (ok, one is baby Rosie, and she doesn't have a choice!) Of the 11 in July, 8 have returned, 7 on a regular basis.

These figures show part of spiritual growth. More people are getting to hear about our ministry and want to know more. Our Welcome team supports them and our worship hopefully provides an uplifting experience. More spiritual growth will come if the new people find what they are looking for with us - a spiritual home, and continue to deepen their faith journey.

For those of us who are settled at MCC Newcastle, the challenge to grow spiritually is just as important. Over 30 people have now completed a Spiritual Gift survey. For many people, the survey helped them to understand why they are growing in the ministries where they already serve. For some, it has provided a space to think about new areas of ministry that they could explore. Others are still praying and reflecting about what is the right next step. As we each grow in God, we grow as a faith community. Growth is about quality and quantity.

As we grow personally and as a church, we also experience change. Emily Watson and Helen Fenwick have both decided to step down from the Board of Directors. I would like to thank them for their excellent ministry in this area. Emily is stepping back from all her leadership responsibilities at this time to enjoy approaching parenthood. We wish her, Katie and John all the very best at this exciting time! Helen will also be stepping down from her role as Web Manager. Our website remains our most powerful evangelism tool, and Helen has done a fantastic job of keeping it sharp and up to date – thank you Helen!

God calls each of us to grow. How are you going to let God help you grow this autumn?

God bless

Linka

Month	Average Attendance	Number of different individuals	Congregants	Visitors	Returners	Newcomers
June	41	82	70	3	2	7
July	47	87	63	11	2	11
August	44	95	78	10	3	4

Some of our Regular Activities at MCC Newcastle

Monthly Dog Walk - If you like getting fresh air and being sociable, then join the dog walk. You don't need a dog to come on these walks, which are spread around the region. It's a chance for a gentle stroll, usually followed by a cuppa. It's a good way to get to know more people in the congregation and visit places that are off your usual track. See Abby for more details.

Movies with Mikee - this is a new event! We often see spiritual or theological meanings in films, even if the screen writers didn't think of them. Movies with Mikee is an opportunity to watch a film together and then discuss what thoughts it raised. Movies with Mikee won't be on a set date, so check the diary. The first one will be on Friday 17th Oct, 7.30pm at Mikee and Jonny's home in Heaton, Newcastle. The film is "Dogma".

Scarborough Group - Once a month, we have a group that meets for worship and a shared meal at the Westborough Methodist Church in Scarborough. The group is led by Marianne and Christine. If you would like more information, see Cecilia.

Taizé Worship Service - Our Taizé service is quieter and more reflective than our regular Sunday worship. We sing chants from the Taizé community in France. These are easy to pick up, so don't worry if you don't know them. We also have a time of prayer and a time of silence. It is a perfect way to be still before God, after a busy week. The service is on the first Friday of every month, at 8pm in the main church.

Useful Contacts

Abby Brown	Social Team	social@mccnewcastle.org.uk
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Claire Denham	Newsletter Editor	newsletter@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Cecilia Eggleston	Pastor	pastor@mccnewcastle.org.uk
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Andy Lumsden	Board Member	contact@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Katie Marsh	Treasurer	treasurer@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Michael Wardle	Worship Rota/Alternate Lay Delegate	worship@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Prayer requests		prayer@mccnewcastle.org.uk
Stewardship		stewardship@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.

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 at

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.