

# Magazine

August/September 2018

Journeying in faith

Are habits bad?

Quiet contemplation



**ZION  
UNITED  
REFORMED  
CHURCH** 

# Zion and Community

Sunday 10.00 a.m.	Morning worship Communion every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Bright and early and a warm welcome every week
Monday 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. In term time	Tiny time Mums, come and join us in the Church Hall for a chat and a cuppa while the children play
Wednesday 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon	'Way In' A chance to get a coffee or tea and a chat
12 noon to 12.30 p.m.	Come and eat your packed lunch
1.00 p.m. to 1.30 p.m.	Market Day service A time for quiet reflection in the midst of a busy day
Saturday 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon	'Way In' More coffee and chat

**Permission is required to reproduce any of the items in this magazine**

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## Pastoral letter

I am writing this during the long heatwave of July – by the time you read it the weather may be quite different. Perhaps you really enjoy the heat, or maybe you find it overpowering. It may be great for getting out into the garden to do that job that's been waiting for a while, or to go to that beauty spot you've planned to visit when the weather was good. Or maybe it's just been too hot for gardening, and that beauty spot would be too full of visitors and, in any case, there is not enough shade. The point I'm making is that among us there will be a variety of views and opinions on the British weather and on other subjects too. That includes how we read the Bible, what we understand from a passage, what we believe it means for us today.

That's not necessarily a bad thing. We all have different life experiences which affect the way we see things. They also affect how a passage comes over to us – in a way that really speaks to our situation, or as something that just passes us by. For some a passage may seem to give clear guidance, for others it may raise a number of questions. What matters is that we read a passage carefully and openly ready to see it afresh, perhaps find something new in it, ready to have our views confirmed or challenged.

Sharing our insights, our questions, our difficulties over passages is also an important part of our deepening discipleship. In this way we can look at things from a different perspective. Maybe we will find that opens up to us a new understanding of the passage, and maybe our thoughts on it may help someone else. Discipleship is not a destination but a journey – we can never really say that we have arrived at the final word on what it is to



be a follower of Jesus or that we know everything a passage has to say to us. Discipleship is about discovery, moving on, developing. This should be a deeply enriching experience, even if at times we feel confused, struggling, afraid to ask our questions.

On this journey, you may find the URC Daily Devotions helpful – many do.

Here you will find a Bible passage, a short reflection, and a short prayer.

These are written by a variety of

people, Ministers, retired Ministers, Elders, Church Members – people like us, also on this journey of faith, offering their insights to promote our thinking. You can get these Devotions sent to you in an email every day. Go online to <https://devotions.urc.org.uk/> and sign up.

Whatever your view of the weather, however you read the Bible, whatever any passage says to you, that's important. We should share these together for we can always learn from others, and more often than you might think we can bring to the dialogue something that is helpful to someone else.



Yours in his service,

*Stephen*

Old men\* ought to be explorers

Here or there does not matter

We must be still and still moving

Into another intensity

For a further union, a deeper communion

*TS Eliot: East Coker*

*\*(and everyone else)*

# Congratulations!

Liz and Dave Styan went to the URC General Assembly on 7<sup>th</sup> July to represent the Secret Garden. We were one of four finalists for the URC and Congregational Insurance Community Project Awards 2018.

The Moderators were unable to choose between the four very different projects so, unusually, decided to make us all joint first! We were given a very brightly coloured plaque we can put by the gate of the Secret Garden and a cheque for £2,000. We were also treated to a beautiful meal and made to feel very special.

It was lovely to chat to the other finalists. There are all sorts of inspiring and interesting things going on around the country in our denomination. There is a YouTube video of each of the projects if you wish to get a flavour of what is going



on, alternatively you may just want to have a good laugh at Liz in the last of the four videos!

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoBN4kxbMiY&feature=youtu.be>)

I think our church should feel rightly proud of what we have helped to make possible. It is a glorious mixture of hospitality and sharing – sharing our produce, sharing the beautiful garden space with wildlife and people and sharing time, skills and enthusiasm.

Thank you

*Dave and Liz Styan*

## News of the family

Not included in website version



*Christine Roddam*

## Opening the doors

Still wondering what the Living Rooms is all about?  
In a nutshell it is to be a friendly resource centre, fairly central in the town, initiated by the five main churches and then further supported by secular specialists from charitable and statutory bodies.

To explain more, an information/social event has been arranged at the Forum on Tuesday October 2nd to which all are invited. Starting at 2pm with a session for the agencies and then another geared towards families at 4pm, there is the main third session for interested adults (potential volunteers? But no pressure!) from 6-8pm. A short initial presentation will be amplified by a 'dummy' 'drop in' space there, set up with craft activities and a Rhythm of Prayer (similar to how Living Rooms is envisaged), plus contributions from a few of the many back up organisations involved - Mind, Foodshare, N. Y. Horizons and Debt Advice, Age UK, the Secret Garden etc.



Meanwhile, much preparatory work is still being undertaken re charitable status, trustees, premises etc, with a view to launching the project in a few months' time. Your interest, support, prayers and donations are warmly welcomed. More information from Roger Tucker or Paul Bowes.

*Paul Bowes*

## Julian Meetings

“‘The Julian Meetings’ is a loose umbrella organisation for local Christian contemplative prayer groups which meet in the U.K. and other English-speaking countries.” This is how the Julian Meetings describe themselves. And why did our contemplative prayer group put itself under this umbrella? The most important reason was that it helps people looking for such a group to find

us. Why this particular movement? Several of us knew of Mother Julian and had been associated with Julian Meetings in one way or another.

Mother Julian is particularly well known for a book she wrote about 1395 called *Revelations of Divine Love*. She was an Anchorite, a person dedicated to solitary prayer in the Christian tradition. Her followers today find it helpful to meet in groups and they keep silence for at least 30 minutes. Usually there is a short introduction by one of the group to mark the space between busyness and listening to God. Listening is the important part because this is not for prayers of intercession or praise or any other kind of prayer which religious people practise. This is listening to what God has to say to us. There are a few words said at the end of 30 minutes to bring us out of the silence and, in our case, we then say The Grace.

In some places where I have belonged to such a group some people have felt that contemplative prayer is in some way in opposition to other forms of prayer. Of course, this is not the case. The way a person finds God is very important and precious to them and it may well change over a lifetime but of course we all welcome any way God comes into our world.



If by any chance – and it would be wonderful if it happened – if anyone asks you “Where does the Northallerton Julian Meeting take place?” well, it is here at Zion in The Cottage on Thursdays at 1pm. The groups do not have a leader but if you want to know more you can ask Liz Styan and Ann Bowes who started our contemplative prayer group and you can also ask Lesley Bustard, Alexa Barber or me. If you are a Methodist or Computer Group visitor then you will be able to ask Douglas Moore.

*Mary Irwin*

## Secret Garden

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed refreshments or their time to help welcome visitors to the garden during the food festival. And if you were a visitor thank you for coming. Whilst it wasn't as busy as last year (possibly due to the clash with the football!) we still made a total of £197.92 from donations for refreshments, plant sales and the creative work of the ATI group who have been working with us. Perhaps of even more importance, we have made new contacts for the garden and found some interest in the concept of a 'Men's Shed' in Northallerton. A good day's (hot!) work - so thank you for helping to make it all possible.

*Liz Styan*

## Quiet in the Garden

The Quiet Garden Trust offers a day of peace and silence in Northallerton's Secret Garden. It is taking place on Friday 3rd August 2018 from 10.00 a.m. to 3.45 p.m. The day is free but a donation of £5.00 would be welcomed.

**Jesus was fully human as well as fully divine. He would have appreciated all the senses- he was thirsty, hungry, tired, grief-stricken etc. Our gifts of 5 senses (and maybe a 6<sup>th</sup>) are integral to our humanity. So here is a day to help us to reflect on those**

## **senses using the resources of scripture, the natural beauty of the garden, and silence.**

People come to a day of silence with different experience and expectation, and this day is sensitively planned with such diversity in mind. After the opening worship and introduction you will be offered Scripture resource for all the senses and promptings/suggestions; largely working/reflecting on your own, with support on hand if you would find that helpful. The day is designed to work equally well either in the garden if weather is fine, or in the cottage or church if inclement.

As part of the invitation to 'Taste and See' (Psalm 34:8), you are invited to gather for a shared silent cold home-cooked lunch of salmon, quiche, salad and baguettes, with choice of pudding. There will be a space in the cottage if you have a packed lunch and wish to talk!

There is seating in the garden, but if you have a portable, comfortable chair of your own do bring it. The facilities of the church hall are available all day including helping yourself, freely, to refreshments. There is disability access to all areas and a dropping off point for transport to and from the day. Suggest you bring Bible, notebook, paints – anything that will help you in your reflections. We look forward to welcoming you.



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*Ann Bowes*

*I like the silent church before the  
service begins, better than any  
preaching  
Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803- 1882*

# Habits are bad for you...

## On the one hand....

### **Not choice**

***But habit rules the unreflecting herd.***

William Wordsworth 1770 – 1850  
from *Grant that by this*

***Habit with him was all the test of truth,  
It must be right: I've done it from my youth***

George Crabbe 1754-1832  
from *The Vicar*

***How use doth breed a habit in a man!***

William Shakespeare 1564 -1616  
from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*



I'm against all habits – there I've said it. That's surprising because it's unusual for me to be so positive about anything being a great weigher-up of pros and cons and always able to see both sides of any argument. Helpful when I was doing my job of advising people who had problems but not so good when it comes to making a decision.

However, to revert to the subject – I really don't like doing things by habit. Now I don't suppose any of you are fans of bad habits such as drug taking, getting drunk and disorderly on a Friday night, smoking etc but you're probably thinking that there are

other habits that are OK. After all, going to visit your elderly neighbour, going to church on Sunday, saying your nightly prayers have to be good, don't they? – do they?

As far as I am concerned a habit is something that is done without much thought just because one has always done it. To my way of thinking one should never approach any sort of task with this attitude.

Visiting your elderly neighbour is great if you are doing it for the right reasons, think about what you want to achieve and put your own wants and needs away first. But is that always the case. Do you ever go just because you always have and 'it's your duty' and you really don't want to and are completely miserable and resentful about it?

Going to church on Sunday is possibly the most likely to be a habit. How often do you actually think of why you are going, what you want to do, what the words that you say really mean, how you want to feel when you come home, what you want to have given to the others there?

Prayers at night may well stem back to your childhood and it's not unknown for people to continue to say the same prayers or ones in a similar vein to those they said then – the classic being the Lord's Prayer. Prayers must have thought behind them to make them of value to those saying them and those covered by them. They must also be meant. I know that there are many times when I have recited the Lord's Prayer when I shouldn't have done and it's usually the 'as I forgive others' that catches me out.

Then there are the times when we are asked to change the way we do things "*But I like doing it this way*" - "*We've always done it this way*" – "*Well, I suppose if I have to...*" Any of those sound in the slightest bit familiar – they do for me. No thought as to whether the idea has merit whether it suits someone else's needs and whether that is rather more important than my needs.

Of course, all the examples are just that and I'm not saying that one shouldn't do any of the things above. What I would like to think is that when you come across something that you do regularly you have a think about it and decide why it is that you are doing it. If it is a good reason, then carry on.



## On the other hand.....!

***Sow an act, and you reap a habit.  
Sow a habit, and you reap a character,  
Sow a character, and you reap a  
destiny***

Charles Reade 1814-1884



***Custom, then, is the great guide of  
human life***

David Hume 1711-1776  
From *An enquiry concerning human  
understanding*

But then I also know that there are times when doing things by habit can keep you going, can be an anchor to hold on to when times are rough and when memory gets shaky the habitual things in life very often can still be clearly remembered, so for all my insistence that habits are bad they do have some saving graces. You see, there I go – hedging my bets again. Now there's a bad habit!

Lord,

*We are such creatures of habit. Please give us the strength of purpose to look at what we do with clarity and an open mind so that we never do things without good purpose and are never opposed to change just because it is not what we usually do.*

Amen

*Sue Kennedy*

## With a smile

### Children are quick

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile?'

GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'

TEACHER: No, that's wrong

GLENN: But you asked me how I spell it.

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

DONALD: H I J K L M N O.

TEACHER: What are you talking about?

DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

TEACHER: Winnie, name one important thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago.

WINNIE: Me!

TEACHER: Millie, give me a sentence starting with 'I.'

MILLIE: I is...

TEACHER: No, Millie ..... Always say, 'I am.'

MILLIE: All right... 'I am the ninth letter of the alphabet.'

TEACHER: George Washington not only chopped down his father's cherry tree, but also admitted it. Now, Louie, do you know why his father didn't punish him?

LOUIS: Because George still had the axe in his hand..... ?

TEACHER: Now, Simon, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?

SIMON: No sir, I don't have to, my Mum is a good cook.

TEACHER: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

CLYDE: Oh no, sir. It's the same dog.

TEACHER: Why are you late?

STUDENT: School started before I got here.

*Anon*

## Church Diary

### AUGUST

Wed 1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Iris Miller)

1 <sup>st</sup> cont...	7.00 pm	Getting to Grips with the Bible (Cottage)
Thurs 2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Quiet Day (Secret Garden)
Sat 4 <sup>th</sup> Aug	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	12.30 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)
Wed 8 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Roger Tucker)
Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Sat 11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 12 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Hilary Collinson)
	11.15 am	Church Meeting

Wed 15 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Miss Lesley Bustard)
	7.00 pm	Getting to Grips with the Bible (Cottage)
Thurs 16 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> Aug	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 19 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Hilary Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
Tues 21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	12.30 pm	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Rivendale)
	2.30 pm	Reading Circle (Cottage)
Wed 22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Iris Miller)

Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> Aug	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Sat 25 <sup>th</sup> Aug	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Mon 27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)
Wed 29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Revd Hilary Collinson)
	7.00 pm	Getting to Grips with the Bible (Cottage)
Thurs 30 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)

## **SEPTEMBER**

Sat 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mr Jo Kennedy)

Tues 4 <sup>th</sup> Sept	2.00 pm	Elders' Meeting (Cottage)
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Esther Witts)
	7.30 pm	WIZI – Women's Group (Cottage)
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Way In
	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Stephen Collinson)
Mon 11 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	2.00 pm	Jane & Paul's Housegroup (Dunnas House, Brompton)
Wed 12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mr Roger Tucker)
	7.00 pm	Getting to Grips with the Bible (Cottage)

Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Fri 14 <sup>th</sup> Sept		Last date for October/November magazine items
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 16 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Communion Service (Revd Hilary Collinson) <i>Commitment for Life Sunday</i>
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Jo & Judith's Housegroup (Cottage)
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> Sept	12.30 pm	Sue & Liz's Housegroup (Rivendale)
Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Miss Lesley Bustard)
	7.00 pm	Joint Pastorate AGM (Darlington URC)
Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)

Sat 22 <sup>nd</sup> Sept	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Church Away Day (Holy Rood House, Sowerby)
Sun 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Mr Brian Oliver)
	11.00 am	Traidcraft Stall
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.30 am	Tiny Time
	7.00 pm	Men's Group (Cottage)
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Way In
	12.00 pm	Lunch-time "Drop-in" (Large Vestry)
	12.00 pm	Soup & Roll Lunches (Church Hall)
	1.00 pm	Midweek Worship (Mrs Iris Miller)
	7.00 pm	Getting to Grips with the Bible (Cottage)
Thurs 27 <sup>th</sup> Sept	1.00 pm	Contemplative Prayer (A Julian Group meeting) (Cottage)
Sat 29 <sup>th</sup> Sept	9.15 am	Prayer Meeting (Church)
	10.00 am	Way In
Sun 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Revd Hilary Collinson)

# Elders' duty rota

If you have any problems and would like to speak with someone please contact the Ministers, Secretary or the Duty Elder as given below

## Week beginning

### August

5<sup>th</sup> Liz Styan

12<sup>th</sup> Paul Bowes

19<sup>th</sup> Sue Bush

26<sup>th</sup> Jane Haslam

### September

2<sup>nd</sup> Judith Puttock

9<sup>th</sup> Judith Puttock

16<sup>th</sup> Christine Roddam

23<sup>rd</sup> Liz Styan

30<sup>th</sup> Paul Bowes



## Contact us



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**ZION  
UNITED  
REFORMED  
CHURCH** ☩☩☩

We hope you have enjoyed the magazine and invite you to worship with us at High Street, Northallerton at our 10 a.m. Sunday service.

**Please note that the closing date for items for the  
October/November issue is 14<sup>th</sup> September**