

Guisborough United Reformed Church

Newsletter. May 2021

At Pentecost, on Sunday, 23rd, May, the elders are pleased to announce that the church will be reopened. A happy day for all members and friends as we can now come together in fellowship with one another after the long absence of 14 months since our last service on the 15th, March, 2020.

Our old friends, the Rev's Ken and Margaret Harris will lead us in worship, on this special occasion, and we look forward to hearing their message to us as we celebrate the birthday of the church.

The service will be at 10.00am

(Present Covid 19 restrictions must be observed until they are relaxed later next month.)

The sanctuary is clearly marked with a one way system, leading through to socially distanced chairs. Hand sanitising is available to all you enter. There will be track and trace register taken. Please come prepared to wear a mask in the service and when entering and leaving the building. It will not be possible, at this time, to have coffee and an opportunity to socialise in the hall after the service.)

The Holy Spirit Appears (Acts 2: 1-11)

Praying together from the moment that the risen Jesus left them (Acts 1: 13,14.), the disciples are all together when the spirit visits them in power, as a violent wind blowing wind through their meeting. The fire that appears in their midst seems initially to be a single fire, only separating afterwards to come to rest on each one of them (v 3) - a corporate consecration before an individual one. The effect is startling. As the spirit rests on each one, they are filled with his presence and enabled to speak other languages, seemingly of the whole known world. (vs 7-11).....

..... From the beginning the spirit is given to empower mission and ministry amongst all people to spread the Good News of Jesus - and from this one event begins the church that stands to this day and into eternity.

(Adapted extract from the Scripture Union Daily Bread commentary)

The Future of the United Reformed Church

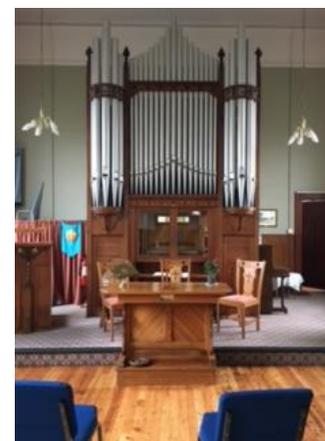


The Rev'd Dr John Bradbury, General Secretary of the United Reformed Church, told the Mission Council *(the Council meets to discuss important church matters on alternative years, now that the General Assembly of the URC is a bi-annual event)* that the extraordinary pace of secularisation means the denomination has reached a time where it needs to reflect on its direction.

When the URC was set up in 1972, by the joining together of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church, it was seen as a first step on the way towards the coming together of other churches. This move is, therefore, in line with the general purpose of our church.

The Mission Council appointed a small group to oversee the process of reflection and change. It will be, no doubt, an interesting challenge for us all when their recommendations are published.

The Organ



The church organ was last played on Sunday, 12th, January, 2020, after which we retreated to the hall for services because of a heating failure in the church sanctuary. The 16 months of silence will have been the longest period it has been out of use since it was installed in the church in 1905.

Before this time a harmonium accompanied the singing - that is until the Reverend Wardle Ridley accepted a call to the pastorate in 1901. He was a man of great drive and energy and came to Guisborough on the condition that the previously proposed building plans were pushed through. On arrival he visited towns throughout Yorkshire, on behalf of the project, and in six months raised sufficient money to build a Sunday school hall, vestry and affect other alterations.

So in 1904/5 the church was substantially reconstructed getting a new front gable, pews, windows, gas central heating fittings and stained glass window in memory of Joseph Wright a long-term serving elder. All of this was done at a cost of £1100, a substantial sum of money at that time.

Central to these alterations was the installation of a pipe organ. Originally built for another church, *(the date of construction not*

known - possibly 1880's) by Peter Conacher & Co of Huddersfield, it was dismantled and brought to Guisborough where it was rebuilt. The lady accompanist, on seeing this huge instrument during the course of its reconstruction, became rather alarmed at the prospect of being expected to play it, and so declined. Another organist needed to be employed for its first performance on Sunday, 16th, July, 1905.

Choose Hope and Anything May be Possible

In 2004 a young senator, Barack Obama, shot to fame after making a speech to the Democratic National Convention which focussed on crucial need for hope in order the revive concept of the "American Dream."

In this speech he made the following crucial points: "Do we participate in the politics of cynicism or the politics of hope.....I'm not talking about blind optimism here - the almost wilful ignorance that thinks unemployment will go away if we just don't talk about it, or the health care crisis will solve itself if we just ignore it. No, I am talking about something more substantial.....(which is?)Hope in the face of difficulty. Hope in the face of difficulty. The audacity of hope!"

In this extract Obama is eluding to the ideal of politics where, although there may be differences of opinion, it is essentially cooperative and therefore able to be fully effective in being "the art of the possible."

His statement: the audacity of hope (*Extended into a book*) suggests that for our hopes to be realised we must show some courage, have a desire to work hard towards a worthwhile goal and, on the way, take some risks.

Obama was talking about politics, but faith is political. Think of that well known quote from the Letter of James 2: 20: "But do you want to know O foolish man, that faith without works is dead." Also, this was effectively demonstrated many times by Jesus throughout his ministry here on earth. Our faith must be of action - doing something, something beneficial - and for others.

As we return to our church building, and are able have fellowship together, our thoughts will, quite naturally, turn to hopes for the future. After such a long absence it will be good for us enjoy being able to settle

back into a near normal pattern of worship - but it will not be exactly the same. The Covid crisis has reminded us, with great emphasis, on how interdependent we are with one another. It is likely that restrictions, of some kind, will continue beyond the 21st, June, when 'normal' life is expected to return. More than ever the exhortation 'love thy neighbour as thyself' will be shown to be essential for living in society.

Our hopes for the post pandemic future are, as yet, unknown. What will they be? Way back during the ministry of our former minister, Rev Norma Johnson, (1994 -2005) directed a mini musical entitled: *Hopes and Dreams*. It toured around the churches of the East Cleveland Group to be enjoyed by all who saw and heard it. Perhaps, this could be the time for a revival? A happy, light hearted start as we look forward to the future of our fellowships in Christ. Then, after hearing the music of these hopes, let us go on to something more audacious!

Ray Tunnicliffe.

SERVICES:

Sunday, 23rd, May: Rev's Ken & Margaret Harris.

Sunday, 30th, May: Rev's Ken & Margaret Harris.

Sunday, 6th, June: Ray Tunnicliffe.

GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Founded 1798

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

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Secretary 01287 637273