

Group News



*** 2023 * *April* * 2023 ***

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

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Our churches are members of the Cleveland Pastorate

Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Pastoral Letter

'I had become like a broken pot but you heard my plea when I cried out for help. The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and He saves those who are crushed in spirit.'

Psalm 31

What would you do if you smashed a prized ornament? The answer, of course, depends on the extent of the damage, but the chances are that you'd try to pick up the broken fragments and attempt to glue them back together. Consider, though, if it was a clay flowerpot you'd dropped; what would you do then? Almost certainly you'd sweep up the pieces and discard them without a second thought. It's only when something means a lot to us that we take the time to try and repair it, - which is one of the reasons why 'The Repair Shop' is such a popular programme.

The quotation above helps us to appreciate the testimony of the psalms. Like David, we too can feel battered and bruised by life, - shattered beyond repair. Can God possibly care enough about us to spend time rebuilding our lives, putting the pieces back together? It seems impossible, surely? And yet God does precisely that. However long it takes, however painstaking a process it may be, He is always looking to heal and renew us, to make us whole. No matter how broken we may be, we are never beyond His loving and restoring touch.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

Shalom

Jan

Synod Prayers

2 April

South East Northumberland Ecumenical Area; President the Revd Julian Sanders; Treasurer the Revd Peter Rand; Administrator Paula Scullion

9 April

Trinity, Bedlington; Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval; the Revd Alan McGougan

16 April

St George's, Morpeth; Great Bavington; Widdrington; the Revd Julian Sanders

23 April

The Anglican Diocese of York; Bishop of Whitby the Rt Revd Paul Ferguson

30 April

Trinity, Ashington; St Andrew's & St Mark's, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea; the Revd Marie Attwood

Guisborough

Lent is a time when we are expected give up something that we value or enjoy so that we can we can focus and reflect on our Christian life - and how effectively we are following Jesus. But perhaps we should give up giving up because Lent was never about giving up something for God. Deprivation in itself is not a real objective.

Lent developed in the early church as a preparation for baptism. It was an opportunity for renewal and recommitment to Christ for all who had faith in him. The people of that era never spoke about 'giving something up' but of 'fasting' Fasting to help focus on God in prayer - so it was not about food, but about self-discipline when they could ask serious questions about their

relationship with our Lord. Physical hunger reminds us that man does not live by bread alone and demonstrates clearly how much we need God.

Aesthetic exercises, including fasting, were never considered an end in themselves. For by fasting it was considered that we strengthen our spiritual being, to practice self discipline and so think more of God and pray more often. At least, that was the view of people who practised this way in the early church. Our lord Jesus suffered from hunger - ' and when in the desert he was tempted to change stones into bread - but didn't and instead prayed to God his Father, for guidance in his mission here on Earth. That mission resonates with us today in his sacrifice showing clearly that God is with us, here in our lives and ready to guide us when and if we listen.

Today fasting is not a regular practice so what can we do - or what should we do in Lent. We need to change - and for the better. this means action on our part which, given what Jesus expects of us, can be difficult - very difficult.

In February Redcar United Reformed Church joined together, formally, with the Redcar Baptists who, as part of this union, moved into their building. Fifty years ago the United Reformed Church was formed by the unification of two churches - with the ultimate aim of having other fellowships joining us in unity with Christ. It was a move forward to remove divisions within the church of our Lord - so that with this event in Redcar we see something that is good. It is more unity in Christ - and therefore worthy of the purpose of Lent.

In Guisborough 'Churches Together' organised a series of Lenten services held each week at the various churches in the town. Our service was entitled: 'Heart to Heart: Sorrow and Joy.' a message for the ups and downs of life. During this period of Lent we are all are faced with the old i

Guisborough Calendar

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning
10.30am -11.30am Church open for private prayer
11.30am Quiet Time in Church. Prayers and reflections with Maureen, and Ray. Details on church notice board

Eternal question: can we make the change we need - and the answer to this needs to be no! Only certain sure faith in our Lord Jesus can do that. This brings us back to the first question which is about faith - so do we believe what we believe? A difficult proposition but something we need to face during this period of quiet reflection.

Lent involves not only quiet reflection on our Christian life, but deep and honest thoughts on where we are on the life's journey of faith. Our weekly acts of worship demonstrate our loyalty to Christ, but also can become a habit. Lent land gives us the opportunity to question all that we do, and how our actions in the various parts of our lives match up to the example set by Christ.

We can say, Lord Jesus, this is what we are doing now, but what do we turn to do next? To this end the Guisborough church held a 'Fellowship Service' in February. Sitting in a circle the intention was for everyone to play an active rather than a passive role in the worship. The guiding principle here was epitomised by the old saying: I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand. The aim being that active mutual support will be more infective in strengthening faith. Time will tell how well this works out in practice.

This is one of many approaches to the challenges of Lent. The important issue is that we do look to our fellowship and personal faith at this time. In prayer and reflection ask for our Lord's help to see where changes are needed. Not an easy journey, requiring some careful, deep thinking, but with God's help we can do it.

Happy Easter.

Ray Tunnicliffe.

	Welcome/door	Vestry/notices	Communion server
2 April	Joyce	Martin	
9 April	Darren	Peter	Jenny
16 April	Peter	Maureen	
23 April	Ray	Joyce	
30 April	Jenny	Ray	

St Andrew's

Coffee Morning

to be held at

St. Andrew's, Marton

on

Saturday 22nd April 2023 at 10.30a.m.

Raffle.

In aid of the Turkey-Syria Appeal.

Please do come along and support us while having a chat and a "cuppa"



Coffee for Charity

18th February	Teesside Hospice	£32.00
26th February	Turkey/Syria Appeal	£24.10
5th March	Turkey/Syria Appeal	£43.00
12th March	Boys' Brigade	£28.25

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boy's Brigade

Details available from church elders.

Preachers

	Marion	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	10.30am
2-Apr	Dave Elliott	Donna Moore	Redcar Baptist in URC Church
9-Apr	Jan Harper Communion	Norma Johnson Communion	Redcar Baptist in URC Church
16-Apr	K & M Harris	Donna Moore	Redcar Baptist in URC Church
23-Apr	tba	Maranny Jones	Redcar Baptist in URC Church
30-Apr	Jan Harper	Bill Reynolds	Redcar Baptist in URC Church

Material for the May Magazine to church editors by Sunday 16th April
please

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