

# Group News



**\* December \* 2022-3 \* January \***

The monthly magazine for:

**Guisborough URC**

56 Westgate, Guisborough, TS14 6AY: Church Secretary 01287 637273

**Redcar URC**

Station Road, Redcar, TS10 1RQ: Contact 07742 720090

**St Andrew's URC, Nunthorpe and Marton**

Cypress Road, Marton, TS7 8PD: Church Secretary 01642 550854

Our churches are members of the Cleveland Joint Pastorate

Part of the URC Northern Synod – [www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk](http://www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk)

[www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk](http://www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk)

# Pastoral Letter

*'From you, Bethlehem, small though you may be among the clans of Judah, shall emerge one who is to rule in Israel, whose roots go back into history, from the earliest of times.'*

*Micah ch. 5 v 2*

'Every oak has been an acorn'. 'Small is the seed of every greatness'. 'Great weights hang on small wires.' 'Great engines turn on small pivots.' These are just some of the innumerable proverbs that remind us that unpromising beginnings need not be a barrier to success, and that, similarly, is a theme which runs throughout the Old Testament, from Moses taking on the might of Egypt, to David killing Goliath; from Elijah triumphing over the prophets of Baal, to Daniel facing up to the terrors of the lions' den.

The prophet Micah adds one more unforgettable picture to the list, in the little town of Bethlehem. It's hard for us today to appreciate how extraordinary it must have seemed to the people of that time to hear that God's promised Messiah was being associated with this insignificant town, even though it was linked with King David. Jerusalem, surely, was the only place fitting for someone of such stature.

In human terms this may have been true, but not in God's! As so often before and since, God proves to be a God of the unexpected. In His kingdom the first invariably find themselves to be last, and the last find themselves to be first

If we ever start to think that we are small, and insignificant, let us remember how Jesus, that little child, born in an insignificant little town proved to be the beginning of Christianity. The work of spreading the news of God's kingdom of love and mercy started small.- and continues to grow today.

May the Lord bless you and fill you with His joy and peace during this season of Advent and Christmas.

Shalom

Jan

# *Synod Prayers*

## **4 December:**

PCM and the work of Mozambique Council of Churches Independent Churches Representative in the NE, Dr Mark Bonnington; Human Rights Day (10 December).

## **11 December:**

The Ministries and Development Committee and Convenor, Revd Ron Forster. St Columba's URC, North Shields; Revd Trevor Jamison; St Andrew's URC, Monkseaton.

## **18 December:**

Stamfordham LEP (Methodist/URC); Revds Jona Sewell and Colin Barrick (Methodist); Bellingham LEP (Methodist/URC); Falstone with Kielder URC; Wark LEP (Methodist/URC); Deacon Anne Taylor (Methodist).

## **25 December:**

Christmas Day. St John the Evangelist LEP (Anglican/Baptist/Methodist/URC), Kingston Park; Revd Adele Moorhouse (Methodist) and Revd Annie Gray (Anglican).

# *Guisborough*

It has been estimated that the Queen's funeral, in September, was viewed by up to 4 billion people worldwide. This could be the largest televised event in the history of TV, with people attracted by pictures of pageantry and great solemnity as the Royal cortège passed thousands of people who lined the procession route. It also presented the opportunity For the Archbishop of Canterbury to deliver his eulogy on the life of our queen to the widest audience ever. A lone voice facing the largest congregation where, in his short address, he described the Christian values of our late monarch.

From a passage in John's Gospel Justin Welby observed that: "Jesus - who in the reading does not tell his disciples how to follow, but who to follow - said, "I am

the way, the truth and the life". Going on to point out that: "Our late Queen's example was not set by her position or her ambition, but through 'whom' she followed." There, in a brief passage from a short eulogy, the Archbishop indicated clearly to the central message of our faith in Jesus: that to follow him is the way to a new and better life. It is also the message for Christmas as we look forward to our celebration of his birth. A message that went out to the very largest of audiences on that most sad occasion.

We all look forward to Advent and the approach to Christmas - but this year this celebration is blighted by the events of recent times: the war in Ukraine, the economic impact of this terrible conflict worldwide - and the ever present cost of living crisis here in our country. People are worried about how they will manage in the coming months and through the winter ahead. How can we face this with some confidence and hope for better times in the future?

An indication of how, as people of faith, we may face this uncertain future came in the form of our Church's 50th, anniversary Jubilee celebrations in October. In biblical times a jubilee was an occasion when the nation of Israel could start afresh. Disputes were resolved, wrongs were put right -forgiven, and property unfairly gained returned to its rightful owners. This gave the people had a new sense of freedom and so they could look to the future with optimism. This is how we should view the present situation as people, in the past, have faced and overcome even greater difficulties. The human spirit can be very resilient when faced with what appears to be an unresolvable problem.

As we approach Christmas the Guisborough church members face one problem: will our organ be repaired in time to give full voiced accompaniment to our carol singing? Last played on Sunday, 18th, September, the organ builders began installing refurbished parts on 11th, November, so I think we'll be lucky and hear a great new sound for the festive season.

In addition to carol services and nativity plays, one other regular treat for the public, at Christmas time, are performances of Charles Dickens most popular story: A Christmas Carol. It is an oft told tale and very familiar to us all, but the

## **Guisborough Calendar**

### **Weekly**

Thursdays	9.30 – 11.30 Market Day Coffee Morning
	10.30 – 11.30 Church open for prayer
	11.30 Short prayer service led by Ray or Maureen.

inspiration for its composition and Dickens experiences as he wrote is also very much a merry tale.

Not known to most people it is certainly worth the retelling for it was in October 1843, that Charles Dickens began the writing of one of his most popular and best-loved books, *A Christmas Carol*. It was written in six weeks and finished by the end of November, being fitted in the intervals of writing the monthly parts of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. *A Christmas Carol* would, he hoped, bring a good financial return – and it did so much more than that.

The story, once conceived, gripped Dickens. 'He wept over it, and laughed, and wept again, and excited himself to an extraordinary degree'. 'He walked thinking of it fifteen and twenty miles about the black streets of London', often at very late hours of the night. He kept Christmas that year with an extraordinary zest; 'such dinings, such dancings, such conjurings, such blind-man's buffings, such theatre-goings, such kissing-out of old years and kissing-in of new ones, never took place in these parts before'. Savouring the atmosphere of Christmas in London became part of Dickens' annual routine. Every Christmas Eve he went to visit the Christmas markets in the East End between Aldgate and Bow, and he liked to wander in poor neighbourhoods on Christmas Day, 'past the areas of shabby genteel houses in Somers or Kentish Towns, watching the diners preparing or coming in'. *A Christmas Carol* captures in many places what Dickens so acutely observed. How exciting to feel like that about Christmas!

Like his other novels it addressed the dire social problems and injustice of the day – but there was more to it than that for in the story we get the clear unmistakable feeling and vision of joyful hope for the future. The miserly Ebenezer Scrooge finds redemption by joining in the spirit of Christmas and accepts the benefits of generosity, not only to those who will receive his gifts, but most importantly for himself – he becomes a changed man. If Scrooge can be converted surely there can be no limit to what is possible?

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year everyone. Bar humbug!

*Ray Tunnicliffe*

<b>Guisborough Rotas</b>			
<b>2022</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Vestry</b>	<b>Comm'n</b>
4 Dec	Martin	Maureen	Joyce
11 Dec	Sandra	Joyce	
18 Dec	Joyce	Ray	
25 Dec	Peter	Jenny	
<b>2023</b>			
1 Jan	Darren	Martin	Jenny
8 Jan	Ray	Peter	
15 Jan	Jenny	Maureen	
22 Jan	Martin	Joyce	
29 Jan	Sandra	Ray	

# St Andrew's

## Happy Birthday....

Happy Birthday to Norris Robertson who celebrated her 90th Birthday in early November with her family at Kirkley Lodge.

Love and congratulations to you Norris.

## Congratulations.....

Congratulations to Natalie (Winner) and Adam on the birth of their new baby son, Finley Mackenzie Potts. A grandson for Shona and Paul, a great grandson for Mac and a great nephew for Grant and Sandra. Congratulations and best wishes to the new addition to the family.

Churches Together

## Carols in our Car Park

St Andrew's URC

**Thursday 22nd January**

6.00pm

Followed by coffee and mince pies

St Andrew's URC



**Coffee Morning**  
&  
**Advent Meditation**  
**Saturday 3rd December**  
**10.30am - 12.00am**

Come and join us for Coffee  
Advent Meditation  
led by Rev Ken Harris

## Flower List Reminder.....

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the 2022 Flower List. We had no vacant slots which was wonderful!

The 2023 List will soon be placed on the Notice Board for anyone who is interested in making a donation.

## Coffee for Charity 2022

23rd October	Middlesbrough Food Bank	£24.40
30th October	Rosemary Fund	£18.00
6th November	Middlesbrough Food Bank	£26.50

## **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

**Soup Lunch**

**St Andrew's URC**

**Saturday 21st January**

**12noon**

**Joint Service**

**Marton Methodist Church**

**Sunday 22nd January**

**5.00pm**

## **Warm Space Warm Welcome**

**Fridays 10.00am - 2.00pm**

### **Recruit for Boy's Brigade?**

Colin Martin, captain of our Boy's Brigade has become a grand father following the birth of Zach Harrison to his daughter. Congratulations to Colin and Linda.

## *Redcar*

### **A New Year - - A New Start**

From January 2023 we will be sharing our premises with Redcar Baptist Church.

Our Sunday morning worship will be a joint service with our Baptist friends in our premises in Station Road. The service will commence at 10.30am.

### **A Service of Welcome for Redcar Baptist Church**

**Sunday 5th February**

**10.30am**

**Preacher**

**Revd David Herbert**



## *Christmas Greetings*



# *Preachers*

<b>2022</b>	<b>Marton</b>	<b>Guisborough</b>	<b>Redcar</b>
	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>11.00am</b>
4-Dec	Jan Harper Meeting	Donna Moore Communion	Redcar Baptist 10.30am Service
11-Dec	K & M Harris Parade/Christingle	John Elliston Communion	Jan Harper
18-Dec	Jan Harper Carols/Communion	Ian Smith	Redcar Baptist 10.30am Service
25-Dec	No Service	Donna Moore	No Service
 			<b>10.30am</b>
1-Jan	K & M Harris	Donna Moore Communion	URC/ Baptist 10.30am @ URC
8-Jan	tba Parade	Keith Martin	URC/ Baptist 10.30am @ URC
15-Jan	Dot Thomson Communion	Donna Moore	URC/ Baptist 10.30am @ URC
22-Jan	Brian Stephenson	Chris Eddowes	URC/ Baptist 10.30am @ URC
29-Jan	Jan Harper	tba	URC/ Baptist 10.30am @ URC

Material for the February Magazine to church editors by Sunday 15th  
January please

Group Editor – R Wheeler, 2C Gypsy Lane, Nunthorpe,  
Middlesbrough, TS7 0DX.

Telephone: 01642 300546.

Email: [roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com](mailto:roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com)