

Group News



*** 2022 * February * 2022 ***

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

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Pastoral Letter

‘My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts’

Isaiah. 55 8-9

When did any of us last feel a sense of awe in the presence of God? How long is it since we caught our breath in wonder as we offered Him our worship? It may be that such moments are still frequent, but if my experience is anything to go by, they have grown fewer and farther between. Partly that happens because we simply don't find time to worship as often as we should; maybe it's because over-familiarity dulls our senses. If we see something breathtakingly beautiful once we gaze in wonder. But if we see it several times, the chances are we'll pass it by without a second glance.

Whether we're talking about a beautiful view, or a sense of God's majesty, it can take a fresh pair of eyes to stir our imaginations one more and help us recapture that first-time sense of wonderment,. For me that fresh pair of eyes belong to Isaiah in the passage above. They are a constant reminder of the sheer 'otherness' of God whose greatness is beyond words and whose awesomeness defies expression. A God who is more powerful, more caring, more gracious than the human mind can ever comprehend. If we can glimpse that, then once more we can find ourselves catching our breath in sheer amazement and kneeling in joyful worship.

Shalom

Jan

Fairtrade Fortnight

21 February to 6 March 2022

In 2022, our Choose the World you Want Festival will return from 21 February to 6 March. Since last Fairtrade Fortnight we have seen the G7 and COP26 take place. Over 33,000 campaigners joined 1.8m Fairtrade farmers and workers in backing the Be Fair With Your Climate Promise challenge to world leaders at the UN COP26 summit. But frustration came as the wealthiest nations delayed their promised \$100bn annual funding to the most climate vulnerable countries until 2023. That isn't good enough.

"A frustrating conclusion to a summit filled with hope." This was the verdict of Mary Kinyua, Fairtrade's lead COP26 delegate, and a Fairtrade flower farmer representative.

Climate justice was never going to be won or lost at one conference in Glasgow. But where the COP26 agreement fell short, we need to increase the pressure for urgent action.

The Journey To Climate Justice In 2021

Wealthier nations like the UK are responsible for, and have benefited from, the global systems that have caused the climate crisis and the crisis of extreme global injustice. The wealthiest 10 percent are responsible for 50 percent of global emissions, while the lowest 50 percent by income are responsible for just 10 percent of global emissions. So we need to tell our politicians it's time to own up to our responsibilities. This is the nation's chance to play its part in delivering a fair climate promise and a fairer future.

Our global Fairtrade community is challenging governments of the countries most responsible for the climate crisis to, at a minimum, deliver on an unfulfilled promise to fund a \$100bn climate investment package for communities most affected by climate change.

The COP26 agreement fell well short of the progress we need to see on climate justice. But with all nations committed to revisit their climate promises at COP27 in Cairo next year, we must all take inspiration from those Fairtrade farmers and workers. Even in the most difficult circumstances, progress is possible when we come together.

Synod Prayers

6 February: Trinity LEP (Methodist/URC), Ashington; St Andrew's & St Mark's LEP (Methodist/URC), Newbiggin-by-the-Sea; Revd Marie Attwood (Methodist). Retired ministers in our synod, especially those who are active within the synod.

13 February: St Andrew's Dawson Street, Crook LEP (Methodist/URC); Revd Christopher Humble (Methodist).

School half-term: to pray for meaningful activities for all concerned, including those having to pay for extra childcare costs.

20 February: PCM, the four Presbyterian Societies: Men's, Women's, Youth and Activists Group (young marrieds) and for our own fund raising for PCM.

27 February: Fairtrade Fortnight: (28 February - 6 March); Church Action on Poverty Sunday.

Trinity LEP (Methodist/URC), Bedlington; Elsdon Avenue LEP (Methodist/URC), Seaton Delaval; Blyth URC; Seghill Methodist Church; Revd Alan McGougan (URC); World Day of Prayer (4 March).

Redcar

New Sanctuary

A week before Christmas the church boiler stopped working and we were not able to get it repaired until January. It turned out the pilot light had gone out due to a "wobbly" flu. The following Sunday Jan Harper was preaching at Redcar and came early to practise her piano skills. While I was listening to her I realised the church was getting colder, not warmer. The boiler was not working again and neither were the electric heaters we had plugged in for extra warmth!

We then moved the service to our new "Sanctuary" - the kitchen. With the help of electric heaters and the oven we were warm again. Since then our Sanctuary has been the kitchen as at the time of writing the boiler is still waiting to be repaired.

Guisborough

As with all New Year's 2022 is welcomed as a time of hope for a better future. A time to reflect on where we are at the present and, therefore, how we can move forward with confidence. However, any such hopes must be based on the building blocks of where we are now and on what we have managed to do in the recent past.

After a closure of fourteen months Guisborough church reopened on Sunday, 23rd May, with the Revs Ken and Margaret Harris leading us in worship. This day revealed the sanctuary with chairs rather than the former pews, restored flooring and so the possibilities of flexible use of the area for different occasions or events. Such a change should be a good building block for the future.

Events have moved on since then with Ken and Margaret leading their last service with us on the 3rd October. We thank them for long service with us and a happy retirement from being at the front of worship. However, at the end of the month we celebrated the 20th anniversary, to the day, of the opening of our building. A happy occasion including a birthday cake. Moving on from this we managed a service of readings and carols presented by members on Christmas Day. It was also good that friends from St Andrew's read a reflection: 'Beautiful Feet.'

In the New Year our second service was led by Maranny Jones of Darlington URC. The theme of the service arose from Isaiah 43 where God promises to rescue his people with that celebrated quotation: "Do not be afraid - I will save you. I have called you by name - you are mine." And so as the people of ancient Israel were promised salvation so we must have the opportunity to dream. Dreams of the sort of church we need to be. Let us be a church whose members know the full extent of God's love for them and so have this love radiate out into society. A dream of a church that would be missed if it wasn't there; a church that speaks out against the injustices in society - being fully relevant to that society's present needs. a church that is prepared to take risks. This is a crucial message for Christians today - but a dream, a vision needs to be converted into reality and, as with all New Year resolutions, this is the first stumbling block we need to overcome. What can we do?

January is the month when The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated. The theme for this year was chosen by the Middle East Council of churches, originating with the churches in Lebanon.....,Global Christianity will celebrate the gift of unity and the revelation of a star and the Good News that came to us from that day forward. For an area of the world, where there is so much conflict, being able to offer a view of the world from their perspective - and ideas on how Christians everywhere can come together is so crucial for us all to see and grasp the benefits of unity..

It is, therefore, a disappointment that no organised services were arranged for Guisborough this year. A year when our church celebrates its 50th anniversary since an act of unity took place when the Presbyterian Church of England joined, with most of the Congegational Churches, to become the United Reformed Church and later joined by the churches of Christ and the Scottish Congregational Union. This was an event of which we may be proud - the first unifying of churches since the Reformation in the 16th, century.

It is in unity that we will find greater spiritual strength. During the closure of our church I was able to visit and worship with other fellowships. The experience showed me differing strengths of various churches. Such traditions coming together will so naturally produce a better, clearer sense of the presence of God. At a time of increasing secularisation of society this is surely what we need.

In her sermon Maranny Jones spoke of: “Let us be a church whose members know the full extent of God’s love for them and so gave this love radiate out into society.” For this to happen church members must have full confidence in their faith in the Lord, have the courage to go forward to express this in a tangible form in society and, like our Lord Jesus, be prepared to take risks. Are we ready for this? Let hope so.

Happy New Year.

Ray Tunnichiffe.

	Welcome/door	Vestry/notices	Flowers
6th Feb	Joyce	Ray	
13th Feb	Peter	Jenny	Annette
20th Feb	Barbara	Martin	
27th Feb	Darren	Maureen	

St Andrew's

Women's World Day of Prayer

Women's World Day of Prayer is to be held at Nunthorpe Methodist Church on Friday 4th March at 2.00pm.

All are welcome.

Annual General Meeting

We will be holding our Annual General Meeting on Sunday 6th March. The meeting will follow morning worship. Could all officers ensure reports are with myself by Sunday 13th February to enable production and distribution of a book of reports.

Roger

Churches Together Pancakes for Lent Saturday 26th February 4.00pm

We are hosting the Churches Together Pancake Event this year. Please come along and join with local Christians. Any offers of assistance please see Eleanor.

Coffee for Charity

28th Nov 2021	Middlesbrough Foodbank	£19.00
5th Dec 2021	Middlesbrough Foodbank	£43.80
2nd Jan 2022.	Leprosy Mission	£20.00
9th Jan 2022	Boys' Brigade	£16.80
16th Jan 2022	Middlesbrough Foodbank.	£22.10

St Andrew's Calendar

Weekly/Monthly

Boy's Brigade

Details available from church elders.

Preachers

	Marion	Guisborough	Redcar
	10.00am	10.00am	11.00am
6 Feb	Jan Harper	Ian Smith	Norma Johnson
13 Feb	K & M Harris Parade	Bill Reynolds	Jan Harper
20 Feb	Jan Harper Communion	Donna Moore	Norma Johnson
27 Feb	tba	tba	Brian Stephenson Annual General Meeting

Material for the March Magazine to church editors by Sunday 13th February
please

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