# Group News



\* 2023 \* March \* 2023 \*

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 Pastorate

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

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

### Pastoral Letter

I labour and I struggle, exploiting the mighty strength of Christ at work within me.

Colossians 1. v 29

One of the television programmes that used to fascinate my son Gareth was the series 'The World's Strongest Man'. I could understand his interest. Whereas I struggled to carry him, these heavyweights would pick up a massive block of solid concrete as though it was a mere pebble, - or they would drag along an aeroplane as though it were a child's toy. It was impressive stuff which most of us could never even come close to emulating.

There is one source of strength, however, that we all have access to, and that is the power of God, - or as Paul puts it, the mighty strength of Christ. We may not be able to hoist a car with our bare hands, but, through faith, we can move mountains! We can take on what night seem impossible odds. We can persevere through adversity, and we can help to shape lives, - not in our own strength but with God's help.

It is, of course, a very different sort of power than that which can be cultivated through exercise and body-building routines, and yet it is ultimately a greater power than any, for it comes from the one who brought the very universe into being.

We should never underestimate what God can do, and never forget what He can do through us.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

Shalom

Jan

### East Cleveland Group Accounts 2022

### **Income and Expenditure Account**

| INCOME  Contributions from Churches- St Andrews Contributions from Churches- Guisborough Contributions from Churches- Redcar Interest  | General<br>Fund<br>£<br>2,825<br>1,280<br>1,224<br>5,329<br>249                  | General Reserve<br>Fund<br>£ |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| merest   | 5,578  | -                            |
| EXPENDITURE  |  |                              |
| Ministers Expenses Revs. Ken & Marg Harris Group News Pulpit Supply Fees and Travel St Andrews Pulpit Supply Fees and Travel Guisborough Pulpit Supply Fees and travel Redcar Rev. Norma Johnson (Gift in lieu) Administration (inc. Travel) Worship material Lay Preachers etc. Sundry Exs.( inc. FWO envs 2023) Cleveland Pastorate travel exs Professional Fees Wages service Professional Fees Accounts Examiner | 250<br>317<br>1,930<br>750<br>420<br>88<br>120<br>119<br>106<br>73<br>369<br>192 |                              |
| Redcar Loan written off -  |  | 2,000                        |
|  | 4,734  | 2,000                        |
| Surplus/ Deficit at 31.12.22   | 844  | -2,000                       |
| Fund balance 1 January 2022 b/fwd<br>Fund balance 31 December 2022   | 7,465<br>8,309   | 13,792<br>11,792             |

#### **Balance Sheet 31 December 2022**

#### Funds:

| General Fund (above)         | 8309  |
|------------------------------|-------|
| General Reserve Fund (above) | 11792 |
| Malkinson Fund               | 4683  |
| Manse Fund                   | 5000  |

29784

Assets:

Cash at Bank TSB 9068
Affirmative Deposit 21702
Less Creditors 986

29784

Approved by Group Elders

Jane Tomlin Group Treasurer.

## Synod Trayers

#### 5 March

Fairtrade Fortnight (27 Feb-12 March)

### 12 March

Synod (18 March); Moderator the Revd Dave Herbert; Clerk Mel Campbell; Treasurer Gordon Wanless

#### 19 March

The Anglican Diocese of Durham; Bishop of Durham the Rt Revd Paul Butler; Bishop of Jarrow the Rt Revd Sarah Clark

### 26 March

St Mark's, Amble; the Revd Alison Mills

## Fairtrade and Climate Justice

### Why the climate crisis isn't fair

Centuries of exploitation of people and planet by the world's wealthiest have caused the climate crisis.

50 percent of global emissions are the responsibility of the highest-earning 10 percent of people.

But it's the communities already facing extreme hardship due to unfair trade who are feeling worst effects of climate change: increasingly extreme weather, more frequent plant disease and more insecure food supplies.

### What is climate justice?

Wealthier nations like the UK are responsible for the global systems that have caused the unfair climate crisis.

We need to tell our politicians it's time to own up to our responsibilities. We can still be a part of building a **fairer**, **greener** future.

### **Our demands**

Our governments must invest in the expertise of farmers who tackle the climate crisis every day. The governments most responsible for our unfair trade system need to fund this work so farmers can make an even bigger difference.

Our governments must, at a minimum, deliver on unfilled promises to fund climate action in low-income countries.

Communities on the frontline of the climate crisis must take a leading role in deciding how any funds are spent.

## Hear from farmers on what the climate crisis means for them

Fairtrade farmers are among the people who have contributed the least to climate crisis – but are already feeling the worst effects.

Did you know that **17** people from Côte d'Ivoire have the same carbon footprint as **one person** in the UK?

Yet across Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and Oceania, small-scale farmers are often experiencing the worst effects of climate breakdown.

## Climate change is a global issue. We, the farmers, have to deal with its consequences every day.

They're more likely to rely directly on the land they farm for their livelihoods.

They're also less likely to earn a living income due to exploitative global trade.

Climate change is making it harder to farm the land productively, while rigged trade systems, which favour the powerful, leave farmers unable to earn enough to adapt to the rapidly changing climate.

### Find out more about Fairtrade and climate justice

Our campaign for living incomes

We believe that trade justice is necessary for climate justice.

Too many farmers barely earn enough to make ends meet as it is, even without factoring in the effects of climate change.

This is why we are advocating for farmers to earn a living income. This means they have the power to effectively tackle the crises affecting their communities and can rely on sustainable livelihoods.

### Fairtrade standards

Fairtrade also supports farmers to combat climate change through technical advice from our expert Producer Networks and our environmentally friendly Fairtrade Standards.

Our Fairtrade Standards require small producers to take steps to:

- Adapt to climate change
- Reduce greenhouse gases and increase carbon sequestration
- Avoid deforestation and protect forests
- Tackle soil erosion and increase soil fertility
- Reduce water wastage.

### Find out more at:- www.fairtrade.org.uk

## Guisborough

Hello , I sincerely appreciate Ray's surprising invitation to write for this magazine. Surprising, only because as recently as just before Christmas, I was leaving the dentist in Guisborough with the sole intention of finding a nice warm cup of coffee. I saw doors open outside the URC church with an offer of a hot drink and biscuits. I don't live in Guisboro and I hadn't been to church for years but entering that coffee bar and the palpable welcoming warmth and friendliness of the people inside and the half hour prayer circle afterwards suddenly made me realise just how much I had missed being part of a loving church community.

I'm a retired Church Related Community Worker.(CRCW)

The URC / CRCW website reads:- "Church Related Community Work recognises where the Gospel is lived out by people and communities, even if they do not use the name of God. It involves commitment to justice and peace and is not afraid of costly involvement with PEOPLE. CRCW work often happens among people who are disadvantaged.... Community Work is about bringing people together, helping them to identify their own problems and opportunities, mobilising people and resources for change and implementing a programme of action. It challenges the churches to engage with and to reflect theologically on local community work (issues) so that community development roles are brought into it's own life, it's order, outreach, worship, mission and ministry."

This very much attracted me to the CRCW ministry. I retired 12 years ago with time to reflect on my learnings. I've learned a great deal while working with the homeless, interfaith, sanctuary seekers, domestic violence issues, youth and alternative economics. I've also learned from my visits to Palestine and South Africa. However the way the world is today with people struggling economically, and prejudice and divisions often dividing communities, I'd like to offer some insights that just maybe some in the churches can together take on board.

One brilliant programme which I was involved with, brought together diverse people in my wonderful diverse multicultural community in Nottingham and was called **See Judge & Act.** Or the 'Pastortal Cycle', which was devised by Christian Liberation Theologians in South America. I didn't know if this had

been done in a multifaith setting before, however 12 multifaith women **commited** to meet together to take part in a pilot programme, for one day every three weeks for 1 year, with some tasks to be done inbetween meetings to:-

**SEE.** First establish a consensus of ground rules such as confidentiality issues, non-judgemental listening, freedom to participate in an activity or not, etc. Then listen to each other's personal experience at a deep level from our own life and faith perspective. **Note:** This important first step took three sessions. This gave us ample time to listen deeply and see the real person. It was a great beginning of going beyond surface communication to build a deeper understanding of each other and promote mutual trust.

The next 'seeing' directive was to link our experience to the wider community: Visit different faith buildings, and / or observe some of their services, visit different faith community initiatives, visit different secular community initiatives, walk around and observe different parts of the community, take pictures of our observations and give reason why they were moved to take that picture.

**JUDGE:** Analyse what we see from all our diverse perspectives. Reflect on our faith traditions, in my case, ask "What would Jesus do?"

**ACT:** Take Action together and implement positive changes on issues identified. Celebrate what we've done, then ask "What next?

Although this was a multifaith group, This programme can be done with any diverse group. Just as an example, different denominations, people of different political persuasions, the marginalised alongside those who are bigoted against them; different age groups etc. It's a great catalyst to come together and make friendships with people different from us thus helping to build bridges by being willing to see and understand each other's perspective and work together to build a more holistic inclusive community. After the pilot, I had a vision that lots of small different groups of 12 people could be dotted across our communities but I retired before I could try to implement this.

**ANOTHER LEARNING:** While working with women of all faiths I was curious why women across the world are subordinate to men. Women's servitude and domestic abuse worldwide is ongoing. I asked myself "**How** 

did this horrific unjust mindset evolve and still be perpetuated even in todays world?" After listening to many women's horendous experiences I helped with others to set up a conference entitled Domestic Violence in Faith Communities. While researching the place of women in different faiths, I didn;t have to go any further than my own faith. I Googled 'Women in the Lectionary' A lot of the major Christian denominations world wide use the Lectionary

Ruth Fox (a female Catholic theologian) quotes:- "The widely held assumption has been that the lectionary faithfully presents the essence of the bible, with the omission of a few troubling or gory passages. A careful analysis of the lectionary reveals that a disproportionate number of passages about the women of the Bible have been omitted. Women's books, women's experiences and women's accomplishments have been largely overlooked in the assigned scripture readings that are being proclaimed in our churches on Sundays and weekdays. In this article I will point out some of the significant biblical passages about women that are ommitted altogether, are relegated to weekdays, where only a small number of church goers will hear them, or are designated as optional . I hope to illustrate how some of the lectionary's readings are used to reinforce what some believe to be the weaknessess or proper roles of women" ....Men devised the lectionary.

Another way of subtly subortinating women was pointed out to me at theological college. We were very much encouraged to use inclusive language for God in litanies and hymns Perpetuating the historical ingrained patriarchal language for God, inevitably, maybe unconciously, supports a worldwide subordinate mindset over women. God is LOVE and LOVE HAS NO GENDER. A growing number of churches have thankfully now taken this on board and use inclusive language in litanies & hymns.

One of the major problems today is the high cost of living. Over the years I've implemented Time Banks in different areas in the uk. A Time Bank is a system where people and organisations pool their time, skills and resources to help each other without payment. Everybody's time and skills are equally valued . It gives justice to all those who work in the second largest industry in Britain, the unpaid workers sector, which, last I heard, was worth 41 billion pounds annually to the British economy. This is a great catalyst to justly re-value women's work volunteers, homeworkers, unemployed and employed alike. It can be a stepping stone to employment, it can cross racial and cultural boundaries. It gives people a great deal of self worth by keeping

their skills alive, It eliminates isolation with regular social events. It saves money. **Please google 'Timebanking UK' to find out more.** 

I have recently self published my autobiography in an ebook on LULU where I reflect more deeply on these and many other social and economic justice issues and link those reflections to my Christian faith. It's called ('Journey into Activism' From Experience, through Reflection to Transformation.) Be welcome to go into my website set up by a friend, and without having to buy the book, please scroll down toward the bottom and listen to the first 4 chapters for FREE. linda-granville.com

Linda Granville

### **Guisborough Calendar**

Sunday 12 March Church AGM

Weekly

Thursdays 9.30am – 11.30am Market Day Coffee Morning

Thursdays 11.30am Quiet Time in Church. Prayers and reflections with Maureen, Ray and others.

Details on church notice board

### **Thursday Prayers**

During lent, Guisborough Churches Together have supplied material which Ray and Maureen may include.

On two dates, March 16th and 23rd, Guisborough Christian Fellowship will lead the prayers in our church at the usual time of 11.30. All welcome.

|          | Welcome/door | Vestry/notices | Communion server |
|----------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| 5 March  | Ray          | Maureen        | Joyce            |
| 12 March | Jenny        | Joyce          |                  |
| 19 March | Martin       | Ray            |                  |
| 26 March | Sandra       | Jenny          |                  |
| 2 April  | Joyce        | Martin         | Jenny            |
| -        | -            |                | -                |

## St Andrew's

### **World Day of Prayer**

Friday 3rd March 2.00pm St. Mary's Church, Nunthorpe All welcome

### **Coffee for Charity**

22 Jan MacMillan Nurses £29.00 29 Jan Leprosy Mission £30.00 12 Feb Boys' Brigade £26.10

### St Andrew's Calendar

### Weekly/Monthly

Boy's Brigade

Details available from church elders.

### Redcar

#### Service of Welcome

Redcar URC has embarked on an exciting journey with the Redcar Baptist Church.

We would like to thank the support we received from members of Guisborough URC and St. Andrews, Marton, it was so lovely that you were able to join us for a very important event. I am sure you would agree the service was emotional, inspirational, and full of hope for the future. The service was led by Rev. Sue Walker and Rev Mark Hubbard with the moderator, Dave Herbert giving the sermon which was full of optimism.

We are looking forward to keeping our ties with the East Cleveland Group and in time hope to begin quiet mid-week services which reflect our roots and to which all would be welcome.

Thank you for your generous support in so many ways.

Elaine

### **Ireachers**

| Marton<br>10.00am                     | Guisborough<br>10.00am | Redcar<br>10.30am            |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 5-Mar Jan Harper<br>Meeting           | Donna Moore            | Redcar Baptist in URC Church |
| 12-Mar Dave Elliott<br>Parade Meeting | Guis Folk              | Redcar Baptist in URC Church |
| 19-Mar Jan Harper<br>Communion        | Keith Martin           | Redcar Baptist in URC Church |
| 26-MarDonna Moore                     | Brian Stephenson       | Redcar Baptist in URC Church |
| 2-Apr Dave Elliott                    | Donna Moore            | Redcar Baptist in URC Church |

Material for the April Magazine to church editors by Sunday 12th March please

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

Telephone: 01642 300546.

Email: roger.wheeler5@virginmedia.com