

A.G.M. HIGH LIGHTS - Sunday, 12th, March.

It was noted that the Bridge (Association) were in receipt of the Queens Award in recognition of 20 years of charitable service in the town - a creditable achievement. Some of our members are volunteers for the Bridge, which has recently appointed a new manager, Lorraine Nash.

Churches Together. It was reported that during Lent services will be held at different churches each week up until Good Friday when there will be a service at the cross in the marketplace at 10 am. Darren Thompson, a representative on the Churches Together committee, is now standing down so another person needs to be appointed to fill this post. Thanks to Darren for serving us so well in this important role. Property Report. In answer to questions on the written report Ray noted that the Property Committee would be conducting a survey of the whole church building to produce a list of works to be done - listed in order of urgency. Dampness caused, by broken roof guttering, has damaged the wall plaster and paint work - so requiring some re-decoration. The repair of the organ at a cost of more than £20,000 has put a strain on our finances that means that all future building improvements need to be carefully planned and costed.

Synod: The most important news from Synod is that the Reverend David Herbert, our moderator, is retiring this summer. His replacement will be the Reverend Kim Plumpton about whom more information is available on the Northern Synod news for January. Media. Darren Thompson was thanked for his previous work in setting up our media presence. Since November last year Roger Wheeler at Martin church has taken on this responsibility and our website is still active.

Election and confirmation of officers: all offices remained in post for 2023 with the following changes: Sandra Verrill to carry on as elder for another three-year term and Angie Etwell will take over the responsibilities as Churches Together representative.

LENT SERVICES IN GUISBOROUGH

During Lent. Services were held in various churches around the town. They were all based upon a common theme and for our act of worship we had the title: *Heart to Heart - Joy and Sorrow*.

At the beginning of the service our attention was focused on the symbolic meaning of two bowls of water and some salt. Water represents life, something that has been recognised since ancient times. Salt is also essential to life and when salt is added to a bowl of water it becomes salty - like the tears we have when experiencing sorrow - or great joy. This was the starting point of our worship - which would go on to involve every one present.

The congregation were invited to offer their heart burning passages from the Bible or other sources, or personal experience of joy and sorrow. Various stories were told and one member of the congregation recalled that, at a recent funeral, the family of the deceased insisted that it must be a joyful occasion - so for all of the people there in the church, to pay their respects, it most certainly was - happy to say goodbye.

Psalm 22 "A cry of anguish and a song of praise" was delivered by three readers in order to emphasise the feelings of sadness but then of praise, to the Lord God, finally joy.

In a reflection we moved forward to learn about how Eastern Christians view the expression of tears as showing a true belief in God. It is in such countries that faith in Christ is often met with persecution and yet the response is usually to reinforce their faith in our Lord expressed in feelings of great joy.

Defining joy can be difficult although the old-fashioned Sunday School description is simple and memorable: *In your life put Jesus first (J) put others next (O) and yourself last (Y)*.

At the end of the service there was a special message: "something to take away." Christians in the Middle East have suffered much during the tumultuous events since the beginning of this century. Many Western Christians find it difficult to understand the profound sense of joy they convey amidst the troubles and persecution that many have experienced. There is a profound 'wisdom' in

the Christian East that is good to share. A question to take away with us was: how do we understand this?

The service ended with all the congregation saying together the great, joyous Psalm 150: Praise the Lord! Praise God in his temple! Precious strength in heaven! Praise him for the mighty things he has done....etc.

BRIDGE NEW LETTER

Many of our volunteers will be aware we are working on reduced staff until after the first week of Easter. In truth or three part-time staff had holiday leave booked at some point before Easter. So my administration rotor would've been alternating with project worker cover. We wish Joanna well by i and I would like to say a big thank you to every volunteer for the support you have given to Juanita and myself. We have moved Project days and edited rotas and edited rotas a little more.

We had a fabulous Fun and Food double date in half term attended by 48 children, some very young siblings and over 30 parents. Food included various spaghetti Bolognese options a vegetarian option baked potatoes with toppings for parents creating their own pizza breads on day two: carbonara traditional pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and Scotch pancakes on Ash Wednesday with choices of ice cream and plenty of fruit. This was my first time assisting with this since attending one as a parent many moons ago!

I believe the timing of the sessions across lunchtime was welcome for parents and their genuinely loved relaxed chatting to other parents and enjoying crafts. Parents and carers said it was very enjoyable particularly at the time of year when the weather is inclement, and it not only provided food but a change of scene different company and activities. This was partially funded from a previous grant and also a grant we were awarded by Sainsbury's through 'Neighbourly.' We have already got the craft site set up for a Food and Fun day at Easter and will circulate

to schools, then consider the wider community in due course.

Bridge 2Youth still hope to appoint a second project worker (term time - Friday evenings). We have sent the advert to community leaders in schools and will circulate through Redcar and Cleveland Funding News as well as which goes to many outlets. And attended my first Bridge 2Youth in February with Shona and Jenny. It was a chillaxed affair with drawing, games, conversation, and leftover spaghetti Bolognese which we had frozen from Food and Fun #nowastage!

The two youngsters who met me first with my bags of food made me so welcome. I came in saying I hoped they would like the food and one said, "I am happy with that melon!" This immediately put me at my ease - my supermarket donation of melon didn't need cooking. We have been approached by a young person to do some volunteering for the meal part of Bridge 2Youth for her Duke of Edinburgh award. It is lovely to think the bridge can have this crossover.

Members of Bridge 2Youth Are also thinking about how we can make sense of self care packs for the year 6 children on their first week as year 7's. I have met with Jennifer Scrutton who has brought us £500 of food bank donations since January. She is hoping to help us fold those well-being packs a little like the Christmas hampers.

Lorraine Nash, Bridge Manager.

GUISBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

Good news: A total of £15 million has been awarded by the Government's Levelling Up scheme for the regeneration of Guisborough town centre.

- Improvement works on Westgate, Bakehouse Square and Challoner Street - providing new car parking areas, outdoor retail space and street furniture.
- environmental improvements around the chapel back area to create attractive recreation spaces for visitors.
- landscaping and play improvements to the King George 5th, Playing Field to promote natural play areas and deliver a new skate park.
- Town centre commercial grand scheme - to assist private businesses with shopfront and property improvements in keeping with the conservation area.

- Providing a new sustainable active travel road (cycling and walking) from Guisborough to Nunthorpe, via the Guisborough Forest and Woodland Walkway Visitor Centre.
- improvements to Guisborough Forest and Walkway Centre.
- A total of £175,000 will help develop a business case to deliver a transport hub at Guisborough/Nunthorpe focusing on rail and sustainable transport.

SERVICES IN APRIL at 10.00am.

2nd. Dr Donna Moore - Guisborough. URC

9th. Rev Norma Johnson - Redcar URC

16th. Dr Donna Moore - Guisborough URC.

23rd. Maranny Jones - Darlington.

30th. Bill Reynolds - Guisborough Christian Fellowship.

Everyone will be welcome at our services. Come to worship, or to learn more about faith in Jesus, or simply to find some good friends.

COFFEE MORNING AND PRAYR MEETING

every Thursday there is a coffee morning in the church hall from 9.30am to 11:30 am, Followed by a prayer meeting at 11:39am until noon.

Please pop in whenever you can, on market day, and you will find a cheerful welcome.

April 2023

GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Founded 1798

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

News Letter

April 2023

Secretary 01287 637273