

## **TIME FOR A CHANGE**

This New Year was on a Sunday.

Traditionally a time for new resolutions, so the reflection, by Dr Donna Moore worship leader, was a well suited theme: Time for a Change.

In looking to the future, as a congregation, we were asked to look to the past year and note significant events in our own lives, for it is usually that from our past experiences we can build the future.

We were guided through the worship with the morning liturgy from the Wee Worship Book from the Iona community. Their thoughts on spirituality being well suited to this time and occasion.

The lectionary readings for the day were from Ecclesiastes chapter 3 and Matthew chapter 2. - both difficult passages to consider as we face a new year. In Ecclesiastes we have the message that grief is in fact God's gift to us. Grieving for loved ones we have lost is not the end. There is a time for everything says the writer and that this is natural experience of life - and hope for the future. We wait for our faith to be rewarded.

In the reading from Matthew we have the story of the flight of Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus, to Egypt, away from the threats from King Herod. The killing of innocent children is a difficult to accept and understand and this led onto thoughts on 'The Suffering of Innocence.' From this emerged the sometimes surprising outcome of life in the 'joy and love from suffering.'

The message from Ecclesiastes brings forward the idea that there is a time for every significant event in life and leading onto a

reflection: Time for a Change. A new year begins and time to think where and how we need to change. A final activity for the congregation was to chose a 'word for the year?' What would that be? Must be something that will help us add value to our lives and of others.

## **FELLOWSHIP SERVICES**

In a recent Guisborough church meeting the point was made that being without a minister for over six years may have led to some loss of spiritual direction. It was then agreed that we have periodic or regular 'Fellowship' services where all worshippers are, or become active participants. Rather than the normal service where whoever acts as a leader takes on the role of a teacher; here all members contributions will be of equal value - and so by being fully involved in the spiritual journey a more effective strengthening of faith should evolve.

The central idea behind the concept of a "fellowship service" is that as people of faith in Jesus Christ working closely gather supporting each other in an exploration of spirituality, and discovering, or rediscovering the treasures of reformed tradition, we will effectively grow in our faith to the extent that we will have full confidence to tell others.

Only when we are fully confident in our trust in our Lord Jesus can we be in a position to pass this message on beyond the walls of our church building. This essential mission is stated clearly in the Gospels and so it must be our central aim to respond to this call to speak of the

Good News when around us so much bad news abounds.

The first Fellowship service is on Sunday, 12th, February at 10.00am. Please come to Join in the free worship - we need your support.

## **CLEVELAND JOINT PASTORATE VACANCY**

The Rev Bridget Banks, from the Southern Synod, recently expressed an interest in accepting a call to the Joint Pastorate, but unfortunately has withdrawn her application for health reasons. This is most disappointing, however, the complementary observations made on our Pastorate profile do provide encouragement, and hope for a minister to be called in the near future.

## **WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

On Sunday, 22nd, January, the Annual Service of Unity was held in the Methodist Church. Organised by Churches Together in Guisborough. Churches in the town were represented to pray for the unity of all Christians as one, in faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to give thanks for the work of the Guisborough Bridge Association in faithfully serving the local community for 21 years.

Worship was shared between the churches present: the Anglicans, Guisborough Christian Fellowship, the Methodists, Roman Catholics,

Salvation Army, the United Reformed Church and others. A small choir led the congregation in the singing of the praise to God and our Lord Jesus. The hymn: Let us build a house, focussed our attention on the work of the Bridge, where people from the various churches worked together on various projects in the community. The chorus line: 'All are welcome' effectively summarised the principal by which the Bridge has worked for, with people, for over a generation.

In recognition of the theme of unity one of the readings from Johns Gospel was about the Vine and the Branches. Here Jesus said I am the True and my Father is the gardener. The branches were likened, to being the followers of Christ, and so being an essential part of the vine - the church as it should be in Unity.

The workers and volunteers of the Bridge were recognised in a simple ceremony where they were invited to light a candle representing their valuable work. After the service coffee was served so people could meet and socialise together - a final act in the search for unity.

### **MUSIC & MEMORIES at St Paulinus**

A time for people Suffering from dementia and that carers have a time for simple entertainment and relaxation.

This event is held in the church hall on the last Wednesday of the month from 1.45pm to 3.15pm and to which others may come to add to the fellowship.

### **SERVICES IN FEBRUARY at 10.00am**

5 Feb: Group Service at Redcar URC led by David Herbert, Synod Moderator

Service of Welcome to Redcar Baptist Church. (There will be no service at Guisborough Church

12 Feb: Fellowship Service - Ray Tunnicliffe

19 Feb: Ray Angelsea - Synod

26 Feb: Rosemary Taylor - Redcar Baptist.

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

### **COFFEE MORNING AND PRAYER MEETING**

Every Thursday there is a coffee morning in the church hall from 930 to 11:30 am followed by a prayer meeting at 11:30 am until noon.

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

**FEBRUARY 2023**

**GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**



*Founded 1798*

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

**News Letter**

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**Secretary 01287 637273**