

**The
Editor.
No 38**

On the 22nd of May the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak stood outside 10 Downing Street, in the pouring rain, to announce that there will be a General Election on 4th, July. Everyone was taken by surprise and so now we have six weeks of furious campaigning by the various political parties involved. Yes, this presents us with the difficult problem of making sense of different ideas and views thrown at us through the various forms of the media. How do we, as Christians, make a wise choice on how to vote?

In the April edition of the Newsletter, this issue was considered when a glimmer of hope, for wise decision making by politicians, came in an online petition asking for people to support a campaign against “nasty politics.” followed, more recently, by another online petition calling for more “Compassion in Politics.” Both are very good ideas if they can be implemented. Parliamentary debate is built into the design of the House of Commons debating chamber with two blocks of seats facing each other like armies on the battlefield. This system of discussion of government versus opposition encourages the language of confrontation, insults and point-scoring, rather than thoughtful, rational, exchange of views on the crucial, practical issues facing the nation.

This approach and attitude is infectious, with MPs themselves now receiving lots of abusive messages through social media where the perpetrators can easily remain anonymous - and so act with total impunity. A general view has been created in the press and other sections of the media of people or institutions representing political views opposite to their own, as being the enemy. Whereas we know from experience that many of our friends may have different political opinions to ours - but they are still our friends. Amongst all of this confusing noise and miss information, so how do we find a way to pick out the truth to enable to make a good decision when we put a cross on the ballot paper?

One good guide to political decision making is to ask ourselves: what is politics all about? That could be summed up in a simple, but difficult idea - solving the nation's practical problems. Which in turn has been summarised in one old saying: Politics is ‘The art of the possible.’ From all of the the promises, made by politicians, which can be delivered? Such a question may not be too difficult to answer but quite naturally leads onto the crucial issue of whether the proposals are really worthwhile and offer a genuine benefit to all of the people of our country? If than that we can turn to our Lord Jesus for his help and guidance. This is best explained by his reference to the Great Commandment: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart.....and love your neighbour as you love yourself.”* Have this

most famous of Jesus' quotations at the back of our minds as we make our political decisions will help us to make the right choice.

**CLEVELAND PASTORATE
VACANCY
MEETING.**

Last month the Cleveland Pastorate Vacancy Committee met in St Columba's Church, Billingham, to discuss progress in the process of calling a new minister to the churches in the Teesside area. The seven fellowships represented were: St George's, Hartlepool, St Columba's, Billingham and St Andrews and St George's, Stockton, located north of the river Tees and St Andrew's Mission Thornaby, St Andrew's, Marton, Guisborough and Redcar, being to the south of the river.

Disappointingly, there was no news of any interest shown, currently, by ministers in the United Reformed Church to accept a call to come to our area. This means that for the East Cleveland part of the Pastorate: Marton, Guisborough and Redcar, the vacancy has stretched to the long period of eight years. During that time the other churches have had the services of a minister for about four years, but we are now all urgently looking for the right person to come forward to accept our call to serve in this area.

The discussions, in the meeting, centred around reports, from each of the churches, about their present events and concerns This was followed by questions about the quality and attributes required of a minister to effectively serve seven churches, with different needs and spread over an extensive geographical area. Eight points of importance were agreed on this crucial issue. They will require further development before being included in a revised version of the Pastorate Profile, which will become available to all ministers nationally within the United Reformed Church. Hopefully, any new interesting, or exciting challenges we may now be able to offer may just be enough to attract the attention of the person we need.

Any other ideas from members would be welcomed and considered by the committee.

SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10.00am

2nd. Donna Moore of Guisborough

9th. Jan Harper or Marton URC

16th. Rev. Keith Martin of Lingdale

23rd. Guisfolk & Church Meeting.

30th. Bill Reynolds Guis Christian Fellowship

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

COFFEE MORNING AND PRAYER MEETING

Every Thursday coffee morning in the church hall from 9.30 to 11.30am - followed by a prayer meeting in the church from 1130 until 12 noon.

JUNE 2024

GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Founded 1798

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

News Letter

June 2024

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