

## THE EDITOR

### no 35

For some years the Scripture Union has been promoting the 95 Campaign. The number 95 represents the percentage of children and young people who have no direct connection with the church. Such a problem is a real concern for the future of faith in our Lord Jesus in this country in the future.

At the start of this year the Scripture Union asks for people of faith to join them in praying for the 95% of under 18s who don't go to church and asks for gifts and donations to help so that a new generation of children and young people will seek our Lord Jesus and commend them to others. As an example of the work that the Union do in this area in October of last year a New Faith Guide holiday was held in Seahouses in Northumberland. It was called 'half term.'

The young people, some of whom came from challenging backgrounds, had a fantastic time with several of them taking significant steps towards God. A number of them commented on what a wonderful time they had had. They engaged with the sessions well. A particular highlight was a prayer activity around the fire on the Saturday night with several other young people wanting to commit things to God in prayer.

This project should be of particular interest to members of our church as we did have a functioning Sunday School up until when the church was closed during the Covid pandemic.

Since that time some people have moved on and so, sadly we no longer have young people in regular attendance at services on Sunday. It is not known when we can restore our Junior Church, but we could support this 95 Campaign being held at the present time. *Ray Tunnicliffe.*  
*Editor.*

In February at Guisborough Methodist Church a Food and Fun session was organised by the Guisborough Bridge Association. The activities were aimed at children aged 4 to 12 With crafts and other activities plus a delicious menu. Food being probably the most popular activity of the session consisted of pasta Bolognese or cheesy pasta Bake, carrot and cucumber sticks, pancakes, yoghurt and fresh fruit. Such a spread was just thing to get youngsters ready for a really fun time.

This event is just one of many activities organised by the Bridge during the 23 years of its existence - being staffed by willing volunteers under the leadership of Project Manager and Administrator, Lorraine Nash.

The idea to form an organisation to address local needs within the community came from the Churches Together Group at the beginning of the new millennium. The first project was a youth activities group held in a vacant shop in Bose Street. This was a trial activity which lasted for a short period until the premises was taken back into business activity. Following this the youth work was moved to the premises above a shop in Westgate where it function for a number of years - and then moved on to a place in Laurence Jackson School where it was possible to expand the number of activities.

During the early years the Bridge expanded into other areas such as Soup and Roll fundraising activity at the Methodist Church, Lunch club, work with the elderly and other activities. At this time work was managed by Jenny Tiery and Shona Joselin - with a significant input from the late Cathy Crabbe. Guisborough United Reformed Church made an important contribution by providing office space in the church house in Westgate.

So, over a period of more than 20 years the work progressed fulfilling its aims to provide: "Life and Support in the heart of the community." In 2023 all of this effort received its reward when the Association was presented with The Queens award, by the Lord Lieutenant, for voluntary service, which is the highest accolade given for such work in the UK.

The work continues fulfilling various needs in the community and is recognised with pride for the valuable contribution it is made in the local area.

### JOINT PASTORATE VACANCY GROUP MEETING

Church secretaries and other church representatives attended a meeting the Vacancy Group, chaired by Maranny Jones,

Interim Moderator, of Darlington, in St Columba's Church, Billingham on Wednesday, 14th, February. In terms of the vacancy the moderator asked the question where are we now? The answer to this is that there is no movement in terms of a minister wishing to consider a call to this pastorate. It was considered disappointing that ministers presently resident in the south seem reluctant to move north - for there is much to recommend this area. It was thought that meeting together more frequently should give us that confidence in our mission to be effective disciple of Christ. We must have faith that God will provide what we need at this difficult time. The hope of the meeting was that we would have a minister by the end of the year.

In pursuit of this goal that the establishment of a Facebook page may be an effective way to draw attention to our new pastorate. Enquiries to be made about setting up this form of social media contact.

*News |From Churches*

St George's in Hartlepool have been working closely with the Methodists and formed a worship group.

St Andrew's at Marton asked the question: what would we expect a new minister to do? Taking on a largely teaching role was considered the best option.

St Columba' of Billingham talked about afternoon events they are to hold.

Guisborough church spoke of wish to have a people person as our new minister.

Stockton church spoke of how members are now much more positive view of the future since the report of the last meeting.

St Andrew's Mission in Thornaby indicated that their small numbers have increased,

in recent times, and this is most encouraging.

Redcar church is still working to establish itself as part of a joint pastorate with the Baptists.

It was announced that there would a Joint Pastorate service in October. The worship will be led by the Synod Kim Plumpton.

### **COMMITMENT FOR LIFE**

Commitment for Life is the United Reformed Church's global justice programme. Our goal is to encourage congregations to make global justice a core foundation of your mission. Here is the recent report from Palestine.

Since the 7th, October the Israeli occupation forces have taken (at the time of writing) almost 28,000 Palestinian lives in Gaza. 12,000 of them were children. About 67,000 cousins have been injured. Over 8000 people are missing or buried beneath rubble. More than half of Garces homes have been damaged or destroyed, along with 368 schools or colleges add 221 place of worship. In addition, over 400 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank, over a quarter of them children.

On 26th of January the International Court of Justice in the head ruled that at least some of the "acts committed by Israel and Gaza appear to be capable of falling within the provisions of the Genocide Convention." Yet the US and UK continued to arm Israel. They have also attempted to defund UNSRA Based on unproven allegations of UN workers involvement in the seventh October attack. At the same time, All that 1200 people in Israel have been killed and 9000 injured.

Commitment for Life shares God's deep sorrow in the face of this appalling, unfolding genocide. We believe in the inherent goodness, mercy and humanity of Israelis and Palestinians. Ultimately wins.

We are determined to continue our support for our partners in Gaza such as the Culture and Free Thought Association (CFTA). CFTA Runs four

youth centres in Khan Younis Southern Gaza. These are places where young people learn leadership skills and coping mechanisms in the face of occupation and violence.

Thank you for your continued support for this amazing project to your partnership with Commitment for Life and Christian Aid.

### **SERVICES FOR MARCH at 10.00am**

3rd Dr D0nna Moore  
Guisborough

10th D Moore followed by Church Meeting

17th Dr Donna Moore  
Guisborough

31st Dr Donna Moore Guisborough  
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 PRAYER 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 11:30 am until noon.

**March 2024**

## **GUISBOROUGH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**



*Founded 1798*

56, Westgate, Guisborough.

**News Letter**

**March 2024**

**Secretary 01287 637273**