

# CONTACT

The monthly magazine of

Groby

United Reformed Church

*Ask*

*It shall be given*

*Seek*

*Ye shall find*

*Knock*

*It shall be opened*

*Matthew 7:7*



March 2022

# Happy Birthday

*Roberto Fracchia*



*Happy Birthday to You  
May the Good Lord Bless You*

Sue Lawrence-Brooks

## Church Elders

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## WELCOME FROM KEVAN CHURCH ELDER.



Greetings and welcome to the March edition of Contact.

In the last issue I wrote a short piece about prayer. This had been prompted by our first Sunday service of the new year in which we considered:

### **Prayer, Teaching, Fellowship and Witness.**

The piece emphasised communal prayer *but*, there was another facet of prayer mentioned in the service, although not in the article, specifically the aspect in Philippians Ch4:6-7 where we are told not to be anxious about anything but to bring all things before God and that the result of this will be “the peace of God which passes understanding”.

Little did I know that I would experience this in Spades shortly after having written the article!

On Sunday 23rd January I went into hospital for a hernia operation. I'd been waiting for about three years for the procedure, but received a phone call on the Monday before I went in saying they'd had a cancellation.

I have to say that I was a tad nervous and was hoping for a general anaesthetic so that I wouldn't be aware of the procedure.

However, the anaesthetist was adamant that it would be safer for me to have an epidural (spinal injection)!

I was not a happy bunny, but to cut a long story short, the surgeon asked me if I wanted a running commentary on the operation. I said NO! Thank you.

So, I prayed and although I could feel everything and hear what they did, *I had the most profoundly peaceful experience of my life so far!* Speaking to the Lord and feeling such warmth and what felt like His arms around me all the way through and for the rest of the day.

Thank you Lord! And thanks to all of you who were praying for me!

Looking forward, we see the start of Spring later in the month. A time of excitement and new growth as the world around us springs into life as the winter ends.

My hope and prayer for you, whoever and wherever you are, is that new life and the peace of God which passes understanding may be yours today and forever!

May our Lord bless and keep you and yours.

Kevan.

Pause for Thought...

By Elizabeth Barrett-Browning



Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire  
with God:  
But only he who sees, *takes off  
his shoes;*

*From Mary Pringle*

## Tasters - Every Saturday at the URC. 10am-12noon

At long last, Tasters (our Churches Together, Saturday morning cafe and young families' activities initiative) is fully open again.



The cafe side has been open as

“Tasters Lite” for a while now, but the young families side has just reopened, and it is a real joy to hear the sound of children playing again. Last Saturday (I’m writing this in February) saw several returning families and some new.

I was sitting at the door on welcome duty, and one young girl who had obviously missed us, rushed up to me bouncing with excitement, throwing her arms out wide and shouting “I’m Seven”!



There was also a lot of excitement from the older folk as we re-introduced bacon and sausage cobs. I have to say that I was one of these. I love a good bacon cob!

Please remember us in your prayers as we endeavour to share the love of our Lord with our local community. Also please get in touch if you'd like to help on Saturday mornings.

Blessings

Kevan



**Open the Book** continues to delight the children in most of our primary schools in Groby and Ratby as well as introducing them to people and stories from the bible. Soon we hope to be able to include them

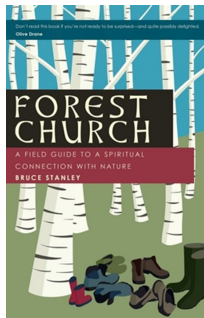
as characters in some stories again. For the last few months we have followed the story of Moses from his birth to the arrival in Canaan. Some ingenious props were created as the Israelites journeyed through the desert. Knitted quail, fabric water flowing from the rock and rice flakes appearing in place of manna.

Next month the presentation will include the whole Easter sequence from the last supper, through the crucifixion to the resurrection.

As always we would welcome more people to be involved in our team, no special skills needed, just a wish to bring the Gospel to life for young children. Prayers for this important witness in our community are always welcome.

Chris Davies

## Recommended Reads. 'Forest Church' by Bruce Stanley



My current favorite book is called Forest Church, by Bruce Stanley. It's about being church for people who don't 'go to church' in the traditional sense - and this one is specific about taking church outside and worshipping God through creation. It's a little book, and easy to read.

I think it's particularly suitable for Groby people, because you already have Tasters - and could easily invite the Tasters customers to connect with God outside.

Linda Rayner

Bruce Stanley takes us on a highly readable journey out into nature to discover a new form of Church. Not only does the book remind us of nature's ability to speak powerfully about God, it also serves as an effective reminder of the urgent need to bring spiritual depth to the task of caring for the earth. Rt. Rev Andrew John, Bishop of Bangor

Bruce Stanley pioneered the Forest Church movement and works and writes to promote nature connection and participation with the hope that what we love we may care for more.

**Forest Church: a field guide to nature connection for groups and individuals.**

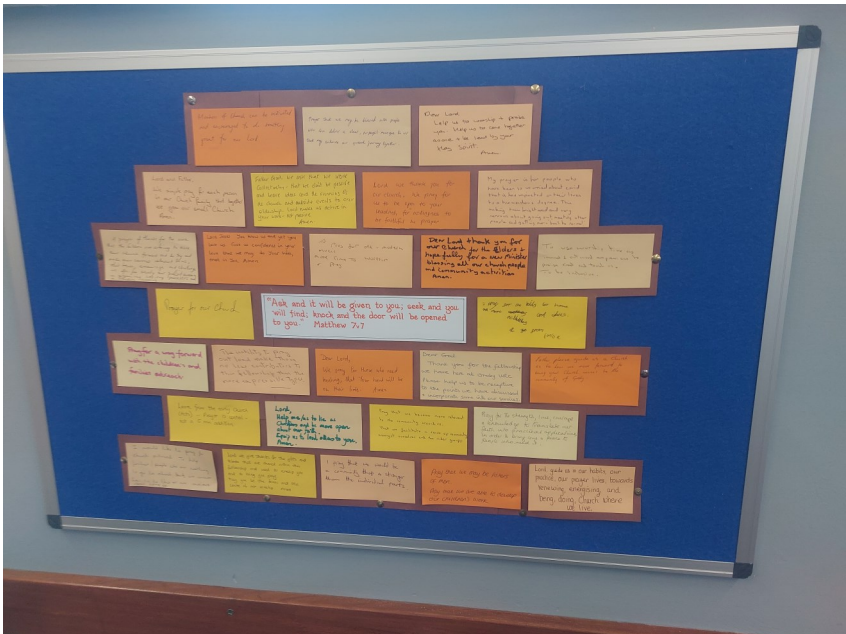
By Bruce Stanley,  
Mystic Christ Press, 2013

**Speak to Mary if you would like to borrow this book.**



Following our Praise, Prayer and Fellowship service in February, discussing our Sunday morning time together, we wrote some prayers for the prayer wall that Sue has put together.

Take a look at some of the prayers on one of the noticeboards in the hall.



Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Matthew 7:7-8

## Teaching

As we started worship in this new year on Sunday morning the 2nd January, our elders reminded us that “we are committed to worshiping God and sharing the gospel of the Lord Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and that we seek to achieve these aims through”:

### **Prayer, Teaching, Fellowship and Witness.**

The second aspect we looked at was Teaching. Under the guidance of the holy spirit. Who or what do we look to for teaching?

**The Bible.** To be disciples means followers – to learn from and do likewise. We should be looking for opportunities to know more about God in order to follow His guidance as much as we can with His Holy Spirit to help and strengthen us. Biblical scripture is inspired by God and is one of the ways He reveals Himself to us.

2 Tim. 3:16 says ‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.’

Psalm 12:6 says, ‘And the words of the Lord are flawless’. Like silver or refined gold and is therefore without fault. We should be doers’ of the word of God. “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves,” the apostle James writes. “Do what it says” (James 1:22). In this changing world, God’s word never changes. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. Matthew 24:35

We can find the bible difficult to understand at times, but it is a most treasured possession to own a bible - It’s our

food (Jer. 15:16), our life (Deut. 32:46–47), our comfort (Ps. 119:50), our strength (Ps. 119:28), our guidance (Ps. 119:105), our desire (Ps. 119:20), our hope (Ps. 130:5), our love (Ps. 119:97), our joy (John 15:11), and our treasure (Ps. 119:72).

**Teaching from this pulpit**, is really important, and we should pray that we always receive God inspired teaching and be prepared to challenge when we feel something is taught that is not scriptural. Pray for those who bring God’s message to us each week. Pray the right preachers would be available to us.

**From conversations with each other.** Bible study is an important aspect of some of the homegroups. Pray for these conversations, that we learn more about God and ourselves. Kathy

### **Opportunities to receive Teaching**

I’m writing this following the discussions we had about teaching on Sunday mornings, with some really good ideas which I hope to share soon. One thought was that we need to take more time to reflect on what we have learnt from our time together each Sunday.

Not everyone uses Bible notes, but they can be a really useful tool to guide us through the scriptures. Barb Lomas will happily take orders. Study books and research on the internet can be rewarding if the author is well regarded and reinforced by other sources.

Could you challenge yourself to join a homegroup if not already involved in one, that encourages conversations about what we learn from the bible?



## SUNDAY MORNING TEACHING AND READINGS FOR MARCH

As we look together at the format/content of our Sunday mornings, it seemed appropriate to try a more thematic approach to a preaching series. Hence we are broadly following Stuart Townend's suggestions for Lent. Any feedback most welcome. Kevan.

<b>March 6th</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 15</b> 'The Risen Christ, Our Hope'	Rev. Ed Bampton
<b>6th at 3pm</b>	<b>'Ready, Set, Go!'</b> Service for Children	Wendy
<b>13th</b> 2nd Sunday in Lent	<b>Ephesians 4:3-32,</b> <b>Forgiveness, Community</b>	A Praise, Prayer & Fellowship Service
<b>20th</b> 3rd in Lent	<b>Luke 1;26-38</b> <b>God speaks, calls us and is with us.</b>	Jim Coaton
	<b>Service includes Communion.</b>	
<b>27th</b> 4th in Lent	<b>Luke 15:11-32.</b> <b>God's love</b>	Ann Willmott

**The 'Ready, Set, Go!' services will be held the 1st Sunday of the month, at the new time of 3 pm.**

## Sunday's Helping Hands in March

	<b>Elder</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Coffee</b>
		(Tim)	(Tim)	(Joy)	(Joy)
6th	Kathy	Sue	Barry	Linda	Hilary & Dave
13th	Mark	David	Phil	Ruth & Roger	Mary & Trevor
20th	Sue	Trevor	Mark	Hilary	Pat & Linda
27th	Rachel	Debbie	Tim	Joy & Peter	Kathy & Barry

### Flowers



(Barbara Conlon)

6th: John & Elaine Mee

13th: Sue Lawrence-  
Brooks

20th: Anne Brandon

27th: Kay Blick

### “The Clean Team!”

(Kathy Du Boulay)

Week beginning....

7th: ‘Our Chores’

14th: Joy & Pat

21st: ‘Our Chores’

28th : Dave & Hilary



# tearfund **BIN TWINNING, THE FINAL WORD...**

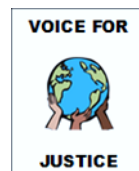
Did you spot Dusty Bin departing Groby around the middle of the month on his way to deliver our donations to Tearfund for Uganda?

The final figure for our bin twinning appeal was £789 including a donation from a church family who sent theirs direct to Tearfund. The wheelie bin stickers will be with us in church soon for distribution.



**Thank you for helping to be  
good stewards of God's  
creation.**

Joy



" The ministry of music"! (1 Chronicles 25 v1-8)

My Bible reading focused on this passage one day in early February and the comments immediately gave me a fresh understanding of the role of our musicians.

Their task is not to play music for all of us who happen to be in church or listening online each Sunday - and neither are they trained to lead corporate worship.

Instead, their fundamental role is to "make music before the Lord" - to play directly to God: to bless, praise and love Him through the ministry of music.

Surely their music inspires us to worship God also, side by side with our brothers and sisters!

**To all our gifted musicians at Groby** - we are so grateful to you for facilitating our worship together!

THANK YOU!

Sue Lawrence-Brooks

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul  
Worship His holy name  
Sing like never before, O my soul  
I'll worship Your holy name

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning  
It's time to sing Your song again  
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me  
Let me be singing when the evening comes

*From Matt Redman's "10,000 Reasons" and based on  
Psalm 105: 1-5*



**This Fairtrade Fortnight** , meet Bismark Kpabitey, a Fairtrade cocoa farmer and a member of Kuapa Kokoo, based in the Ahafo region of Ghana.



Bismark travelled to the UK in November 2021 to attend COP 26 with Fairtrade. He is a 3rd generation cocoa farmer, but doesn't think his son will follow in his footsteps because farming has become so difficult. He

says "It is very difficult to go into agriculture because the rainfall pattern has changed. There is drought, currently we are experiencing a very hot sun, which is really affecting our crops. For about two months now, we have not experienced any rains. It is so severe that we are losing almost every crop. In some areas we experienced swollen shoot in the cocoa and we have black pods too. With this, we also have pests, who attack our plants. And once production is reduced, financially we become handicapped." Illegal logging is also taking its toll.

Bismark is part of Sankofa project that brings together organisations that provide training in dynamic agro-forestry. This is when you plant different crops in the same field. He says, "Initially we planted only cocoa, that is the mono-cropping. Whenever there were prolonged periods of no rainfall, initially, we experienced a huge mortality rate of cocoa seedlings. Whenever we planted cocoa, at the end of the season, you lost about 70-80 percent of the plants. But since this system was introduced to us, we realised it



has really reduced the mortality rate”.

The project is funded by various international sustainable and Fairtrade alliances. However, Bismark says “Currently, the issue is we are only a few farmers benefiting from this system, I want this project to extend. And this can only be possible with funding support from additional partners”.

There are other benefits as well. “they pay farmers depending on the amount of cocoa sold [Fairtrade Premium]. In some cases, premiums are used to build infrastructures – like clinics, health centres, water pumps, boreholes, giving us water in areas where we don’t have access to good drinking water – depending on the intensity of the problem in the community. In different or diverse ways, we benefit from the premium”.

Bismark and fellow farmers, Rachel Banda and Muniraju Shivanna answered questions from Fairtrade supporters in November 2021 when they were in the UK for COP26.

You can listen in by following this link:

[Q&A: Fairtrade farmers at COP26 answer your questions - YouTube](#)

# Choose the World you want

**21st February to 6th March (Fair Trade Fortnight) and every day.**



# Answers to last months Fairtrade Quiz



- 1) What is not a Fairtrade product?  
**Toothbrushes.**
- 2) Which of these colours is not in the Fairtrade Mark?  
**Yellow.**
- 3) Standard footballs are made up of which two shapes?  
Hexagon and **Pentagons**
- 4) Most of the world cocoa is grown in which of these places?  
**West Africa.**
- 5) Brazil nuts can grow to the equivalent height of which of these?  
**3 double decker buses stacked on top of each other**
- 6) In which country are 70% of the world's handstitched footballs made?  
**Pakistan**
- 7) What do the following countries have in common?  
Ecuador, Brazil, Kenya and Indonesia  
**They are all on the Equator**
- 8) On average a person in the UK eats how many bananas a year?  
**Roughly 100**
- 9) How much money do we spend on chocolate in the UK each year?  
**£4 billion**
- 10) If you weighed all of the chocolate that we eat in the UK in a year it would weigh the same as  
**4000 blue whales**

## Ratby / Groby Telephone Befriending Service

Would you be interested in becoming a Volunteer befriender?

What is our telephone befriending service?



It is a service for people living in and around Ratby and Groby. The aim of the Telephone Befriending Service is to provide support to people who may be suffering from the debilitating effects of loneliness and/or social isolation.

We will offer an individual a friendly volunteer who will ring the person each week for a chat. It is a completely confidential service. Training and support will be available to the volunteer.

If you want to know more about becoming a volunteer please contact Joan Hawkins on 07545909868.

*Although starting out as a Churches Together in Ratby initiative, many folk who come to some of the events etc we run in Ratby live in Groby and we offer them support and as the Kingdom of God knows no boundaries, nor do we!*

*Rev. Ed*



## Christian Aid Week 15th - 21st May

I recently attended a Christian Aid Week preview session on Zoom. As well as being briefed about this year's campaign it was great to hear about the success of Christian Aid Week nationally in 2021.

In particular the unexpected success of the 'delivery only' envelopes which were used as a Covid precaution and were not expected to be as fruitful as the usual 'call back and collect' envelopes.

However, some Churches reported an increase in giving, more gift aid slips being returned, more people being willing to volunteer and the ability to deliver to more roads.

Our total in Groby for 2021 of £4,523 (from envelopes and our 300,000 steps Justgiving page), was an increase on recent years and donations were much easier to bank with more notes and a lot less small change. Rucksacks were sufficient going to the bank - previously we've needed suitcases on wheels!

We will therefore stick with 'delivery only' envelopes for Christian Aid Week 2022 and aim to get even more homes and businesses acting as drop off points, displaying the Christian Aid poster throughout the week.

Christian Aid Week runs from 15th - 21st May and the theme is - **Hungry to provide** which will focus on climate justice in Zimbabwe. Look out for more information in the April Contact magazine. Also we need new people to join our team of envelope deliverers - do let me know if you can help with this - time needed 30-45 minutes only. Many feet make short work!

Mary Pringle

## A PRAYER FOR RESTORATION

Come Holy Spirit

Our hearts cry out for more of you.

Lord, in a world full of brokenness,

Show us how to use our gifts to repair and restore.

Spirit of peace,

Fall on places of conflict around the world.

Heal divisions and hurts,

Bring together families torn apart by war.

Spirit of justice,

Anoint decision-makers with wisdom,

To bring about systemic change and truths

Where cycles of poverty and bias have taken root.

Come Holy Spirit

We let you take control,

Show us how we can build back better,

Unite, bless others and renew.

In Jesus' name we pray, amen.



By Nigel Harris, Tearfund CEO

Sent in by Kay Blink

## PRAYER BOX

The Prayer Box team meet each and every Tuesday throughout the year.

If you would like personal/confidential prayer for yourself or someone you know, please contact Ruth or Roger, Sue LB, Dave Smith or Rachel Hiscocks.

If you prefer, there are blank prayer cards lodged at the front of the prayer box - please write one and pop it in the slot so that we can bring your prayer request to God.

Sue





## FORTHCOMING DATES

### Prayers:

Zoom prayers - Thursdays every fortnight at the earlier time of 7.30 pm (March 3rd, 17th and 31st)

Elders will send out a link nearer the time for anyone wishing to join.

Please let one of us know if you would like us to facilitate other prayer opportunities

### Children & Family Activities:

“Ready, Set, Go” - Children’s Service - Sunday 6th March also at an earlier time - 3 pm at Groby URC.

Sunday Chattabox - every 3rd Sunday of the month at Ratby St Phillip & St James church.

## April issue

The deadline for April issue of Contact is **SAT 19th March** but happy to accept articles sooner if prepared and ready to go!

Please submit to [magazine@grobyurc.com](mailto:magazine@grobyurc.com) or to Kathy (5 Hawthorn Rise, Groby) Preferred via email.

This magazine is published in print and on the church website, grobyurc.com. If you would like to be added or removed from the paper copy distribution list or the monthly hyperlink email list, please let Mark or Kathy know at the magazine email address above.

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0116 231 2866 / susanbeverley46@yahoo.co.uk

**YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORKER:** Vacancy.

**CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS:** Jane Hinds 07530  
957022 / janesnips@hotmail.com

### SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Our Sunday morning services start at 10 am. We continue to encourage face covering and social distancing when meeting together indoors. Services are recorded and then broadcast afterwards on our Church Facebook page.

Our worship includes monthly Holy Communion.

READY, SET, GO services for children and families are held every 1st Sunday of the month, at 3 pm.

**The church building** has a loop hearing system, wheelchair access, a toilet for the disabled & baby nappy changing facilities.

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Some weekly activities are open with restricted numbers.

Mon: Noah's Ark parent & toddler group - 9.30-11.30 (term time)

Thurs: 'Fair Cuppa'\* at Groby village Hall-10.30-12 am

Fri: CatCH\* parent & toddler group-9.30 - 11 am (term time)

Sat: Tasters \* - Hot Cobs, Coffee & Cakes - 10-12 am

\* These activities are run jointly with St Philip & St James as part of 'Churches Together in Groby'.