

CONTACT

The monthly magazine of

Groby

United Reformed Church



and
suddenly
there was with
the *angel*
a multitude of
the heavenly host
praising God
and saying
Glory to God
in the highest, and on earth,
peace, goodwill towards
men
Luke 2
13-14



Dec 2022 & Jan2023

Pause for Thought...

I thank God who could not have made himself bigger to impress us, so made himself smaller to attract us.

Revd Canon J. John



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Our Church website can be found at <https://grobyurc.com/>

Our Facebook page is at <https://www.facebook.com/grobyurc>

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WELCOME FROM RACHEL, CHURCH ELDER.



Welcome to our final edition of Contact for 2022, as I write this it's only the middle of November, but Christmas is quickly approaching & I've already lost count of the number of times I've said, "I can't believe how quickly the year has gone".

Although I do have to admit that I'm not quite in the Christmas 'mood' just yet! Normally I love Christmas, I love everything about it & the cheesier the better! I love the decorations, the time spent getting together with people & the Christmas songs! (Again, the cheesier the better when it comes to Christmas songs – Christmas Wrapping by The Waitresses is the greatest Christmas song of all time & no-one will convince me otherwise!) This year it seems difficult to see how to get into the festive spirit with all that is going on in world. This time last year I wrote a message about Mary & how she turned what could have been a desperate situation into one of joy & worship. But after another year of global turmoil & increasing hardships for everyone this seems even more challenging this year.

However, we must remind ourselves that the Christmas message is not one of good food, good fun & good music, it is one of hope, one of God not just seeing us in our darkest times but of Him sending His son down into that darkness with us; to walk alongside us & comfort us whenever we need it.

I recently came across a song which, although not necessarily a Christmas song, resonated with me as I look at the world around us & think about what Christmas really should mean to us, the opening verse says:

“In the darkness, we were waiting, without hope & without light,
‘Til from Heaven you came running, there was mercy in your eyes,
To fulfil the law & prophets to the virgin came the Word,
From a throne of endless glory to a cradle in the dirt.”
(King of Kings, Brooke Ligertwood & Hillsong Worship)



As we look back on 2022 & beyond Christmas to the coming year, let's also remember that our God is also one who listens to us & answers our prayers. As a church, we can see this in very practical ways, not least the calling of Paul to join us as our minister & more recently the situation with the manse. Again, the words from the song above & the Christmas story presented in the Gospels, show that the arrival of Jesus was not just God coming down to save us. It was God fulfilling every promise & every prophecy he had made in the Old Testament; Jesus is the living embodiment of God's faithfulness to each & everyone member of the human race.

So, as we move towards Christmas & into another new year, we may do so with some trepidation, but let's continue to remember that the message of Christmas is one of endless hope in the face of adversity, one of pure light in the darkest of places & above all one of love that can conquer anything!

PTO

To quote a more traditional Christmas carol, as we prepare for this Christmas & move into 2023, may the prayer in each of hearts this year be:

“O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray,
Cast out our sin & enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell,
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel!”

Amen



A Word on Eldership

Our Church meeting in January includes Elders Elections. Please look out for information about this in the new year.

Something to consider (from the URC website):

Eldership has always been both a privilege and a responsibility – but it’s also deeply fulfilling.

The eldership of a local congregation is a significant ministry – the Elders share responsibility with the Minister for the spiritual oversight of the congregation. – with the Elders collectively possessing the abilities, skills and spiritual gifts of leadership.

Elders are no different from any other church members – all are called to develop and grow in faith, – the call to eldership is a renewed call to these things as well. Kathy

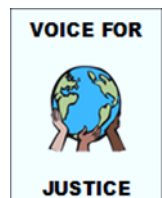


This year's **Christmas Appeal** is to support people in desperate need brought about by Climate Change.

Donations may be made in memory of a loved one by writing a tribute on a glitter gift tag, which will be displayed in the church on a separate tree or branch. Gift envelopes and tribute tags will be available in church during Advent. Some suggestions for wording of the tributes are displayed on the notice board in the hall by the fire exit.

Memory Garden: During January all the donations will be sent to **Tearfund** along with the tributes for displaying on their Memory Garden site so all can view online.

The Voice for Justice team will be popping up to help with any questions you may have about Tearfund's work with the effects of **Climate Change** or further details of how you personally can help make a difference this Christmas.



Induction Service of Rev. Paul Ellis as Minister to the URC West Leicestershire Resource Area.

Rev. Paul Ellis will be inducted as Minister to the West Leicestershire Resource Area Pastorate at 3 pm on Saturday 3rd December 2022 at Enderby URC.

Please add your name to the list on the notice board in the hall if you plan to come so we can let Enderby know how many of us there will be. There is plenty of room for all.

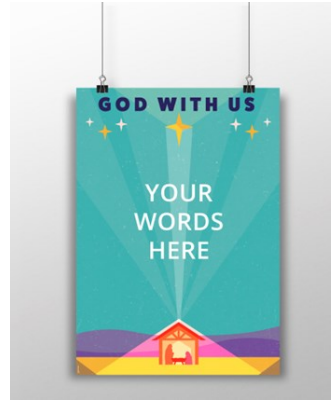
Also, if you need a lift or can offer a lift to Enderby.

Refreshments will be served.

Judith (Enderby) will let us know what we can bring nearer the time. Directions to the church and parking advice will also be available.



👁️ Look out for the communal Christmas card coming to a notice board near you soon! Greetings can be left for members of this fellowship by using the roll of white sticky labels attached to the notice board in the passageway.



At the heart of the story that is at the heart of Christianity is a hefty dollop of astrology. Modern discoveries have made us powerfully aware of how small we are. We are not the centre of anything. We are less than a speck of dust.

The stars remind me to dethrone myself.
They remind me that it's not about me.
They remind me that I am not anything unless I am part of something.



This is, of course, deeply counter-cultural. Society these days tells us that absolute significance is found in the self. Individualism is the dominant narrative of our age.

The stars lead us away from that.
And then there is that one star in particular.
The star of Bethlehem. The Christ-portent.
And what is Christ?
Selflessness in service of inclusion.
Radical, breath-taking inter-connectedness.
The Word that formed the stars;
The Word that formed us.

Paraphrased from Gideon Heugh (Dec. 2021)

Reflections on training in Pioneer Ministry

By Wendy Hall

In September 2021 I embarked on the first year of a degree certificate in Pioneer Ministry with 13 other people from different denominations at the Church Mission Society (CMS) based in Oxford. (I was the first attendee ever of this course from the URC) I have been asked to write about what I have been learning and why I decided to take this journey.

This is indeed a good question and there have been times in the last year when I have wondered myself why I did so, when deadlines for essays loomed, I grappled with weighty theological texts, and waited with some trepidation for my marks! Happily, I can say I passed the course and apparently and astonishingly I am invited to a simple graduation service on the 8th December. This all sounds a bit grand, but it isn't really. I simply wanted to learn more about mission to the culture of today and use those ideas to help me and us with developing our Tasters café which started out of the Fresh Expressions course many of us undertook a few years back with our Anglican friends at St Martins in the city. I also wanted to broaden my own experience of theology and mission.

What is Pioneering all about? Broadly speaking it is about re-imagining the way we do Church, its seeing and imagining different possibilities, it's about finding out where God is working and joining in, and it may do that within a church setting or by starting something completely new.

What did the course teach me?

This is a big question as there was so much learning and information. I took six modules through the year. It is impossible to precis it in any form that wouldn't take pages and pages to read, so perhaps, I can give you some headlines of the learning and some thoughts on what is un-expectedly, happening next.

Module 1: Practical Theology.

Practical theology is about theology in context.

An understanding of doing, walking, and talking theology outside the church. When we think about theology we often think of a trained Minister, or an academic poring over scriptures meaning, but practical theology is what we do all the time.

“Theology is talking to people, and talking about God, in and outside the church. Practical theology is listening to others and communing with God. Practical theology is a vision of community, and a community of friendship. One of my favourite quotes is “We do theology because we share a vision and we all experience wounds..... and we do theology out of the powerful message of the beatitudes.”

In this module we learnt there are many fragmentations and hybrids of modern culture often with no fixed ideas, having multiple meanings and seeing truth as relative to one’s own understanding of it. This made us consider how we can make God meaningful to those around us. One significant and huge mark of our cultural environment today is a consumerist identity. Practical theology then, means working to build genuine community friendships and relationships from inside the cultural practices of others, and bring change to that situation or persons life, by the conversations we have, and our experience of faith as we mutually share life together. It’s about us resisting power in order to allow everyone to have ownership of the community. Everyone has ideas to bring and service to provide through their gifting and skills. It’s about caring for those in need, our planet, and it’s about a voice for justice.

Peace in Christ. Wendy

(Module 2 and what is happening next - see next month’s Contact)



Rachel (Conlon) & Neave

(Editors note)

Following the joy of our own Du Boulay addition, I realised there were a lot of other x Urban Saints becoming proud parents. Please do send photos in if I've missed anyone's. More on page 18.

Kathy



Becca (Harrup) Daniel & baby Jacob



Ruth (McNeil) & Alf



Nathan Hiscocks (born Feb 2022)



Alison (Carter) & Lily



James (Scott), Charlotte & baby George

More on Page 18



TEACHING AND READINGS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2022

Nov. 27th	Genesis 3: 2-7	Kevan Hall
1st Sunday in Advent	'It all started with the fall'	
Dec. 4th	Isaiah 9:2-7 & Micah 5:2	John Filsak
	'The Promised Son'	
Dec 4th at 3 pm	Ready, Set, Go'! 'Service for Children, Families & Everyone Else!'	Wendy Hall
Dec. 11th	Matthew 1:18-25	Rev. Paul Ellis
	The birth of Jesus (arrival of the Son). Service will include Holy Communion	
Dec. 18th	Luke 2:8-20	Malcolm Clarke
	'Carols and Angels'	
Dec. 25th at 9.30 am.	The Joy of Christmas	Elders

Rev. Paul Ellis will lead us in Communion during the service on the 11th December.

Please note our service on Christmas Day begins at 9.30 am. There is no yChurch for children on December 4th as they will be enjoying time together in the afternoon.

Sunday's Helping Hands in December & January

	Elder	Music	Media	Welcome	Coffee
		(Tim)	(Tim)	(Joy)	(Joy)
Nov 27th	Sue	Helen	Barry	Barbs	Hilary & Dave
4th	Mark	Helen	Dave	Margaret & Maurice	Mary & Trevor
11th	Rachel	Sue	Tim	Elaine & John	Pat & Linda
18th	Sue	Debbie	Mark	Alan	Kathy & Barry
25th	Kathy	TBC	Tim	Elsie & Pete	N/A
1st Jan	Kathy	TBC	Barry	Rachel H	Volunteers required please
8th	Sue	TBC	Dave	Linda	Peter & Margaret
15th	Rachel	TBC	Mark	Hilary	Joy & Cherryl
22nd	Mark	TBC	Phil	Ruth	Hilary & Dave
29th	Kathy	TBC	Barry	Joy & Peter	Mary & Trevor



SUNDAY MORNING TEACHING AND READINGS FOR JANUARY 2023

Jan 1st	Rev. Paul Ellis	Jan 1st Service to include Holy Communion.
Jan 8th	Jim Coaton	Themes / readings for January to be confirmed.
Jan 15th	Ben Wright	
Jan 22nd	Rev Paul Ellis	Jan 22nd possible CTG Service for Christian Unity.
Jan 29th	Wendy Hall	Details to be confirmed.



Flowers

(Barbara Conlon)

Christmas Decorations throughout December

January

- 1st: Barbara Conlon
- 8th: Ann Tombs
- 15th: Kathy & Phil Holmes
- 22nd: Ruth Ivens
- 29th: Rachel & Mark Hiscocks

“December & January’s Clean Team!”

Week beginning....

5th Dec - Trevor & Mary

12th Dec - “Our Chores”

19th Dec- Kathy & Barry

26th Dec - “Our Chores”

2nd Jan - Dave & Hilary

9th Jan - Our Chores

16th Jan - Linda & Tim

23rd Jan - Our Chores

30th Jan - Sue LB & Sue A



E is for Energy!

Ruth Valerio's book 'L is for Lifestyle' was revised and updated in 2019 before Covid & Ukraine hit us. In it she recommends we "use low energy and LED light bulbs, insulate our home effectively and wash our clothes on cooler temperatures, with full loads".

Fact: We have created a society totally dependant on using huge amounts of energy in order to survive.

Fact: We take it for granted that everything should be 'on tap' for us to use (and waste!) at will.

Thought: 'Climate Change' has become part of our cultural language, which we think does not really apply to us but to others. Wrong!! Jim Coaton upgraded his loft insulation last month. Have you checked yours in the last ten years?

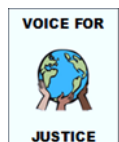
Fact: Covid and Ukraine have been a shock to us and brought us up sharply.



Thought: Each one of us must think hard and address our own over- dependency on energy.

THINK AND ACT NOW, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

Guest writer: Roger Ivens writing for Voice for Justice





Hannah (White) & Rio

More proud parents from our Urban Saints groups.



Cat (Sheldrake) & Rory



Hannah (Critchley) & Maisie



Jessica (du Boulay) & Jaxson



News Update on Cop 27 from **tearfund**

At the time of going to print, outcomes from this year's conference on Climate Change are still not clear though it seems an agreement regarding the 'Loss and Damage' scheme has been reached. This was one of the main sticking points and though we don't know details so far, the scheme, funded by the richer countries, would be available for the low-income nations to claim after suffering destructive events as a result of climate change.

As part of Tearfund's campaigning at the conference, Tearfund activists from the 'climate-vulnerable nations, issued an 'overdue bill' to wealthy nations to remind world leaders that the \$100 billion a year promised to low-income nations is yet to be fully delivered.

Please pray that decisions taken will be honoured. As well as compensating for destruction caused by climate change, the low-income countries need financial support to help them switch to renewable energy.

Keep alive 1.5c was a slogan from COP 26 - emphasising the need to keep the increase of global temperatures to no more than 1.5c pre-industrial era. This goal is now very close to the tipping point - pray that you and I do what we can to reduce our impact on global warming.

Young People leading the way. Thank God for the young climate activists around the world who Tearfund is working with; pray their voices will have been heard by decision-makers at COP27. Ask God to bless them with opportunities to help their communities overcome poverty and thrive.



Bonfire Party

On the afternoon of Sunday 6th November, Ready Set Go invited parents from Tasters to a bonfire party of fun and mayhem! Approximately 10 families from Tasters, joined our own church families to gaze at the pretend bonfire, dance under a disco ball, get extremely wet apple bobbing, craft and make a lot of noise. The afternoon ended with burger or sausage baps, cakes, glow sticks, sparklers, and dancing to Rend Collectives song My Lighthouse, as we declared the light of Christ when the storms hit.

Feedback from our Tasters families was positive and one family went home to find the song on You Tube and play it in their living room.

A very very big thank you to those who made this all happen on the night.

Wendy







More from the
Bonfire Party





*The Just Shop extended
Leicester shop opening hours -*

Tuesday to Friday 11am till 5pm
Saturday 10am till 5pm
Sunday 12pm till 4pm

Have You Explored the Basement?

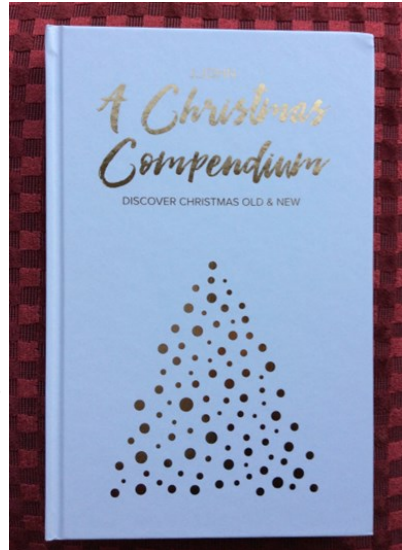


Recommended Reads

A Christmas compendium

- discover Christmas old and new
by Canon J. John.

This is a book designed to be dipped into, to generate conversations and invites readers to recall Christmas memories. In it J. John unwraps the reason for the birth of Christ and his relevance for us today while also attempting to unravel the mysteries of some of our Christmas traditions.



Over 100 diverse Christmas related topics are tackled, including cherubim, Charles Dickens, glory, Stir up Sunday, Live Aid, Saviour, holly and ivy, Scrooge, Bethlehem, figgy pudding (recipe included), and lots more.

Happy to loan my copy to anyone who would like to read this interesting festive title.

Mary Pringle

More News of x Urban Sinters!!

Our Congratulations to Rachel (Scott) who has been accepted as an ordinand (which is a baby Vicar according to Ruth, her Mum!)

Homegroups

We have regular homegroups, that meet fortnightly at different times throughout the week, providing opportunity for bible study, prayer and conversation.

Mondays - 6.30 - 8 pm in Groby.

Contact Mark Hiscocks on 07887 399107

hiscocksm@gmail.com

Mondays- (evenings) in Anstey

Contact Rachel Edwards on 07533228435.

rachyrach17@hotmail.com

Wednesdays - 2.30-4.30 pm in Groby

Contact Jim Coaton, 0116 287 6909 j.coaton@sky.com

Wednesdays - 7.30 - 9.30 pm in Groby

Contact Kathy DuBoulay on 0116 224 5095

kathygrace127@gmail.com

Thursdays - 7.30 pm in Groby

Contact Elaine Mee on 0116 287 7608

elaineamee@gmail.com

Steve & Heather Burrage have sent us the following message via Mary Pringle

Please pass my love and blessing to the church for a great Christmas and a wonderful new year with our great Lord and saviour.

**Blessings,
Steve and Heather.**



DIARY DATES

Induction Service of Rev. Paul Ellis: 3 pm Saturday

December 3rd at Enderby URC. Please see the sign up sheet on the notice board so we can let Enderby know numbers.

‘A Christmas Cracker’, presented by The Chantry Choir with Sapcote Handbell Ringers in aid of Leicester Hospitals Chemotherapy Suite Appeal: Saturday December 3rd, 7 pm at Christ Church Dumbleton Avenue, Leicester. LE3 2EG.
Cost £10

Carols Around the Tree: Thursday 15th Dec. at 7pm at the Stamford Arms

Children & Family Activities: “Ready, Set, Go” -

Sunday 4th December at 3 pm. (no YChurch during the morning service on 4th December) No Ready Set Go in January.

Prayers for Ukraine: Dec. 8th, Dec 22nd, Jan 5th and Jan 19th. Still at 6.30 pm in church

Groby URC AGM Church Meeting: Tuesday January 31st at 7.30 pm in church. This will include election of elders. Please notify Kathy or any of the elders if you want to add anything to the agenda. Please look out for information about elder’s elections in the new year.

Advanced Notice: A Razzle Dazzle Social get together - A Fun Time on a Winter’s Afternoon. Following our service on February 12th. Make sure its in your diary **now!**

February 2023 issue

The deadline for February 2023 issue is **SAT 21st January 2023** but happy to accept articles sooner if prepared and ready to go!

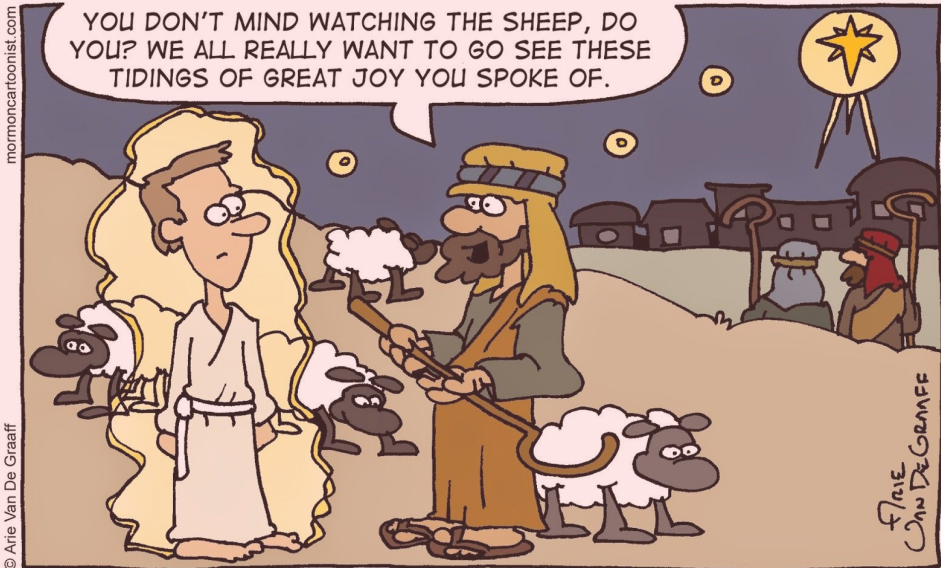
Please submit to magazine@grobyurc.com or to Kathy (5 Hawthorn Rise, Groby) Preferred via email.

Print or Hard Copy of Contact?

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

If you receive a paper copy and no longer wish to, please let us know through the magazine email address.

You are, of course, most welcome to receive both.



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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 and are recorded then broadcast afterwards on our Church Facebook page. Groby United Reformed Church / Facebook. Our worship includes monthly Holy Communion

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

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

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)

Fri. (alternate Fridays during term time) 7.30 pm Urban Saints.
Games and Grub for children in Years 5 - 11.

Sat:Tasters* Coffee, hot cobs. Kids activities -10-12am

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