

CONTACT

The monthly magazine of

Groby

United Reformed Church



March 2023

Happy Birthday



Roberto Fracchia

Happy Birthday to You

May the Good Lord Bless You

Sue Lawrence-Brooks

Church Elders

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Our Minister and Church Elders



Rev'd Paul Ellis



Kathy



Rachel



Sue



Mary



Wendy



Mark



Phil

WELCOME FROM KATHY, CHURCH ELDER



It's my pleasure to write a welcome to March's edition of Contact. I enjoy reading what others write in their welcome letter, when I don't need to do much more than read, absorb and decide if there is anything I need to respond to. However, having to put something together myself means I have to allow myself to be more challenged, actively seeking out what I think God would want me to include - not always easy but can be more rewarding.

We've recently had our AGM and church meeting. This was particularly encouraging as it was the first that Paul chaired for us, and the first for quite a time that we had two completely new elders, plus one recycled elder! (sorry Phil!). I look forward to what the Lord will have us say and do as we support Paul in leading the Groby church into perhaps new endeavours or perhaps re-visiting projects that need something of a re-ignite. Please remember us in your prayers.

It was also a useful opportunity to understand more about the activities already running under the banner of Groby URC or CTG, and a reminder of how much time and effort are put into all these things by many of us. It's not just the roles listed on the 'Appointments' list, but the many who do so much behind the scenes so that the church is ready for whatever comes next.

The underlying aim of all this? Putting it simply, most of what



we do is to praise and worship God, to become more the person He wants us to be by receiving His amazing love and to share that love with those around us - whether far or near.

I've recently been on a journey through Psalm 73, via a Selwyn Hughes study, part of a one year devotional 'A Fresh Vision of God'. The Psalmist (Asaph on this occasion) begins by writing how he nearly slipped and lost his foothold, how envious he had become of those who appeared to have better fortune than him although they seemingly reject God. The Psalmist questions why God has allowed such things. The Message translation puts it like this:

Ps. 73:11 What's going on here? Is God out to lunch?

Nobody's tending the store. The wicked get by with everything; they have it made, piling up riches.

The Psalmist continues in this vein until he enters the sanctuary, at which point he begins to understand. Referring to God

Ps. 73:23-26 Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.

Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (NIV)

Hughes says the word 'sanctuary' means the physical house of God - church or temple, and makes the point that we need to regularly enter that physical space where we can meet with Christians, and where God is worshiped. This will help us be encouraged in our Christian walk, and to understand the love of God in our life circumstances. Within the Sanctuary, the Psalmist goes from a deep, emotional questioning of God, to understanding God's presence, God's hold, guidance and strength in his life. The questions no longer matter because God's presence and love is felt and eclipses all else.

Hughes quotes from CS Lewis 'Mere Christianity'.

'God can show Himself as He really is' 'to men' (and women - my comment) 'who are united together in a body, loving one another, helping one another, showing Him to one another. For that is what God meant humanity to be like, like players in one band, or organs in one body. Consequently the only real, adequate instrument for learning about God is the whole Christian community, waiting for Him together.'

Last year I wrote the Welcome Letter for February's Contact, and focussed part of the letter on the humble daffodil. To the unprofessional eye at least, it isn't possible to know what sort of daffodil was preparing to bloom until the flower began to show itself. I wondered how we might look when we eventually emerged. In order to reveal ourselves at all, like the daffodil, we need to be resting in the nutrients of church life, our soil in order to grow.

Don't be persuaded to miss out on being with other Christians, whether during Sunday morning services together, home-groups or some other opportunity to grow with Christians, being part of something bigger than we are as individuals.

Take this opportunity to review where you are growing in God's grace, love and mercy. God is wanting to bless each of us wherever we choose to be.

Kathy





RAZZLE DAZZLE SOCIAL

Church Bring and Share lunches are always enjoyable. The one we attended in February was no exception. Both church attendees and visiting guest generously bought a wide variety of buffet food and delicious desserts to share together. I heard many complements such as “this is a feast” and “what an amazing buffet” as we enjoyed the food together.

The buffet was followed by Trevor’s musical medley of Sing Along Songs where everyone was encouraged to join in with the chorus, even if you didn’t know the verse. All musical tastes were catered for including country music, the Beatles and of course Neil Diamond’s brilliant sing a long song ‘Sweet Caroline’. A whole group ‘wave-along’ was a must for the chorus!

After testing our lyrical knowledge, we then had to test our brain power by participating in Paul and Jill’s quiz. Having a team of children (and those young at heart), definitely played to our advantage when answering questions about Disney and children’s books.



Team Pikachu consulting over their answers.

Though the scavenger hunt was a little more tricky for us as we were furthest away from both the door and the destination to take our items to!

Nevertheless, we had a great time as a family and would like to say a big “thank you” to all those involved.

Harley said “the food was brilliant and the quiz was very enjoyable. I liked the higher and lower round and testing my knowledge of bizarre facts”.

Kezi said “I liked the scavenger hunt, running around and grabbing stuff. The team name was the best - Team Pikachu!”

The Euden family

Judith, Pat & Peter sharing a joke



HAPPY FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2023

The world is facing a climate crisis- it is affecting the foods we love and the communities who produce them. By choosing **Fairtrade** products we can support producers on the front line and help to protect the future of our food.



This year we have enlisted the help of the local **Co-op** who have kindly agreed to support us with a small in-house promotion, albeit less grandiose than in the past, when we didn't quite fire the imagination of the general public!

So, what is happening? At the time of writing plans are still evolving.....

On March 4th at **Tasters** there will be a display of Fairtrade goods which can be purchased from the local Co-op, and again for the Sunday Morning congregation on March 5th.

What else can we expect?

- * Engaging games and activities for Ychurch and Tasters children.
- * Delicious free Fairtrade recipes.
- * And maybe something unexpected!



What does Fairtrade do for kids?

The Fairtrade Foundation **makes sure that all products come from farms and factories with fair working conditions.** This means that workers are treated well, and children are hopefully, sent to school so they can get an education.



G IS FOR GLOBALISATION -L is for Lifestyle

Globalisation is the word used to describe the growing interdependence of the world's economics, cultures and population, brought about by cross border trade in goods and services, technology and the flow of investment, people and information.



Not new, since one of the earliest examples is the 'Silk Road' (dating from 2nd century BC to the mid 1500) linking the 4,000 miles between Rome and China, via footpaths and sea routes, to facilitate trading in goods, such as silk, gold, & silver, and manufactured articles and opened up economic, cultural, religious and political interaction. **Globalisation!**

Globalisation is bound up with the theory of free trade, with no protective barriers, and is the most effective way of lifting the poor countries out of poverty – and it's working.

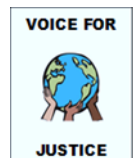
The down side is the immoral business practises, using the availability of cheap labour to increase profit margins. The gap between rich and poor is forever increasing. The 42 richest people in the world own as much as the 3.7 billion poorest people. Morally indefensible!!

Jesus certainly crossed the cultural boundaries and the words of the prophets (e.g. Isaiah 49:6) foreshadow globalisation on a grand scale.

As responsible citizens shouldn't we:

Be looking at the food we buy, the clothes we wear, where they come from and what impact our choices have on other people and the environment?

Jim Coaton, guest writer for Voice for Justice





‘Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.’ (Romans 12:2, NIV)

It might not be possible to know exactly what Paul meant by this, but looking at the world around us, we can discern some of the ‘isms’ that shape it:

✦ **Cynicism.** Believing that human nature is fundamentally selfish.

✦ **Consumerism.** Believing that happiness is found in acquiring more things.

✦ **Capitalism.** Believing that endless economic growth is possible, and should be relentlessly pursued.

Individualism. Believing that we should all be self-reliant – responsible for our own lives alone.

This pattern of the world has led to great injustice, destruction and sorrow.

Let us renew our minds and believe the truth that all humans are made in God’s image. Let us believe in enough, that less is more, that simple is beautiful. And let us believe in each-otherness, in connection, and in community.

Gideon Heugh

Gideon writes for Tearfund and is a poet and environmentalist



SUNDAY MORNING TEACHING AND READINGS FOR MARCH

Other than March 12th when Gary will bring a focus on Mothering Sunday, our preaching continues through John's Gospel as we head towards Easter.

Our service on March 12th will include Holy Communion led by Rev. Paul Ellis.

No planned 'Ready, Set, Go' service for children in March. The next one will be linked to Easter - date to be confirmed.

- | | | |
|--|--|------------------------|
| March 5th | John 17:6-19
Jesus Prays for His Disciples | Cate Coffey |
| March 12th | John 17: 20-26
Jesus Prays for all believers
Service includes Holy Communion | Rev. Paul Ellis |
| March 19th
(Mothering Sunday) | A Focus on Mothering Sunday
(reading to be confirmed) | Gary Wood |
| March 26th | John 18
Jesus Trial | Rev. Paul Ellis |

Sunday's Helping Hands in March

	Elder	Music	Media	Welcome	Coffee
	(Kathy)	(Tim)	(Tim)	(Joy)	(Joy)
March. 5th	Mark	Debbie	Barry	Elaine & John	Hilary & Dave
12th	Kathy	Sue	Chris	Alan	Mary & Trevor
19th	Phil	David	Dave	Elsie & Pete	Pat & Linda
26th	Wendy	David	Mark	Rachel H	Ruth & Roger

Flowers



(Barbara Conlon)

5th: John & Elaine Mee

12th: Sue Lawrence-Brooks

19th: Rachel & Dan Parker

26th: Kay Blick

“The Clean Team!”

(Kathy Du Boulay)

Week beginning....

6th : ‘Our Chores’

13th: Kathy & Barry

20th: ‘Our Chores’

27th : Dave & Hilary



‘Our Chores’ hope to do our church clean first thing on Tuesday mornings of the weeks they are with us. If you know the church is being used at that time, let Kathy know who will contact them. They are more than happy if they know ahead of time to try to arrange a different day. Kathy

Organic

Bee A-mazing

This bee has a very important job to do! He must carry pollen from one flower to another in the strawberry patch so that strawberries can grow. Insects and other animals that do this job are called 'pollinators'. Organic farmers make sure their farms include lots of places for pollinators to live.



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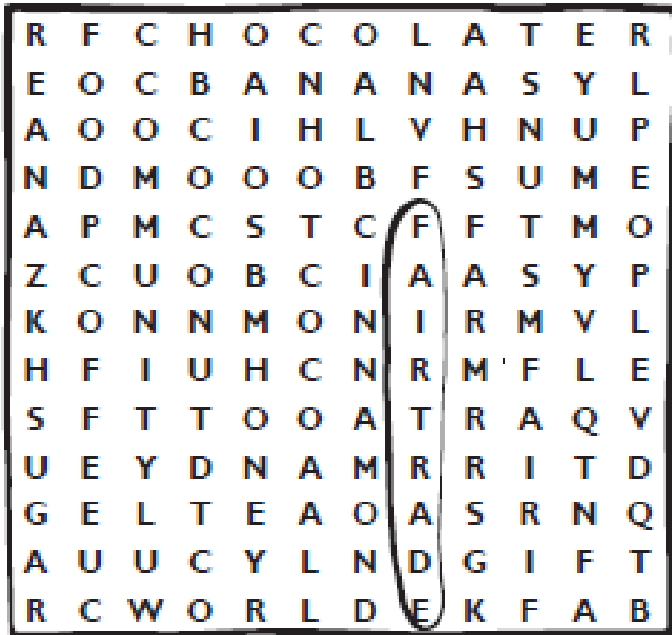
When you see the USDA Organic symbol on a package or sign, it means that the food was produced in a way that is good for plants, pollinators and people.



Fair Trade Word Search

Find the words below, looking horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|--------|
| Bananas | Sugar | Food | People |
| Chocolate | Nuts | Yummy | Kind |
| Hot Cocoa | Honey | Farmers | Fair |
| Coffee | Cinnamon | Community | World |
| Tea | Coconut | Fair Trade | |



Some foods we love come from far away and its not easy to know if the farmer who grew the food was paid fairly for their work. When you see the Fair Trade logo on packages or signs you know the farmer got a fair deal. Fair Trade farmers also work together to improve their community

Pause for Thought...

From Mary Pringle



If you must look back, do so
forgivingly.
If you must look forward, do so
prayerfully.
However, the wisest thing you
can do is be present in the
present.... Gratefully.

Maya Angelou



TEARFUND MAGAZINE

The new Spring '23 TearTimes and Prayer Diary are now
being sent out.

If you would like more details or to have your own copy please
see Kathy, Joy, Ruth.

Recommended Reads.

The Emerald Forest by Catherine Ward

Illustrated by Karin Littlewood

Orangutan lives with her family in the heart of a vast, emerald green forest until their peaceful life is shattered by the sound of roaring and crashing - a monstrous machine that tears the forest to the ground- including Orangutan's tree !

It is a beautifully told and illustrated story putting Orangutan and her family at the heart of the story.

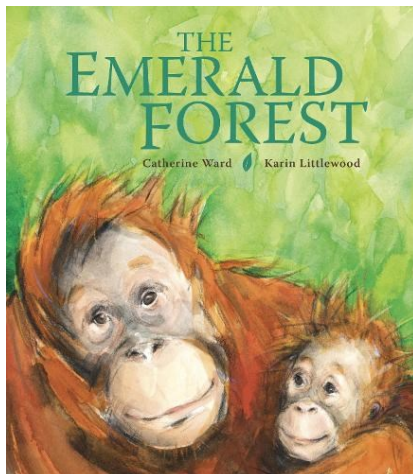
Although recommended for KS1 & 2, this book works on many levels and is a good introduction to issues like deforestation, wildlife extinction and conservation.

"This powerful and moving picture book is set in tropical Sumatra, an island that has lost almost half its rainforest cover in recent years. The story graphically describes the reactions of an orangutan family to the destruction of their age-old home, but also shows how wildlife campaigners are bringing hope for the future."

** Picture Book Den **

Published by Otter-Barry books, Kathy has a copy to borrow, and will eventually ensure there is a copy on our children's book shelf in the church hall.

Kathy





At the Movies

Wednesday 1st March is the first day of the new season for our community choir, *Groby Sings*.

At the Groby Club, Leicester Road, Groby, Leicester LE6 0DJ
(ramps and disabled facilities available)

Wednesdays, term time only.

1.30pm – 3.00pm Adult singers (pre-school children welcome in the care of their adult with a crèche area available)

3.40 - 4.40pm Youth and Children's Choir (7 years and over)

7.30pm – 9.00pm Adult singers

Adult singers are welcome at either or both sessions so feel free to vary attendance each week as the same programme of singing will be covered by our Musical Director, Simon Lubkowski.

Groby Sings welcomes everyone and this season we are actively encouraging people who have been diagnosed with memory loss or dementia, as well as their friends and carers, to come along and experience the enjoyment of singing together. Enquiries via our [website www.grobysings.org](http://www.grobysings.org).

Groby Sings is a Registered Charity no. 1180490

June L Ward

New Area Dean of Sparkenhoe East

It may come as no surprise to many of you, as I have been acting as Assistant Area Dean these last three years, but the following announcement was made in church on Sunday 19th February:

The Bishop is pleased to announce the appointment of The Revd Ed Bampton, Rector in the Benefice of Groby and Ratby in the Diocese of Leicester, also as The Area Dean of Sparkenhoe East.



The details of Ed's licensing service will be announced in due course.

I will continue to serve everyone in the wonderful parishes of Groby and Ratby as I have always tried to do. Now, alongside this, it is my honour to fulfil this new role to the best of my ability and to support my colleagues in the deanery as well. In this time of transition we look to be Shaped by God Together, and not merely as a Diocesan vision, but as a heartfelt call upon us all as disciples of Jesus Christ. I believe we can do this best when we work together across boundaries, as we already do in many ways in our deanery.

I ask most especially for your prayers in this new role, which I do feel God has called me to, but which I can only do in His strength.

In His name,

Rev'd Ed

Paul concluded our Church AGM and January Church Meeting by reading the poem which can be found in the folder telling 'The story of the Chapel Hill Folk . 1825-2012'

I thought you might like to read it through again.

THE CHAPEL HILL FOLK
Poem by Linda Wapples

Our little Church built on the hill,
Is growing fast, is growing still.
Likewise our faith has grown with years
Through joy and sadness, hopes and tears.

The faithful few, through storm and rain,
Climb up the hill, to sing refrain,
The old and young sing praises still,
And also climb old 'Zion Hill'.

Hymns are the same, though tunes are new,
We'll sing the old and sing them through,
We'll praise the Lord in heaven above,
For all His goodness and His love.

As children come and people go,
Our faith goes on and still we know
That God is listening to our prayer,
He's always with us, always there.

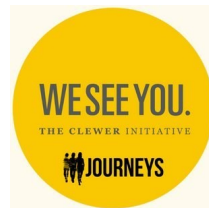
Through open door and side by side
We enter now our Church with pride,
From old to new, in faith and love,
For our new church, thank God above.

Lent Course

Thursdays from 2nd March at 7.30pm at the Methodist Chapel, Ratby

Our Lent Course this year will use resources from the Clewer Initiative (<https://theclewerinitiative.org/>).

The Clewer Initiative is enabling Church of England dioceses and wider Church networks to develop strategies to detect modern slavery in their communities and help provide victim support and care. Our Lent Course will take us on a journey throughout Lent, challenging us to move from the side-lines to action.



The five-week course studies some of the themes from the "Stations of the Cross" and includes a reflection, prayer, discussion questions, and suggestions for action.

Throughout the devotional, we consider the suffering faced by victims of modern slavery, explore a variety of ways in which we can help or respond, face up to the call to weep for ourselves and our own complicities, and share in celebrating the miracle of new life as victims begin to emerge from the darkness of being buried out of sight.

As part of the devotional, artist Bill Crooks portrays the traditional stations of the cross in a series of moving portraits. Each week, we will be encouraged look at a cluster of three stations / drawings and reflect on Jesus' experience and how, in some ways, it parallels the journey of modern slavery victims.

We will meet in the Methodist Chapel at 7.30pm on Thursdays, from Thursday 2nd March until Thursday 30th March. All welcome.

Rev'd Ed



DIARY DATES

Prayers for Ukraine: March 2nd, 16th and 30th - 6.30 pm in church

Urban Saints Rock Solid: March 3rd, 17th & 31st at 7.30 pm, for year's 5 - 11.

Fair Trade Fortnight 2023: 27th Feb to 12th March

Lent Course – Thursdays from 2nd March at 7.30pm at the Methodist Chapel, Ratby

Ratby Brass Band Concert- Wednesday 22nd March. 12.30 - 1.30 (Doors open 11.30am) St Philip & St James Church, Ratby. Free admission (donations welcome). Includes soup & roll.

CTG Maundy Thursday meal & Communion - Thursday 6th April. Details to be confirmed.

Our next Church meeting: Wednesday, 26th April 2023

West Leicestershire Area Churches Get Together:

Saturday 10th June at 3 pm. A tea followed by an act of worship

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.

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

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

April 2023 issue

The deadline for April 2023 issue is **SAT 18th March 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.

Some interesting observations from Barbara Lomas.....

How To Preserve

To Preserve a Husband

Select with care – young and green varieties take longer to prepare – but are often excellent when done.

Those too crusty take a long time to cook tender.

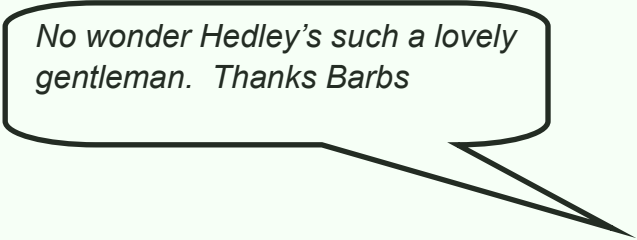
Do not keep in a pickle nor in too hot water, nor prick to test tenderness as this leave a mark.

Even poor varieties may be made sweet and tender by this method – wrap in a mantle of charity and keep warm over a steady fire of loving domestic devotions.

Garnish with patience, sweeten with smiles, flavour with kisses to taste.

Serve with peaches and cream.

Thus prepared they will keep for years.



No wonder Hedley's such a lovely gentleman. Thanks Barbs

Groby United Reformed Church
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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

There are also regular Homegroups running throughout the week. Our Secretarial Contact has more information.

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