

Silent Visitor

United Reformed Church
Grays



May 2018

Who's Who at Bradleigh Avenue

Minister: Rev'd David Coaker
Mobile No: 07378 348191
E Mail: drcoaker@gmail.com

Secretary: Mrs Elaine Barcz 01375 400903

Treasurer: Mr Alan Beckley

Serving Elders: Mr Alf Pryer & Mrs Denise Beckley

Organist: Mr Richard Wade

Facilities Manager: Mrs Charlotte Webb
& Mobile No: 0750 584 6356
Hire of Halls: graysurc@gmail.com

Silent Visitor: Mrs Janet Semain 01375 373532
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Leaders of the Uniformed Organisations:

Group Scout Leader: Mr Tim Webb 01375 391031

Guide Leader: Miss Gill Davidson 01375 384253

Brownie Leader: Ms Madeleine Loin 01375 891672

Minister of Grays URC

So, we've made it official! By the time you are reading this I will formally have been inducted to serve as your minister. We will have gathered in worship, heard Rev'd David Rees explore Scripture, declared what we believe it means to be part of the United Reformed Church, we will have heard and shared promises, offered welcomes, and our Moderator, Rev'd Paul Whittle, will have declared it to be so.

An induction is a new beginning, whether that is being shown around a university campus or new workplace, or in this case, for a congregation and minister. We all start afresh, going forward from where we were. We are at the beginning of a new relationship, a part of the body of Christ has been grafted on another.

We all have much more to learn, about each other and about how together we will serve God, follow the way of Christ and discern the paths we will take, and we start by getting to know each other better. I've never been your minister and you've never had me as your minister – so we need time to build on what we've read about each other and the first impressions that we have made.

We need to work out together how 50% scoping will best serve Grays URC, enable me to best serve you, and live out my ministry, and balance family life alongside it all. I'm looking forward to getting to know you better and discovering who you are, where you want to be – and my role in helping us to get there.

We all have a part to play in expressing, celebrating and grounding our life together as Grays URC in the vision of God's kingdom Jesus declared.

We all have gifts to bring to this. We may not recognise them, we may downplay them, and we might think someone else should do it, but a family is made up of many members and everyone plays a part in being family, welcoming each other, supporting each other, and at times challenging each other along the way.

May God bless us as we step forward in faith together.

With every blessing,

Rev'd David R Coaker

"CHRISTIAN AID"



13-19 MAY

COFFEE MORNING – come and join us on **Wednesday 16th May at 10.30am** for tea, coffee, biscuits, cake and a chat.

It is an opportunity to give a donation to help Christian Aid workers build strong homes to withstand storms.

News of the family

In our hearts and minds we hold the names of those members and friends of our congregation who are feeling unwell and unable to be with us in worship. Their names are not all mentioned but we know who they are and that they need our support and love.

We do however mention Doreen Thomas and Joyce Fraser in their respective homes. Joyce has been unwell with a chest infection and had to spend some time in hospital but is now back home again.

A Prayer

Lord Jesus, we pray for all the people who walk through the doors of our Church, not only on a Sunday but throughout the week as well. We ask that you be with us all as we go about our lives.

We also pray for our Minister, David and for Rita and Mark as they settle into their lives here in Grays and into the Manse and we ask that our Church may provide a loving and friendly place for them.

We pray for those who are suffering that they may feel the love and comfort of your healing hands upon them. *Amen*

Induction Service

Kee Cheung has added some photographs he has taken at the Service of Induction for our Minister to the Photograph Album which is on the shelf in the Church Hall.

Also a reminder that you can view the Silent Visitor each month on the Church website - there you will see it in glorious colour! You can also view other items and various photographs that are also posted there.

Ed.



Denise and Alan's 2018 trip to New Zealand – Part 2

You will remember that Denise and I were just about to set off to explore the South Island from our overnight stay in Picton.

We travelled through the Marlborough district, passing kilometres of vineyards growing the Sauvignon Blanc grapes which make world famous wines such as 'Oyster Bay'. We sampled these wines, and 'wine o'clock' very soon became an integral part of the holiday routine. The road continued over an extremely steep and twisting pass to a place called Golden Bay, just north of the Abel Tasman National Park. Our camping 'pitch' overlooked one of the most deserted and beautiful beaches you could imagine, with clear warm waters just perfect for the pre - breakfast swim. We visited a place called 'farewell spit,' a long sandy peninsula which was the northern-most point of the North Island and inhabited mostly by birds such as oyster catchers. As an old boss of mine used to say 'it is not quite the end of the world but you can clearly see it from here'. It is one of the most isolated and beautiful places I have been to, only one road in and out (over the pass described earlier), no towns, hardly any houses and the weather was great. Surely Denise and I will return?

Whilst we were in Golden Bay we took a trip into the Abel Tasman National Park to do some sea canoeing, one of Denise's favourite activities. The sea was crystal clear and we paddled our way around some off shore islands, the perfect way to watch the nesting sea birds and get up close to fur seals sunning themselves on the rocks. After a while we pulled up onto a small sandy island where our guide miraculously produced some homemade chocolate cakes and flasks of coffee. Perfect!

Time came to leave this beautiful place and continue the adventure. Back over the pass (was it even steeper going back?) and head for the west coast. We stopped at a holiday park in a place called Ross, and got chatting (the way you do) to the lady owner. It transpired that this lady was born in Orsett hospital, the same place as both I and Derek were born. It is a small world! There followed a very memorable evening, BBQ dinner and a glass of wine watching the most wonderful sunset, followed by some spectacular star gazing. The almost total lack of light pollution meant that the stars were brighter than any we had seen (including in the Sinai desert) and the chap camping 'next door' knew his stuff regarding astronomy and pointed out various features of the night sky. We went to bed leaving the curtains open a little, just so we could watch the stars, feeling blessed and a little humbled.

Anyway, up and going the next day, continuing our way down the west coast. On the way we passed through a small town where there was a tourist office with a sign outside 'Helicopter flights – special offer today'. You know, I said to Denise, I have always wanted to do that. So, in keeping with our current view on life – don't leave things you want to do until another day – an hour later we are flying at about 5,000 feet in a small helicopter (just myself, Denise and Josh, the pilot) to visit and land on a glacier. We flew over where 'Lord of the Rings' was filmed – the scenery was spectacular – and duly landed on a glacier high up in the mountains. Then we flew back, having taken many, many photos, got back in the campervan, had a 'brew' then continued on our way.

Our route down the west coast took us past the Franz Josef and Fox glaciers and down to the town of Haast, where we spent the night. Originally we had thought of stopping at the Franz Josef glacier, however the tropical storm 'Gita' had arrived at the north of the island and was possibly heading our way. Therefore we decided to continue heading south, over the Haast Pass and on to Te Anui where we spent four nights, in order to explore the area and in particular the Milford Sound.

On arrival in Te Anui the weather turned 'English' again, partly due to the effects of tropical storm 'Gita'. When we arrived it was wet, 7c and not especially pleasant, however it improved significantly so by the third day Denise and I were able to swim in the magnificent Lake Te Anui.

The one place we had really wanted to visit was Milford Sound. So we booked a trip which included travel in a minibus (to give me a break from driving and let me appreciate the scenery) then a cruise around Milford Sound. It was about a 2 hour drive and passed through yet more spectacular scenery, stunning 'mirror lakes' waterfalls, snow capped mountains and a one - way traffic 1.2km long tunnel. Finally we arrived at the small harbour to board our cruise boat for our tour round Milford Sound. After a spot of lunch on board (essential) we started out, and it is difficult to describe the beauty of scenery surrounding you. Milford 'sound' is actually a 'fjord' so you can imagine the high mountains overlooking crystal clear waters. We were blessed with wonderful weather, bottlenose dolphins swimming all around the boat and a very knowledgeable commentary which kept us well informed. Yes, there are many, many people who visit Milford Sound but the place coped well, and is definitely worth visiting.

So began the final leg of our holiday adventure. We left Te Anui and headed north, and stopped for the night in a place called Twizel –

pronounced Twyzel. For the one and only time, the first holiday park we stopped at was full, we did not realise it was the weekend and the locals were taking advantage of some late summer sun. Never mind there was another holiday park nearby which had a space and we booked in. Denise noticed a small poster in the reception advertising canoeing on a nearby lake. Now you know how Denise loves canoeing, and so she made a phone call, and sure enough one hour later we were canoeing across a lake, yet again surrounded by mountains, and enjoying the late afternoon sun.

Next day we left Twizel, and soon were on a road which afforded great views across Lake Takapo to Mount Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain. A short stop and many photos later, we continued our journey to our final destination, Christchurch.

We were on a flat 'ordinary' road (for once) about 120km from Christchurch and stopped in a small town called Winchester for fuel. As we left I noticed a road sign saying 'Christchurch via highland scenic route' or similar. I fancied one final look at the mountains, but Denise said 'are you sure it is OK for campervans?' 'Yes, of course' I replied, 'what could possibly go wrong?' With that a similar sized campervan came down the 'scenic route' from the other direction. 'Look,' I said, 'they did it so the road must be OK'. Anyway, off we went and enjoyed a wonderful journey, stopping at a place called Rakia Gorge for a brew. Across the gorge there is a bridge, old, narrow, wooden and at least 30 metres above a fast flowing river. We were taking some photos when we noticed a couple of lads walking on the side of the bridge, obviously intent on taking part in the New Zealand obsession of jumping off anything high. Den went into full 'life saving' mode, 'are you sure it is deep enough?' she enquired. 'Oh yes, my mate will jump first to check!' Off they jumped, one at a time, and we were relieved to see them surface some considerable distance downstream. Shortly afterwards, they were back. 'That was scary' they said, 'but were going to do it all over again.' We left.

So, two nights in Christchurch followed, one near another wonderful beach where on Sunday morning Denise and I watched some very brave instructors teach a large, and some quite young, group of children how to surf. Surf was definitely 'up', and the sea pretty rough but the youngsters were in and having great fun.

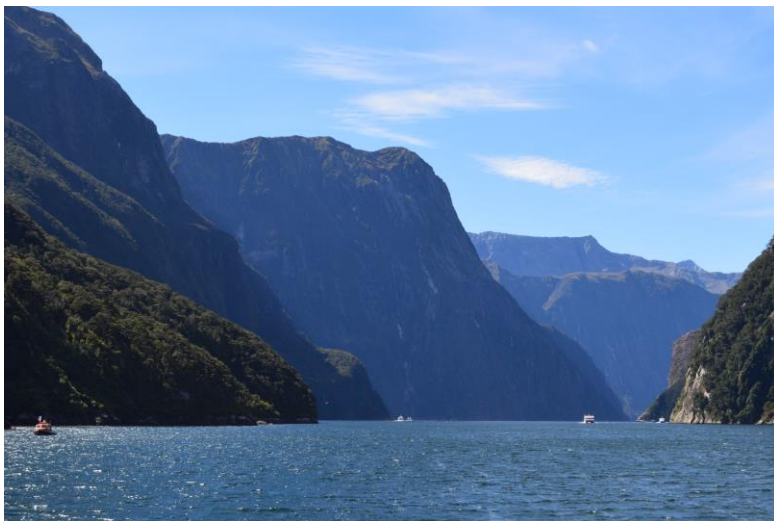
The next day we visited the Botanical Gardens in the centre of Christchurch. The gardens are free, and include stately trees, some of which are hundreds of years old, herbaceous borders, large

glasshouses and on Sunday afternoons free open air musical concerts. Denise and I love gardens and spent a lovely last full day in New Zealand at the gardens and Hagley Park, where England would play (and beat) New Zealand in the deciding ODI cricket match a few days later.

Then we made our way to our final holiday park, near the airport as we had a morning flight the next day, and started the dreaded task of trying to put everything we had packed into our campervan 'home' back into two suitcases. Well, we did it and at 8am sharp next morning we were standing outside the campervan rental building waiting to give back our vehicle and get a shuttle bus to the airport. The vehicle was checked over, paperwork completed, bills settled and we said goodbye to our 'home' and were off to the airport.

So, after two long flights, interrupted by a 6 hour wait in Singapore airport, we landed at 5am in Heathrow to temperatures of -4c, collected our luggage and headed off in our taxi home. The adventure was over but we had enjoyed a brilliant holiday/adventure which we will not forget. Hope you enjoyed reading about it.

Alan



Milford Sound

Denise and Alan by their helicopter



Mite Scheme

What is the Mite Scheme?

The Mite Scheme raises funds by collecting 5p coins, to purchase Oral Rehydration Sachets through Unicef to keep children around the world healthy and safe. Just like your alka-seltzer after a party, these salts can re-hydrate your body. However, for a child suffering from cholera or malnutrition, five sachets could mean the difference between life and death. Did you know that just £6 could save the lives of as many as 15 children suffering from dehydration caused by diarrhoea?



Is the Mite Scheme right for me?

Unicef is supported entirely by your donations, and The Mite Scheme is one of the ways your faith group can raise money so that together we can help make a lasting difference for children worldwide.

At present, it is mainly Christian churches of various denominations throughout the UK who make up the membership of the scheme, but there are also youth groups and other organisations and individuals not linked to a church, who are involved with the Mite Scheme too. Everyone is welcome.

What difference will this make for children?

All money raised through the Scheme comes to Unicef. The delivery and production in various locations locally of each sachet, costs an average 8p.

Your fundraising will go to buy sachets of specially-formulated salts that can help save the lives of children suffering from dehydration caused by diarrhoea.

How can I support the scheme?

You can be part of the Mite Scheme by saving any 5p coins that you have and donating them each month to the Mite Scheme either through your faith group or individually, collecting “mites”. Once this is paid in at the bank, please then send a cheque made out to Unicef UK together with either an e-mail address or a stamped addressed envelope for a receipt to Keith Garner the Scheme Coordinator at: 39 Trinity Close, Daventry, NN11 4RN.



CREAM TEA

SUNDAY 13TH MAY

ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH, EAST TILBURY RM18 8PB

2pm – 4pm

Pop in for a delicious cream tea and help raise funds for
Thurrock Foodbank

THANK YOU EVENING

TUESDAY 15TH MAY 7PM

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH, GRAYS RM16 2RP

A chance for us to update and thank our volunteers. If you
volunteer for Thurrock Foodbank in any capacity then this
event is for you so come along.



QUIZ NIGHT

SATURDAY 19TH MAY 7.30PM

URC BRADLEIGH AVENUE, GRAYS RM17 5XD

An evening of quizzing to raise funds for Thurrock
Foodbank. Costs £5 per ticket. Email
warehouse@thurrock.foodbank.org.uk or call
01375 416200 to book your place.

SOUP AND SWEET EVENT FOR DONORS

MONDAY 21ST MAY 7PM

ST MARGARETS CHURCH HALL, STANFORD LE HOPE SS17 0EP

Do you donate food or money to Thurrock Foodbank? If so we
would love you to come along to this event. To book your place
email warehouse@thurrock.foodbank.org.uk



WAREHOUSE OPEN EVENT

WEDNESDAY 30TH MAY 11AM – 2PM

2 – 4 Chase Road, Corringham SS17 7QH

Come along and visit Thurrock Foodbank warehouse,
see what we do and what goes in our boxes.

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

SUNDAY 3RD JUNE 6.30PM

SOCKETTS HEATH BAPTIST CHURCH, PREMIER AVE, GRAYS RM16 2SB

Join us to celebrate the work of Foodbank as we give thanks to God

THANKSGIVING
SERVICE



SERVICES

10.30 am	SUNDAY FAMILY SERVICE
10.30 am	1 st SUNDAY EACH MONTH HOLY COMMUNION
6.30 pm	3 rd SUNDAY EACH MONTH HOLY COMMUNION
10.30 am	3 rd SUNDAY EACH MONTH PARADE SERVICE

You can find us at: **Bradleigh Avenue, Grays, RM17 5XD**

On our website: **graysurc.org.uk**

Find us on our Facebook: **URC Grays**