

Silent Visitor

***Christmas 2018
&
New Year 2019***

Come let us
Adore
Him



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
&
Hire of Halls: Mobile No: 0784 3559011
graysurc@gmail.com

Silent Visitor: Mrs Janet Semain 01375 373532
geojan321@sky.com

Leaders of the Uniformed Organisations:

Group Scout Leader: Mr Tim Webb
Tel: 01375 391031

Guide Leader: Miss Gill Davison
Tel: 01375 384253

Brownie Leader: Ms Madeleine Loin
Mobile No: 07971 139384

Entertaining Angels

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13: 1-2



When we focus on the images of angels we have in our Nativity readings in Luke, they can lose some of their relevance. If we limit angels to wings, halos and white flowing gowns then we only really think about them at Christmas and tend to ignore them for the rest of the year.

The words we have from Hebrews offer us a much earthlier image of angels. Here we are reminded to be hospitable to strangers, because they may be angels. Now these aren't angels we don't recognise because they have hidden their wings, halos and white robes under big coats. These are angels in a more general sense.

If we look beyond the heavenly being image of angels, we have two other ways of understanding them. We can speak of angels as other human beings who share with us a message from God, who point out to us what God might be urging us towards. We can also speak of angels who offer us an example of Godly living, people who show us how life can be lived.

When we focus on angels in this way they become a lot more immediate and accessible. Which also makes them a lot more challenging. We know we have no chance of being an angel as we don't have wings, halos or look good in white, but we can try to live more in tune with God's way and we can try to sense where God might be calling the people we know.

Throughout our lives there will be people we have encountered who we could call angels. Folk who have offered us a challenging word, who have held up a mirror to our actions, who have gone out of their way to support and encourage us.

Angels are not just for Christmas. Angels make the world a better place. They encourage us to be better people. So, at the very least: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it."

With Every Blessing, Rev'd David R Coaker

Homeless Response Action Group

Representatives from various local churches and other organisations have started to meet together to try and find a way to help the homeless and in particular the people who are sleeping rough in Thurrock. We do not know how many they are, but know that they exist.

The Salvation Army in Grays are in touch with some as they are providing breakfasts on their premises on Monday mornings. It is not just people that sleep outside that come to them. There are also people that are "sofa-surfing" – moving around amongst friends and do not have a place of their own.

The Salvation Army also helps with giving out clothes, food, toiletries, etc. They have also installed a shower that the "guests" can use. They are now trying to raise funds to purchase a washing machine and dryer that also can be used. People who are homeless have difficulties in accessing benefits because they do not have an address. The food bank's parcels are made up assuming cooking facilities are available so are therefore not suitable for a homeless person.

The Action Group is trying to find out where a homeless person can go to find warmth and food on different days.

Grays Baptist Church in Orsett Road offers tea and toast on some mornings and "Inclusion" has a "drop-in-cafe" offering soup and rolls in the afternoon. The Sikh Temple, the Gurdwara offers food to visitors. We think the church opposite the library in the premises that used to be a night club (in the old Co-op building) offers food on a Sunday. There seems to be less on offer on Fridays and Saturdays so we would like to see if we can offer a cooked meal somewhere at midday or in the afternoon.

Ideally one of the churches in central Grays could be used, but if that is not possible maybe we can offer our church here in Bradleigh Avenue. We would not need to staff this ourselves but maybe we could offer to be the host church once or twice a month. If possible we would like to start this service in December on the 7th or the 8th.

At the time of writing this it is still to be discussed with Elders and Church Meeting.

If you are concerned about somebody who you think is sleeping rough you can contact "Street- Link" tele: 0300 500 0914 or send an alert by visiting www.streetlink.org.uk via the mobile app, available for Apple and Android devices. They will contact the local outreach team.

I am sure you will hear more on this in the future "Silent Visitors".

In the meantime have a lovely and warm Christmas.

Inger Collier



Happy Christmas Messages

	<p>Elaine and Bernard Barcz send very best wishes for a peaceful Christmas and a good New Year.</p> <p>This year we are donating to the Leprosy Mission and Crisis</p>
<p>Richard Wade and family send warmest Christmas greetings to all friends at the Church and will donate to Meningitis Now in continuing memory of Andrew.</p>	<p>Ruth and Roger Hunwick wish everyone who reads this a very Happy and Joyful Christmas and a Peaceful and Healthy 2019.</p> <p>Our charity is Water Aid</p>
<p>Bob and Margaret Datlen would like to wish everyone at Grays URC a very Happy Christmas and New Year.</p> <p>We shall be supporting various charities this year.</p>	<p>Maureen and Bryan wish all readers of the Silent Visitor a very Happy Christmas and Peace in the year to come.</p> <p>We shall be donating to support the work of Guide Dogs for the Blind.</p>
<p>We wish all our friends a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.</p> <p>With love Frances and David</p> <p>Our chosen charity is Macmillan Cancer Support</p>	<p>Christmas Blessings from</p> <p>Georgina (Nottage).</p> <p>(donating to Cancer Research)</p>

From Members & Friends of Grays URC

<p>Tony & Jean Olley wish all at Grays URC a very Happy Christmas and a Blessed New Year. We will donate to St Luke's Hospice in lieu of cards.</p>	<p>Doreen Thomas wishes everyone at Grays URC a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New Year.</p>
<p>SEASON'S GREETINGS to all from Isobel and Clive Beynon. A donation will be made to Parkinson's UK</p>	<p>A very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year. With love from Anne French</p>
<p>Wishing everyone at the Church a Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year, Pat & Bill Boag</p>	<p>George and Janet send their love & best wishes to everyone for a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. Our charity is Crisis</p>

"Don't Light The Fire"

We've put a plate of cornflakes down for Rudolph and his mates,
We've put a glass of whisky on the hearth,
And now we'll hang our stockings up and close our sleepy eyes,



And listen for the footsteps up the path:
Quite soon our Christmas visitor will clump across the roof,
And down our chimney slide on Christmas night,
So please don't light the fire, Dad, till Santa 's gone back up,
In case you catch his dressing gown alight!
From "Inspirations" by Mike Nash

Eileen Henry

It has only just come to our knowledge that sadly Eileen Henry died earlier this year. Unfortunately the Church was not made aware of this.

Eileen and her husband Brian, lived in the bungalow at the Church for many years while Eileen carried out her role as Caretaker.

Elaine Barcz, our Church Secretary, describes Eileen as a true and loyal servant who at the height of her role could be a force to be reckoned with. She was a formidable protector of the premises. On more than one occasion she disturbed intruders who were trying to remove the copper from the church roof.

It is also noted that she was appreciated by the hirers of the Church; comments having been made of how helpful she was.

As the work at the Church became too much for Eileen to undertake, she and Brian moved to the complex in Long Lane and enjoyed their time there.

We thank Eileen for her time with us and the input she made to the life of the Church and her professionalism at funerals.

Rest in Peace Eileen.

News of the Family

We remember those in the Church family who are feeling unwell, frail or anxious or who are in the process of receiving treatment that involves staying in hospital. We especially think of Margaret Pryer and Margaret Datlan and wish them both a speedy recovery.

We remember those members and friends who are unable to worship with us regularly and think especially of Doreen Thomas.

Dear Lord Jesus, we ask that all those who are in need of your support and comfort may feel your healing hands upon them.

Amen



A Holiday Reflection



This year, Janet and I took our caravan to the Nottinghamshire area for a holiday break. This area has much to offer for a sightseeing holiday and this year was no exception. One of our trips took us to the National Holocaust Centre and Museum being intrigued to see it mentioned on the map of the area.

This museum was started by a local family who, in 1991, had visited Israel's National Holocaust Museum. They were a Christian family and that trip in 1991 changed their lives on coming back to the UK. They were convinced that the Holocaust had to be taught, discussed and understood by all.

They started raising funds and after many dedicated years, what was once their family home is now the only national museum in the UK dedicated to teaching and learning the lessons from the Holocaust. To help in this they invite survivors of the Holocaust as regular speakers. The speaker the day we were there was a gentleman called Paul Oppenheimer (who has signed our copy of his autobiography "Rudi"). The Conference Room was full to the brim with schoolchildren; there was hardly a seat available.

His book is entitled "From Belsen to Buckingham Palace", reflecting on a journey which brought him eventually to Buckingham Palace where he was presented with the MBE medal by Her Majesty the Queen in 1990.

The Board of Trustees at the Centre agreed a definition of the Holocaust as the attempt by the Nazi regime and its collaborators to murder all European Jewry during the second world war. This culminated in the so called "Final Solution", the murder of six million Jewish, men, women and children. The whole visit turned out to be a sobering experience.

Among things which we could see in the centre on a beautiful hot sunny day were:-

The Children's Memorial: This is being built gradually by visitors who are invited to select a stone from a trough and place it on the memorial, a mound of stones. This is in tribute to one of the one and a half million children who died. It is an ancient tradition to place stones on Jewish graves.

The Obelisk: This obelisk contains the names of the six death camps established by the Nazis. The soil underneath the memorial contains soil from each of the six death camps.

The Rose Gardens: Visitors are faced with a mass of white rose bushes. During the building of the centre, the founding family was concerned that the exhibition showing starving prisoners in striped uniforms behind barbed wire but whose names were not known, dehumanised the victims. So the roses were planted, starting with 100 but now numbering about 1000, many dedicated to their families by Holocaust survivors,



A view of the Rose Garden – the gardens are beautiful

There are, of course, many other exhibits, all of which can cause visitors to meditate on the evil that mankind can inflict on itself. One cannot leave the museum without reflecting on all those who died for no other reason than that they were born Jewish.



"Abandoned" a statue by Czech Survivor Naomi Blake

The 27 January each year is designated as National Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK. This is commemorated locally by a ceremony in the gardens at the corner of Palmers Avenue and High View Avenue.

Shalom, George & Janet

"Some Funnies"

supplied by Lynne De'Ath

A vicar went on a Pastoral visit to 90yr old Maisie Coggins who, though getting on in years, was sharp as a pin and quite active.

"Mrs Coggins dear," he said, "At your age, shouldn't you be thinking about the hereafter?"

"Oh yes vicar" she replied to his obvious delight. "Every time I go from one room to another I think to myself "What am I here after?"



A teacher in a primary school was trying to explain that the story of Jonah and the whale couldn't be exactly true. "Although they are huge, whales can only eat tiny little creatures called krill or plankton, so a whale couldn't possibly have swallowed Jonah."

An angry little girl sitting at the front shouted "It says in the Bible that's what happened, so it must be true."

The teacher smiled and shook her head, "No dear, its just a story".

The little one was furious. "Well when I get to heaven I'm going to ask Jonah myself".

"But what if Jonah went to hell?" asked the teacher

"Well in that case, you ask him!"

From a funny birthday card: –

Some Texting Codes for the Elderly:-

BTW – Bring the wheelchair

BFF – Best friend fell

BYOT – Bring your own teeth

ATD – At the doctor's

IMHAO –is my hearing aid on

LMDO – Laughing my dentures out

GGPBL – Gotta go, pacemaker battery low

GHA – Got heartburn again

FWIW – Forgot where I was



Suburban Hermits

I passed the guy who lives next door the other day,
We nodded and he grunted and I grunted back,
His nod and grunt meant, "morning, lovely weather, eh?"
And mine meant, "Yes, it's nice." Or something on that tack:
And further on, a chap I used to see at work
Just waves his hand and said, "worrerp!" or something like,
I made out I'd not seen him and just walked on past,
And he just shrugged and rode off somewhere on his bike.

I could have asked him. "How are you? The wife? The kids?"
And "how's the job you went to when you left our place?"
We might have said, "Let's go out for a beer one night,
And have a gas. Its nice to see a friendly face."
A pram went by and accidentally bumped my arm.
I turned, it was a woman living down my road.
She blushed and muttered something that I didn't hear
And swiftly moved along, pushing her four wheeled load.

I wondered if she meant to say, I'm sorry", or
Perhaps, "was that my fault? I do apologise."
I would have smiled and said, "Don't worry, that's alright,
It's my fault for daydreaming – should have used my eyes."
But pleasantries don't seem to happen any more,
We've all gone introspective, don't communicate.
Whoever said, "No man's an island" got it wrong,
But if we tried to change it, would it be too late?

If someone spent his life alone, and didn't mix,
He used to be regarded as the odd one out,
The hermit, in exile chosen by himself,
The one who all the "normal" people laughed about.
Communities were formed by people mixing in,
Each problem being shared, and thereby being solved,
But now, a person dying isn't missed for weeks,
And all because nobody wants to get involved.

Why does it take a war for folk to rally round
And care for one another in a time of need?
Perhaps we're all too selfish to involve ourselves,
Too busy chasing rainbows, too obsessed with greed.
We'll make excuses, like, "It isn't safe these days,
We can't walk down the street for fear of being mugged
By lunatics or rapists, child molesters, thieves,
Who only get their kicks by being drunk or drugged."

But surely, if relationships were forged once more,
And people cared for others, helped their fellow men,
The perverts who can prey on individuals
Would never find a victim on his own again!
Communities would spurn this scum, and drive it out,
And peace and happiness could flourish, as before;
With everyone considering each others needs,
We wouldn't be suburban hermits any more.

With kind permission of Mike Nash from his book "Inspirations"

Christmas Services



Sun 2nd Dec 9.30am Christingle Service for young families

10.30am Advent 1 - Call to Wisdom - Communion

Sun 9th Dec 10.30am Advent 2 - Prepare the Way - family worship

6.30pm Carol Service and Tilbury Band Concert

Wed 12th Dec 3.30pm Christmas Messy Church

Sun 16th Dec 10.30am Advent 3 - Call to Action - parade service

Sun 23rd Dec 10.30am Advent 4 - Rejoice in God - family worship

6.30pm Service of lessons and carols

Mon 24th Dec 2.30-3pm Family Christmas worship

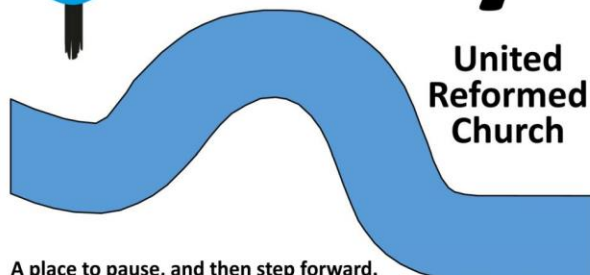
11.30pm Watchnight service

Sun 30th Dec 10.30am Family Worship



Grays

United
Reformed
Church



A place to pause, and then step forward.

Christmas Eve
Monday 24th December 2018
2.30pm

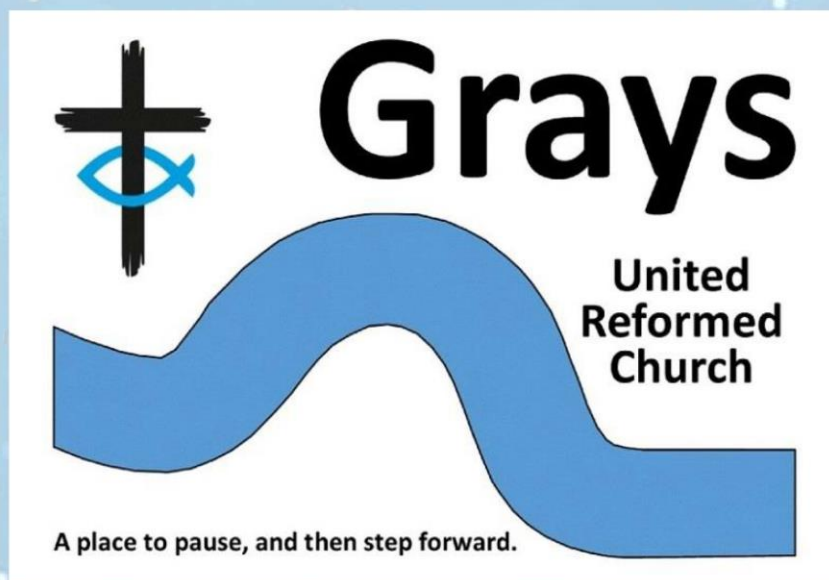
Grays United Reformed Church

**Invite you and your family to pause,
Sing, celebrate, and reflect.
A special service on eve of a special day.**

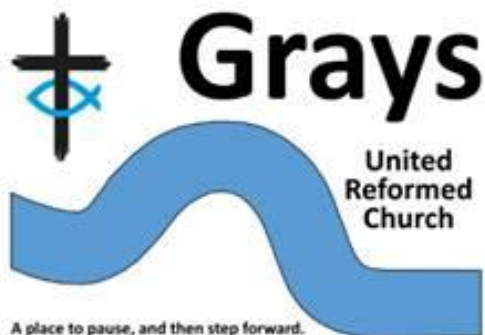
Refreshments served 3.00pm



Take away your personal Christmas Eve box



Bradleigh Ave. Grays RM17 5XD



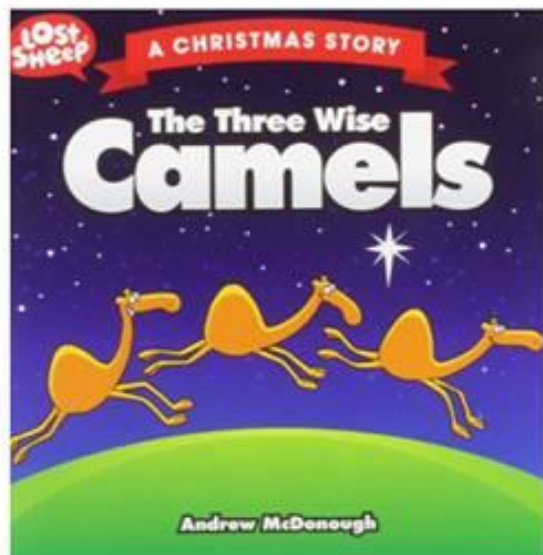
**You are warmly invited to
our Young Families Service
Sunday 6th January
9.30 - 10.10am**

An informal service where we will make camel related crafts, explore the message of Christmas, sing, and share refreshments together afterwards.

There will be a collection in support of the Children's Society.

This is the second of a series of short, monthly services aimed at young families.

Next: Sunday 3rd Feb @9.30am



www.graysurc.org.uk

07378348191

drcoaker@gmail.com

CHURCH CALENDAR

SERVICES

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

MEETINGS

COFFEE MORNING	10.30 am	EACH WEDNESDAY
BOWLS	2.00 pm & 7.30 pm	EACH MONDAY
PRAYER MEETING	10.00 am	2 nd WEDNESDAY EACH MONTH (before coffee)
	6.45 pm	EVERY FRIDAY
MESSY CHURCH		AS ANNOUNCED

- For information about Messy Church – Worship together for families – please contact Denise Beckley on 07806 739959.
- All meetings take place in the Church or the Church hall unless otherwise indicated.

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

On our website at: Graysurc.org.uk



URC Grays