

Silent Visitor



March 2019

Who's Who at Bradleigh Avenue

Minister: Rev'd David Coaker
Mobile No: 07378 348191
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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
&
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Silent Visitor: Mrs Janet Semain 01375 373532
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Leaders of the Uniformed Organisations:

Group Scout Leader: Mr Tim Webb
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Guide Leader: Miss Gill Davison
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Brownie Leader: Ms Madeleine Loin
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Marking the Seasons

The first inklings of Spring seem to be with us. After a few false starts crocuses and daffodils are coming out in bloom, birds are beginning to build their nests, and on occasions there seems some heat in the sunshine. Each year follows this same cycle with the rebirth of Spring, the vitality of Summer, the rest of Autumn and the chill of Winter. As it is true for the year, it is also true for our lives.

It's hard to grasp this cycle in one view. The depth of Winter makes us doubt the heat of Summer. The excitement of Spring obscures the patience of Autumn. This has been true for humanity ever since we became conscious of the world around us, and why our ancestors created rituals to mark the seasons to offer hope of the next. Those rituals remain within our worshipping communities as we celebrate Easter, Ascension, Harvest and Christmas; and when we come together for baptisms, weddings, anniversaries and funerals.

In Spring and Summer, and during our childhood and youth, we focus on the overwhelming positives but they are not without risk and uncertainty. In Autumn and Winter, and during our later years, we focus on the drawbacks and negatives, but they are not without joys and benefits. The year and our lives rely on this cycle and each stage depends upon the others. Their challenge to us is to live fully each moment, whatever stage we are in, holding all that has gone before and looking forward to what is to be. The hope of Spring helps us through Winter, and the joy of Summer needs to include preparation for Autumn.

Within the Easter story we see this cycle lived out. The Autumn of Jesus' arrest, the Winter of his death on a cross, the Spring of Resurrection, and the Summer of the new life in Christ, the disciples, and we, share. As in our lives and the year, the cycle of the Easter story must be held together. Each part relies on every other, and its meaning is revealed to us as we reflect on the whole story as we journey through it together in worship.

With every blessing, Rev'd David R Coaker

"Simon answered "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets."

A failed night
Call from the shore
Taken at face value
Impossible result
Oppportunity grasped
New life begun

Symbols and metaphors litter the text.
The ending writes the beginning, and points to what's next.
The man they knew, and the God he served:
a challenge to empire, law and the rites to be observed,
was moulded by empire and constrained by law.
Inspire us anew to see what they first saw.

A simple answer to a complicated question,
gives a veneer of assurance.
It can easily crack and vanish before us.
Life is infinitely complicated, beyond our comprehension.
To confine it will only be the cause of tension.

The questions are eternal; the answers are evolving.
It was always so, and will be while the world keeps turning.
Embrace the adventure, accept the unknowable.
Simple trust is what can make faith probable.

A sheer film,
Covering the heart of love;
Concealing nothing
Enveloping everything;
Permission already agreed.
Tenderness awaiting.
Always present,
Not always perceived;
Calling us in hope.
Encounter the heart of love.



Painting was displayed at the Retreat day.

Some thoughts from Rev'd David Coaker

The Retreat

Early in February, Dave and seven members "retreated" for a day to Mulberry House at High Ongar. The retreat was, like Grays URC, a place to pause and also to give time to God.

Mulberry House is part of the Nationwide Christian Trust and is located in a cottage within the grounds of a hotel. Those grounds and the hotel were made available to us during the day. Inside the hotel we could use a library and a lounge. We also partook of a very tasty lunch in an attached garden room. The grounds were extensive and we could roam around a large pond on which we were surprised to come upon a family of Black Swans, mum, dad and three cygnets. In a nearby enclosure were several donkeys, which were quite amenable to being stroked and a number of alpacas, which weren't! In fact the Alpacas were described as haughty and Elaine reports that once they had established that she had not come bearing food, they turned their backs on her. How uncooperative!



There was a profusion of Snowdrops scattered around and a number of memorial plaques. Whilst kneeling to take a photograph of one of those plaques, Elaine startled a rabbit which was minding its own business basking in the sun. It had the same feeling for Elaine as the Alpacas as it bounded away leaving her feeling guilty that her peaceful moment had shattered his (or hers). Other peaceful moments were being enjoyed by Alf and Margaret and Denise and Alan who had bagged a summerhouse each to enjoy their own thoughts in the sunshine. Dave, in the meantime, was busy in the library, making use of the quietness of those surroundings.

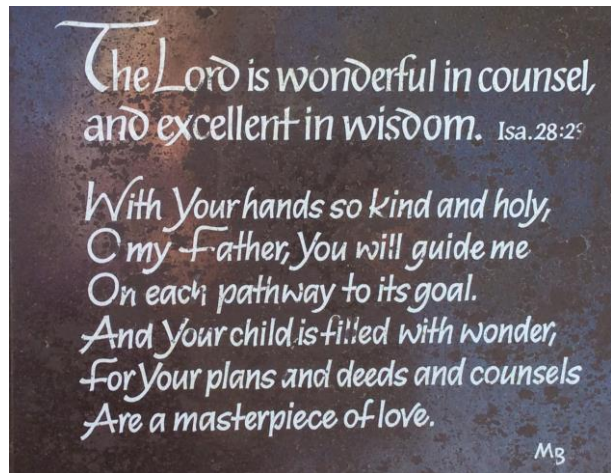
These delights, however, were not the point of the retreat although they added to the enjoyment. The day started with coffee or tea and biscuits. Then, in a comfortable lecture style room we had a short service. This was introduced by one of the leaders, who showed us a picture which had been painted a few days earlier by an attendee at a ladies' day. Something different could be seen by all of us in that painting and it became itself a point of meditation.

We were then given an interesting bible study by Chris, another of the leaders, who, incidentally, with his wife, also leads tours of the Holy Land. As part of that study we learnt a little more of how the fishermen of Lake Galilee plied their trade, helping to put the gospel of Luke into context. The afternoon followed a similar pattern including afternoon teas and coffees and ending with another short service where people were invited to share their thoughts about the day.

Most, or even all of us, felt the day had been well spent and would no doubt recommend a similar outing to anyone considering a visit in the future. Thanks to Dave for organising this one for us.



Painting and plaque



Black swans

(Some literature may be found on the table in the foyer for anyone who might be interested.)

George Semain with contributions from Elaine Barcz

News of the Cubs & Scouts



7th Grays Conquest Cubs were in the news in the Thurrock Gazette recently for raising £950 for the charity Children with Cancer UK. They raised the funds by selling cakes at school and at church, swimming, running, bike riding and giving up electrical games.

Akela, Frances Sladden-Garwood was very pleased with the effort made by the Cubs and said that every year they choose a charity to fund raise for. This was a superb effort by the cubs for children less fortunate than themselves.

Parade Services: Following discussions with the Group Executive Meeting the following are the proposed dates for Church Parade for the rest of this year:-

17th March – Service already planned
30th June – avoids Cub Camp
29th September - Harvest
10th November - Remembrance Day
15th December – Christmas

Lent Study Group

The Lent Study Group will be meeting on the following Wednesdays in March and April between 1 – 2.30 pm. This will follow the material prepared by the Mission Theology Advisory Group of Churches together in Britain and Ireland and will be led by the Minister, Rev'd David Coaker.



Wednesday 6th March – The Mystery of Life and Death
Wednesday 13th March – The Mystery of Good and Evil
Wednesday 20th March – The Mystery of God's Glory
Wednesday 27th March – The Mystery of Relationship & Reconciliation
Wednesday 3rd April - The Mystery of Joy and Salvation

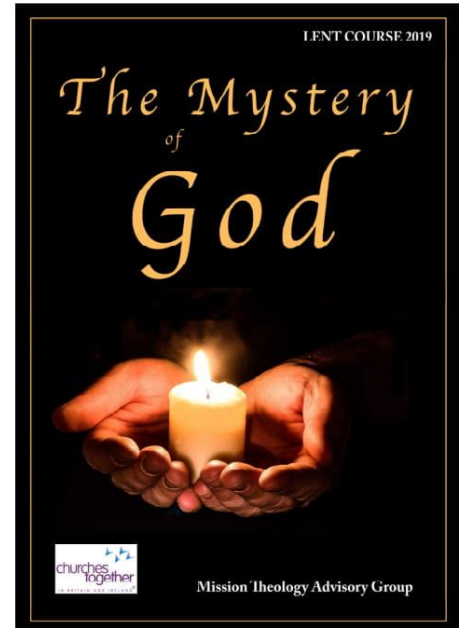
There are copies of the discussion material available at the back of the Church.

The Mystery of God

Lent Journey

Over the 6 weeks of Lent we will delve more deeply into the mystery of God, seeking to rediscover what it is that draws us so deeply in our search for God. We will follow the Lenten Bible readings to be drawn in love and wonder, into the mystery of God.

The material has been prepared by the Mission Theology Advisory Group of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

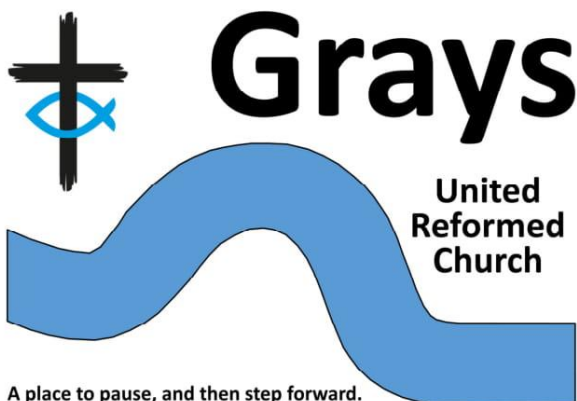


Wednesdays 1.00-2.30pm

Sundays 10.30-12noon (within worship)

**Grays United Reformed Church
Bradleigh Avenue, RM17 5XD**

Wed 6th March	The Mystery of Life and Death
Wed 13th March	The Mystery of Good and Evil
Wed 20th March	The Mystery of God's Glory
Sun 24th March	The Mystery of Sin, Suffering and Hope
Wed 27th March	The Mystery of Relationship and Reconciliation
Sun 31st March	The Mystery of Parenthood and Adoption
Wed 3rd April	The Mystery of Love and Sacrifice
Sun 14th April	The Mystery of Joy and Salvation



Copies of the discussion material are available at the back of the Worship space.

The material is a mix of conversation starters and things to think about, prayer and engagement with Scripture, reflection and an invitation to deepen and develop your devotional practice.

Unicef UK Mite Scheme update – Spring 2019

Promoting safe and healthy practices with Oral Rehydration Salts in India

In Madhya Pradesh – large state in central India – local government bodies help to spread information on diarrhea management and promoting safe and healthy practices to address under nutrition.

Dr Vandana Bhatia is a Unicef Health Specialist who has come to visit a programme there. She is explaining to health workers and mothers about the use of Oral Rehydration Salts as part of a intensified diarrhea control over a fortnight.



Here, Usha Sen is with her daughter baby Niharika who is 12 months old and drinking Oral Rehydration Salts, which are recommended by the World Health Organisation. This mother can now give her child freshly prepared ORS, which she learned from a Unicef supported health worker.



Grandmother Vasu and her grandson Sanket at the Child Health Centre in Kolar, adhya Pradesh. Sanket is having Oral Rehydration Therapy following a demonstration with Vasu.



Happy New Year! We extend our most heartfelt thanks to all supporters who through faith and extraordinary commitment to Unicef, fundraise towards the Mite Scheme – the Oral Rehydration projects you continue to support are saving the lives of children across the world.

Our Mite Collection



It is interesting to see how our 5p's and other loose change can help people from around the world who are being helped and supported by Unicef.

So far we have raised over £120. The funds we raise in this way are an important lifeline to people in countries that do not have clean water to drink which puts them at risk from waterborne diseases. So keep the bringing in your coins !!!

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



PEW NEWS!



Baptisms: From now on, the North and South ends of the church will be utilised. Children will be baptised at both ends.

Charity Begins at Church: After the church service seven year old Brian said to the preacher: "When I grow up, I am going to give you some money."

"Well, thank you," the preacher replied, "but why?"

"Because my daddy says that you're one of the poorest preachers we've ever had."

And a warning from Gina Nottage:

An Ode to Teeth

I once could eat apples and toffees galore,
But alas no more
And a crisp roll with butter on,
Now these days are gone.



I used to enjoy roast beef with mustard,
But now its bowl of jelly and custard
The tooth fairy has been a little too often,
And so my food I now have to soften.

I now wear crowns but not on my head,
And I'm scared I might loose my false teeth in bed
From one tooth to another in place of a bridge,
It's stopped trips at midnight to the fridge.



If trips to the dentist fill you with terror
You would do well to remember
Brush, floss and gargle,
To keep your sparkle.



Wednesday 3rd April 2019

3.30pm

Grays United Reformed Church

Bradleigh Avenue RM17 5XD



**Easter activities for all ages,
after school snack,
exploring Easter stories and
a meal shared together.**



Please call, text or email to book 07806739959

Email graysurc@gmail.com

No charge, donations gratefully received.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

www.graysurc.org.uk



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URC Grays

MARCH 2019 - ROTAS

FLOWERS		Arranged by	Supplied by
March	3	Frances Lock	
	10		
	17	Edna Lazell	
	24		
	31	Inger Collier	
April	7		

PREACHERS		Time	
Young family service	3	9.30 am	Rev'd Dave/Denise
Morning Service with Communion	3	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Family Service	10	10.30 am	Denise Beckley
Parade Service	17	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Communion	17	6.30 pm	Revd Dave Coaker
Family Service	24	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Family Service	31	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
April			
Young family service	7	9.30 am	Denise Beckley
Morning Service with Communion	7	10.30 am	George Semain

READERS			
March	3	10.30 am	Edna & Inger
	10	10.30 am	Janet & Colin
	17	10.30 am	Rachel King
	24	10.30 am	David & Frances
	31	10.30 am	Isobel & Colin
April	7	10.30 am	Jean & Margaret D

Duty Steward: Alan Beckley

Hymn Book Steward: Beryl Clarke

This year's Charity is:- Friends of Essex & Thurrock Homeless
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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