

# **Silent Visitor**



## **March 2020**

## Who's Who at Bradleigh Avenue

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

**Secretary:** Mr Ben Marshall      Mobile No: 07841 06604  
e-mail: graysurcsecretary@outlook.com

**Treasurer:** Mr Alan Beckley

**Serving Elders:** Mr Alf Pryer, Mrs Denise Beckley,  
Mr Ben Marshall, Mr George Semain &  
Mrs Janet Semain

**Organist:** Mr Richard Wade

**Facilities Manager:** On Maternity Leave  
&  
**Hire of Halls:** 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

## **The Whole Journey**

After enjoying our pancakes, we are now treading the path of Lent on our way to Easter. For some that will simply be the time it takes to get to another holiday at the end of term. Others will attempt to use it as another encouragement to give up something they struggle to do without. Many will see it as another excuse to give and receive chocolate. But for some it will be a time of reflecting on our faith as we prepare for the central festival of the Christian year.

Our Sunday gospel readings will explore Jesus' time of discernment in the wilderness, what it means to be born from above, living water, to have spiritual sight, to share resurrection life, and Jesus' humble, joyful and demonstrative arrival in Jerusalem. We will enter into Holy Week, break bread and share wine in the upper room with Jesus, the disciples, in fellowship with all those that have gone before. We will weep and pray with Jesus in the darkness and fear of Gethsemane. Hide the shadows with Peter as Jesus is questioned, and stand in the crowd questioning whether we would join in, or risk all and declare his name. Wonder whether we would flee or stand with the women as he is nailed to the cross and breathes his last. Face the emptiness, grief and confusion of the time between. Then we would celebrate the joy of Resurrection.

Holy Week holds within it all aspects of life and faith. Joy and fellowship, fear and betrayal, and everything in-between. There is much for us to reflect upon, and much to be missed if all we do is experience the joy of Palm Sunday and Easter Day, and do not walk the path of the days in between. We fail to question whether we would fall asleep, betray or flee like the disciples? If, to the detriment of others, we cling to control? If we'd stay true like the women? If we'd risk our position to do the right thing as Joseph of Aramathea did? If when faced with the liberation inherent in living the resurrection, we would remain silent, return home, or declare it to all.

We are not just marking time until we binge on Easter eggs. We are preparing ourselves for facing the biggest questions there are about life and faith. This is a journey we share together in the weeks ahead, and for which we need each other to see through.

**With every blessing,** Rev'd David R. Coaker



## News of the Family

We think of all those in the church family who have been unwell over the last few weeks and think especially of Jill and Colin.

Sadly, Frances' mum and Elaine's cousin died recently and we wish them and their families the blessing of God's love at this sad time.

Gina sadly lost her sister, Ann, on Christmas morning and in memory of her has included this verse:-

### *Ann Lily Neale*

**05.02.1951 – 25.12.2019**

Perhaps you sent a lovely card  
Or sat quietly on a chair,  
Perhaps you sent a funeral spray,  
If so we saw it there  
Perhaps you spoke the kindest words,  
As any friend could say,  
Perhaps you were not there at all,  
Just thought of us that day  
What ever you did to console our hearts,  
We thank you very much  
Whatever the part.

Love Gina & Ray Nottage,  
Her brother in law, nieces and families

Listen, stranger, Christ is near,  
Hear him calling, have no fear.  
Bring your troubles, bring your care,  
Bitter burdens, hard to bear.  
He'll give strength to see you through,  
From the old he'll bring the new.  
Toiling, striving, let them cease,  
*Come to Jesus, go in peace.*

Amen

## An Example for Lent?

This edition of March 'Silent Visitor' is covering the major part of the period we call Lent. Much of the Christian Church has observed a period of fasting and preparation during Lent and in the early centuries many candidates for baptism were given preparation. The Eastern Churches tend still to keep to these traditions whereas the Western Churches have become more relaxed about them. The Roman Catholic Church specifically relaxed them during World War II and now tends to keep only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday as fast days.

However, many people often choose to give up specific pleasures such as sweets, alcohol and, nowadays, social media, as a way of fasting or fostering simplicity and self control in their lives. Some also adopt positive good things to do

I sometimes think of a particular exponent of fasting and living the simple life, who I am reminded of during March. His name – Gandhi, the Mahatma, and March because in March, 98 years ago, he was imprisoned, for a six year sentence, in India by the British authorities for what they called sedition. Sedition seems to have been some sort of euphemism for civil disobedience. Gandhi had considered the plight of his fellow countrymen and decided to work towards India's independence from British rule.

It's interesting to compare his methods to certain practices adopted by some Christians during Lent. For example, what did he give up? Firstly he gave up his law practice which he had previously used in South Africa to aid victims of apartheid. He then gave up his normal clothing and started wearing only a loin cloth and, in colder weather, also a shawl, both made out of basic textiles made by the poor. He ate only simple vegetarian food. And he spent his time working for India, particularly the poor, by advocating and acting upon a system of civil disobedience, for which he was imprisoned more than once.

However, Gandhi began to dislike the phrase civil disobedience, as it sometimes had the wrong motivation and wasn't always all that civil. He cited as an example the suffragette movement. In 1919 he coined the new word, 'Satyagraha', satya meaning truth. In 1927 he wrote, "God is Truth and the way to truth lies through non-violence." Later he made a change to this and altered 'God is

Truth' to 'Truth is God'. Satyagraha was not simply civil disobedience by non-action but meant a positive resistance and non-co-operation in order to aim for love conquering hatred. Martin Luther King Jnr. adopted it during his 'I have a dream' speech.

Gandhi wasn't happy with Christian missionaries in India because he felt that their main objective was to convert those following Indian religions to Christianity. This tended to lead to hatred of neighbours and other religions. He felt no religious tradition could claim a monopoly over truth or salvation. (He had studied Christianity, Judaism and Islam.) His thoughts were that Christians should first understand the message of Jesus. According to Gandhi, the message of Jesus was not to humiliate and imperialistically rule over other people, considering them inferior or second class or slaves. (To see ourselves as others see us!) It is more that when the hungry are fed and peace comes to our individual and collective lives, then Christ is born. (And this wisdom from a Hindu!)

So, while we think about Lent during this March, it might be useful to give a thought to the sort of life led as an example by Gandhi, the Mahatma, or Great Soul, who was eventually shot and killed by a Hindu who felt his methods were not aggressive enough.

*George Semain*



Ghandi

## Reading List 2020

Included in this month's Silent Visitor is a copy of the Reading List for this year. This was compiled from the 2018 Reading List originally created by Anne French. During the past year or so, some people have decided they are no longer able to read, which means there are some empty spaces to be filled. These "gaps" are indicated with a "?". If anyone is to be prepared to fill one or more of these spaces please let Janet know.

Please remember if you are unable to be in Church to read when it is your turn, please try to arrange a swap with someone else.

## Mini Market

At a recent church meeting it was confirmed that there will be a Fundraising Mini-Market on **Saturday 14 March from 10am until 12.30pm.**

The stalls will include:

Bric-a-Brac	Margaret & Bob Datlen
Tombola	Alf and Margaret Pryer
CDs/DVDs	Janet/George
Cakes	Homemade cakes
Plants	Ruth & Roger

And, of course, Refreshments – Tea, Coffee & soft drinks

All of these stalls will need articles to sell – so if you have any quality items for the stallholders you wish to donate, please let them have them in good time for the market.

Also a plea to all those who bake delicious cakes, for some of your "goodies" to sell or eat on the day.

An advertisement will be placed in the Thurrock Gazette for two weeks prior to the market so we are hoping to attract a few more people through our doors this time.



**All proceeds will go towards fundraising for the Church "New Kitchen Project."  
Please come along and support this event.**

## Reading List 2020

### January

5 Ruth H & Thembisa  
12 Inger & Edna  
19 Janet & George  
26 Margaret P & Alf

### February

2 Gina & Richard  
9 Elaine & Thembisa  
16 Frances & David  
23 Janet & George

### March

1 Edna & Inger  
8 Ruth H & Colin  
15 Rachel King (*Parade*)  
22 David & Frances  
29 Alf & Margaret

### April

5 ? & Colin  
12 Jean & Gina.  
19 Ruth H. & ?  
26 Edna & Elaine

### May

3 ? & ?  
10 Janet & George  
17 Sue Meurs (*Parade*)  
24 ? & Denise  
31 Colin & Gina

### June

7 Edna & Denise  
14 Jean & Margaret D.  
21 ? & ?  
28 Richard & Elaine

### July

5 ? & ?  
12 Janet & George  
19 Phil King (*Parade*)  
26 Elaine & Richard

### August

2 ? & Edna  
9 Margaret P & Alf  
16 Jean & Margaret D  
23 Jean & ?  
30 Elaine & Richard

### September

6 Inger & Gina  
13 Margaret P & Alf  
20 Denise & ?  
27 Rachel King (*Harvest*)

### October

4 Ruth H & ?  
11 David & Frances  
18 Margaret D & ?  
25 Richard & Edna

### November

1 ? & Ruth H  
8 Sue Meurs  
15 David & Frances  
22 Richard & Edna  
29 Ruth H & Inger

### December

6 Elaine & Richard  
13 Kay Watt (*Parade*)  
20 Margaret P & Alf  
27 Janet & George





## Christians Against Poverty (CAP)

At a recent Church Meeting it was agreed that Christians Against Poverty (CAP) would be the church's charity for 2020. Many may remember that in September last year, David Akerman, from the Thurrock Branch of CAP spoke to us about the difference CAP makes in helping people who are struggling with debt and helping them to resolve their problems.

Below is an excerpt from the CAP website :-

### **"The CAP Story:**

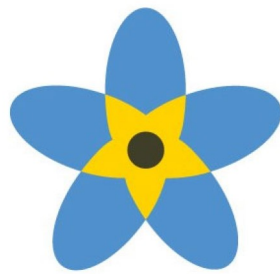
**How it started:** With a small donation and big faith, Kohn Kirkby started Christians Against Poverty in 1996. He believed God was calling him to sacrifice his career in finance to use his knowledge of the industry to help the poor.

In his home town of Bradford, John set off on the incredible journey of CAP. His faith adventure led him to people crippled by debt; parents who couldn't feed their children, families facing eviction and desperate people living in fear and without hope. He used his expertise to negotiate with creditors, set up budgeting systems and offer a lifeline to those trapped in debt.

John knew people all over the country were struggling in the same way and he began looking to replicate the work across the UK. With the vital ingredients of a church to partner with, a passionate person to be trained as a debt counsellor and the faith that God would provide, four new CAP centres were opened at the end of 1998.

Since then CAP has rapidly grown its debt centre network and expanded its services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty too. As well as CAP Debt Help, we now help people step into employment through CAP Job Clubs, help people get control of their habitual dependencies through Fresh Start and a brand new service, CAP Life Skills, to equip people to live well on a low income. Our vision is to bring freedom and good news to the poor in every community through a nationwide network of CAP projects."

More details about CAP can be found on their website: [capuk.org](http://capuk.org).



**Dementia  
Friends**

An Alzheimer's Society initiative

# Training in Context

## Coffee Morning

**Wed 1st April**

**10.30am-12noon**

An opportunity to learn basic but important ideas / information about dementia and about people who have this disease. Not a complete answer but a very good start.



# Grays

**United  
Reformed  
Church**

A place to pause, and then step forward.

Refreshments served from 10.30am; training 10.45 to 11.45; further opportunity for refreshments 11.45 to 12noon.

## March 2020 - ROTAS

<b>FLOWER ROTA</b>	Please see notice board regarding the Flower Rota. This rota is no longer defined. Please add your name to the flower rota list if you would like to arrange church flowers for a particular Sunday.		
<b>PREACHERS</b>			
		<b>Time</b>	
Young family service	1	9.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Morning Service with Communion	1	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Morning Worship	8	10.30 am	George Semain
Parade Service	15	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
Evening Communion	15	6.30 pm	Alf Pryer
Morning Worship	22	10.30 am	Denise Beckley
Café Church	29	10.30 am	Rev'd Dave Coaker
<b>April</b>			
Young family service	5	9.30 am	Revd Dave/Denise
Morning Service with Communion	5	10.30 am	Revd Dave Coaker
<b>READERS</b>			
<b>March</b>	1	10.30 am	Edna & Inger
	8	10.30 am	Ruth & Colin
	15	10.30 am	Frances & David
	22	10.30 am	Ruth & George
	29	10.30 am	Edna & Inger
<b>April</b>	5	10.30 am	? & Colin

**Duty Steward: TBA**

**Communion Steward: Jean Olley (1st March)**

**Hymn Book Steward: Bill Boag**

<b>Church Charity 2020: Christians Against Poverty</b>
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## CHURCH CALENDAR

### SUNDAY SERVICES

Children's Service	9.30 am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday each month
Morning Worship	10.30 am	Each Sunday
Holy Communion	10.30 am 6.30 pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday each month 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday each month
Parade Service	10.30 am	15 March 2020

### ACTIVITIES

Coffee Morning	10.30 am	Every Wednesday
Carpet Bowls	2.00 pm & 7.30 pm	Every Monday (except Bank Holidays)
Prayer Meetings	10.00 am	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday each month (before coffee)
	6.45 pm	Every Friday
Messy Church	3.30 pm	See Notices

- 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**