 URCGrays
www.graysurc.org.uk

Minister: Rev'd David Coaker
07378 348191
drcoaker@gmail.com

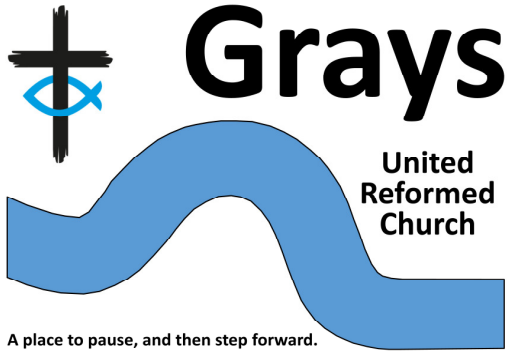
Silent Visitor



July / August 2022

THE TILBURY BAND

Established 1919



Summer Concert

Bradleigh Avenue, Grays, RM17 5XD



Sun 17th July
3.00pm

Followed by afternoon tea

Donations to help cover costs would be appreciated

Please get in touch, or book a free ticket, to help us
gauge numbers:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/tilbury-band-summer-concert-tickets-366664291767>

The band will be remaining afterwards to rehearse
and you are welcome to stick around.

Grays United Reformed Church - Worship Plan

Date	Lead by	Time	Notes
03.07.22	David Coaker	9.30am	Young Families
	David Coaker	10.30am	Communion / CM
06.07.22	David Coaker	11.00am	<i>Dementia Friendly</i>
10.07.22	George Semain	10.30am	
17.07.22	David Coaker	10.30am	Baptism - William Speight
24.07.22	Kathryn Taylor	10.30am	
31.07.22	Alf Pryer	10.30am	
03.08.22	David Coaker	11.00am	<i>Dementia Friendly</i>
07.08.22	David Coaker	9.30am	Young Families
	David Coaker	10.30am	Communion
14.08.22	Denise Beckley	10.30am	
21.08.22	David Coaker	10.30am	
28.08.22	Alf Pryer	10.30am	
04.09.22	David Coaker	9.30am	Young Families
	David Coaker	10.30am	Baptism – Bethia Flemmings Communion
07.09.22	David Coaker	11.00am	<i>Dementia Friendly</i>

To help us run smoothly on a Sunday morning a member of the elders' meeting will be on duty each week:

Date	On Duty	Communion
03.07.22	Elaine Barcz	Elaine Barcz
10.07.22	Janet Semain	
17.07.22	Margaret Pryer	
24.07.22	Elaine Barcz	
31.07.22	George Semain	

Community Café: Wednesday 10am-12noon – all are welcome! Dementia friendly worship: 11am first Wed of month

Church Meeting: Sun **3rd July** following worship.

Elders' Meeting: Wed **27 July**, 12.30 for 1pm start.

Elders' Meeting: Denise Beckley has been co-opted onto the elders' meeting and her name will go to CM for election.

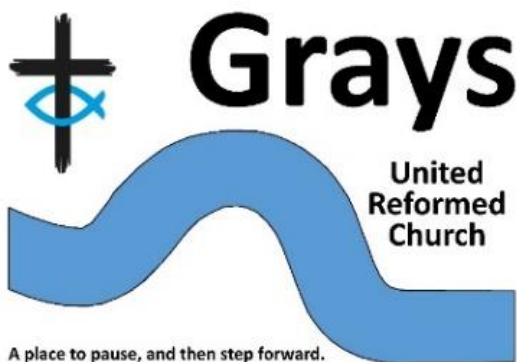
Worship Team: the next meeting will be on **Thurs 14th July** between 10am-12noon.

Baptisms – we are delighted that our worship will include baptisms on 17th July of William Speight, and on the 4th September of Bethia Flemmings.

Tilbury Band – we will be sharing a summer concert with the band on Sunday 17th July from 3pm followed by afternoon tea. (Volunteers to help offer refreshments and donations of cakes would be appreciated.) The band will be staying on after to rehearse for a competition and all are welcome to stay.

Our next **young families service:** is Sunday **7th August** 9.30-10.10am.

Sept SV - If you could please email or phone through your contributions by **Friday 26th August** to Janet Semain, 01375 373532, geojan321@sky.com



Bluebells by Georgina Nottage

I didn't wander lonely as a cloud on high
But the sight I saw will stay with me
until I die.

Before my feet as pristine as a new day
Hundreds of bluebells lay

No human feet through them had trodden
Such a site as this will not be soon forgotten
As I wander through the woods
I wonder how many others have stood
and seen the bluebells

We may stop and wonder at man's creations
wonders as they be
But the work of God's hands will
always be more glorious to me
The wonders of sky, land, rivers and
sea are his doing
With every season renewing

Let us give thanks that we live in
a green and pleasant land
For all the beauty created by God's
own hands
Let a joyous hymn be sung
Praising God from whence it comes



“Peace to this house.”

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

When words like mission and evangelism are bandied around in church, some folk are energized and others squirm in their seats. And I must admit, I tend to do both! I'm energized because they are what church is about, but I squirm because of how we assume we have to go about it and our expectations of the results.

Like most church words, mission and evangelism carry a lot of baggage with them. Our minds immediately go to Christian rallies, altar calls, lots of denouncing, fire and brimstone, and being saved. It can be a numbers game, success judged by how many come forward make a commitment. For churches that fit into this model it is all very emotional and encouraging. But I don't think we fit into it.

We don't have a constant churn of new people coming along on a Sunday morning or wide networks to invite along. We are also more likely to deliberate on our answers, and give quite nuanced replies, rather than swift and dogmatic ones.

So, in attempt to stop us squirming and maybe become a little energized, let me tease out the root of what mission and evangelism mean and what they could mean for us? Mission is living out the way of Jesus and evangelism is encouraging people to live it out too. Simplifying it helps us drop some of the baggage, but if you scratch the surface there is still lots of work to do.

Through our life together we offer activities and opportunities that express the way of Jesus. That are grounded in the kingdom of God. That in some way or other live out justice, peace, mercy and love.



Mission, living out the way of Jesus, can be the easier of the two. The kingdom of God is an all-encompassing term and it's not too hard to fit any church activity into it. Evangelism, encouraging people to live it too, is much harder.

We also make it much harder for ourselves because our default answer to living the way of Jesus is turning up on a Sunday at 10.30am. Worship, and Sunday morning is the traditional time, has a place in our spiritual lives, our social connections with each other, and our opening ourselves up to the challenge of living Christ's way. But worship is part of the kingdom of God, it is not all of it.

If everyone on this planet lived lives committed to the ideals of God's Kingdom, would it matter if all the churches were empty?

If justice, peace, mercy and love were everyone's reality, Jesus' prayer, that God's kingdom would be on earth as it is in heaven, would be fulfilled.

The Kingdom of God, and not necessarily the Church, is the priority. So let me repeat Jesus' instruction, "Peace to this house."

Mission is living out the way of Jesus and evangelism is encouraging people to live it too.

So let us not assume we have to leap into some complicated and contradictory campaign as we explore our mission and evangelism.

Let us not expect that every single one of us have to devote every waking hour to this endeavour.

Let us free ourselves from the expectation that the only way to judge its success is by how many other people are in this space at this time on a Sunday morning.

But, let us not forget that every single one of us has some part to play in how we discern and live it out.

Let us remember that the tiniest changes, actions or words can have dramatic effects.

Let us remember that our task is to live out the kingdom of God, and the best way to attract others to live it too is through our example.

"Peace to this house." As we live the way of Jesus and encourage others to join us. "Peace to this house." Amen.

With every blessing, Rev'd David R. Coaker

MOVING STORIES

Committed to supporting our global partners in:

ZIMBABWE

There are almost 3.4 Zimbabwean refugees, roughly a quarter of the population. Most have gone to South Africa and Australia, with over 400 000 now living in the UK. Zimbabweans leave their homes because of poverty, climate change, and repressive government policies.

South Africa deports many of those who cross the border – over 14 000 every week. Most Zimbabweans crossing at Beit Bridge are turned back. Some attempt to swim across the Limpopo and are attacked or killed by crocodiles and hippos.

Many Zimbabweans seeking refuge in South Africa are children. They are vulnerable to abuse and sex trafficking. The large number of refugees has contributed to xenophobic attacks and harassment from locals.

Much of Zimbabwe is financed by money being sent back by refugees to family members, who use the money to pay for groceries and school fees.

BANGLADESH

To mark World Refugee Day tens of thousands of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh staged demonstrations (the Bari Cholo' or 'Let's go home' campaign) to demand repatriation back to Myanmar. Most have had to flee a brutal military crackdown in Myanmar. People came out despite a ban on rallies since 2019.

Almost a million Rohingya are confined to bamboo and tarpaulin shacks in thirty-four unsanitary, inadequate camps. They have no work, poor sanitation, and little access to education.

"We don't want to stay in the camps. Being refugees is not easy. It's hell. Enough is enough. Let's go home," Rohingya community leader Sayed Ullah said in a speech at one rally.

More than 890,000 Rohingya refugees are sheltering in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar region, the biggest cluster of refugee camps in the world.

About 92,000 Rohingya refugees reside in Thailand, 21,000 in India, and 102,000 in Malaysia. The Rohingya also make up a portion of Myanmar's 576,000 internally displaced people.

Please pray for an end to the brutal suppression of the Rohingya people so that a speedy and safe return of refugees might be possible. Thank you for your continued support through Commitment for Life for the work of our partners in the region.

PALESTINE/ISRAEL

About half the Palestinian population (10 million) lives outside the OPT as refugees. In host countries Palestinian refugees are often unwelcome and their rights denied. In Jordan, Palestinian refugees hold full Jordanian citizenship; however, some, notably those from Gaza, hold only temporary passports, which restricts full citizenship rights. In Syria, Palestinian refugees are non-citizens, although historically they were permitted to work and access social services. With the outbreak of civil war their situation changed. Before the war, Yarmouk refugee camp in Damascus contained almost 100,000 Palestinian refugees. By 2015, only 18,000 remained. Most were displaced inside Syria or to Lebanon or Jordan.

In Lebanon refugees face employment restrictions and are barred from owning property. As a result, they generally live in severely overcrowded refugee camps. This situation has been exacerbated further given the influx of Palestinians fleeing Syria.

Palestine's refugees feel insecure and abandoned by both the international community and regional leadership. Their fundamental right to return has been reduced to a final status political issue which never arrives and UNRWA, the UN body responsible for providing their essential services, including health and education, struggles to raise the funds to meet those needs.

As we remember that Jesus was a refugee, let us commit to confronting this ongoing injustice using all the influence we have. Commitment for life is grateful for our partnership with Christian Aid's work in support of Palestinian refugees.

Reflection on Refugees

Amnesty International reports that in 2019, more than two-thirds of all refugees came from just five countries: Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

Syria has been the main country of origin for refugees since 2014 and at the end of 2019, there were 6.6 million Syrian refugees hosted by 126 countries worldwide.

In 2019, only half a per cent of the world's refugees were resettled. Over the past decade, just over 1 million refugees were resettled, compared to 3.9 million refugees who returned to their country.

Wealthier countries aren't doing nearly enough to share the cost of protecting people who have left everything behind. Appeals for humanitarian assistance for refugees are consistently – and often severely – underfunded.

In short, the world urgently needs a new, global plan based on genuine international cooperation and a meaningful and fair sharing of responsibilities.

Prayer for Refugees

Lord of the journey, we ask for your protection on all who have fled their homes.

Give them strength on their journeys and grant that they may find places of compassion at which to rest.

Ease their fear as they throw in their lot with strangers and keep alive their vision of finding a secure and welcoming home. Amen.

Commitment
for | Life

Life-giving Faith | Defiant Hope | Generous Love

**Singing a New Song – Year C – 204 When Jesus sent
disciples out (87 87 D) 3v (Bishopgarth, HPSG 248)**

When Jesus sent disciples out
The harvest was extensive;
But workers who would gather in,
Were few; their work intensive.
When Jesus sent disciples out
As lambs, they would be fragile;
He knew the world had many wolves;
Some people could be hostile.

When Jesus sent disciples out
He said, “Do not take money,
Nor shoes nor purse; but heal the sick;
Do not disrupt your journey.”
When Jesus sent disciples out
“Remain where you are welcome;
But when rejected say to those,
‘We tried to share God’s Kingdom.’ ”

We too are sent, ‘Proclaim the Christ.’
In our own time and culture;
We need to seek new strategies
To feed the spirit’s hunger.
We too are sent, ‘Proclaim the Christ.’
In ways that lead to freedom;
The Jesus story has the power
To bring us near God’s Kingdom.

George Stuart - <https://sites.google.com/view/george-stuart/home/singing-a-new-song> No copyright licence is necessary to use any of the lyrics on this website. They are all free of any copyright restrictions and limitations and thus are all available for your use.



We started this week by welcoming the High Sheriff of Essex Nick Alston. We were delighted that he was able to present our administrator Helen Watts with a Platinum Champion

Award, awarded for the 10 years of dedicated work.

The Trussell Trust conducted a Change Makers Survey, providing a great opportunity for everyone across the network to have their say, tell them their views, and play an important part in shaping how we work together towards our vision. Some of the preliminary findings give an idea of what we are hearing:



- There is an overwhelming consensus and solidarity behind our shared vision and Together for Change strategy, with 89% agreeing that UK food banks should not be needed and 95% agreeing that they do not solve the root cause of poverty.
- **Many volunteers believe that the need for emergency food can be reduced if people received benefit payments quicker (57%),** if there were more local support services available (40%) and if more support was offered to unemployed people to rejoin the workforce (37%).



- **The majority of volunteers (70%) initially started their role because they wanted to help or improve things for people in their community.**
- **Most volunteers (70%) say that the volunteer role they carry out at a food bank impacts their view on poverty.**
- Volunteers act to support our shared strategy in both a voluntary role within the food bank and in a personal capacity. In a personal capacity, this includes almost half of volunteers signing a petition relating to poverty and 40% following or sharing content about poverty on social media.
- **A third of volunteers say they either have direct lived experience of poverty or proximity to it.**

This insight is really valuable from food bank volunteers across the UK for the first time, and it's really positive to see such resounding unity, solidarity, alignment and authenticity in our work together. This vital insight is already shaping how we develop our changing communities, changing policy and changing minds goals so that the Trussell Trust can provide even greater support going forward.

Our annual Tesco Collection has started and with the help of some wonderful volunteers, Shola, Joanne, Lucy Gordon and Iain, we got off to a flying start filling 2 ½ trollies worth in the first two hours.

Demand is still out weighing donations so every donation, however large or small, is so very much valued and is so important to us.

This weeks list of items include: Tinned Potatoes; Cooking Sauces; Tinned meats - Spaghetti Bolognese, Tinned Curry, Sausages & Beans etc.; Sponge Puddings/ Desserts; Tinned Custard; Tinned Fruit; Long Life Milk; Noodles (either Pot Noodles or dried packet noodles); Fruit Juice/ Squash.

We do really appreciate your continued prayers and support, as we continue to support those in need across Thurrock, it really does make a difference and we see it working in our day-to-day work.

If you would like any clarification or further information on our work please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards, Pete Newall, Operations Manager Thurrock Foodbank
01375 416200 <https://thurrock.foodbank.org.uk/>

A message from David & Frances Lock

It has taken me a long while to get round to writing this email. I have been putting it off for several months and now feel I just have to get on and do it. You will be well aware that since restarting live worship after the pandemic restrictions were removed, Frances and I have been worshipping at Grays Methodist Church. We are expecting to be received into membership there on the 1st Sunday in July. Our return to our Methodist roots has taken 30 years to achieve. We originally were only going to stay at the URC until our sons had left the Scouts but one thing led to another and we stayed on. Can you please pass on our best wishes to the whole church family.

All of this is a bit of a wrench, but we feel it is the right thing for us to do. We wish you every blessing and success as the church moves forward. God bless you and thank you.

Kindest regards, David and Frances.

We have wished David and Frances every blessing, and we give thanks for their time with us.

Community Café

Bradleigh Avenue, RM17 5XD

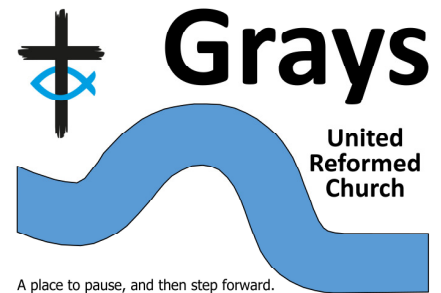
10am - 12noon each
Wednesday



Inclusive and dementia friendly café.



For more details contact: David Coaker
07378348191 drcoaker@gmail.com



Mature Movers **Gentle Exercise Class**

Tuesdays 1.45 - 2.45pm

Enjoy movement and exercise at a gentle appropriate pace.
Programme includes chair based, aerobic and standing movement.
Designed to improve posture and maintain mobility. Promote relaxation and restful sleep, enjoy mental and physical well being.

£4.00 per session - first one **FREE!**



www.graysurc.org.uk

07806739959

densplayden@gmail.com

Worship Services:

Sundays 10.30-11.30am followed by refreshments
(First Sunday of the month includes communion and 5 parade services per year.)
Dementia Friendly Worship 11.00-11.30am (First Wednesday of the month)

Who's Who at Bradleigh Avenue

Minister: Rev'd David Coaker
07378 348191
drcoaker@gmail.com

Treasurer: Mr Alan Beckley

Elders: Mrs Janet Semain, Mr George Semain & Mr Alf Pryer. Co-opted: Mrs Elaine Barcz, Mrs Margaret Pryer & Mrs Denise Beckley

Church Contact: Mrs Elaine Barcz
graysurcsecretary@outlook.com

Organist: Mr Richard Wade

Facilities Manager: Mrs Charlotte Webb
0784 3559011
graysurc@gmail.com

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

