



 URCGrays
www.graysurc.org.uk

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

Silent Visitor



June 2023

"Seaside Golf"

How straight it flew, how long it flew,
It clear'd the rutty track
And soaring, disappeared from view
Beyond the bunker's back –
A glorious, sailing, bounding drive
That made me glad I was alive.



And down the fairway, far along
It glowed a lonely white;
I played an iron sure and strong
And clipp'd it out of sight.
And spite of grassy banks between
I knew I'd find it on the green.

And so I did. It lay content
Two paces from the pin;
A steady putt and then it went
Oh, most securely in.
The very turf rejoiced to see
That quite unprecedented three.

Ah! Seaweed smells from sandy caves
And thyme and mint in whiffs,
In-coming tide, Atlantic waves
Slapping the sunny cliffs.
Lark song and sea sounds in the air
And splendour, splendour everywhere.

John Betjeman

NB: This poem might appeal to other ex-golfers and the joys of playing a hole well. The joy increased when playing a course with a sea view it compensated for the bad golf being played! Ed

Grays United Reformed Church

Worship Plan

Date	Led by	Time	Notes
04.6.23	Denise Beckley	9.30am	Young Families
04.6.23	Elaine Barcz	10.30am	Daily Devotion – Fellowship time
07.6.23	Rev'd Dave Coaker	11.00am	Dementia Friendly
11.6.23	Rev'd Kathryn Taylor	10.30am	Holy Communion – Fellowship Time
18.6.23	Rev'd Dave Coaker	10.30 am	Cafe Style Church
25.6.23	Rev'd Andrew Birch	10.30am	Pulpit Exchange
02.7.23	Denise Beckley	9.30am	Young Families
02.7.23	Alf Pryer	10.30am	Holy Communion – Fellowship Time

Duty Elder for Communion:-

Alan Beckley – 11.06.23

Experiencing the Spirit

28th May was Pentecost. The reading from Acts tells the story of the Spirit bursting into the upper room like a fierce storm, tongues of fire resting on the disciples' heads and launching them out to convert the crowds in Jerusalem. An amazing story, and our response?

Well, we usually sing some hymns that focus on the Holy Spirit and they might have a bit more swing to them than our normal selections. Our prayers will give emphasis to the Spirit and we'll hear a sermon telling us something about it. But it doesn't really compare to the story though, does it?

Personally, I'm not overly in tune with the theatrics of the Holy Spirit that you could describe speaking in tongues or spiritual healing as. I don't see the Spirit as an overwhelming but sporadic force in the universe. To me the Spirit is an all-encompassing, ever present force within the universe. The Spirit as an energy within my heart beating, the wind blowing, the ebb and flow of the tides, that holds the Earth spinning around the Sun, and the galaxies around us. The Spirit of God that opens up to me the glory of Creation, the gift of life, and the diversity of my fellow creatures.

I believe that it is through prayer that we can open ourselves up to the Spirit and commune with God. Listen for the divine voice, share our ultimate concerns, and feel words of encouragement on the path that is before us. This is open to us as individuals, but we receive greater clarity when communities open themselves up to each other and God in this way. An individual insight can be affirmed, adapted, and actions taken with greater confidence, clarity and commitment.

That is why I have such high regard for Church Meeting. Despite the appearance of democracy when we gather for Church Meeting we do so in prayer, seeking to discern God's will. We are sharing together our dreams, concerns, and insights and through speaking the truth in love come to decisions that lead us closer to God's kingdom. We are not expressing personal preferences; we are trying to catch God's dream for our loves together.

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

Sunday Worship from September 2023

At our Church Meeting on Sunday 21st May we agreed:

To focus our worship on Sunday mornings by drawing together elements of the present 9.30 am and 10.30 am services to offer times of worship that are informal and formal in a sustainable and manageable way each week.

At our Elders' Meeting on Wednesday 24th we reflected on the discussion at CM, and talked through how we might proceed. The following is an outline of a plan which you are invited to reflect upon and come along to talk things through on **Wednesday 28th June at 1.30 pm.**

Suggested pattern for our morning:

9.30 am Arrivals and non specific activities for children
(i.e. a standard mix of activities for them to have each week)

9.45 am Welcome – brief introduction to the week's theme
Activities – worksheet/craft
Story, songs, prayer

- 10.15 am Refreshments
- 10.45 am Quiet Time - transition from informal to formal, for those who came to the earlier worship to depart and those who came for refreshments to prepare for worship. Marked by the playing of a set piece of music.
- 10.50 am Beginning of our more familiar worship service, with its usual variations.
- 11.30 am Final Blessing and depart.

This will involve more effort from those who lead our worship and we need to think through how we can ensure it is feasible.

If all of the material is prepared in advance, would you be willing to help with or lead our early time of worship or comper a service provided by the Daily Devotions material?

Should this be our pattern every week, run just through term time, or be a less structure beginning during school holidays?

Should we just have one time of worship for Parade Services?

Should be invest in Roots material? Resources for traditional and young people's services, £114 - £120 per year depending on print/digital subscription.

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/see-sample-material/sample-week>

Should we invite other leaders of worship for our later time e.g. Synod Moderator, Children and Youth Development Officer, Mission and Training Officer, the Moderator of the URC General Assembly, lay preachers from Thurrock and the wider URC?

Other ideas that came up in discussion:

Notices – produce a printed copy each week that is also emailed.

Donation Box – set up a donation box and make Standing Order forms available.

Harvest – provisionally we are looking at Sunday 1st October for our Harvest parade service. On the following Wednesday we could have another more formal Harvest Service at 11 am, enjoy lunch, and then gather as Church Meeting.

Membership – we need to make a conscious effort to encourage each other, and those we draw into our worship, to consider becoming church members.

You are warmly encouraged to ponder this, hold it before God in prayer, and then come together on **Wednesday 28th June at 1.30 pm** to discuss our plans further as we strive after God's dream for the life of Grays United Reformed Church.

Thank you, Alf!

Alf shared with the elder's meeting that he will be stepping down as an elder and as a lay preacher, at the end of this year.

On the whole church's behalf, we wish to thank him for all that he has offered, both in worship and in serving us as an elder, over so many years. We are grateful for his service, companionship, and willingness to share in leading our fellowship and worship.



Finance Report

As at 30 April the bank balance was down again, to £15,000.

At the Annual Church Meeting the 2022 accounts were presented, and the key points are summarised below:-

Expenditure was up by £4,000, whilst income was reduced by £6,000 resulting in our 2021 surplus of £13,000 being reduced to £3,000 in 2022.

Income from monthly giving is likely to reduce in 2023 as Church congregation numbers continue to decline.

This could well result in us having to draw from our capital investments during 2023.

Income from interest on our investments was reduced due to depression of financial markets.

Fortunately, income from our hirers increased, thanks to Charlotte's efforts in finding suitable hirers and Elaine for the efficient and timely invoicing.

The church continues to rely on hirer's income.

Thanks to Steve Morgan for auditing the year end accounts.

The usual thanks to all those who continue to contribute so generously to Church funds each month.

If anyone has a query regarding Church finances please contact me and I will do my best to help.

Alan Beckley

Coronation Afternoon Tea

On Monday 8 May, the extra bank holiday awarded as part of King Charles the third's Coronation celebrations, the Church held an Afternoon Tea Party, with plenty of cakes, sausage rolls and wobbly jelly.

There was plenty of fun to be had with a Bouncy Castle and Colouring Competition for the young children.

There was Coronation Quiz to see who could answer the most questions. This was very competitive between the groups of people taking part and for the winners there were prizes and chocolate!

It was very well attended with people coming from within the local area as well as Playden, Mature Movers, Community Cafe and the congregation.

Thank you to all those who came along and a thank you to Denise for organising it and to all the volunteers for their help and giving of time and support on the day.



(Spot the Rabbit in the photo.)

Kee Cheung

News from the Food-bank

Deliveroo are launching an influencer campaign in June to try and encourage customers to top-up their orders in support of Trussell Trust. As part of this campaign, they chose influencers to visit food banks to find out more about what they do and who they support.

The Corringham Food Bank hosted an influencer, who came into the warehouse to understand how it works and to support Deliveroo/Trussell Trust Campaign. It was an interesting day when we all learned a lot, like how hard it is to load the van and get orders out to the distribution centres.

The current demand is at a manageable level but the demand is still real. There are still lower stocks of various items as they continue to deliver a balanced food parcel. The items are mainly dessert related products and include:-

Custard, Squash/Fruit Juice, Tinned Fruit, Rice Pudding, Tinned Potatoes, Tinned soups, Jams/Spreads. Sponge puddings.

A Prayer:

Dear Lord, we thank you for the work of all those who volunteer to make life easier for other people.

We thank you especially for the Food-Banks who diligently strive to provide the food parcels that help so many people and families to keep nourished when life seems desperate.

We ask you to be with all those who give their time so freely.

Amen

Fun Friday

The fun never stop

16th June 2023

3.30pm

Grays United Reformed Church
Bradleigh Avenue RM17 5XD



Fun activities for all ages
Includes after school snack
Come along join in the fun

Please book early limited space available

Book text or email 07806739959

Email graysurc@gmail.com

No charge, donations gratefully received.
Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Who's Who at Bradleigh Avenue

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

Treasurer: Mr Alan Beckley

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

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

Assisted by Mr Kee Cheung