 URCGrays
www.graysurc.org.uk

Minister: Rev'd David Coaker
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Silent Visitor



November 2023

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Israel and Palestine: Prayer for peace

Please pray with us for the bereaved, and for those whose lives have been lost.

Please pray with us that the killing will stop, that a ceasefire across the whole of the Gaza strip will be brokered, and that humanitarian aid will reach the hundreds of thousands of innocent women, children and men whose lives are in great danger.



Please pray with us for peace, reconciliation and justice for all in all of the land.

Rev Su McClellan, has written a prayer to guide us as we intercede for all of those in Israel and Palestine caught up in the unfolding events:

God of light and salvation, our refuge and our strength, we pray for the people of Israel and Palestine amid the escalating violence.

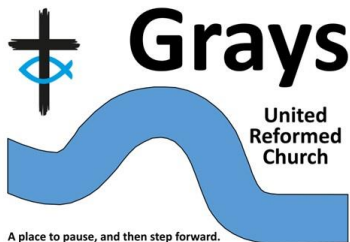
We pray for those killed and injured by rockets from Gaza in southern Israel. May your rod and staff comfort them. We pray for those who are grieving. May they know your ever-present help.

We pray for the protection of those who have been taken hostage by Hamas. As they walk through this dark valley, may they fear no evil.

We pray for the civilians of Gaza. May they know that their help comes from the Maker of heaven and earth. We especially remember all of those who have been killed and wounded in Gaza today - may you comfort and heal those who are in pain and those who have lost loved ones.

And we pray for those in leadership in Gaza and Israel. May you guide them along the right paths. We ask all this in union with Christ and trusting in the power of your Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Sunday mornings @



A place to pause, and then step forward.

9.30 - 11.30am

Be yourself.
Ask questions.
Share your answers.
Arrive when you can.
Leave when you're ready.
Come when you're able.
Welcome to Grays URC!



We begin with an informal,
child-friendly time.

Gather together to share
refreshments.

End with a time of formal /
traditional worship.

Grays URC, Bradleigh Avenue, RM17 5XD

Pattern for our Sunday mornings:

9.30am	Arrivals and activities for children
9.45am	Welcome – brief introduction to the week's theme
	Activities – worksheet / craft
	Story, songs, prayer
10.15am	Refreshments
10.45am	Quiet time
10.50am	Beginning of a more traditional worship service
11.30am	Closing words and depart.

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How to make God laugh ...

Last week my plan was to travel by train with Mark to Kemble, south of Cirencester, and begin to walk the Thames path as far as Oxford. That plan changed. A stomach bug and lack of sleep led to a return home, recuperation, and then some family time together in Oxford.

Plans change. It happens. And sometimes you just need to let go and roll with it.

The hope was that we'd get a start on the journey we plan to make next summer, while I'm on sabbatical, and have a better idea of how to plan for it. While we failed at the former, we did at least achieve some of the latter.

It soon became clear that carrying five days of clothes and snacks was a bad idea. So, our plan needs to either include shorter trips or paying an agency to transport our bags between accommodation. It also confirmed how keen Mark was for the trip and that I need to do much more preparation to ensure I'm more comfortable with the plan.

So that plan fell apart, but lessons were learned.

But we do seem to be having more success with our Sunday morning plan.

My impression, and confirmed at church meeting, is that it is going well. We have the same range of attendance we had for our monthly young family's service, but now that is each week. Our midpoint refreshments have become routine. The more traditional service has been maintained, with thanks to visiting preachers and the Daily Devotions material, without overburdening our existing leaders and with a few extra people coming along.

Of course, we will learn some lessons and explore new ideas along the way, but so far, so good. Let us give thanks to God for the new path we have stepped out in faith on.

With every blessing, Rev'd David R. Coaker

Worship Plan November / December

Date	Time	Type	9.30 Lead	10.15-10.45am Refreshments	10.50 Lead
05.11.23	9.30am	Communion	Dave Coaker		Dave Coaker
12.11.23	10.30am	Remembrance Parade	Dave Coaker		
19.11.23	9.30am		Nicola Grieves		Nicola Grieves
26.11.23	9.30am		Denise Beckley		DD Screen (Dave)

Date	Time	Type	9.30 Lead	10.15-10.45am Refreshments	10.50 Lead
03.12.23	10.30am	Christmas parade	Dave Coaker		
06.12.23	11.00am	Dementia Friendly	Dave Coaker		
10.12.23	9.30am	Communion	Dave Coaker		Dave Coaker
17.12.23	9.30am		Dave Coaker		Kathryn Taylor
24.12.23	10.30am		Dave Coaker		
31.12.23	10.30am		DD Screen		Elaine Barcz

DD Screen = Daily Devotions material

Cake Sales

To support our Scout young leaders attending Jamboree trips there will be cake sales after the parade services on Sundays **12th Nov** and **3rd Dec**.

THE TILBURY BAND

Established 1919

Carol Service and Concert



**Sunday 17th December
3.00pm**

**Refreshments will be served
during the interval.**

**Donations to support the band
would be appreciated.**

Christmas Messages

The next edition of SV will take the form of a communal Christmas card.

To save us sending cards to each other, please send your message, and the name of the charity you have donated to, to David: drcoaker@gmail.com by Friday 8th December.

News from the Foodbank

Major needs for the food bank remain the same, with calls upon them continuing to be high.

Most needed items include:

Mashed Potatoes

Tea Bags

Crisps/ Savoury Snacks

Coffee

Tinned Fruit

Tinned Meat (Curry/ Spaghetti Bolognese/ Corned Beef)

Sponge puddings/ Angel delights/ Jellys

Rice Pudding

Fruit Juice

Toiletries, Shower Gels, Shampoo etc.

Please do remember that you can make very welcome financial donations to: Thurrock Food Bank

Sort 30-18-34

Acct 22388060

Ref Your own name



Mite Scheme



The Mite Scheme raises funds by collecting 5p coins, to purchase Oral Rehydration Sachets through Unicef to keep children around the world healthy and safe. Just like your alka-seltzer after a party, these salts can re-hydrate your body. However, for a child suffering from cholera or malnutrition, five sachets could mean the difference between life and death. Did you know that just £6 could save the lives of as many as 15 children suffering from dehydration caused by diarrhoea?

What difference will this make for children?

All money raised through the Scheme comes to Unicef. The delivery and production in various locations locally of each sachet, costs an average 8p.

Our fundraising goes to buy sachets of specially-formulated salts that can help save the lives of children suffering from dehydration caused by diarrhoea.

How can we support the scheme?

On Sundays there is a tub placed on the table in the worship space to collect our coins, and Alf and Margaret count them up and pay the money to UNICEF.



Cleaning the Brass

Grays URC does employ cleaners, and if you notice a dusty corner, just mention it to Charlotte, who will pass on the message.

Their remit does not cover the brass, though! I had not the heart to explain to Beryl Chalkley's sister, more than a few years ago, that the vases etc were dull because Beryl had been ill and it was she who unobtrusively kept them bright, just as she quietly supplied the fortified wine for communion.

'Barkeeper's Friend' (available in supermarkets along with other products!) now comes as a paste. Rub it on, rinse it off and rub. If you notice the need for a quick polish, maybe you could step in.

The cross by the Book of Remembrance and the candlestick have a special finish and **don't** need cleaning, hooray.

And here's a little hint

A Blast from the Past

A familiar tale, apparently attributed to Charles R Swindoll, but delivered with his usual panache on a number of occasions by our past minister, the late Victor Ridgewell.



Everybody



Somebody



Anybody



Nobody

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it.

Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

Women's Refuge

EDAPP (Essex Domestic Abuse Partnership Project)

Here's the message we received from the refuge operations manager after the Harvest Parade and collections:

It was so lovely to see you yesterday and a very big thank you to yourself and Grays United Reformed Church for the wonderful donation of harvest food and toiletries. Also a huge thank you for the kind donation of £135 which we will put towards purchasing items for a client that has come to refuge with no recourse to public funds, and a children's party for Halloween.

This is so very kind and on behalf of Changing Pathways staff, residents and children thank you so much.

Look forward to seeing you again soon.

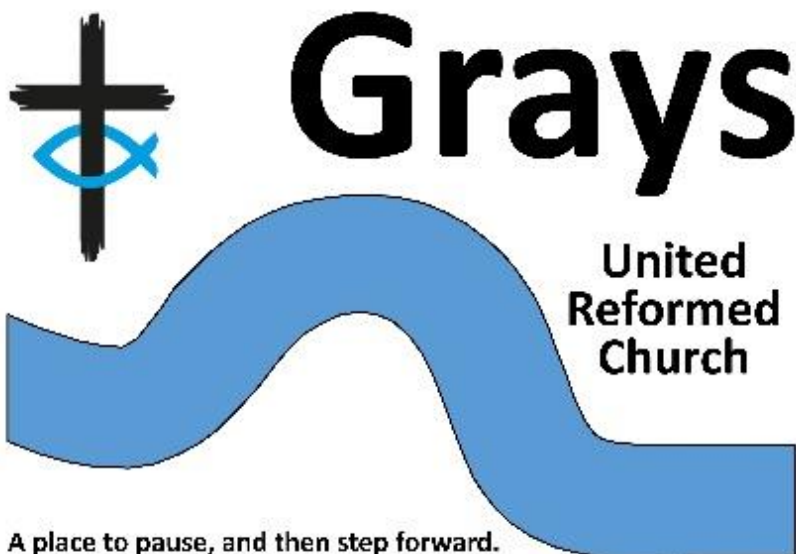
Membership

Hopefully you already feel part of Grays URC. Whatever your connection to all the various people who gather in our building, you are part of us. But there is some small print, and that is membership.

Grays United Reformed Church, is a church and part of who we are is to have a membership which is made up of those who have made a commitment to support each other, to live out following Jesus' teachings, and come together to make decisions about our life together.

The people who keep this place running are just like you and me. We don't get money from the government or a wealthy benefactor, just a group of people doing what they can to pay the bills and ensure the doors stay open.

If this is something you'd like to think or talk about, there is a flier on the worship space table and one of our elders, or our minister, will be happy to chat.



MOVING STORIES

Committed to supporting our global partners in:

ISRAEL & OCCUPIED PALESTINE

On Saturday, 7 October, Hamas launched a wave of rocket attacks and stormed into Israel, leading to the biggest escalation in violence there has been in the region. Members of armed groups entered Israeli towns, communities, and military facilities near the Gaza Strip, killing and capturing Israeli forces and civilians.

William Bell, Christian Aid's Head of Middle East Policy & Advocacy, says, "Following atrocities against Israeli civilians, Israel's military response in Gaza is now creating an escalating humanitarian crisis that threatens more than two million people."

Christian Aid has been working with the poorest and most vulnerable people in the Middle East since the early 1950s, when it provided humanitarian relief to Palestinian refugees.

Christian Aid's established partners in Gaza are ready to respond with medical relief and community-led initiatives such as food, shelter, sanitation, and protection.

BANGLADESH

Rising temperatures and a longer monsoon season are providing ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes. Bangladesh is grappling with record deaths of the Mosquito-borne dengue fever this year. Disease experts are linking worsening outbreaks to the impacts of climate change.

A lack of proper prevention measures has allowed the dengue carrying *Aedes Aegypti* mosquito to spread across almost all of Bangladesh.

Dengue is common during the June-September monsoon season when mosquitoes thrive in stagnant water.

Authorities are scrambling to contain and treat the disease. By August of 2023, 778 people had died so far in Bangladesh, making this the deadliest year since the first recorded epidemic in 2000.

ZIMBABWE

In the Mudzi District of Zimbabwe, our Commitment for Life partners work to support improved livestock production, managing and marketing.

Livestock such as cattle, goats, chickens, ducks and guinea fowl are incredibly valuable resources for communal farmers. Yet these resources suffer the impacts of climate change most acutely. Thanks to the education, training, and support that you enable through your support, local farmers are taught risk reduction techniques and financial literacy.

“[Our training...] covered goat production and management aspects such as improved housing, nutrition, and disease management.

“We are grateful for the improved knowledge,” says communal farmer, Mr Never Kafura.

PRAYER

Creator God, we thank you for the creative thoughts and talents you have given each one of us. Help us to use those gifts in ways that express your sadness over global justice issues which affect people in regions such as Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. May our hearts be so moved that our response is simply to love and support these people, as you would, in the best way we can through Commitment for Life. Amen.

Commitment for | Life

Life-giving Faith

Defiant Hope

Generous Love

Community Café

Bradleigh Avenue, RM17 5XD

10am - 12noon each
Wednesday



Inclusive and dementia friendly café.

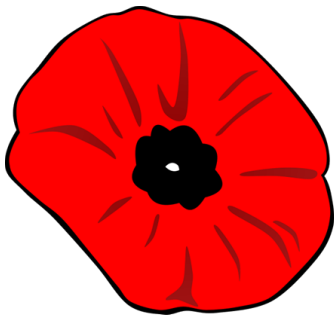


For more details contact: David Coaker
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REMEMBRANCE

10.30am, Sunday 12th November



**We will gather to
remember the loss and
sacrifice of conflict and
pray for peace.**

The Silence will be marked at 11.00am



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

**For the next few months or so, Rev'd David Coaker.*