

BEXLEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH



Burgh Island, Bigbury-on-Sea, Devon

**SUMMER
JULY AND AUGUST 2024**

50p

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Disclaimer

This Magazine is published by Bexley United Reformed Church but the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Church.

Deadline for the next Magazine will be
Sunday 25th August 2024

**BEXLEY URC CHURCH HALL
& RUXLEY ROOM**

Junction Bexley High Street and Hurst Road
Facilities include a Stage and a Fitted Kitchen
Reasonable rates include Heating and Lighting

Inquiries to: Letting Secretary 07702 185702
elliestocker@talktalk.net

The Minister's Pastoral Letter
For July/August

Summer is here and for many people it's the best time of the year. We can enjoy the pleasant weather every day and stay outside, taking advantage of the abundance of vegetation, light and warmth. This time of year coincides with children's school holidays. It's time that gives them a break from the routine of school, which is a year-round pressure, an obligation to concentrate and control themselves. Summer time, like a good night's rest, allows their young brains to regenerate. It means doing nothing, sleeping as much as the body needs, simply being there, with our families, without having to produce or do anything. In the Church, we are going through a time when children are absent from our services and activities (apart from the Scout Movement, which we are very pleased to have as part of our Church life). The period leading up to the summer holidays is no longer marked by children's shows, as it once was, and the summer is no longer marked by children's shows, as it once was, and the summer is no longer occupied by church camps. Most members of our congregation don't really need the summer to rest, or at least not as much as the children.

However, I want to continue to live this summer season in a childlike way. I want to calm and rest my brain, which is preoccupied with the great challenges facing our Church today, and use this time to give thanks to God for the sweetness of life in God's creation, for the beauty of the environment, the animals that inhabit it, the serenity of summer evenings, the conviviality of friends invited to share a drink in the garden. There are many passages in the Bible that celebrate this and encourage us to live in gratitude, while remaining passive. Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time for everything, and we can certainly extend his thought by saying that "there is a time to do things and a time to do nothing". Psalm 127 tells us that the Lord "gives sleep to his beloved" (Ps 127:2b). No doubt the Spirit is telling us to relax and rest during the summer. Surely it is as well rested disciples, full of energy and freshness, that the spirit will send us after the summer to do God's mission in the community.

I wish you all a wonderful summer. In the grace and peace of Jesus Christ,

Rev. Rodolphe Blanchard-Kowal
Minister of Bexley URC, Emmanuel United Church Sidcup
& Geddes Place URC.

Services for July and August 2024 at 10.30am except when stated

	<u>Minister</u>	<u>Elder</u>
Sunday 7 th July	Val Loader	Ann
Sunday 14 th July	John Twidale	Keith
Sunday 21 st July	Rev. Rodolphe Blanchard- Kowal – Communion	Mavis
Sunday 28 th July	Kathy Shaw	Philip
Sunday 4 th August		Keith
Sunday 11 th August	Mavis Wilson Songs of Praise	Ann
Sunday 18 th August	Rev. Ian Gow Communion	Keith
Sunday 25 th August	Rev. Rodolphe Blanchard- Kowal	Ann

Communion Fund

The Communion Fund is for those who are known to us who are in need. Gifts may be placed in the box near the entrance of the church on any Sunday whether or not there is a Communion Service.

Philip Shepherd

Family News – on our prayer calendar for July and August are:-

Sunday 7 th July	Kathy Shaw and Michael Adams
Sunday 14 th July	Edward & Essie Boateng and Barbara Anderson
Sunday 21 st July	Linda Wells and Jean Couling
Sunday 28 th July	Val Howe and Val Fox
Sunday 4 th August	Ellie Stocker and Lucy & Chris Reynolds and Rosie
Sunday 11 th August	Martin Robertson
Sunday 18 th August	Colin & Penny Denyer and Family, June and Don Bobby
Sunday 25 th August	Helen & Mike North and Sandy Lewis

Please also remember in your prayers – those known to us in need of our love and those on holiday.

Pause for Thought

Sunday 7 th July	Essie	Sunday 4 th August	Suzanne
Sunday 14 th July	Bee	Sunday 11 th August	Stephanie
Sunday 21 st July	Suzanne	Sunday 18 th August	Essie
Sunday 28 th July	Linda	Sunday 25 th August	Linda

Flowers for July and August

Sunday 7 th July	Ellie	Sunday 4 th August	Val Fox
Sunday 14 th July	George Dimond	Sunday 11 th August	Margaret Hunt(Sals)
Sunday 21 st July	Mavis	Sunday 18 th August	Mavis
Sunday 28 th July	Keith	Sunday 25 th August	Essie

They lie on the table side by side
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is well worn and cherished with pride.
Not the Bible, but the TV Guide.
One is used daily to help folks decide.
No, not the Bible, but the TV Guide.
As the pages are turned, what shall they see?
Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV.
So they open the book in which they confide.
No, not the Bible, but the TV Guide.
The Word of God is seldom read.
Maybe a verse before they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be.
Not from reading the Bible, from watching TV.
So then back to the table side by side,
Lie the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
No time for prayer, no time for the Word,
The plan of Salvation is seldom heard.
But forgiveness of sin, so full and free,
Is found in the Bible, not on TV.

**SUNDAY AFTERNOON
CONCERT**

**SEVAN HABIB & HER
YOUNG MUSICIANS
SUNDAY 21st JULY
3.00pm – 5.00pm**

All Welcome

**CREAM TEA
In Aid of
MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT
*WITH BACKGROUND MUSIC***

**SUNDAY AFTERNOON
18th AUGUST
3.00pm – 4.30pm**

IN THE CHURCH HALL

TABLE TOP SALE

**SATURDAY 7th SEPTEMBER
10.00am – 12 noon**

Free Admission

Light Refreshments

Letter from a Serving Elder

It was a joy to attend the Pastorate Day held at Albany Park Baptist Church last month, led by our minister. I enjoyed the day and went home feeling positive about the task before us.

It was encouraging too that there seemed to be a consensus among all there from the three churches. No big revolution, at least not at this stage, but many small steps. We will hear more of these in the weeks to come.

Of course, numbers were seen as the big problem. There is a small team of people working very hard just to keep our church standing still, none getting any younger, and we need to grow. More importantly it is our responsibility as Christians to lead others into faith. It is not just about getting the jobs done.

It is no coincidence that Rodolphe and three of our in-house worship leaders have preached recently about the need for change and accepting some changes that we may not be very sure about. Let us unite and see what happens.

It was a throw away remark at the Elders' Meeting a few days ago, while discussing something else, about the history and tradition of our church and the wider Reformed Movement. I wondered how much Reformed Theology played in your decision to join this church. Did you join because it was in a convenient place, or you had friends here, or you were made welcome, or you liked the simple style of worship. Did you consider the separation of the church from the state, the authority of the Church Meeting, the service to the wider community, no bishops, no mandatory prayerbook and all that history?

I think Rodolphe is about to lead us through some interesting times.

John Twidale

Leaflets

On the table at the rear of the church next to the coffee server, you can usually find a number of leaflets. Because I usually sit at that table to drink my tea, I normally read the leaflets while waiting for 'the musicians' to join me. I wonder how many others read these very informative bulletins?

I recently read the newsletter, 'Insight', from the RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind). The main feature was entitled 'Learn to Lend a Hand'. It explained that many people on seeing a person with sight loss are not quite sure what to do to help. Apparently, nine out of ten need assistance to make unfamiliar journeys. The key message was that it is OK to offer help. Just ask because that person might be grateful for assistance or could just decline your help.

The second leaflet I read, was from 'RE-Instate', a charity working to improve the quality of life and well-being for disadvantaged people in the London Borough of Bexley, including people with learning disabilities and autistic adults. The charity's programme was based on the New Economics Foundation's Five Ways to Well-being – Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Keep Learning and Give. I confess that I had never heard of the Charity, but I could sympathise with its good intentions.

The third leaflet was 'Prayer in Action', produced by the Bible Society. It gave suggestions about what to pray for during the period March to June. I list below one short prayer included for June:

May God the source of hope fill you with all joy and peace by means of your faith in

Him, so that your hope will continue to grow by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15.13 GNB

It seems to be a pity that we don't often find time to read the very helpful and informative leaflets displayed on the side table!

John Johnstone

Islands around the British Isles

At the Social in May the quiz was based on Islands around the British Isles and I was asked for more information about Burgh Island, nr Bigbury-on-Sea, Devon a favourite haunt of Agatha Christie. The picture on the front of the magazine is Burgh Island and on this page I have attached a picture of the Sea Tractor that takes you out from the Devon coast to the island when the tide is covering the causeway to the island.



Ann

Commitment for Life

Debt Justice Prayer by Heidi Chow

Dear God

Thank you for your heart for social and economic justice. We pray today for communities in the UK and across the Global South who are challenging the exploitation and hardship created by unjust debt.

We pray for the 54 countries that are in debt crisis and pray that UK politicians would introduce new legislation to help unblock efforts to cancel unpayable debt. Thank you for your idea of debt cancellation. Cancelling Global South debt today would release resources to fund healthcare, education and the climate emergency.

We also pray for households in our communities that are facing mounting debts created by soaring energy bills and rising prices. We pray for government action to cancel energy debt to address extreme financial pressures and give households a fresh start.

We pray for debt jubilee in the name of Jesus, Amen

A Prayer for Today

Father, help us to live in this present time
that you give us every moment,
Help us not to lose our way in worry,
to know that you forgive us the wrongs of the past,
You allow us to start again today.
Help us not to worry about the future,
To do what we can, what you ask of us Today,
And leave the rest in your hands. Amen

*Stephen Dawson, member Ipswich Road URC, Norwich
(from URC Daily Devotions)*

Commitment for Life



Supporting

Bangladesh

'Commitment for Life' is the global mission support and advocacy group within the United Reformed Church in Great Britain.

A Prayer on Economic Justice *by Richard Lewney*

God our Creator and Sustainer, we stand in a place of frustration, longing for the world as you intended it to be, while living in the world as it is. We see lives blighted by poverty, hunger and powerlessness. We see spirits 'oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care'. We participate in systems that depend on and perpetuate injustice. Sometimes our faith wavers, and your kingdom seems a long way away.

Restore our faith, we pray. Help us to see the signs of your kingdom breaking into our world today. Free those who are shackled by poverty. Bless them, and those who support them, as they pursue changes to make A real difference in their lives.

Give them, and us, today our daily bread. Amen



Weekly Programme

Sunday

Worship Service 10.30am (C)

Afternoon Concert (once a month) 3pm-4.30pm (C)

Monday

Exercise Classes (over 50s) 10am-11am (H)
(School Term Time only)

Afternoon Teas 2pm-4pm (C)

Tuesday

Whist Drive 2nd Tuesday 2pm-4pm (H)

Knit and Natter 3rd Tuesday 1pm-3pm (H)

Wednesday

Singing for Fun 1st and 4th Wednesday
1.30pm – 2.30pm (H)

Thursday

Exercise Classes (over 50s) 10am-11am
(School Term Time only) (H)

(C) in the Church (H) in the Hall

All Welcome



Meeting weekly in Church Hall during term time as well as
enjoying
outdoor activities

Mondays

4.30-5.30pm Rainbows

5.45-7.00pm Brownies

8.00-9.30pm Rangers

Wednesdays

7.30-9pm Guides

Our uniformed groups join the congregation for five parade services each year : Harvest Thanksgiving, Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Gift Service, Renewal of Promises and Easter gifts (eggs)

Children are Welcome

At present we do not have a Junior Church BUT for Young Children we do have a well equipped children's corner in the church where parents are welcome to supervise their little ones whilst being able to participate in worship.

Bexley United Reformed Church complies with The United Reformed Church Good Practice Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Young People in the Church.

Some useful contact numbers

Age UK - 0800 6781174 - provide information and advice that covers every facet of later life.

Bexley Borough Neighbourhood Watch - 020 8284 5537

Bexley Council - 020 8303 7777 Out of hours service 020 8303 7171

Bexley Crime Hotline - 0208284 9234 - report crimes confidentially and anonymously.

Bexley Voluntary Service Council – 01322 431765 – signposts elderly residents in Bexley to the right support services:

Bexley Borough Pensioner's Forum – 01322 527097 – is a non party-political equal opportunity organisation. Their principal aim is to promote the welfare and interests of pensioners in Bexley Borough.

Contact the Elderly – 0800 716 543 – companionship for older people suffering from loneliness and social isolation.

Crimestoppers – 0800 555111

Crossroads Care South East London – 01322 336086/341983 – provide a variety of services to carers of Children, Adults and Older vulnerable people with a diverse range of care and support needs across the London Boroughs of Bexley, Greenwich and Lewisham. Email: info@ccsel.org

Darent Valley Hospital, Darent – 01322 428100

Evergreen Care Bexley – 01322 431 765 – seek to serve the older vulnerable adults in our community by improving their circumstances through advocacy, friendship and practical support.

London Dial-a-Ride – 0343 222 7777 – a door to door multi-occupancy transport service for people with disabilities who cannot use public transport. It can be used for journeys such as shopping, visits to friends, appointments, and going out at night.

London Fire Brigade – general enquiries 020 8555 1200
Emergency calls **only** 999

Metropolitan Police – general enquiries 101. Emergency calls **only** 999

National Rail Travel – 03457 484950

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich – 020 8836 6000

Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup – 020 8302 2678

Samaritans – 116 123

Silverline – 0800 4 70 80 90 – is the only confidential, 24 hour, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year.