

## **BEXLEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

### **“CORONA CLARION” Issue 9: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020**

**Hello again!** At last those who are shielding can go outside! How good that must feel, but it may prove a bit of a reality check for some – queues, face coverings, social distancing. This is the new normal & it's important that we all stick to the guidelines. Unfortunately Coronavirus is still very much with us.

**Church news** Just to let you know that the Elders are meeting on August 4th face-to-face (with social distancing, face coverings & sanitizing!) for the 1<sup>st</sup> time since March! (We have had to use the Zoom technology for a couple of months – not easy for some of us!) We will be taking the important decision as to when & how the Church will be re-opening. This is a tough decision to make, as we have to consider the physical health of our members & friends as well as their spiritual well-being. We ask that you will accept that the Elders' decision is based on what they genuinely feel is in everyone's best interests. You will be informed of the decision as soon as possible.

**Farewell** In the first of the editions of the Clarion I used a passage from Romans 8 as a pause for thought:

“For I am certain that nothing can separate us from the love of God: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below – there is nothing in all creation that will even be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Good News emphasis added)

In this my last contribution to the Clarion I return to that passage. Lockdown is easing but the pandemic is far from over. Over the past months we have been united in love even as we have been apart from one another and those words have been borne out. God's love has sustained us all.

As I prepare to move on to another phase of my ministry, I am excited by the challenges I shall face with two local church congregations and with Northern College, I will need to hold those words in the forefront of my mind, nothing can separate me from God's love.

The same is true for you as you face the challenge of re-opening church buildings and decisions about how church life should continue safely and faithful to God.

I shall miss everyone and thank you for your support and fellowship over the last 6 years. **Alison**

**Goodbye, Alison,** & thank you for all you have done for the members & friends of Bexley URC over the past 6 years. It seems very odd not to be able to say a proper farewell, but hopefully, eventually, we may be able to invite you back for a final celebration of our time together! (You know us, always happy to have a party!) Our love & prayers go with you as you start the next chapter of your life.

**Answer to last issue's Poser** If ABAT40T stands for 'Ali Baba and the 40 thieves' what do SWAT7D and 4A20BBIAP stand for?

Snow White & the 7 dwarves & 4 & 20 blackbirds baked in a pie. (Easy when you know, isn't it?!)

#### **Puns for Educated Minds**

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering!

Two silkworms had a race. They ended up in a tie!

Did you hear about the Buddhist who refused Novocain during a root canal? His goal: transcendental medication!

#### **John's Aid to Relaxation**

I hope you are continuing to practise the exercises I have given in the previous editions of the Clarion. However, it is just as important to be able to relax as it is to exercise. Many people find it very difficult to wind down and others find it equally difficult to get to sleep. There are a number of techniques that you can practise.

*Step 1*

Sit down with your forearms resting on your thighs and palms facing upwards. Close your eyes. Breathe in through the mouth to the count of four and then breathe out through the mouth to the count of four. Repeat 5 times.

*Step 2*

Visualise yourself walking along a river bank. Hear the sound of the water, listen to the songs of the birds. Feel the wind on your face.

Alternatively visualise yourself walking slowly down stairs. Count the steps.

*Step 3*

Use soft, calming music to aid your relaxation. There are many tapes available which are designed to help relaxation e.g. chimes, chanting, water sounds etc. or you may be able to use any appropriate music you have available.

Enjoy the experience of relaxation! **John Johnstone**

**JUST FOR FUN!**

**WHICH NEW TESTAMENT BOOK IS MISSING?**

S Q S W E R B E H S U S S  
H B E P H E S I A N S N C  
H O Z B H V E A I A A A F  
R P H I L E M O N I T M C  
M E S U I L A I H P T O S  
S T K N S A J T E P I R I  
K E D W A T N Q T I M Q W  
L R S N A I S S O L O C E  
Z M E R R O T V T I T U S  
J B J O H N Y A T H H M O  
L U C M A R K C L P Y O J  
B R D D W E H T T A M I U  
D X P E K H S S O J G B V

**A Blessing**

May the Lord bless you, not with easy roads but with strong steps,

May the Spirit bless you, not with certainties and proofs, but with the leap of faith.

May the eternal God bless you, not with happiness for an hour, but with peace and joy forever.

And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

**Amen**