

**BEXLEY UNITED  
REFORMED  
CHURCH**



**SUMMER  
JUNE & JULY 2026**

**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 26<sup>th</sup> July 2026

BEXLEY URC CHURCH HALL  
& RUXLEY ROOM

Sadly our hall is not available  
for hire while modernisation is taking  
place

No: 264/265

**Services for June and July 2026 at 10.30sm except where stated**

	<b><u>Minister</u></b>	<b><u>Elder</u></b>
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	The Minister	Philip
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	John Twidale	Mavis
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Revd Ian Gow	Suzanne
	Holy Communion	
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	The Minister	Keith
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	John Twidale	Philip
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Valerie Loader	Mavis
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	The Minister	Keith
	Holy Communion	
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> July	Kathy Shaw	Suzanne

**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.

Thank you. *Philip Shepherd*

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

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Margaret Hunt (FCL), Ann Markey
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	Mavis Wilson, Dorothy Downs
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Elizabeth Whorlow, Angela Davis
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	Kathy Shaw, Lucy & Chris Reynolds & Rosie
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Debbie & Ian Markey & Family, John & Bee Twidale
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	June & Don Bobby, Keith Thomson
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Tony Ball and John Johnstone
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> July	The Minister & Family, Eileen Hollingsworth

Please continue to remember in your prayers over the holiday period those we have been thinking about in recent weeks, and give thanks to God for His loving care, which surrounds us at all times.

**Pause for Thought**

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Keith
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	Essie
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Stephanie
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	Lynda
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Bee
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Essie
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Ann
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> July	Lynda

**Flowers for June and July**

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Sandy
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> June	Mavis
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> June	Suzanne – Father's Day
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> June	Tony
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Michael
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	George Dimond
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Ann
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> July	Keith

**SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT**

**SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JULY  
3.00pm – 4.30pm**

**JIMMY VAN LIN**

**All are welcome**

## **The Minister's Pastoral Letter** **for June and July**

Dear Friends,

This is the longest season of the year, beginning at Pentecost. It ends just before Advent the following year. It is now the Church's turn to act, following the period of teaching on the birth, ministry, passion, and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### **From Disciples to Missionaries**

The disciples had witnessed together a vision of Jesus present with them in a different way ("I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!" (Revelation 1:18)). The disciples saw him ascend to heaven, to the mysterious place where God and his angels dwell. The disciples found themselves alone, without the earthly presence of the Master among them. They were like children who found themselves facing responsibilities prematurely, whilst their parents were no longer there. They then received the Spirit of God to equip, accompany and inspire them for the mission.

### **Images of the Spirit**

The Spirit of God was there from the beginning, before anything else existed. It was the breath that moved over the face of the primeval waters. The Spirit of God appeared in the form of a dove at the moment of Jesus' baptism. Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit in his farewell discourse to his disciples in terms of a defender, an advocate or a comforter who will be there for them when they need him. The Holy Spirit appears in the Bible in various ways. There are many facets and images used to describe him/her/it.

### **The Power of Grace**

The Holy Spirit is present in the history of the Church, in the personal lives of Christians, and in our own lives. The Holy Spirit inspires

movements and ways of thinking, and helps us to spontaneously bring that extra measure of grace which characterises the work of Christians in the world.

The Holy Spirit is probably the person of the Trinity who is the most difficult to perceive and describe – unlike the Creator Father and Jesus, whose actions and teachings we know. The Holy Spirit is the force that makes us creative, that helps us see what is important, that is stronger than the traditions and rules that stifle us or whose meaning we do not understand.

### **Summer Blessings**

I wish you a wonderful summer and pray that the Spirit of God may guide, comfort and sustain you amongst your loved ones and in every encounter you have.

Rev Dr Rodolphe Blanchard-Kowal

## Elder's Letter for June and July

Dear Friends,

Twice in recent months I have found myself at meetings discussing how much we in the United Reformed Church spend time talking or teaching about our denomination and what makes it different.

I suppose it makes sense that in a church committed to a wider Christian Unity, we don't always emphasise the differences. The URC was formed in 1972 by the Union of the Presbyterian Church of England and the Congregational Church in England and Wales. We became a British Church a few years later when the Churches of Christ joined and later the Scottish Congregational Church.

Only in two short periods was the Reformed tradition dominant in England, during the short reign of Edward VI (1547-53) and the Commonwealth (1649-53). Both periods where the rulers chose the state religion.

In European terms the Reformed tradition looked to Switzerland, Netherlands and, of course, Scotland.

The phrase "priesthood of all believers" has occurred a few times recently. This teaches that every Christian has direct access to God and shares in Christ's priestly ministry, empowered to serve, intercede, and proclaim His truth. We do not need priests to interpret for us or need dead saints to intercede.

There is a built-in democracy in the URC with our three decision making councils.

Every church member is expected to be involved in the work of the church. The Church Meeting sends delegates to the Synod and the Synod to General Assembly. The officers of the Church have to

encourage these councils to reach decisions and then faithfully implement them. It is easy to understand that in both state and church government those in the hierarchy were very uneasy about letting ordinary people have a say.

We believe that Christ gives his Church a government distinct from the government of the state. In things that affect obedience to God the church is not subordinate to the state.

Historically our differences with the Anglicans have always been summed up as Prayer Books and Bishops. We have gathered churches of like-minded people coming together where ever we live. The Parish system in other churches, particularly in towns and cities is breaking down with people choosing to join a congregation outside their Parish boundary.

We acknowledge only two Sacraments, Baptism and The Lord's Supper. These are retained because the Protestant reformers concluded that Scripture only supports rites directly instituted by Jesus Christ himself. Ordination, Marriage etc are still important but not seen as Sacraments.

I'm now worried about the things I've missed and things not fully explained.

Of course, there are many beliefs and practices we share with all Christians, others that we agree with other Protestants and more with other Non-conformists and even within the Reformed community there are some differences but thank God these days we are mostly willing to live with differences and work in common purpose with others.

*John Twidale*

## Sport

There are lots of different sports going on at the moment, crowds going to matches, watching on TV or they are playing and getting very excited about it all. I don't understand the rules and regulations of all these different sports although they have been explained many times, they are all so difficult, especially the rules governing cricket! See how you get on.

## Cricket

You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. each man that is in the side that's in goes out and when he's out he comes in and the next man goes in until he is out. When they are all out the side that is out comes in and the side that has been in goes out and tries to get those coming in out. Sometimes you get men still in and not out. When both sides have been in and out including the not outs ..... that's the end of the game.

## Howzat!

I return to my book!      *Mavis*

## Audio-visual

For several years we have hoped for a permanent audio-visual ('AV') system in the church building. There have been weaknesses with our sound, and the lack of visual equipment has restricted our ability to complement worship, concerts and meetings. In 2018 we approached Clarity in Sound, Light and Vision Ltd, a company which supplies AV equipment for education and places of worship and they proposed a suitable system.

During 2025 we were offered a generous and anonymous gift for the purchase and installation of audio-visual. Clarity and another company visited and provided quotes within a range we could seriously consider.

We engaged Clarity and they have installed an AV system, which we have started to use for worship and meetings. There are five monitors, it links to the existing microphones and T-loop system and to the speaker in the side classroom. There are some new electrical sockets and the plaque in memory of William Hodgins has been re-located. The system is controlled from a rack on the pulpit side of the church.

It is early days and we have experienced some teething issues and there will be an element of trial and error as we receive constructive feedback.

Our thanks for the gift which made this possible and for our successful application for a grant from Southern Synod. The system has been funded entirely from these sources.

Our thanks are also due to the people within our church who made this possible by working together to provide us with technology which is fit for contemporary worship.

*Philip Shepherd*

## What is Truth?

Having found one interesting book in the church library I pulled another rabbit out of the hat. Colin Evans, the author, was persuaded by Carol Rogers, who some will remember from Nigel Rogers' ministry in our church, to collect forty meditations into a book. Colin was a URC Minister and regular broadcaster, and his collection is far from dull. One of his pieces set me off for the following article.

The question, what is truth? was asked by Pontius Pilate to Jesus during his interrogation by the Roman Consul. Jesus chose not to reply. He had already declared to his disciples, 'I am the truth'. Pilate may have been asking a genuine question or implying, who cares about the truth? The latter attitude might apply to certain newspapers and politicians!

Truth may well be in the eye of the beholder. In the case of witnesses in a trial, a good criminal barrister can soon cast doubt upon what a witness might have thought he had seen. Oscar Wilde is quoted as saying 'The English are always degrading the truth into facts' and 'I have difficulty in knowing, what is the truth'. Wilde was being witty but there was point to his wit.

If you watch politicians being interviewed on television, you rarely get a straight answer to a question. Even in Prime Ministers Questions in the House of Commons where there is a requirement that a Minister must answer truthfully, there have been complaints that questions are not answered. I realise that in some cases, as a matter of secrecy or confidentiality, a politician cannot divulge certain information, but nevertheless it is irritating when a politician speaks at length without answering the question which was posed.

Having cast doubt upon the meaning of truth I turned to the dictionary, which was no more helpful. It said, truth is the opposite of false and truth is a fact or belief which is accepted as true; which doesn't get us far.

Maybe it is better to record what Jesus actually said about truth. Jesus said, 'My task is to bear witness to the truth, for this I was born, for this I came into the world, and all who are not deaf to truth listen to my voice'.

John Johnstone Ref, A Knock at the Door, Colin Evans 2005



**Bexley**  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# Weekly Programme

## Sunday

Worship Service 10.30am (C)

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

## Monday

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

Afternoon Teas 2pm-4pm (C)

## Tuesday

Whist Drive 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 2pm-4pm (H)

Knit and Natter 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 1pm-3pm (H)

## Wednesday

Singing for Fun 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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

## Girlguiding at Bexley URC

### Rainbows

(for 4 to 7 year-olds)

Mondays, 4.30pm to 5.30pm

### Guides

(for 10 to 14 year-olds)

Wednesdays, 7.30pm to 9pm

### Brownies

(for 7 to 10 year-olds)

Mondays, 5.45pm to 7pm

### Rangers

(for 14 to 18 year-olds)

Mondays, 7.30pm to 9pm

To register your daughter, visit  
[www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus)

To register as an adult volunteer, visit  
[www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved)



### 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 details for Bexley residents :**

Age UK Bexley – Services for older people  
020 8300 0883 [www.ageuk.org.uk/bexley](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/bexley)

Alzheimer's Society – Dementia advice and support  
01322 524950 [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

Bexley Accessible Transport Service – Telephone support & prescription pickup  
01322 322333 [www.bexleyct.co.uk](http://www.bexleyct.co.uk)

Bexley Carers' Support - Support for Carers  
020 8302 8011 [www.carerssupport.org](http://www.carerssupport.org)

Bexley Council Contact Centre – 020 8303 7777 (Mon-Fri 8am-5pm)

Bexley Deaf Centre – support for deaf & hard of hearing residents  
01322 351122 [www.bexleydeafcentre.com](http://www.bexleydeafcentre.com)

Bexley Mencap – Support for people with a learning disability & their families  
020 8303 6336 [www.bexleymencap.org.uk](http://www.bexleymencap.org.uk)

Bexley Moorings – Befriending & virtual social group for ages 10-15  
020 8304 9609 [www.bexleymoorings.co.uk](http://www.bexleymoorings.co.uk)

Bexley Voice – Service for parent/carers of SEND children  
07512 409936 (Thurs a.m.) [www.bexleyvoice.org.uk](http://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk)

Bexley Women's Aid – Domestic abuse support for women  
020 8301 1536 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-12.30pm) [www.bexleywomensaid.org.uk](http://www.bexleywomensaid.org.uk)

CAP – debt advice  
0800 3280006

Citizens Advice – Advice for legal, financial and housing issues  
01322 517150 Mon-Fri 9.30am-3.30pm [www.bexleycab.org.uk](http://www.bexleycab.org.uk)

Counselling Matters – low cost counselling  
07498 377305 [www.counsellingmattersbexley.org](http://www.counsellingmattersbexley.org)

Crimestoppers UK – 0800 555111

Darent Valley Hospital, Darent - 01322 428100

Family Lives – support for parents with a child under 5 years experiencing challenges 07739 788120 [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

London Fire Brigade – general enquiries 020 8555 1200. Emergency 999

ManKind – domestic abuse helpline for men  
01823 334244 weekdays 10am-4pm

Mental Health Crisis Line - 0800 330 8590

Metropolitan Police – general enquiries 101. Emergency only 999.

Mind in Bexley – Talking therapies and support for Mental Health  
020 8303 8932 [www.mindinbexley.org.uk](http://www.mindinbexley.org.uk)

National Rail Enquiries – 03457 484950

Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Woolwich - 020 8836 6000

Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup – 020 83022678

Re-instate – Employment retention support  
01322 438155 [www.re-instate.co.uk](http://www.re-instate.co.uk)

Samaritans freephone - 116 123