

**BEXLEY UNITED
REFORMED
CHURCH**



**SPRING
MAY 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 17th May 2026

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

**Hall will be closed for new bookings
until the Autumn**

But

Inquiries to: Tony Ball 0791 0800176
anthony.ball73@ntlworld.com

Services for May 2026 at 10.30am except where stated

	<u>Minister</u>	<u>Elder</u>
Sunday 3 rd May	Philip Shepherd	Suzanne
Sunday 10 th May	John Johnstone	Keith
Sunday 17 th May	The Minister	Philip
	Holy Communion	
Sunday 24 th May	Valerie Loader	John T.
Sunday 31 st May	Anthony Ball	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 May are:-

Sunday 3 rd May	Peter Linder, Francis Christou
Sunday 10 th May	Philip Shepherd, Michael Adams
Sunday 17 th May	Helen & Mike North, Barbara Anderson
Sunday 24 th May	Edward & Essie Boateng, Margaret Hunt(Sals)
Sunday 31 st May	Sandy Lewis, Sue Clark

Please continue to remember in your prayers –

Mavis Wilson, Eileen Hollingsworth

Pause for Thought

Sunday 3 rd May	Keith
Sunday 10 th May	Essie
Sunday 17 th May	Kathy
Sunday 24 th May	Stephanie
Sunday 31 st May	Lynda

Flowers for May

Sunday 3rd May

Sunday 10th May

Sunday 17th May

Sunday 24th May

Sunday 31st May

See List at back of the Church

SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT

SUNDAY 31st MAY

3.00pm – 4.30pm

**DOUG SNOW
ORGAN RECITAL**

All are welcome

Pastoral Prayer

We humbly lift our heads to you and cry a silent tear.
We humbly fill our hearts with you, to take away the fear.
We seek the way to walk with you as on the road we go,
believing there can be a place where kindness overflows.
We own our faults, for we have sinned, and there we must confess
that right and wrong are hard and that we sometimes fail the test.
We humbly say, along the way, the journey may be slow,
but we believe you are the place where kindness overflows.

John Cook. URC Prayer Handbook 2025 (submitted by Kathy)

Elder's Letter for May 2026

I recently attended the funeral of a senior member of my family. For the first time, I delivered a funeral tribute. I wanted it to be a reflection of the long life of the deceased, which was now complete. Part of the tribute concerned my relative's spiritual life, not just because the service was in a church building but that I knew he had moved away from the church of his childhood and most of his adult life and had explored the richness of other parts of Christendom. His spiritual journey was very much part of who he was and why we met to celebrate. The occasion also made me realise that I have now become one of the senior members of the family, which can be quite scary.

I think there are similarities with the life of a church, by which I mean any church, not just the one which gathers at 500 Hurst Road. My belief is the church is the people. We describe ourselves as the priesthood of all believers. To me, this means that in the sight of God, we are all equal and no-one should claim or expect any superiority. We all have something to offer in service of the Risen Saviour. Our buildings are facilities with which our people work to share our faith and need to be suitable for that work. It is the people who matter with all their quirks, imperfections and human frailties. We come to worship a God who loves and cares for us. We mature and change as we progress through life and our outlooks are influenced by our experiences. We are not the same people we were 20, 40, 60 or more years ago. The world has changed and we change within it. In our church we are thankful for those who have gone before us. Without them, we would not be here today and we move forwards from their work.

To celebrate one life is to celebrate all. This is typical in a family setting but a church is also a family of believers. We pass on from one generation to another and look to different approaches. It is natural for younger and older people to think and act differently. If this was not the case, there can be no progression and what we have would become extinct. We have challenges ahead, which are exciting for their opportunities and, to some extent, scary.

We have recently celebrated Easter and our belief in the risen Christ. This is why we worship on a Sunday, the day of Resurrection. At the core of our faith is a story of a life, a death and a rising from the dead and this is reflected in our church life. For our faith to be alive, it is the faith of present which looks to the future and is not bound by the past.

I wish you blessings throughout this season as we await the Holy Spirit, our Comforter.

Philip Shepherd

The Son of God

I once had a discussion with a friend of mine, Wael, a devout Muslim, who said the trouble with you Christians is that you believe in three Gods. I tried to explain the concept of the Trinity, but he remained unconvinced. I thought later, who are you kidding? You don't even understand it yourself!

In the Gospels we read that Jesus went off by himself to pray. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed to God not to put him to the test, but accepting that God's will be done. The question that arises in my mind is; who was he praying to?

It is a tenet of the Christian faith that Jesus is God. Indeed, the Nicene Creed states:

‘We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
Eternally begotten of the Father’.

Yet, Islam, while regarding Jesus as a prophet would not regard him as the son of God. Indeed, some Christians would argue that Jesus was merely a gifted preacher, who inspired the Christian Faith but cannot bring themselves to accept that he is the son of God. As for atheists like Richard Dawkins, he argues:

‘There is no good historical evidence that he ever thought he was divine’

Simon Loveday, in his book, *The Bible for Grown-Ups*, writes;

‘He obeyed the Law, but was relaxed about breaches of it; he performed miracles of healing, but did not insist on payment, either in money or in repentance. He associated with the rural poor, but also with the urban rich. He lived a pure life, yet was not ashamed to keep company with drunks and prostitutes’

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ was sent by God to be the saviour of the world. While being human he was also divine. So, the answer to the question, is Jesus, God? Can only be a matter of faith, but not

blind faith. Jesus said, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me', quoting the prophet Isaiah.

We read in the Bible various descriptions of Jesus; he was the suffering servant, the Lamb of God, born to bear the sin of the world. Christianity is not the only religion in the world. There are other great faiths, each with millions of followers. With Christianity, it is Jesus himself who is all important. He once described himself as 'the way, the truth and the life. We may acknowledge the Trinity without being entirely sure what it means!

John Johnstone.



1/4/2026

Dear Friends of Bexley United Reform Church, Rainbows, Brownies & Guides,

We would like to say a HUGE 'THANK YOU' to all who contributed to the wonderful array of Easter eggs you so kindly donated to our families, women & children. It really will make such a difference for them all to receive an Easter egg at this special time of year. You are all superstars

Your donation plays a significant role in the services that we provide at Bexley Women's Aid, and will enable us to keep providing as much as we can to the families we support. We greatly appreciate your kindness and generosity and hope that you will share our thanks with everyone involved.

On behalf of the staff, women, children and residents of Bexley Women's Aid we would like to thank you for your continued support.

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

Helen Education & Prevention Service
Bexley Women's Aid

Darent Valley Hospital
Darenth Wood Road
Dartford
Kent
DA2 8DA

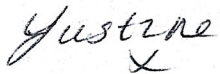
Tel: 01322 428100
www.dgt.nhs.uk

Paediatric Willow Ward
01322 428702

Dear Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, members and friends,

Thank you for your kind donation of Easter eggs for the children on the ward.
This really helps the children and cheers them up when they're unwell and in hospital.

Yours sincerely



Justine Gill
Play specialist

Thank you

X
X

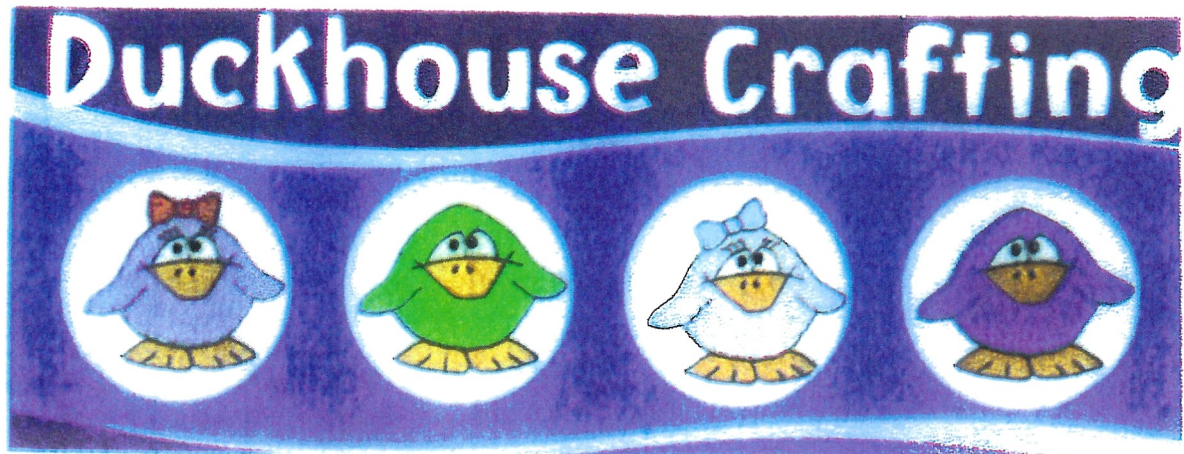


Dear friends

Thank you for your generous donation of Easter goodies

Your support is hugely appreciated by the staff, children and their families

We wish you a lovely summer from the children and staff at Demelza Esthram X



CRAFT WORKSHOP

This is a full day craft workshop from 10am until 4pm.

Location: - Bexley United Reform Church Hall, Hurst Road, Bexley, Kent DA5 3JN (Parking available)

Date: **Wednesday 20th May 2026**

Cost: - £15.00 (All materials will be supplied.)

We will be making 4 cards using different materials and techniques.

To book a place contact Penny: -
duckhousecrafting@gmail.com 07415 138284

(Please ensure you bring a packed lunch - tea/coffee and cake will be provided)



Book Recycling

I thought you would like to see the amounts of money the church has received from the books I have sent off for recycling over the last few months and also the inkjet cartridges.

Kathy

Offer ID	Offer Amount	Offer Date	Offer Status	View Details
2666500	£12.54	2026-04-06 09:43:13	Paid and Complete	View Details
2625477	£13.45	2026-01-06 11:03:49	Paid and Complete	View Details
2590138	£14.54	2025-10-19 12:17:02	Paid and Complete	View Details
2572679	£12.61	2025-09-15 14:05:49	Paid and Complete	View Details



Your Monthly Statement

Dear Kathy Shaw ,

C73655 - Bexley United Reformed Church

Thank you for recycling your printer cartridges with Recycle4Charity.

Congratulations! You and your supporters have raised **£24.70** during the period of 1st March 2026 - 31st March 2026.

This donation will be paid to your organisation on or shortly after the **21st of April 2026**.

Total funds raised
for your charity:
£205.95

Raised in the last
12 months:
£38.55





Commitment for Life



Supporting
Bangladesh

Prayer : Hope in the midst of poverty

By Pat Poinen, a member of the URC and the Windrush generation

God of our weary years, you have journeyed with us through struggle and strength. From the islands and nations of our birth to the shores where we planted new roots in faith.

God of our ancestors, may your Holy Spirit descend upon us.

We remember those whose lives are still marked by poverty – families denied opportunity, children going hungry, elders left behind by systems that fail to care. We carry them in our prayers, and in our hearts.

We know that poverty does not have the final word.

Hope is rising – in the laughter of a child fed, in the courage of communities demanding justice, in the daily resilience of those the world overlooks.

Lord Jesus, make us part of your work of restoration.

Help us to be bearers of hope – not only in word, but in action;
not only in charity, but in solidarity.

Lord, grant us collective faith and hope to overcome injustices, imposed by those in power in our world.

With faith rooted in your promises, we pray in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen

Submitted by Kathy

Fantastic Week End

Saturday 18th April 2026 we had a book sale. We have not had one for a long time although we sell books at the table top sales. This was slightly different with only books. It had been advertised at other churches. Several of us set up the tables and books on Friday and



even this was nice to have coffee and chat, while books were being sorted. At the same time several members were preparing for the cream tea by measuring out individual portions of jam and cream. It looked like youngsters playing with a chemistry set with lots of laughter. On Saturday we

buntings and
We were a bit
God wanted to use
So after a nervous
doors were open. A
were waiting. In the
hour some people
of books, but
people from other



put up
balloons.
unsure how
us today.
prayer the
few people
first half
brought lots
wonderfully
churches

started talking and laughing in a group. It was wonderful supporting fellowship. On the count we raised over £80 and a cheque.

On **Sunday 19th April** at 2.50pm Colin started playing and providing his wonderful piano atmosphere from all types of music. We opened the doors and quickly the hall filled up. We had to get more chairs out, On the door we charged £5 for a suggested donation, but people

were giving £10s and £20s not wanting change. Some one suggested we provide gift aid forms to increase the money the Hospice could get. At the door people felt comfortable talking about losing people close to them and they helped me in telling them how the Hospice helps a lot more people than just those in the building. The money and cheques were taken to the Hospice on Monday morning, on Monday afternoon I was given more money which was taken on Tuesday, On Wednesday I was given another cheque for the Hospice which was taken there on Thursday. I always feel very welcome there, talking to the nurses and doctors who knew my wife Anne, and the fundraising team. There are so many people we need to thank for this wonderful weekend. The people who came up with the idea, and sorted out the calendar, those who promoted the events with giving out leaflets, collecting the books, setting up the tables, moving the heavy boxes of books around , sorting the books, setting up the hall and decorating the tables, buying and setting out the refreshments and tea and jam, the team working behind the scene in the kitching preparing and washing up, the team serving the food, everyone who put the tables and chairs away, sweeping up the hall and taking all the leftover books to the Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice warehouse in Welling. In total we raised

£1000.50

But, we also provided a great time for all who attended and got to know lots of new friends. It was a truly fantastic weekend.

Tony Ball



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-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

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

To register as an adult volunteer, visit
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.