



The
United
Reformed
Church

Kindle

The newsletter of the
Romford United Reformed
Churches

February 2018

Dear friends,

***Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice.
Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.
Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and
supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made
known to God.***

***And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.***

(Philippians 4: 4-7, NRSV Bible)

Do not worry about anything!

At the start of this new year, there is much we could worry about.

I read a statistic recently claiming that January is generally the month in which people feel at their lowest. I would assume that this is caused by a number of factors, such as the dark, long winter days, the bleakness of our surroundings after the exuberance and light during Advent & Christmas, and the level of expectation our society presents us with at the turn of the year.

And every year around this time I am reminded of Bonhoeffer's powerful hymn, *By gracious powers: "By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered, and confidently waiting come what may, we know that God is with us night and morning, and never fails to greet us each new day."*

Bonhoeffer wrote this hymn in prison at the turn of the year that would end World War 2. He didn't know what the new year had in store for him. He would never see any further new years on earth. He didn't know just how near he was to meeting his Lord. These hymn words are among the last writings of Bonhoeffer. And they express a deep faith in God's presence. They reflect the peace of God which surpasses all understanding.

Likewise, Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians from prison and expected it to be one of his last letters, as he was sure of his impending death at the hands of the Roman Empire.

Both Paul and Bonhoeffer were able to use the most difficult times in life to encourage people in faith. Both knew and trusted that God was with them and found His Peace even in their own turmoil and anxiety.

So let us rejoice, not worry, and experience the Peace of God transforming our lives!

This new year, some things will change in our churches and the Heath & Havering Group. Others will remain the same. Our vacancy for a part-time colleague is officially declared and advertised to URC ministers and ordinands. While we are waiting to hear news of anyone exploring a call to our vacancy, we are implementing some changes to prepare for this new minister. The Heath & Havering Group will consist of 2 pastorates, served by a stipendiary minister each. From this month (February), I will wind down my pastoral and ministerial involvement with the Romford pastorate (Western Road and Heaton Way), which is in vacancy, and will then focus primarily on the full-time pastorate of Trinity, Nelmes and Chadwell Heath URCs.



Western Road

February 2018

4th Gill & Fiona

11th Revd. Ann Woodhurst

18th Revd. Dorothee B  urma

25th Revd. Dorothee B  urma

Heaton Way

February 2018

4th Frances Ackroyd 11th
Revd. Ann Woodhurst

Evening - Heath and Havering at
Heaton Way

18th Revd. Dorothee B  urma

Communion-Church Meeting

25th Revd. Dorothee B  urma

March 2018

4th Graham and Jim

2018 Spring Clothing Collection

Whitechapel Mission rely on various organisations for the clothing that is needed in the London area for the homeless. In the autumn we managed to almost fill Tony's van, so let us try to repeat that. As well as adult clothing and shoes the homeless need toiletries, towels etc, anything needed for daily living. The date for this Spring is SUNDAY 15 APRIL 2018.

Start collecting now, anything can be stored in our garage (please see Tom. Thank you,

Betty

Both Ann Woodhurst and I will continue to be involved in the leadership of the Heath & Havering Group and look forward to welcoming a new colleague to the Ministry team when the vacancy has been filled. We will continue to coordinate group activities jointly and to build up mutual support and fellowship among the members of the group.

Ann will continue to preach in all the group churches, while I will honour my commitments until June and then focus solely on the churches of the pastorate I have been assigned by the Steering Committee in the light of the vacancy.

Whatever this year presents us with as churches and as individuals - "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." God Himself will surround us with His Peace. Let us be thankful, let us rejoice, but most of all, let us allow God to embrace us and wrap us in His Peace.

In thankfulness for the shape of my ministry with you so far, and with joyful anticipation of what is yet to come, may the Peace of our Lord be with us all!

Love & blessings,

your minister Dorothee

Christmas now seems rather far away, and we are already thinking of the Pancake Party, Easter Banner Making on Ash Wednesday and activities for Holy Week. But our thanks are due to everyone who took services and activities during the Christmas season. All were enjoyable and helped us celebrate. A new activity was the making of Advent Meditation books. These were on display at Church Meeting. With a focal colouring page for each week, we added carols, pictures and meditations to centre our preparation for Christmas. Those who took part enjoyed the shared thinking and doing time.

The Colouring in Time has started well and provides a welcome time for relaxation and coffee and chat. There is plenty of space for others to join us, come regularly or when you can.

At Church Meeting Gill Shepherd became the Church Secretary once more. She says, 'This morning I am regretting it as Dorothee sent me lots of 'zip folders' to download, read and act on so when you see me submerged under paper work have some sympathy. My computer skills are only adequate, and I am about to buy a new printer to cope with the resultant deluge!

We thank Graham Cull for his time of service as secretary (he enjoyed the computer) we all have different skills! So, watch this space.

On Ash Wednesday we are going to make 4 new banners for Holy Week, one for Palm Sunday, one for Maundy Thursday, a Good Friday one and an Easter Sunday one. Come and help from 2.00 onwards on 14th February.

Gill



Just to update you all that our Church continues to thrive with many outside groups using our Church each week, and I believe our outreach is better than ever.

Most of the time locking up is covered by Kirk, Church friends, family or in some cases the lettings themselves. Currently, we have 1 group who meet once or sometimes twice per month who prefer us to lock up for them. They do all their own clearing up, so it is only to check everything over and lock up no heavy lifting of chairs etc.

This is where I ask for help – up to now I have been able to cover the locking up at 4.15pm on a Saturday afternoon, however, with family being unwell or needing visit 80 miles away most Saturday's, it has not been impossible but more difficult. If you are a key holder and could lock up on one occasion during the year, please let me know and I will add your name to the rota. Many thanks to all the help & extra help received recently when Kirk was off work for several months.

Best wishes

Ceri

Minister

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