



The
United
Reformed
Church

The COURIER

April.May 2018

*Our sins
put Him on
the Cross,
but love kept
Him there!*



United Reformed Church
New Road, Brentwood

BRENTWOOD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4GD

Church Office ☎ 01277 227556

Church Foyer ☎ 01277 217361

A Joint Pastorate with Ingatestone And Billericay
United Reformed Churches
www.brentwood-urc.org.uk

MINISTER Ruth Mitchel ☎ 01277633143

CHURCH SECRETARY Jenny Mayo ☎

TREASURER Mr Kees Maxey ☎

COVENANTS Mr Jim Bealey ☎

ORGANISTS Mr Tony Cheer ☎
Mrs Muriel Cantor ☎

SERVING
ELDERS Mr Ian Davidson ☎
Mr Kees Maxey ☎
Ms Rosalie Brentnall ☎

HALL
STEWARD Gabrielle Crowther All bookings:
www.brentwood-urc.org.uk

Dear Friends

This year amazingly Easter Sunday falls on April 1st - April Fool's Day'.



So is it foolish to think God is the least bit interested in our world?

Many would think so; they would point to the wars and conflicts all around our world; the acts of terrorism, famine, increase knife and gun crime and a greedy selfish unbelieving society!

Is it foolish to believe God answers prayer? To read the bible and believe it is God's word? And as for believing Jesus is the Son of God died and rose again – the message of the cross you cannot get more foolish than that surely?

Then of course there all Jesus' teaching surely that's not relevant for today it just utter folly.

I mean – turn the other cheek, love your enemies, forgive 70 X7?

Love others as ourselves?

Be willing to serve and not count the cost?

And take up a cross and follow, die in order to live?

The beatitudes are just absurd surely?

BUT BY WHO'S STANDARDS, OURS, THE WORLD'S, OR GOD'S?

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.....

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 1 Cor. 1.25,27

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts..... Isaiah 55:8-9

If you are going to start a movement that you want to last – you would pick the best most qualified people to come on board with you, yes?

You would not pick, a cheat, someone who worked for the opposition, hot headed brothers’ a struggling fisherman’ a pessimist **and** you certainly would not pick people with dubious reputation – that is just utter folly **BUT AGAIN BY WHOSE STANDARDS, OURS, THE WORLD’S OR GOD’S?**

THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD IS WISER THAN MAN’S WISDOM

A long history had promised a messiah was to come – a saviour was to set God’s people free.

The religious leaders had their own very clear and firm idea of who God would provide. They had all the clues and information from the prophets, **BUT** blinded by what **they believed** God should do. Yet again and again Jesus failed

to conform. Yet before their eyes prisoners were being set free, sight to the blind, broken hearts mended **and they missed it all.**

So when they expected a mighty conquering hero/king to ride in to Jerusalem, on a white charger/horse; Jesus rides in on a donkey – humble, symbolising peace and not war. It **just** didn't fit their view of what they believed God should and would do.

Even the disciples struggled at times understanding what was happening. It was not until after Jesus' death and resurrection then the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, that the disciples began to see the amazing wisdom of '**God's folly**' in action as people's lives were transformed and now they could understand what Jesus had been telling them all along.

Through the event leading up to Easter and the weeks following we continue to witness to and recall the depth of God's love for each of. Every time we share together in the Lord's Supper we see a reminder of that love, a love that turns all the worldly ideas upside down, a love that appears to the world as weak and foolish yet it is **only by this love** that we and our world can be truly healed and transformed in to his likeness.

Lord set us free from the world's standards
Lord turn us upside down
Lord transform us

Lord grant us your wisdom and make us fools for your sake.

Love and prayers

Ruth

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Please note that full names and birth dates are not mentioned due to new legislation regarding protection of personal information.

There does not seem to be much news of the church family this month and it is to be hoped that no news is good news. Clive R. had his second cataract operation and is very pleased with the result. Stan F. has had his knee replacement operation and is obviously pleased with the result as he has been seen riding his bicycle around town. We have no up-to-date news of Jim S. who has been back in hospital again but hopes to be home by the time this goes to press. Eileen B. has heart problems and is housebound – one of her neighbours is kindly giving her a helping hand. Jim B. is very poorly but Helen is over from New Zealand for a few weeks which has given him and Sally much support. All of our prayers and best wishes also go to Ruth and Jim with both their health.

I hope that no-one has been missed or overlooked – the pastoral group welcomes any input from church members as to problems we might have overlooked. Please remember all our church members in your prayers.



– we even have very few birthdays to report in this issue – Elizabeth will be nineteen in May and Kees will be 81 in May - many happy returns to you both .

Rosalie Brentnall

NEWS FROM THE CHURCH SECRETARY**RETIREMENT OF OUR MINISTER**

It was with great regret and sympathy that we learned of the retirement of our minister, Ruth, at the end of May. We have all been aware of the many health problems for both Ruth and Jim and send them our love and very best wishes for a restful and much less stressed time ahead. They will, of course, not be far away and we hope to hear regular news in future.

ELDERS ELECTIONS 2018

The annual elections resulted in Kees Maxey being elected to serve a further three years as elder but unfortunately nobody else could be found willing to stand. We thank Jim Bealey and Corne Van Staden for their service during the last few years. We therefore now have only four elders - Jenny Mayo, Kees Maxey, Rosalie Brentnall and Ian Davidson. As we are now going into a period of vacancy with the retirement of our minister, Ruth, there will be even more demands than usual placed on the elders. Please remember them in your prayers and give as much support as you can.

LENT GROUP MEETINGS WITH BRENTWOOD METHODIST CHURCH

We have shared five meetings with our Methodist friends, using the York Course booklet "On the Third Day" when we shared stimulating thoughts on the Resurrection that, as usual, prompted wider conversations. We all agreed that these meetings were much appreciated and that we

would look ahead later in the year to a further series during Advent.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

This was held on Sunday 25th March and was probably the quickest anyone could remember - 20 minutes! Reports from those responsible for all our activities were printed so that they could be read at leisure. If you were not able to be at the meeting but would like to have a copy of the reports, please let me know. I have plenty of spare copies.



**35th UNLOCK LONDON
WALK – SATURDAY
28TH APRIL**

We now know that this year's walk is under the heading of "Together in Tottenham". The seven and a half mile circuit will, we are told, be around Tottenham Hale, the High Road, Seven Sisters and West Green and will go along a canal towpath, an old Roman road and several green parks, as well as some interesting buildings, old and new. Football fans might be interested to know that these will include the new stadium being built for Tottenham Hotspur. Among the churches to visit, one is the first new build Church of England church in London for 40 years. You can find out more details including a map of the route on their website, www.unlock-urban.org.uk, or speak to me. Sponsors will be welcome!

Jenny Mayo



Report from Treasurer

We have received a very generous legacy from Patricia Benham of £5,000 for the work of the church.

The collection for the past three months (January to March inclusive) was as follows:

	Loose	Envelopes	Total
Total 2017	1,720.26	8,152.45	9,872.71
per week 2017	33.08	156.78	189.86
Jan-March 2018	338.18	2,074.50	2,412.68
per week so far 2018	28.18	172.88	201.06

Kees

MONDAY GUILD

At the February meeting we were pleased to welcome Sheila and Kees Maxey who showed slides of their river cruise journey through Ukraine. The very interesting presentation was appreciated by everyone.

The March meeting was led by Margaret and Tony Cheer with hymns, Bible readings and artwork in keeping with the season of Lent.

Our next meeting will be at 2.30 pm on April 9th in the William Hunter room and then May 14th.

Eileen Goult



Christian Aid Week

13- 19 May 2018

Christian Aid Week was founded by the Church more than 60 years ago in order to help the Church in its concern for the poor and its fight against injustice.

We, in this local church, are not currently able to take part in the house-to-house collection so our support will be as follows:

- **Learning** more about Christian Aid's work. This year the week is focussing on Haiti after Hurricane Matthew and a DVD about that work will be shown during worship on Sunday 13th May. Below is the story of Vilia which will also be told in the DVD.
- **Praying** - especially as we use the words 'thy kingdom come' whenever we say the Lord's prayer
- **Giving** - envelopes will be distributed from 6th May – and remember to Gift Aid if you can.
- Consider offering an envelope to friends or family outside the church.
- Neil Roper, the Christian Aid area organiser who came to present Stan with his Diamond Award and introduce the Christmas Appeal, is running in the London Marathon for Christian Aid. If you would like to sponsor him, click on the following link <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/neil-roper3>

Vilia's story,

For Vilia, it's remembering the lessons she learnt from her mother. Her mum was an incredibly strong woman, and she passed her strength on to her daughter. But that strength alone wasn't enough to save her when the earthquake hit Haiti in 2010. Vilia doesn't know how her mother died, and never found her body. It's still deeply painful for her. The earthquake not only killed Vilia's mother, it also destroyed her home. She was forced to move back to her hometown in the south of the country, but with seven children to care for and nowhere safe to stay, life was a real struggle.



Thankfully. Christian Aid's partner KORAL was there to help Vilia. They built her a new home, safe and strong enough to stand up to natural disasters. She will never forget her mother, but our help has allowed her to move on from the other things she lost. The new house made Vilia incredibly happy, but it's done more than that. It's been a safe haven for dozens of people when they needed it most.

On that terrifying night when Hurricane Matthew hit, Vilia's neighbours quickly realised that her house was the only one in the area sturdy enough to cope with the storm. One by one, they fled to her house and she welcomed them in. As the hurricane raged on, Vilia opened her house to her neighbours. She shared food and a safe shelter for sleeping in for several days. 54 people sheltered safely

12 BRENTWOOD URC - **The COURIER** – April/May 2018

from the hurricane. Despite the ferocity of the hurricane, her house lost only one roof panel and wasn't damaged in any other way. Many other homes in the area were totally destroyed.

Vilia is incredibly grateful for the help she's received, and she's used it to help others. But she knows there are still many more people in her neighbourhood who are struggling. She wishes we could help them too.



Can your church raise £210 this Christian Aid Week? That's enough to train a local builder in Haiti to build homes like Vilia's. This would give more of her neighbours a safe place to weather the next disaster, and a fighting chance to build a better life.

Sheila Maxey, Christian Aid organiser.

WOMENS' WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year, the planned meeting on 2nd March for the service of Womens' World Day of Prayer was cancelled

due to inclement weather. However, it is hoped that the service, arranged by the Christian women of Suriname, will be held at a later date at Hutton and Shenfield Union Church.

Details will be confirmed when arrangements have been made.

Eileen Goult

Thank you



Dear friends

Thank you so much for the gorgeous basket of flowers and the many cards I received for my 80th birthday. The basket has pride of place in our conservatory and I will be able to plant the contents out at a later stage and so keep remembering your kindness and love.

Sheila Maxey

COMMUNITY AIMS FUND COLLECTIONS

The retiring offering for April 2018 is for Home-Start Brentwood



Home-Start volunteers visit families at home each week, supporting parents in situations as diverse as isolation, bereavement, multiple births, illness, disability or who are just finding parenting a struggle. They provide non-judgemental practical and emotional support and help build the family's confidence and ability to cope.

The offering for May 2018 is for Brentwood Mind



Their aim is to support users of the service to become more independent and therefore have a worthwhile place in the community. There are two services: bridge-building which is working alongside service users in the community, and a drop-in service at 14 Ongar Road where people can meet to improve their social skills.

Stan Francis

E.A.S.T.E.R



The gift of God is **E**ternal

life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am the living one: I was dead, and

behold I am **A**live forever and ever!

The father has sent his Son to be the

Saviour of the world.

I am the way and the **T**ruth and the life.

God has given us **E**ternal life, and this

life is in His Son.

Remember Jesus Christ **R**aised from the dead.

MOVING STORIES.....



Linda Mead is the Commitment for Life co-ordinator. The programme gives churches an opportunity to be involved in global justice and development through campaigning, fundraising and worship. She is a lay leader of the URC in Britain, said the call of the times is for Christians to

help lead the way in “living more simply amidst climate change.”

The Long Walk Home

‘Okay you can take a step...’

Saber needs this kind of encouragement. After being caught up in an airstrike, Saber was struck by shrapnel and is now struggling to walk normally. He’s 13.

As his dad Wael says, ‘Before my son got injured he was like a normal child – playing, acting as a child...but after he got injured he became very worried. He was walking every day to school - now he can’t walk normally. Yesterday he came back upset because all the children were walking normally and he was trying to walk on the crutches. He can’t even hold his school bag.’

‘My son is so afraid to step on his leg. He feels like if he steps on it he will be in pain and is afraid that he’ll never walk again.’

Saber and his family had already left their home, terrified, after an attack in their neighbourhood. When the Israelis

16 BRENTWOOD URC - *The COURIER* – April/May 2018

announced a ceasefire, they went home because there was no water where they were staying.

The bomb which hurt Saber fell during the ceasefire as he was on his way back to the shelter after taking a shower.

‘I was not with my boy at the time, but I felt that something had happened to my family because I could hear the bombing. I left my home and started running down the street to get there, but I kept falling down.’

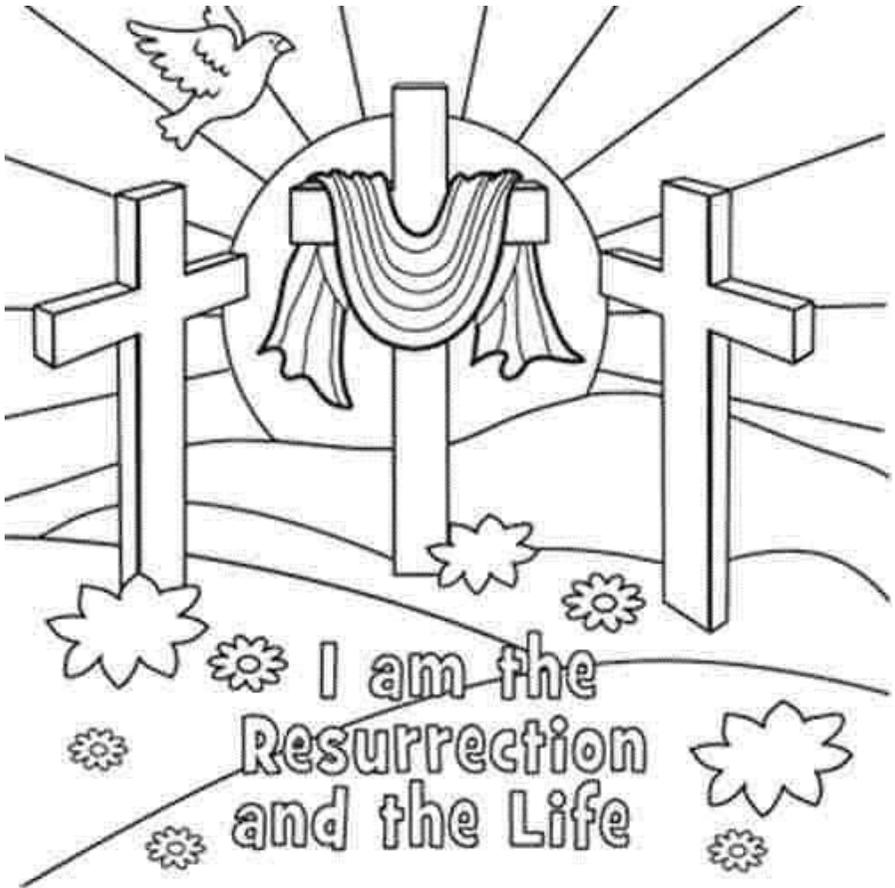
When Wael got to Saber he took him to hospital but it was so overcrowded he wasn’t seen for two days. Then Christian Aid stepped in.

‘My son is making good progress now but I feel fear because there is no peace. Maybe the war will come again?’

When our newspapers and broadcasters talk of refugees, stories like this aren’t often told in the same breath. Refugees are people seeking refuge from experiences like Saber and his family have had to endure. We have to [#ChangeTheStory](#).

Rachell Lees: This article was originally written for the Christian Aid Collective, Christian Aid’s young adult website. If you want to find out more about Christian Aid’s work with refugees and internally displaced people, <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/refugee-crisis>’

Commitment for Life Newsletter March 2018.



Prayer Calendar for April and May 2018

Week beginning:

April 1st The worldwide church as it celebrates Easter
Water Aid and those it seeks to help
People who have mental disabilities

April 8th Doctors, Nurses and other health workers
Workers in industry and industrial chaplains

The Monday Guild

- April 15th** Victims of war and conflicts
Workers in the financial sector
Those who care for our building
- April 22nd** The people of England (St. George's Day tomorrow)
People with long term illnesses
The Wednesday Luncheon Club
- April 29th** The media and its employees
Baptist Churches in the UK (Baptist Assembly from May 5th)
The Brentwood URC Knitters and the people they help
- May 6th** The legal and probation services
Local schools and the work of BSCWT
Coffee Shop
- May 13th** Victims of racial prejudice or injustice
Christian Aid (Christian Aid Week begins today)
Those who use our building
- May 20th** The Church as it celebrates Pentecost
The Brentwood Street Pastors
Those involved in leading or arranging our worship
- May 27th** The World Council of Churches
The Brentwood Food Bank
Our 3-church pastorate

DUTY ROTAS – APRIL 2018

	Flowers	Vestibule
1st	Eileen Goult	Heather Davidson
8th	Mary Tate	Sally Bealey
15th	Margaret Gazely	Carolyn Rudkin
22nd	Sheila Crisp	Gordon Hanna
29th	Carolyn Rudkin	Margaret Cheer

	Vestry	Steward	Notices
1st	Ian Davidson	Eileen Goult	Steve Burns
8th	Moses Tsingano	Stan Francis	Rosalie Brentnall
15th	Clive Rudkin	Corne Van Staden	The Cheers
22nd	Jenny Mayo	Linda Hanna	Stan Francis
29th	Corne Van Staden	Stan Francis	Jenny Mayo

	Reader	Prayers of Intercession
1st	Ian Davidson	Jenny Mayo
8th	Jenny Mayo	Kees Maxey
15th	Markus Van Staden	Clive Rudkin
22nd	Josh Hanna	
29th	Markus Van Staden	Linda Hanna

	Coffee
1st	Elaine Austin and Margaret Gazely
8th	Gabrielle Crowther
15th	Linda Hanna
22nd	Eileen Goult
29th	Rosalie Brentnall

CHURCH CALENDAR – APRIL 2018

Sunday	1st	10 am	EASTER SUNDAY Rev Sheila Maxey - with Holy Communion
Thursday	5th	8 pm	Sacred Space
Sunday	8th	10 am	Mrs Faith Paulding
Monday	9th	2.30 pm	Monday Guild
Wednesday	11th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Thursday	12th	7.30 pm	Bible Study at 48 St. Thomas Road
Sunday	15th	10 am	Mrs Linda Mead
Wednesday	18th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
		2.00 pm	URC Knitters
Sunday	22nd	10 am	Rev Ruth Mitchell - Holy Communion
Wednesday	25th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Saturday	28th	UNLOCK SPONSORED LONDON WALK	
Sunday	29th	10 am	Rev Birgit Ewald

DUTY ROTAS – MAY 2018

	Flowers	Vestibule
6th	Elaine Austin	Heather Davidson
13th	Margaret Cheer	Rosie Benjamin
20th	Eileen Goult	Margaret Cheer
27th	Mary Tate	Eileen Goult

	Vestry	Steward	Notices
6th	Ian Davidson	Gabrielle Crowther	Jenny Mayo
13th	Moses Tsingano	Mary Tate	Rosalie Brentnall
20th	Rosalie Brentnall	Kees Maxey	The Cheers
27th	Corne Van Staden	Markus Van Staden	Stan Francis

	Reader	Prayers of Intercession
6th	Lucy Crowther	Ian Davidson
13th	Dora Parajos	Rosie Benjamin
20th	Sheila Crisp	Clive Rudkin
27th	Markus Van Staden	Kees Maxey

	Coffee
6th	Sally Bealey
13th	Mary Tate and Sheila Crisp
20th	Elaine Austin and Margaret Gazely

27th	Gabrielle Crowther
------	--------------------

DUTY ROTAS – MAY 2018

	Flowers	Vestibule
6th	Elaine Austin	Heather Davidson
13th	Margaret Cheer	Rosie Benjamin
20th	Eileen Goult	Margaret Cheer
27th	Mary Tate	Eileen Goult

	Vestry	Steward	Notices
6th	Ian Davidson	Gabrielle Crowther	Jenny Mayo
13th	Moses Tsingano	Mary Tate	Rosalie Brentnall
20th	Rosalie Brentnall	Kees Maxey	The Cheers
27th	Corne Van Staden	Markus Van Staden	Stan Francis

	Reader	Prayers of Intercession
6th	Lucy Crowther	Ian Davidson
13th	Dora Parajos	Rosie Benjamin
20th	Sheila Crisp	Clive Rudkin
27th	Markus Van Staden	Kees Maxey

	Coffee
6th	Sally Bealey

13th	Mary Tate and Sheila Crisp
20th	Elaine Austin and Margaret Gazely
27th	Gabrielle Crowther

CHURCH CALENDAR – MAY 2018

Wednesday	2nd	2 pm	URC Knitters
Thursday	3rd	8 pm	Sacred Space
Sunday	6th	10 am	Ms Rosie Benjamin
Wednesday	9th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Thursday	10th	7.30 am	Bible Study at 48 St. Thomas Road
Sunday	13th	10 am	Rev Sheila Maxey
Monday	14th	2.30 pm	Monday Guild
Wednesday	16th	9.30 am	Sacred Space
		2 pm	URC Knitters
Sunday	20th	10 am	Mrs Beryl Hunt
			DEADLINE FOR JUNE/JULY COURIER
Wednesday	23rd	9.30 am	Sacred Space
Sunday	27th	10 am	Rev Sheila Maxey - with Holy Communion
Wednesday	30th	9.30 am	Sacred Space

THE COURIER

The next issue of The COURIER for June 2018 will be available on Sunday the 27th May 2018. hcvstaden@gmail.com Editor: 01277 203830

24 BRENTWOOD URC - *The COURIER* – April/May 2018

BRENTWOOD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4GD

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 am Family Worship with Creche and Junior Church

Holy Communion is usually celebrated at Morning Worship on the last Sunday of each month.

Details of preachers and special events are given in the COURIER.

EACH WEEK:

Brownies: To be confirmed

WEDNESDAYS: 12:00pm Luncheon Club

FRIDAYS: 09:45am – 11:45am Coffee Shop

