

BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH



"Here comes the sun, after a long cold winter!"

April 2024

Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

Last time I wrote this letter, late in February, I mentioned that the daffodils were just beginning to appear up at Holebottom. Now, just a very few weeks later, they're almost finished. That would be quite sad, if it weren't that – after what has felt like a very long time – leaves and buds are really making themselves unmissable now. The field is still a quagmire, so we're still wearing wellies whenever we're there, but I'm starting to be convinced that one day it'll be normal shoes again, and then, even if only for a short while, we'll be able to be up there in sandals.

It's been a gloriously busy time at church since the last Calendar. In early March we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the official opening of the beautiful building we get to call home, and it was a lovely weekend. The tea party on the Saturday was thoroughly enjoyable: there were nearly fifty people there, and not only did we share a delicious tea, but there was a definite 'buzz' about the place, and it felt like our community teas pre-Covid (it's hard to believe that this month marks the fourth anniversary of the first lockdown!). The tea didn't happen without a lot of work from dedicated and hardworking people, and I'm grateful to all of them.

And on the Sunday we held our Anniversary Service (which, again, didn't happen without a lot of work!), in the presence of guests including the Deputy Mayor of Bury, and his consort. It was a real privilege to have so many people at the service who'd been at the Service of Dedication in 1974, and to know that there are people here who have loved this building for the whole of its life. It was especially moving that we had input from all of the ministers who've served here: three of us in person, and one by means of a written message. We are really lucky to have this building, and to have a church to inhabit it!

Most of you will receive this Calendar over Easter weekend (with some of you getting it later because of the post), and it seems a bit obvious to say that that's another huge weekend in the life of any church. Even though, as Unitarians, we don't generally have the same beliefs as our Trinitarian

siblings, I think almost all Unitarian congregations take Easter seriously and mark it with a degree of importance. Just like Christmas, it always feels to me as though Easter is actually many many different festivals all rolled into one, and that what it really marks is the unstoppable power of the light, the turning of the year, and the visible reawakening of things which were already wide awake and working hard, but hidden from us.

In early April, several members of the congregation will be attending the Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (normally referred to, for obvious reasons, as “the GA”). We don’t have formal delegates this year, which means that we don’t get to vote on the Motions which are put before the meeting, but I’m still glad that we will be represented as a congregation, even if not formally.

The GA gatherings are a great time to meet other Unitarians from different congregations, districts, and countries, and to hear more about what is going on in this unique denomination of ours. There is always a huge range of workshops to pick from, and one of the highlights for me (unsurprisingly, perhaps, given that I’m a minister) is the variety of worship which is available. I always particularly love the Anniversary Service: it was an Anniversary Service at Hatfield some time in the early 2000’s that finally cemented for me that I wanted to remain in Unitarianism (my call to ministry came later, and that’s another story, maybe!). There is always something truly nourishing and uplifting about singing together with 300 other Unitarians, and if you’re considering attending next year, I really would encourage you. It’s also very exhausting (physically, spiritually, and emotionally) so if you want encouragement from any of the people who will be there, it might be wise to give them a few days after their return, so that they might have some energy back!

I wish you all a (nearly but not quite late) happy Easter, and I send you all the blessings of all the spring festivals. May the light continue to shine on us all!

As ever, I send you my love.

Kate.

News of our community

Vera Stephenson

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Vera. Vera was a lifelong member of Chesham and Bury Unitarian churches and continued attending occasionally until very recently, and many of the congregation have known her for their entire lives. Her stories of life (both at church and in Chesham) as a child and then as an adult, were always warm and funny, and she will be much missed.

We send our love to Vera's family.

Bryan Freemantle

We recently heard from his wife, Barbara, of the death of Bryan Freemantle. Bryan and Barbara were members of the church for several years before they moved away to be nearer Barbara's family. Bryan's health has been failing for some time.

Our love goes to Barbara and her family.

Norah Hickton

I've seen Norah a few times since the last Calendar, and she remains in good spirits, cheerful, and in no pain.

There is no news on when she might move back into residential care rather than hospital, but I know Peter will keep us all updated when there is news.

Connie Diggle

I recently received the following letter from Connie, which was a real delight:

Dear Kate and Congregation,

Thank you so much for your visits and all the magazines that you sent to us.

It was too good to learn lots of little bits of you all and also blessings, especially those with some health issues.

I am especially thinking of those like Norah and family, and those I was especially close to when I was in Bolton. Please send my best wishes to them and all the others, and keep some yourself.

May you all pray for each other, and thank you for mine.

Thinking of all of you,

Connie Diggle

PS: I was 96 on 27th February and had a lovely party fixed by the home.

We send our love to all those who are struggling with loss, or who are dealing with illness, whether that's their own or that of someone close to them.

Church Officers, Council Members, and Trustees from March 2024

Church Officers:

Chair of Congregation: Betty Kenyon

Chair of Council: Jean Maden

Secretary: Karen Hampson

Treasurer: Lynda Arthur

Membership secretary: Vacant post

Council members:

Damion Langford

Janet Thatcher

Rita Boardall

Howard Maden

Peter Whewell

Val Chamberlain

NELUM Representatives:

Anne Mills

Ewen Sim

Trustees

Chairman: Janet Thatcher

Deputy Chairman: Neville Kenyon

Treasurer: Susan Holt

Secretary: Marian Price

Property Steward: Howard Maden

Insurance: Karen Hampson

Trustee: Margaret Pollard

Worship

Barring emergencies, all the services during April will be led by the minister.

Communion

This month's Inclusive Communion will take place on **Sunday 28th April**, at around 12.30 or 12.45. Everyone is welcome.

Ainsworth

Sunday 7th April, 3pm: 309th Anniversary Service, led by Rev Helen Mills, followed by tea and cakes in the Schoolroom.

(Ainsworth's AGM takes place on **Friday 5th April** at 11am).

Mid-month mid-week meditations

I will be holding a mid-week meditation session on Zoom on **Tuesday 9th April**, at 6pm. Please let me know by Monday teatime if you'd like to attend.

If you're interested in taking part in a long-running and much-loved regular online meditation session from the Findhorn Unitarian Network, please talk to either myself or Val Chamberlain.

Minister's schedule, April 2024

Kate will be at the GA meetings in Northamptonshire from **Wednesday 3rd until Saturday 6th April.**

Other than that she doesn't have any planned time off (other than routine days off, including her Thursday Sabbaths) during April.

Vestry Days: most Fridays, and one Saturday a month

I plan to be in the vestry between 10am and 3pm on **Fridays 12th, 19th and 26th April**, and in the morning on **Saturday 13th April.**

It's always worth checking ahead of time before coming in: although I always plan to be in on a Friday, other things sometimes crop up, and whilst I love seeing people on Fridays, I'd hate for you to waste a journey!

The heating and the kettle will be on on all those days, and I'd love to see you if you fancy popping in. You're also welcome to pop in if you don't particularly need to see me but either just want somewhere to hang out for a while, or want to use the worship area for quiet prayer and reflection.

It's worth bearing in mind that people are often in and out on a Friday (which is the point of the vestry days), so if you want a more in-depth or confidential and uninterrupted chat, it would be better to arrange this on a different day.

Regular Social Events

Book Club

In April, the book club will revert to meeting in the evening, so the April meeting will take place on **Wednesday 24th April**, at 7pm, in the church lounge. We will be discussing *Eve Green*, by Susan Fletcher. Tea and coffee will be available, and you're welcome to bring other drinks and nibbles. There will be ample parking!

Books for the book club are always obtained from the library, so there is no need for you purchase anything.

Everyone is welcome: you don't even need to have read the book!

Camera Club

The Camera Club will meet on Zoom at 7pm on **Monday 8th April** and **Monday 22nd April**. Everyone is welcome to join the group: please speak to one of the members for details (if you don't know who is in the Camera Club, Kate can tell you!).

Social Gatherings

The next gathering will take place on **Saturday 27th April**: you are really welcome to join us, whether you'd like to get involved with collating the next edition of the Calendar, or just fancy joining us for a cup of tea, coffee, or hot chocolate and some friendly companionship.

Second Sunday lunch

Kate will be going to the Art Picture House for her lunch on **Sunday 14th April**, and would love you to join her. We generally have a really chatty and happy little gathering, and you're welcome to join us whether you want your lunch (or dinner – call it what you will!), just a coffee, or a drink.

We normally each pay for whatever we're having, but please don't let money be a reason not to come: have a quiet word with Kate and we'll sort it out.

April 2024 Calendar:

The deadline for entries for the April edition of the Calendar will be teatime on **Tuesday 23rd April**, and we'll collate it on **Saturday 27th**.

Copies of services

If you're on our email list, you get a copy of the service every week, and a list of the week's notices.

If you don't use email and would like to see a service that you've missed (or that you particularly enjoyed) please let Kate know and she'll make sure you get a paper copy either next time you're in church or by post.

Notes from the building.

We are heading into spring in a big way now and it will soon be time for me to put all of the paperwork I have been working on of late into the out-tray and look forward to getting on with work on the outside of the building again. There's a lot of work that has been left a little too long now, and its really beginning to show. I have been wanting to replace the sealant around the windows on Back Saint Mary's Place for around three years and as its starting to slip and give way in places, the work has moved beyond 'needs to be done' and entered the 'actually worrying me a bit' stage.

It's one of those jobs that has to be done now, and it's one of those jobs I have to figure out how to get done without it costing the church more than it should. That sounds straightforward really, but actually it is much harder than you might think.

If I were to do the work myself, it would, I suspect, take me about eight hours and I would have to buy the sealant in bulk at the price it is sold to the public... alternatively I will need to spend quite a few hours, possibly more than it would take me to get the job done myself, to get quotes from contractors who can get the sealant much cheaper because they can buy at trade prices, in bulk.

What I will likely have to do is what I absolutely don't want: spend a lot of time and money on finding a contractor to quote for the work only to find I have to do the actual work myself because the labour costs don't cover the extra savings any contractor can offer me on sealant, but I suspect the potential for actual savings might really be there if only I can find the right contractor. It's a Catch 22, one that creates even more paperwork for me, but that is an unfortunate but necessary part of the process really.

Ade Brady

What our building says to me: Acceptance

From the outside the rounded edges of the walls and low structure of the building give a sense of 'groundedness' here, not reaching to the heavens 'up there' or 'out there'.

Inside the People Praising sculpture, flanked by diverse colours, express a celebration and a welcome to ALL humanity. The symbol of the chalice is a cup for all and the flame burns bright as the spirit of life. So there is warmth, comfort and challenge.

There is acceptance.

But this is a reflection of someone has been inside the building and experienced the people and worship and spiritual presence within. This has illuminated my perception.

Damion Langford

Stewards for Sunday services April 2024

Sunday 7 th April	Betty Kenyon and Neville Kenyon
Sunday 14 th April	Faye Casey and Susan Mitchell
Sunday 21 st April	Barbara Bamford and Jean Brookhouse
Sunday 28 th April	Howard Maden and Jean Maden

Tea and coffee rota, April 2024

Sunday 7 th April	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 14 th April	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 21 st April	Marian Price and Susan Holt
Sunday 28 th April	Rita Boardall and Susan Mitchell

There is a vacancy on the stewarding rota if you'd like to be part of the team: have a word with either Betty or Kate. Stewarding is a really good way to get to chat to everyone as they come in to church, and fulfils a really important role, particularly when we have visitors.

If you don't want to be on the rota but are happy to help out occasionally, that would also be great!

A message from Rev. Beryl Allerton

Please pass on a thank you to those who arranged the flowers for the 50th Anniversary Service: they were lovely and such appropriate colours. John and I would like to thank everyone for the warm welcome they gave us, we were well hugged. It was lovely to take part in this service though it made us feel very old both having been at the first one.

Beryl

54th Annual General Meeting

The 54th Annual General Meeting of the Bury Unitarian Church congregation was held on Sunday 24th March. Full minutes will be available in due course.

Website

After many years of hard work by Roger Mills, and excellent service from our previous website hosts, we will soon be moving to a new website, hosted by Scruffy Monkey Web Design. We hope to be able to launch the new site sometime in early summer. The website team (Ewen, Janine, Kate, Neville, and Roger) will keep you updated on this project.

Advance notice:



NIGHT

at Bury Unitarians

Saturday 11th May 2024

7.00pm for 7.30pm prompt start

Ticket £5

Pie and pea supper

BYO drinks– glasses provided

A stylized logo for the word 'QUIZ'. The letters are written in a thick, rounded, hand-drawn font. The 'Q' is red, the 'U' is orange, the 'I' is green, and the 'Z' is blue.

Fire Evacuation Practice and congregational photo, Sunday 14th April

Assuming good weather, we will be holding a Fire Evacuation Practice on Sunday 14th April, straight after the Postlude: the alarm will sound and everyone (including stewards and people on tea- and coffee-duty) will be asked to evacuate the building.

Please familiarise yourself with the fire evacuation policy and fire safety instructions which are displayed on the notice board in the lounge.

It is really important that this evacuation includes people with mobility problems: so please be prepared to help one another as you would in a real emergency.

Ade and Howard will be on hand to assist and also to monitor how quickly safely we can empty the building.

Whilst we're outside anyway, we hope to take a congregational photo: it's been a while since we've done this.

If the weather is poor we will wait a week or so for the evacuation drill.

This pre-announced evacuation will be followed, probably in May or June, by an unannounced evacuation practice.

News from around the District

NELUM news (advance notice)

The NELUM AGM takes place at Walmsley Unitarian Chapel, on Saturday, May 11th, from 2.30 p.m. Tea will be available afterwards but must be booked, in advance.

Rochdale Unitarian Church Concert Series



FRIDAY NIGHT MUSIC
Clover Street Unitarians

STACKSTEADS
BRASS BAND with
a concert not to be missed!



Coming **HERE**—Friday 26 April
7.30pm



 **£10 inc. refreshments**
Scan QR code for tickets
or Tel 01706 649015
(limited tickets on the door)
Clover Street, Rochdale, OL12 6TP
www.rochdaleunitarians.org.uk

Padiham's 200th Anniversary:

Padiham Unitarian Chapel

200 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

26 - 28 April 2024

Church Street, Padiham, BB12 8JH

Interactive digital exhibitions will cover the History of Padiham and Unitarianism in Padiham over the past 200 years, Explanation of Unitarianism, and the Chapel for Children.

Opening times

Friday 26th April 12:00 – 19:00

Saturday 27th April 12:00 – 15:00

Sunday 28th April 12:00 – 15:00

During the above times refreshments will be available in the Centenary school room.

Saturday at 16:00 a Celebration Service will be held after which there will be a traditional tea served in the main hall. We need to know how many are coming to plan the catering and if you have any special dietary requirements.

To let us know if you are attending the tea, please email either fredawhittle2@hotmail.com or tony.camn@cannco.co.uk

Bolton Walmsley Garden Festival: (Advance notice):

Bolton Walmsley will hold a Garden Festival, on Sunday, May 5th, between 12 noon and 4 p.m. There will be refreshments, musical entertainment, a maypole, and a variety of stalls. More details to follow.

By-Gone Times by Betty Kenyon: number 45

Annual Congregation Meetings

will be held in 1891 on Tuesday 20th January at 7.30pm.

All members of the congregation are earnestly invited to be present at the meeting for business at which reports will be read upon the work of the of the past year. The Chapel Warden's accounts will be presented and committees will be appointed for the current year and Thursday 22nd January the tea meeting at 7.30pm this meeting is mainly an opportunity chiefly for friendly intercourse, a cordial invitation is given.

Report on the Congregation Annual Meeting

Brought as usual both pleasure and regret—pleasure at meeting so many staunch friends and supporters of chapel and school—regret at not meeting some whom we should have been pleased to greet.



Regalia from the past from our archive.

How times change!

Chapel Officers and Committees

In 1898 there were 23 Trustees.

Officers:

Chapel Warden,
General secretary,
Collector of pew rents,
Organist,
Chapel keeper.

Committees:

Cemetery,
Choir,
Day school,
Dorcas,
Fellowship fund,
Ladies,
Ladies Visiting,
Mission Committee (NELUM),
Reception,
Sunday School.

The Minister, Chapel Warden and General Secretary are ex-officio of all committees.

Do you find this easier to read?

Almost everything we provide in print at church (including services, Calendars, letters, reports, and the minutes of most meetings) is available in a large-print format, and a recorded version of the Calendar is available on CD and on memory disk.

Accessibility

We want our church and our community to be as accessible to everyone as it possibly can be. As well as providing everything in large print, we have a hearing loop, wheelchair access at the back of the building, and an accessible toilet.

Our services and other events are fidget-friendly!

We have also recently taken possession of a new lightweight, easily collapsible, sturdy wheelchair. The wheelchair lives in the cupboard under the front stairs, and you are free to use it at any time it would be useful in church.

If you have a short-term need at home and would like to borrow it, please speak to one of the church officers.

We know that there will be needs we haven't accounted for: if there is anything which would make it easier for you to engage with what we do, please do tell us!

Regular Events (all social events are subject to change)

Sundays:

11.15am: Worship in person at Bury

First Sunday of most months:

10.30am: Worship in person at Ainsworth

Second Sunday of each month:

12.30 (approx.): Second Sunday Lunch. Please join Kate at a local pub for lunch, a coffee, or a drink. (If the cost would be a problem please have a quiet word with Kate).

Fourth Sunday of each month:

12.30pm: Inclusive Communion Service at Bury

Second and fourth Mondays of most months:

7pm: Camera club (normally online)

Last Wednesday of each month:

7pm (summer): Book club

Most Fridays:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Day

Second Saturday of each month:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Saturday

Last Saturday of each month:

11am-1pm (approx.): Saturday Social Gathering

What's on: April 2024

Friday 5th April

11am: Ainsworth AGM.

Sunday 7th April

11.15am Bury:

Morning Service

3pm Ainsworth:

Anniversary service, led by Rev. Helen Mills

Monday 8th April

7pm: Camera Club, meeting on Zoom

Tuesday 9th April

10am-2pm: Upstairs hall booking

6pm: Zoom meditation (link to follow by email)

Friday 12th April

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Saturday 13th April

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Saturday

Sunday 14th April

11.15am Bury

Morning service

12.15 approx

Fire evacuation practice and congregational photograph

12.45 approx

Second Sunday Lunch

Monday 15th April

9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)

Friday 19th April

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Sunday 21st April

11.15am Bury:

Morning service

- Monday 22nd April** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*
7pm: Camera Club, meeting on Zoom
- Tuesday 23rd April** Teatime: deadline for entries for the March Calendar
- Wednesday 24th April** **7pm:** Book club meeting to discuss *Eve Green* by Susan Fletcher
- Friday 26th April** 10-3: Minister's Vestry Day
7.30pm: Rochdale Concert Series
- Friday 26th – Sunday 28th April**
Padiham 200th Anniversary Celebrations
- Sat 27th April** 11am onwards: Saturday Social Gathering and Calendar Collation party

<p>Sunday 28th April 11.15am Bury: 12.30pm approx.:</p>	<p>Morning service Inclusive Communion</p>
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- Monday 29th April** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*
- Tuesday 30th April** 7pm: Church Council meeting

Looking ahead to May

- Sunday May 5th** 12pm Walmsley Garden Festival
- Saturday 11th May** 2.30pm: NELUM AGM, Walmsley Chapel
- Saturday 11th May** 7pm: Quiz night

Church Information:

Minister:

Rev. Kate Brady McKenna

0161 460 3363 / 07751 240886

revkatemckenna@gmail.com

Church address: 1 Bank Street, Bury, BL9 0DN

Church phone: 0161 761 3785

Website: www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk

Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church

Church officers

Chair of trustees: Neville Kenyon 01204 887222

Chair of church council: Jean Maden

Church secretary: Karen Hampson 0161 766 2283

Chair of congregation: Betty Kenyon 01204 887222

Church treasurer: Lynda Arthur

Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager Adrian Brady 07736 107143

Charity reg no: 107857



Camelia



Susan, Betty Kenyon and Abi working hard to arrange our 50 year celebration!



Jon Egging Memorial Sculpture at Bournemouth