

BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH

CALENDAR FOR APRIL 2016

CHURCH SERVICES

- 3 April 11.15am Reverend John Allerton
- 10 April 11.15a The Minister
- 17 April 11.15am The Minister
- 24 April 11.15am Speakers from **Streetwise** and **Christians Against Poverty** will take part in the service.

CHURCH STEWARDS

- 3 April Jean Brookhouse & Susan Mitchell
- 10 April Lois & Alan Williams
- 17 April Barbara Bamford & Allan Hodgert
- 24 April Margaret & John Fitzpatrick

Please ask someone to exchange dates if you cannot make a particular Sunday.

CHURCH FLOWERS

- 3 April Roger Mills – In memory of Sybil Mills
- 10 April Pam & David Gilbert – In memory of Peter
- 17 April Margaret Miller – In memory of Derek
- 24 April Jean Taylor

Distributors: Anne & Harvey Evitts

Janet Thatcher is now accepting donations for flowers. Thank you.

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE ROTA

- 3 April Anne Mills (M), Beryl Bowden, Rene Hollos
- 10 April Norah Hickton (M), Peter Whewell, John Allerton
- 17 April Margaret Fitzpatrick (M), Lois Williams, Di Scaife
- 24 April Marian Price (M), Jean Taylor, Susan Mitchell

SATURDAY MORNING COFFEE ROTA

- 2 April Margaret Fitzpatrick & Norah Hickton
- 9 April Marc Peters & Philip Peters
- 16 April Rene Hollos & Alison Hollos
- 23 April Molly Ratcliffe & Betty Kenyon
- 30 April Jean Maden & Margaret Pollard

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Thursday 7 April at 7.30pm Joan MacFarlane will speak on
My Year as President

COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN APRIL

- Thursday 7 April at 2pm Ministerial Appointments Group
- Monday 11 April at 7pm Trustees
- Monday 18 April at 7pm Church Council

CALENDAR DEADLINE – Sunday 17th April

BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will meet on Monday 25 April at 7pm. The book to be discussed is *Red Dust Road* by Jackie Kay. New members will be very welcome – it's not even necessary to have read the book!

TRADICRAFT

The stall will be open on April 3rd and April 24th. If you require goods at other times, please speak to Anne or Jean. New brochures are now available from the stall.

LUNCHEON CLUB

The next meeting will be held on April 19th, at 12.30 p.m. when Beryl, Barbara and Jean will host. Please sign up on the list, if you intend to be present. New members are always welcome.

MEETINGS AND STEWARDING

It is our intention to ask the Monday evening Yoga Group to accept keys and cover their own stewarding; this will take effect from the beginning of April. As we will no longer require Monday stewards, if all goes smoothly, we ask that regular meetings should be held, as far as is possible, on Wednesday evenings, in order to assist with the stewarding of the AA. Will the Chairs and Secretaries of all such groups, please arrange for a member of that group to open and close, on each occasion; if no-one is nominated, it will be assumed that either the Chair or Secretary is the responsible person. *Thank you.*

WEBSITE

Roger wishes to try some new ideas for the website, and a suggestion has been made that members of the congregation might compile a short profile about themselves, along the lines of ten facts about themselves, or a few short pieces about their association with this church, and those that preceded it, and what they value most about their church-life. Samples of what might be possible are now on the door of the kitchen-store, in the lounge; please have a look at them and try your hand. For further information, please speak to Roger.

MOTHERING SUNDAY

March 6th was an amazing day---traditional, yet different. The church was decorated with daffodils, and the children handed out small bouquets of them, too, to everyone present. June and the children had baked a Simnel cake, which we all enjoyed and pronounced delicious. John accompanied the service on the piano, its mellow tones sounding beautiful in the worship-area. But it was the service itself that impressed most: Barbara's reading made us laugh, but Marian's was more sobering, and the hymns, including the choir's contribution of The Mothering Sunday Carol, were moving---a reminder that time passes, and life changes, seemingly in a flash. Beryl devoted her sermon to paying tribute to mothers who care for physically- and mentally-challenged children; she dwelled on the fulfilment that this brings, despite the stresses and strains which accompany such a demanding task---a lifetime's work, in many instances. Beryl spoke from the heart, and from personal experience, and we all sympathised with such direct emotion; this was a timely reminder that we should be grateful for our children and grandchildren, and for the joy they bring. Within a more mature congregation, it is sometimes difficult to devise a truly relevant Mothering Sunday service, but this one succeeded brilliantly. Thank you to everyone who helped to make this service so meaningful, and, especially, to Beryl.

CONGREGATIONAL A.G.M.

This was held on March 13th, at 12.00 p.m; and attracted a good attendance. We had a busy and successful year, in 2015, as all the reports testified, and it is clear that a great deal of hard work is carried out by many people.

Church-Officers were elected for a year: Anne Mills remains as Chairman of the Congregation and Church Secretary; Betty Kenyon and John Fitzpatrick were re-elected as Chairman of Church Council and Treasurer, respectively, and Roger Mills became Assistant Treasurer; Beryl Bowden, June Clarke and Margaret Fitzpatrick were elected to serve on Church Council for three years.

There remains one vacancy for a Council-member; if you wish to volunteer, please speak to Anne Mills or Betty Kenyon.

The AGM agreed changes to church-rules, following recommendations from Church Council; a new copy of the church-rules should be available, later in the year, once Council has met and decided how best to proceed.

The Minutes of the 47th Congregational A.G.M. and a copy of the 2015 Annual Report have been pinned on the notice-board; once these have been removed, they will be filed in the bookcase-cupboard, in the lounge, if anyone wishes to consult them. If anyone would like a personal copy of either of these, Anne will provide one.

UNITARIAN THEOLOGY CONFERENCE

This is to be held at Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, on Saturday, May 21st, 2016, from 11a.m. to 5 p.m. Full details are on the notice-board; if you wish to attend, you will need to book quite soon.

MINISTER'S MONTH

A few days after having my gall bladder removed I am recovering well though still very sore. John is an excellent nurse and is looking after me well. The staff at North Manchester Hospital were wonderful, particularly the night sister, who, when the supper trolley failed to appear made brews and piles of toast for us all. Having not eaten for 14 hours I was very grateful. Thank you to John for stepping in and taking the service on Palm Sunday. I had my service all prepared and had been determined to do it but realised that I was being overly ambitious only three days after surgery. Thank you to everyone for their good wishes they are much appreciated.

Once again the church AGM took place after a shorter service on Sunday 28th February. This arrangement seems to

work well as it does not require people to come out on a winter evening. The business was conducted efficiently and effectively. Those who had served were thanked. Those who will serve were welcomed. Church rules were amended to take into consideration congregational changes and these were passed unanimously. We heard what a busy year we had had and also what a successful year financially which is good to report. As always the administration of Bury Unitarian Church is tip-top.

Further to my report about Monday morning Tai Chi I have now to say that I have given up the class. After persevering for some months I felt that I was not making any real progress. The instructor was extremely poor at communication without which it is very much a case of flailing hopefully, rather than the graceful moving meditation which it should be. So onward and upward, I have persuaded my friend to enrol for 'Zumba' classes though she agreed reluctantly saying we were 'too old' for such strenuous exercise. I can only hope that she is proved wrong, pink lycra here we come, or perhaps we are too old for that.

The last of the last series of seminars end tomorrow. Over the last five and half years I have organised at least one sometimes two each year. We have tackled a variety of subjects and each has given us much food for thought and discussion. This last one has not let us down. I have to say, thank you to those who have taken part, it has, for me, been challenging and inspiring listening and sharing thoughts on things spiritual. The level of commitment has been incredible and the sharing of deep understandings humbling also the confidentiality of the group has been at

all times respected. And from the meetings have come services that have moved and uplifted the congregation.

Mothering Sunday has always presented a challenge in that there is an expectation of celebration but a need to be sensitive to those who find it upsetting. This year as last year I decided against the fluffy nostalgic approach and instead spoke from personal experience of mothers who have children with problems. I had worried about this service but I need not have done so. The response was the best I have ever had which made me think that perhaps less sugar in all areas may be good for us.

Once again I have to say that we have a number of people whose health is causing concern please hold the members of our community in your thoughts and prayers.

Love Beryl

FUNERAL

The funeral of Betty Connelly took place at the church on Tuesday 22nd March followed by committal at the East Lancashire Crematorium. The minister conducted both services.

Betty will be remembered as a loyal, quiet, Wigan supporting lady with a good sense of humour. She was a member of our congregation for many years until she moved south to be near her family.

To her family we offer our sincere condolences.

TAKING THE SERVICE

MONDAY 4TH APRIL 7PM.

This evening will be the first of a number looking at what is needed for a service and how to conduct the various aspects. It is hoped that this will be useful for those willing to take a whole service as well as those who would be willing to take just part of one. John and Beryl are offering their help and advice on choosing hymns, prayers and reading, storytelling, writing and preaching a sermon, use of themes, pacing the service and microphone technique. It is intended that session will take place on Monday evenings between 7pm and 9pm through April and early May. All are welcome and this is intended to help people build confidence in what is chosen and how it is presented. All materials will be provided.

Beryl and John

DO YOU HAVE DIFFICULTIES GETTING TO AND FROM CHURCH ON SUNDAYS?

Please have a word with Beryl. We have car-drivers who are anxious to help with transport and very keen to see everyone, who wishes to come, in church.

RETIREMENT LUNCH

Beryl's last service at the church will take place on Sunday 29 May 2016.

After the service a lunch has been arranged at the Red Hall – 1pm for 1.30pm.

Anyone who wishes to attend the lunch should put their name on the list on the notice board by **15th May 2016.**

Church members will be paid for by the Church Trustees.

Susan Holt

