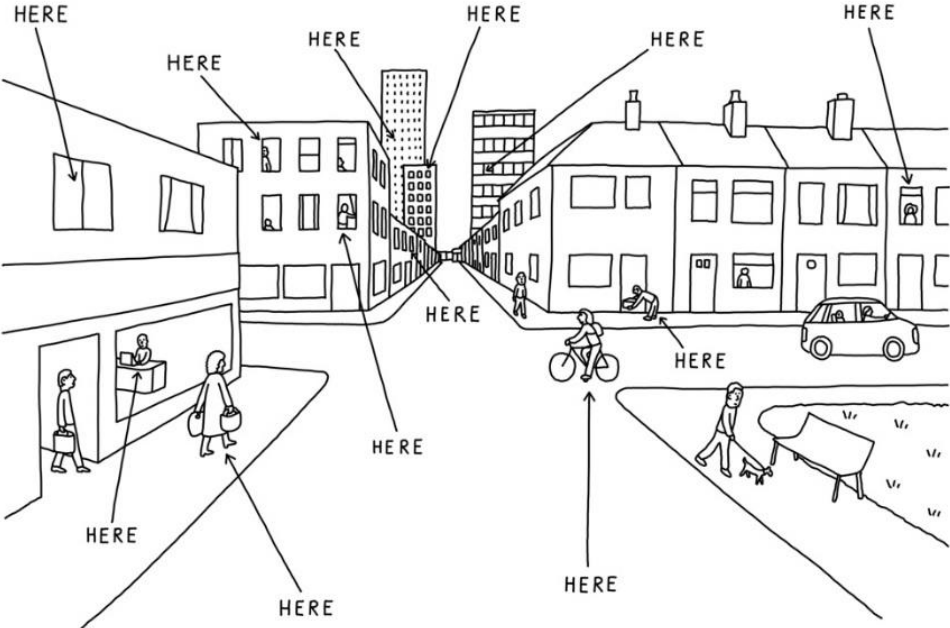


# Bury Unitarian Church

WHERE THE CHURCH IS



CartoonChurch.com

## Calendar for April 2020

Cartoonist Dave Walker has allowed this cartoon to be used free of charge for church purposes. Thanks to him.

Dear all,

Welcome to this month's edition of *The Calendar*. You'll notice that it's very different from normal: this is partly because of the closure of the church building, and partly because instead of being lovingly and expertly tended by Pam Gilbert, this edition is being lovingly and inexpertly put together by the minister. Please be forgiving!

The content is very different, too: because the church is closed there are no rotas, and no announcements of events. But I really hope you find it interesting and that it gives you another sense of connection with the church in these very odd times. It is very sad that we can't be together in person, but I know that we are still together in spirit.

I hope you've all been receiving weekly services-at-home: please let me know if you haven't and I will put that right. If you are getting them by email but would prefer paper copies, I'm very happy to arrange that.

To encourage that feeling of being together, members of the congregation will have received a list of names, telephone numbers, and email addresses (these have been provided with the owners' permission, and are only being sent to church members and friends). It would be lovely to think of people phoning each other: maybe even try phoning someone you don't know so well (you could start with the name under yours on the list, and work your way down, one or two a week).

Please please *please* contact me if you need anything or if you want to talk.

With love,

**Kate**

## **Cancellations: a message from Anne Mills, church secretary:**

With effect from March 17th, ALL ACTIVITIES at church, including services, have been cancelled, on account of the Coronavirus pandemic. The AA will continue to meet, if they choose to do so, independently. The situation will be reviewed at the end of March.

The Congregational AGM, scheduled for April 5th, is postponed indefinitely, and new arrangements will be made once this is possible; the church-officers have agreed to continue in post until then.

The Church Council Meeting, on April 15th, will probably be rescheduled; you will be informed of new arrangements, in due course. For all routine matters planned for April, please check whether these are to go ahead; do not automatically assume that they will be going ahead.

Events outside the church that have been cancelled or postponed are as follows: again, you may wish to check the situation, nearer the time.

The March Music Exams; the NELUM Meeting, on March 23rd; the March 27th Lunchtime Concert at Cross Street Manchester; Ainsworth's Anniversary Service, on April 5th; and the Annual Meetings, in Birmingham, between April 7th and 9th.

The Palace Theatre, Manchester, has suspended all its performances until the end of April, and possibly longer, so our proposed trip to "The Phantom of the Opera", on May 5th, has been cancelled; Roger has now issued refunds to everyone who had booked; thanks to him for the tremendous amount of work he has had to do---more than anticipated, and in difficult circumstances.

Further information, on all matters, will be given when it is available.

## **A message from our property manager:**

Greetings friends,

It's a funny old time for all of us and there's no mistaking that; not just for those of us in the congregation, the church herself honestly feels a little glummer now that she's not filling her rafters with your glorious voices; she's a bit listless without the sound of clanking spoons in teacups, or laughter and joy in her halls. No organ music, no services and no children running along the sanctuary floor, she's feeling very quiet indeed. She genuinely feels lonely, and that's okay, because she isn't alone in that, right now I suspect we all are, but I am visiting her regularly and I am trying to keep her company, and I have promised that we will return and bring our glorious voices, clanking spoons and our laughter and joy.

In this time of self-isolation, it's important to remember that the virus we are isolating ourselves from can survive on surfaces for days, and on some surfaces, potentially weeks. Aggie and I are deep-cleansing the building ready for it to be open to all of you again. This makes it imperative however that we are all careful not to re-contaminate the building by going in too frequently and we continue to allow anyone working at the church to self-isolate by not dropping in unannounced. If you need to go into the church for any reason, I would really appreciate it if you could let Roger or me know in advance, so we can manage the risk both to you and to everyone working in the building appropriately.

I understand it's a liberty that I am taking here in making this request, but if we want to come straight back to our beautiful church as soon as the lockdown is lifted, we can only hope to do so safely if we manage entry and exit of the building from a central point of contact, so we don't risk re-infecting parts of the building as we go. Between us, Aggie and I will keep the building in good company as well as safe and secure.

I do hope you are all keeping yourselves safe, and that our wonderful church will soon be filled once more with your singing and joy.

**Adrian Brady**

## **Worshipping together**

I hope that you are enjoying the service-at-home which is being sent out each week. If you know anyone else who would like to receive one, please let Kate know: there is no extra cost to adding them to the email list, but if someone would like a paper copy a contribution to church funds to cover printing and postage would be appreciated. (Church members are not, of course, being asked to contribute to this cost!)

As well as holding the service at 11.15 on Sundays from my kitchen table, I have started a practice of singing the Lord's Prayer at noon every day. If you would like to join me (even if it's only as and when you remember), I would be delighted.

## **Worshipping online**

During the time churches are closed, several ministers and worship leaders are offering opportunities to worship together online. I have decided not to do this, as it would not be inclusive in a congregation in which so many of our members do not have internet access.

If you are interested in joining in a 'live-streamed' service from another minister, or in watching or hearing other services, please let Kate know and she can tell you which churches are doing this and when.

There are also several opportunities each week to join in a 'Heart and Soul' session, which is similar to the contemplative worship we used to hold at Bury: I have "attended" two of these online and they genuinely feel like worship. Again, please let me know and I will let you have details.

This may be a good opportunity to see the worship-leading styles of other ministers and other churches.

## Church collections

Obviously, whilst we're not meeting together as a church, we won't be receiving collections, but I know that you will probably still want to make your regular weekly donation. If you are able to save up what you would have been paying each week, and then pay it in one go when we're back together (ideally by cheque or bank transfer) we would all be very grateful!

### **Bury Community Hubs: Help offered by Age UK**

If you are 70+ with health-conditions, live in Bury, and need support with the Coronavirus lockdown,

ring 0161 253 5353. Please tell you family and friends.

The national Age UK Advice Line is 0800 678 1602,

and this is open from 8 am to 7pm, every day of the year.

If you would just like to have a friendly natter, call Silverline at any time of the day or night, on

0800 470 8090.

Best wishes to everyone,

Anne.

You can also contact the Samaritans on 116 123.

Thanks to **Anne Mills** for finding this information.

## **Book club plus!**

The Book Club will not be meeting for a while, but it seemed, from the response to that announcement, that some of the members would still welcome the chance to discuss books and related matters. We seem to have finished talking about the March book, but, if anyone would like to join in a more general chat, by email, please contact Anne Mills, who will make sure that you are copied in to the emails. There's no obligation to provide your own comments, unless you wish to, but you might be interested in finding out what other people are reading, at the moment, and what they think about a particular book. All welcome!

**Anne Mills**

## **Food supplies**

I really hope that everyone is well supplied with food: I know from speaking to you that most of you are either able to go shopping yourself or have someone else who can bring you your shopping.

If this changes, please make sure to contact me: if necessary we can make sure that someone picks up your shopping and delivers it to you. A couple of people have volunteered to help with this.

Please also bear in mind that Ade and I have made quite a lot of soup, and it's currently in the freezer in church. If you know of anyone who needs some healthy homemade soup (the current options are leek and potato or tomato, I think), please let me know: Ade has to go into church every three days to do security checks, and can collect a tub of soup for you.

If you are struggling with any other deliveries, please let me know straight away, and I will do what I can.

## **Worship Support Group Service:**

On March 15th, we were privileged to have our service conducted by 4 members of our Worship Support Group: Val Chamberlain, Betty Kenyon, Damion Langford, and Marian Price. The service was entitled "Desiderata", taken from a 1920's prose poem, by American writer, Max Ehrmann, for which Susan Mitchell had provided the original inspiration *[see overleaf]*. Our Orders of Service informed us that "Desiderata offers many different ways to live a positive life", and the group stressed the importance of our spiritual requirements, which enable us to achieve happiness and peace in our daily lives.

This was a well-devised and well-presented service from an effective team, who are to be congratulated on their achievement. Amongst the themes was a reflection on giving advice: whether, when, why and how to do so, and which people are best-qualified, both in terms of giving and receiving it. Over-hasty reactions were considered, too; did you know that it takes 6 seconds to count up to 10? In this time, we can think before we speak and refrain from uttering words which are untrue, unnecessary, or unkind. The group had compiled a list of guidelines aimed at providing us with a good life, which we were invited to consider during a contemplative musical interlude.

Many thanks, once again to the members of our Worship Support Group; their high-quality services never fail to please.

**Anne Mills**



## **Desiderata, Max Ehrmann.**

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace  
there may be in silence.

As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.  
Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull  
and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit.  
If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for  
always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real  
possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery.  
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for  
high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself.

Especially do not feign affection.

Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and  
disenchantment it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of  
youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not  
distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and  
loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you  
have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as  
it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to  
be.

And whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life,  
keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.

Be cheerful.

Strive to be happy.

## **Matters financial:**

During the last few weeks, we, as a church, have raised a considerable amount of money which has been donated to charity.

The Quiz, held on February 20th, was organised by the Social and Fund Raising sub-committee, and raised £660.00---an excellent achievement! As previously agreed, half the proceeds were donated to church-funds, and a quarter each to Médecins Sans Frontières (suggested by Pam Oxley) and Hope for Justice (suggested by Abi Elliott-McGuffie). Anne Mills paid the monies over, and acknowledgements and thanks have been received from both charities; these will be posted on the notice-board. Thanks to everyone who supported the event, and to the organisers, on the evening.

Church Council had agreed to replace "Liberty" with "The Woodland Trust"; this was suggested by John Fitzpatrick, who organised a year's subscription for the church; literature about "The Woodland Trust" is now in the lounge, for everyone to read. Thank you, John.

On March 1st, we were visited by Marta Pacini, Anand Ennis-Cole and Sri Ramana Devi, who spoke to us about a project to create a Peace Forest in Rawtenstall; this is being organised by The Shiva Trust, who aim to plant 500 trees there, and a matching number in other countries, too. The retiring-collection raised £142.50, which the church-officers agreed to top up to £200.00. Anne and Roger handed over our cheque when they attended Rawtenstall Unitarian Church's Interfaith Service, on March 15th.

Many thanks to all who contributed to the above worthy causes; we should be proud of ourselves.

**Anne Mills**

## **Vice-Presidential Duties.**

February 9th saw me at Newcastle, to conduct morning-service at the Church of the Divine Unity, in the city-centre; the church-premises are magnificent, and the worship-area will easily hold 600 people. Sadly, this space is far too large (and expensive) for the current congregation, who use a lower-ground room for their activities, including services, nowadays. The building is up for sale, a good offer has been received, and this is under consideration; if the transaction is completed, this would enable the congregation to remain where they are and to refurbish their smaller premises, whilst the remainder of the building will be transformed into an Arts and Theatre complex. We used our time in Newcastle to do a little sight-seeing and found that the centre is attractive and interesting, whilst coastal resorts, such as Whitley Bay and Tynemouth are very beautiful, even if Storm Ciara was raging!

By the following Sunday, I had travelled to Kendal, to attend the Formal Welcome to their new Minister, Rev. Amanda Reynolds. I gave the Greetings from the General Assembly, plus some thoughts on successful Ministry; I also wrote a report for The Inquirer, which was printed in the March 7th issue. Rev. Beryl Allerton conveyed the Greetings of NELUM to the congregation, and Val Chamberlain represented our congregation. The GA Chief Officer, Elizabeth Slade, was also present, and spoke about her work, and her life as a Unitarian. This was a wonderful service, on a memorable afternoon; Mandy was delighted with the event and quick to express her pleasure; she is an excellent Minister and already much admired by her congregation. I shall return to Kendal (hopefully!) at the end of May, to help them to celebrate their 300th Anniversary.

Unity, Bolton, was the next service I conducted, on February 23rd; I had been asked to talk about my year as Vice-President, so, using my calendar-pieces, I constructed an address for them. They were very pleased, and

even Roger commented on how interesting it had sounded---and he was there at the time!

After that, I attended services at Bury, in March, as I had no official engagements until the 29th; this included chairing the discussion of the GA Motions, on March 15th, after the service.

Unfortunately, Coronavirus took over, before then, and Ansdell and I were obliged to cancel the visit. My three Presidential visits in April have all been cancelled, too, by mutual agreement, and who knows where that will end? The cancellation of the Annual Meetings means that I will not be installed as the GA President, as I had expected, although I will assume my duties (if there are any!) from April 9th. The coming year, I suspect, will be different from what I had envisaged!

**Anne Mills**

### **Editing *The Calendar***

After many years hard and loving work producing our excellent monthly *Calendars*, Pam Gilbert has decided that it's time to pass the responsibility on to someone else. If it's a job you'd be interested in taking on, please contact Kate. You will need a computer, of course, but a colour printer can be provided.

I would personally like to thank Pam for her hard work over the years: our *Calendar* is of a high quality and is always a treat to receive. I'm sure there will be a more formal thank you once we can all meet again, but in the meantime I hope Pam knows how much her work is appreciated!

## **Service of Welcome for Reverend Amanda Reynolds at Kendal Unitarian Church**

Despite storm Ciara having just left and storm Dennis about to arrive on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February, Kendal was bathed in sunshine for this special occasion. It was a double celebration because not only were the congregation welcoming a new Minister but also celebrating the tercentenary of the chapel. So there were many congratulations and good wishes being shared. Val Chamberlain represented the Bury congregation, Anne Mills, in her role as Vice-President of the GA, brought good wishes from Unitarian congregations across the country. I spoke as Secretary of the North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission (NELUM), offering good wishes for the future and a welcome to Amanda as a new Minister in the District. Amanda is well known to the Kendal congregation, having been the leader of their ministry team for the last four years, so inviting her to be their Minister seemed like a natural progression. The service had a warm and friendly feeling, with just the right mixture of serious and lighter moments. There was gentle music from a trio of piano, bassoon and cor anglais, with nice words and four great hymns joyously sung. The sunlight filling this lovely chapel seemed to add to the atmosphere of hope that filled the occasion.

**Beryl Allerton**

## **Alf Howson: an update**

I've received the following email and picture from Alf's daughter Deborah, and she has said that I can share the details with you:

*If you've visited my dad recently at Bankfield you will know doubt have noticed a decline in his health as the dementia has taken hold.*

*As a family we have taken the decision to move Dad to a private nursing home specialising in vascular dementia nursing care.*

*Dad moved to Gorsey Clough Nursing home on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March and we have already seen a huge improvement in Dads wellbeing. I have attached a picture taken by the manager of Gorsey Clough yesterday and I am sure you will see he is looking better already.*

*Gorsey Clough is not allowing visitors at this time but when this madness is all over if you are fit and well and would like to visit him you would be more than welcome.*

*You may wish to ring first to get the best times for them to accommodate your visit.*

*Gorsey Clough Residential &  
Nursing Home  
Harwood Road  
Tottington  
Bury  
Lancashire  
BL8 3PT  
T: 01204 882 976  
Deborah Holt*



## Minister's letter

*Dear all,*

*Well: these are certainly very strange times.*

*It's hard to imagine that just two weeks ago (at the time I'm writing this) we were only just starting to wonder if we might need to close the church for a couple of weeks, and that this time last week we received instructions from the government to say that we should stay in our homes as much as we possibly could.*

*It's been a shocking and fast-moving time. And the things that are happening are things we haven't ever experienced before: we've never before been instructed to stay at home, and we've never before been told we're only allowed one period of exercise a day. And it's very, very hard. It's been a massive change in our lives, and not a pleasant one.*

*But we do know why it's happening, and whilst I've never been someone who thinks the government is automatically right, on this occasion I am absolutely supportive of these rules.*

*There are people out there working incredibly hard, and putting themselves at risk to try to contain this awful virus, and the only way we can support them is by staying at home as much as we possibly can. If we've ever had a sacred duty to obey the rules, it's now, and I am so grateful to know that you are all abiding by the spirit of the law, as well as the letter of the law.*

*I have been genuinely humbled in the last few days (I can't believe it's only a few days!) by the expressions of concern for others which I hear every single time I phone one of you. Everyone is asking how everyone else is, and*

*it is no exaggeration to say that that lifts my heart in what can be very dark times.*

*I do miss you all, very much, already. On Sunday when Ade and I worked through the service-at-home (at the kitchen table), I got a bit weepy when we were singing the Lord's Prayer: I really missed singing it with all of you in church.*

*I hope and pray that before long we will all be back together in our beautiful building, seeing each other's faces and worshipping together again.*

*Until that time, let's be very grateful for our friendships, and for telephones, and let's remain together in our hearts and in our prayers: you are certainly all in mine.*

*With love,*

***Kate.***



## **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

Charity reg no: 1078570

Website: [www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk](http://www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk)

Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church.

## **Church Officers:**

Chair of trustees: Susan Holt (07876 716573)

Chair of church council: Betty Kenyon (01204 887222)

Chair of congregation: Anne Mills (5, Arley Avenue, Bury, BL9 5HD, 0161 762 0943)

Church secretary: Anne Mills

Church treasurer: John Fitzpatrick (0161 764 6374)