

# **BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH**



**December 2023  
& January 2024**

## Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

There's still over a week of November to go as I'm writing this, and it feels a bit strange that it's the last Calendar of 2023. I try not to think too hard about Advent and Christmas until after we've fully honoured Remembrance Sunday (although we generally book the organist and pianist for the carol service in January!) and so my thoughts are only just turning to carols, and readings, and oranges, and to the general busyness which comes to any church community at this time of year.

Even though, as Unitarians, we don't generally believe that the Christmas story happened like the bible stories tell us it did, it's still an important time of year for us as a community. We'll soon be decorating the worship area with flowers, a tree, and extra lights, and we have several events coming up, some of them traditional, and others newer. I hope that everyone will find something in the month's programme which nourishes them and brings them a moment of peace or happiness.

I also know that it can be a difficult month, and I hope you know that if you're struggling for whatever reason, I'm around. In a world which feels like it's trying to force us to be 'merry and bright' we sometimes need a space where we can say that we're not, and I can provide that space. It's part of what I'm for.

While I was writing this, I flipped back through the last year's worth of Calendars, and it made me reflect on what a year it's been for us all. We've seen illness, death, and grief this year, and supported each other as we face that sadness both individually and as a community: it has been humbling to see how, tired though we all are, we work together when someone needs us to support them, and how we make the events happen which need to happen. We've honoured our losses, and comforted those who've grieved the most. If there is one thing a church should do, it's that, I'm so proud that we're fulfilling that responsibility.

And we've also seen growth, and joy. We've welcomed new people into our midst, who already feel like they've been here for a long time, and I think we've had more children amongst us than we have since before the lockdowns: it's a great pleasure when they join us.

We've worked, and we've socialised, and we've worshipped together: I feel like we're still finding our feet after the shocks of three years ago, but it does feel as if the ground is getting firmer (I also feel that I may have mixed my metaphors here!). Some things that we were doing have faded away (the Zoom services and the midweek meditations, for instance), but others are growing stronger: the Saturday Social Gatherings feel like an established part of our routine now, and they're far more than just a way of me getting help with collating the Calendars.

It has been a rich and full year, and that richness and fullness has to include the sadness as well as the joy. I feel deeply blessed that as your minister I get to share that with you.

I must, of course, talk about the seasons and the weather. I'm writing this just a month away from the Winter Solstice, the shortest day and the longest night of the year. For many of us it is a very sacred and magical time, and I do hope to be marking it at Holebottom, which is a sacred and magical place. Holebottom is currently very muddy indeed, but the trees are exceptionally beautiful as they shed the last of their leaves and take on that stark wintery glory. And for about the last three weeks or so Ade and I have been taking note of one, brave, unseasonal, solitary buttercup which has been bravely defying the mud, the cold, and the rain and standing proud in the middle of it all. I think it's gone now, but we actually found ourselves saying "aww, hello brave buttercup!" when we saw it.

But most importantly, I send you my love and my blessings at this magical and sometimes difficult time of year: may all the blessings of the winter, of the solstice, of Christmas be with us all, and may they sustain us.

As ever, I send you my love.

Kate.

## **News of our community**

### **Howard Maden and Jean Brookhouse**

Congratulations and best wishes to Howard, who recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, and to Jean who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **Norah Hickton**

Norah is still in Fairfield, and she's physically well and seems less unsettled than she did at first. She is looking forward to moving to a residential home in Prestwich soon. Peter misses her, and I know he appreciates our love, support, and prayers.

### **Connie Diggle**

I saw Connie recently: she is still in hospital and mostly happy. She was adamant that I should give everyone at Bury her love, and tell you that she misses you all.

### **Margaret Hallam**

Some of you will know Margaret, who was mostly involved at Ainsworth Church, but also spent a lot of time at Bury, before moving to Llangollen: Margaret visited us recently when she was in Bury on a coach trip, and wanted to be remembered to people who knew her.

## **Roy Brooks**

Roy Brooks, who was a regular and well-loved attender at our coffee mornings before the pandemic, has died at the age of 94, and I know that he will be very much missed.

Roy's funeral is at 12:45pm on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December, at Radcliffe United Reform Church: sadly, I won't be able to attend but I will send condolences to his family on behalf of all of us at Bury.

## **Thanks from Brenda Ainsworth**

Brenda would like to thank everyone for their very generous donations to the Send a Child to Hucklow fund, following Robin's death. The donations came to over £600, which will make a real difference to the charity.



# **Advent and Christmas at Bury Unitarian Church**

**Saturday 2nd December, 2pm**  
Christingle-making workshop.

**Sunday 3rd December, 11.15am**  
Christingle Service (the one with the oranges!)

**Sunday 10th December, 11.15am**  
A quiet and reflective service

**Sunday 10th December, 3pm**  
Carols by Candlelight

**Saturday 16th December 2pm**  
A festive sing-song around the piano

**Sunday 17th December 11.15am**  
Morning worship, followed by a congregational lunch  
(please book in advance)

**Sunday 24th December, 11.15am:**  
Morning worship.

**Monday 25th December, 11.15am:**  
Worship for Christmas morning, with a light breakfast  
beforehand.

# **Carols by Candlelight,**

**3pm, Sunday 10th December,**

**A service of carols, readings, and music,  
followed by refreshments and  
fellowship in the lounge.**

**There is still time (until about 3rd  
December) to offer readings or request  
carols**



**Christingle Service,  
11.15am, Sunday 3rd December,  
and Christingle workshop,  
2pm, Saturday 2nd December.**

We would love you to join us for this child-friendly early celebration of Christmas, with oranges, candles, stories, and song.

and if you're free the previous day, please come and help us make the Christingles: this is always fun, and there will be wintery treats!



**A quiet, reflective, morning service**

**11.15am, Sunday 10th December,**

Christmas can bring great joy, and can also be a time of sadness.

You are invited to join us in the worship area for a quiet reflective time during which we give each other permission to be with the sadnesses and to have some respite from what can feel like overwhelming expectations to be happy.

Words, music, time for reflection, and candles.

**A sing-song round the piano,  
2pm, Saturday 16th December**

Please join us for a good old-fashioned Christmas sing-song round the piano, accompanied by Alan Taylor on the piano.

If we have the words and Alan has the music, we can sing it!  
Refreshments available.



**Congregational Christmas Lunch  
After the service on Sunday 17th  
December.**

**Menu**  
Sherry/fruit juice  
Soup and bread roll  
Hot Ham muffin & garnish  
Xmas cakes  
Tea/coffee

**Cost: £6**

If you would like to stay for lunch please put your name on the list

On the notice board in the lounge or ring Susan  
07876716563





**Worship for Christmas morning**  
**Breakfast from 10.30am**  
**Worship at 11.15am**  
**Sherry and mince pies after the**  
**service**



**Please join us on this very special day where we celebrate Christmas with hymns, readings, and companionship.**

**Join us for a simple and very casual breakfast (omnivore, vegetarian, and vegan options are available) before we all come together in worship.**

**Lifts to and from church are available.**

**After the service we gather for sherry, fruit juice, and mince pies.**

## **Minister's schedule, December 2023 and January 2024**

I will be working most days during December, and although I will of course take some time off, it won't be on my usual regular schedule: I'll keep you informed by email and in notices, but please contact me if you need me, even – just for this month – on a Thursday!

I will be taking time off immediately after Christmas, starting back at work on either the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> January. I will be away for a few of those days, but I do know that it can be a stressful time so please contact me if you need to.

### **Vestry Days: most Fridays, and one Saturday a month**

Kate will be in the vestry on **Fridays 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December**, and the **5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> January** (although as the January dates are some time off they may be subject to change!) She will be around for the Christingle workshop on **Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December** and for Vestry Saturdays on the **9<sup>th</sup> December** and **13<sup>th</sup> January**.

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 warm up, 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 might be better to arrange this on a different day.

## Regular Social Events

### Book Club

There won't be a Book Club meeting in December, but we will meet on **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January**, at 2pm, in the church lounge. The book to be discussed is *Little Face*, by Sophie Hannah. Tea and coffee will be available. Parking will only be available in case of a real need, so please check beforehand.

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

### Camera Club

The Camera Club will continue to meet during December and January, at 7pm on two Monday evenings, on Zoom. Please listen out for details in church notices and in the weekly email.

### Social Gatherings

Kate won't be hosting a Saturday Social Gathering in December, but if anyone would like to host one, you'd be very welcome: the normal date would be the Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December, and you'd just need to make sure the building was open, the heating and the kettle were on, and that there were snacks. You don't even need to provide any admin tasks for people to do!

The next Gathering will take place on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January**, and definitely will involve admin tasks (though it's mainly a chance to socialise, of course!)

## Second Sunday lunches

There won't be a Second Sunday lunch in December (the second Sunday is the Carol service, the third is the congregational lunch, and the fourth is Christmas Eve).

We'll try to get back into our normal Second Sunday routine from **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January**.

### February 2024 Calendar:

The deadline for entries for the February (!) edition of the Calendar will be teatime on **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January**, and we'll collate it on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>**.

*If there seems to be a need for it, I'll produce a brief 'what's on' sheet for the first service in January.*

### No service on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December

As you will see from the list of services and the what's on pages, there won't be a service at Bury Unitarian Church on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December: Kate always takes a week off after Christmas, and the Church Council (including Kate) agreed that it would be very hard to find a worship leader and that few people would want to be in church on that day. If you'd like to attend a Unitarian service elsewhere, Kate can help you find one.

### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January

Looking ahead, the service on **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2024** will be led by Vince McCully, president of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.

## **Notes from the building.**

It's been a quieter month this month in property related matters, which is nice, because it's allowed me to take a bit of a break from chasing contractors around. As I've mentioned before, the post-lockdown changes in contractor availability have been intense. It's not so much that the number of our contractors has shrunk, but the work they have available has exploded as others have closed shop and businesses and buildings have reopened; and yes, we're still feeling the knock-on effects of that now.

We, as a church, rely on a lot of what I call 'trusted contractors', these are contractors who have been working for us for years and have been hunted down by people who know what they are doing, we still use a lot of the tradesmen brought in initially by Peter Whewell and Roger Mills. It's a win-win position, because our contractors know that we aren't likely to insist on a particular time, and they can fit us in when available, and we know we have someone we can leave to get on with the job without having to worry about exactly who is doing it, or what their qualifications are.

We've been blessed by a couple of great additions to our list of trusted companies, again recommended by members of the community. It was the Minister who found our fantastic new Audio Systems supplier. It was Howard Maden, our property trustee, who knew our lift reporting company from his work, and also found the company who installed the new door system. All of these new contractors have been selected with great care and the results have been fantastic.

Howard's work with the doors has largely been a start-to-finish solo run; with my involvement limited to turning up and opening the doors for them, and it's been a really impressive deal for us. It's cut down our repair overheads on the doors massively and the doors are working in exactly the way one would expect. It's been nice to have working automation again, and if you see Howard at church, it might be a good idea to throw him a thank you for that; we certainly wouldn't have them without all his hard work.

*Ade Brady*

## Stewards for Sunday services, December 2023 and January 2024

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Susan Mitchell and Susan Holt
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Barbara Bamford and Jean Brookhouse
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> December (Carol service at 3pm)	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Ewen Sim and Janine Hurley
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	No service at Bury Unitarian Church
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Beryl Bowden and Marian Price
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Betty Kenyon and Neville Kenyon
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Susan Mitchell and Susan Holt
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Barbara Bamford and Jean Brookhouse

## Tea and coffee rota, December 2023 and January 2024

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	CAROL SERVICE AT 3pm
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	Rita Boardall and Susan Mitchell
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	No service at Bury Unitarian Church
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> January	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> January	Marian Price and Susan Holt
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Faye Casey and Janet Thatcher

If you would like to be included on the rota either for stewarding or for setting up and serving tea and coffee after services, please ask Kate to put you in touch with the relevant people: if you'd prefer not to be on the rota but can offer to help out on occasional Sundays, that would also be very gratefully received!

## **Members' name and address directory**

The name and address directory hasn't been completed (or even started) yet, but it will happen early in the new year.

## **Membership Secretary**

After many years of hard work, Margaret Pollard is stepping down as Membership Secretary, and we're looking for someone to take her place. The job mainly involves collecting, recording, and banking cash donations from Sunday services. It doesn't have to be done every week, and as a lot of people now make their donations by bank transfer, it isn't as big a task as it used to be.

If you'd like to know more about what it involves, please speak to either Margaret or Susan Holt.

## **2024 Christmas greetings**

The last few years we've sent out Christmas greetings in the December and January calendar, but this year it falls far too early for that to make much sense. If you would like to share your Christmas greetings with the rest of the congregation and with the people who receive the Calendar, please let Kate have them (either by popping them in the box at the back of the worship area or by dropping her an email) as soon as possible but certainly by the end of the Carol service on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December so there's time to print and distribute them.

## **News from around the district and the denomination**

### **News and greetings from Ainsworth**

- 10.30 am Sunday 3rd December Rev Helen Mills  
10.30 am Sunday 7th January Mr Ewen Sim  
10.30 am Sunday 4th February Mr Vince McCully, GA President

### **To all Members of Bury Unitarian Church**

We send our best wishes for a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year

from The Congregation at Ainsworth Unitarian Chapel

### **Greetings from Rochdale:**

Dear friends,

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for all your gifts of support throughout this year, for joining us for social events and keeping in contact. Though we appreciate this Christmas will be different for a number of you, know that you will be in our thoughts and prayers. From all of us at Clover Street Unitarians (Rochdale) we send love and best wishes for a blessed Christmas time.

Rev Abi xx



**By-Gone Times by Betty Kenyon. Number 42: December 2023 and  
January 2024.**

**The Chancel Window in our third Chapel 1852-1972**



This window was the workmanship of Mr. Warrington of London.

The chancel window was much admired for its beautiful colour and design.

It depicted the 10 Commandments.

At the feet of these ten figures are scenes from the life of Jesus;  
Jesus in the Manger, Jesus among the doctors, the Baptism of Jesus, Jesus  
blessing the children, Jesus at Gethsemane, the betrayal of Jesus, Jesus  
bearing the cross, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension.

There were a further 8 stained glass windows given by members of the  
congregation.

There were 13 memorial tablets. I do wonder what happened to the windows and tablets in 1972! If you know please do tell me.

Many well-known members of the congregation donated gifts to the new chapel-

Thomas Wrigley, the gothic reredos and the pulpit carved in ecclesiastical style made of Caen stone.

(The beautiful carved pulpit from the second chapel was presented to the congregation at Crewe. The 1719 plaque off the pulpit of the first chapel is in our worship area.)

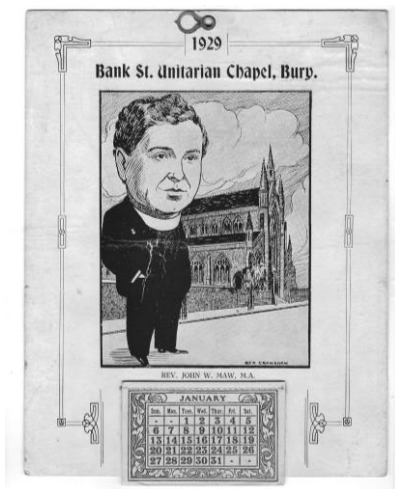
John Grundy, the octagonal font of Caen stone and gothic spire cover of dark oak plus floors of mosaic work rich and of beautiful colours.

John Duckworth, the elaborately carved reading desk.

Mrs Douglas Walmsley, kneeling stool in reading desk.

Needlework cushions were worked by ladies of the congregation.

Recently, I found the following 1929 calendar.



On the reverse it says: in 1923 a beautiful cenotaph in memory of members of the congregation who fell in the great war was erected in the church-yard.

yard. As we have said, Bank-street Church is a very beautiful building, but we seldom pass it without thinking how much better the public would be able to appreciate its architectural charm if the walls of the churchyard, especially that on the south side, were lowered. This, too, would bring the cenotaph, as seen from Manchester-road, into admirable perspective with the buildings in the background. In an industrial town two many uglinesses flaunt themselves before our eyes and insist on being seen. It becomes, therefore, something in the nature of a public loss when anything that is really good to look upon is hidden—or half-hidden—behind walls that are needlessly high.

Spot the spelling mistake in the above article.

Happy New Year for 2024

# 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 please do tell us!

## Looking forward to 2024:

2024 is the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of our beloved church building, and we will – of course – be celebrating this.

On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March we will be having a congregational tea party, and on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March (the actual anniversary of the opening service) we will be holding a special service, in the presence of the Lord Mayor of Bury.

Please save these dates: further details will follow.

With very best wishes from everyone at Bury Unitarian Church. May your Christmas season be blessed, and may the new year bring you everything you need and much that you want.

## What's on: December 2023

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December** 2pm: Christingle making session

### **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

10.30am Ainsworth: Morning service, led by Rev Helen Mills

11.15am Bury: Christingle service

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December** 12.30: Matthew Haygarth trustees' meeting

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Saturday

### **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

11.15am Bury: A quiet reflective service

3pm Bury: Carols by Candlelight

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December** 2pm: Christmas sing-song around the piano

### **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

11.15am Bury: Morning service

12.30pm approx: Congregational lunch

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> December**

11.15am Bury: Morning service  
12.30 approx: Inclusive communion

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December**

10.30: Breakfast  
11.15: Worship for Christmas morning, followed by time for fellowship.

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December**

No service at Bury

**What's on: January 2024**

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January**

10.30am Ainsworth: Morning worship, led by Ewen Sim  
11.15am Bury: Morning service

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January** 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January** 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January** 12-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Saturday

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January**

**11.15am Bury**

Morning service

**12.30 approx**

Second Sunday lunch

***Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January***  
*building)*

*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire*

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January**

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> January**

11.15am Bury:

Morning service

***Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January***

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

**Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January**

Teatime: Deadline for entries for the February Calendar

**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January**

11am onwards: Saturday social gathering and Calendar collating

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

11.15am Bury:

Service in church, led by Vince McCully, President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches

12.30 approx:

Inclusive communion

***Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January***

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

**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January**

2pm: Book club meeting to discuss *Little Face*, by Sophie Hannah



## Church Information:

Minister:

Rev. Kate Brady McKenna

0161 460 3363 / 07751 240886

[revkatemckenna@gmail.com](mailto:revkatemckenna@gmail.com)

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

Church phone: 0161 761 3785

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



***Bodnant Garden - Conwy***



***Happy Christmas!***



***The Rock's best Christmas Tree***