

# Bury Unitarian Church



The way ahead.....?

## Calendar for July 2020

## Welcome!

Welcome to the July 2020 edition of the Bury Unitarian Church Calendar. Once again, I'm very grateful to everyone who sent in material for it: in this edition there is information about ways of joining us for worship and online social events; updates on what some of the congregation have been up to; messages from the congregation; news from the camera club and the book club; information about some books which are available; details of a charming local walk; a page of funnies; and very much more.

There is also some information about where your church officers are up to in discussions about re-opening the church safely in the midst of the continuing pandemic.

There is usually a double issue for July and August, but as this is currently one of our main forms of communication between one another, there will be another edition out for August. Please let me know if there is anything you would like to see included in these Calendars: I will consider all suggestions, and accept all submissions (within reason!). Maybe you'd like to see an edition one month with a theme? Or to have a running series of articles on a particular subject?

One thing I would love to see in the Calendar is creative work: we've been lucky to have a poem recently by a member of the congregation, and I think we'd all be really delighted to see more poetry, creative writing, or even artwork (we can print in colour on the inside back and front pages, and in black-and-white anywhere else!).

The deadline for the August edition will be Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July (so I can lay it out on Thursday, print on Friday, and deliver on Saturday).

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Calendar, which is – as always – brought to you by many more hands than just mine!

**Kate Brady McKenna (with her editor's hat on).**

## Letter from the Minister:

Dear all,

I'm writing this on the last Thursday in July, and it is stifling! We've certainly seen some changing weather in the last few weeks, and I must admit that this is not my favourite of it!

I'm being very grateful though, that in the past few years household fans have become more available: I have a very large stainless steel one making the heat in my living room just about bearable.

I hope you're all managing with the heat, and – although I'm not charged with your physical health – I really hope you're all drinking enough fluids! Like the fans, I'm really grateful to live at a time of effective refrigerators and freezers!

As most of you know, we have recently started inviting people to join in with us for online coffee mornings and for worship on Sunday mornings. Originally I made a deliberate decision not to offer online worship, because so many of you do not use the internet and this would have meant offering something to some people which was not available to others, and that felt very wrong. But we now have a system which means that you can join in using your normal home telephone, which means it's available to everyone. A couple of people have done this already, and it would be lovely to hear more of your voices.

When you join us for the Sunday service you are able to hear me and everyone else, and we can hear you. Although you can't see us, people who have joined in by phone have still enjoyed the service. We even get to sing along to a recorded choir, with no one else hearing us!

If you would like to join the services but are a bit anxious about it, you might like to read Margaret Miller's words about how she has found it, and I can always try and talk you through it. It's been very lovely in the past couple of weeks to hear people's voices and to have a chat in a larger group.

We are constantly evolving during this pandemic, and as the lockdowns are increasingly relaxed, I'm sure we will continue to do so. I have given some details on another page of the calendar about where we're up to on our decisions.

I do want to assure you that, like all my ministerial colleagues, I am spending a great deal of time, thought, effort and prayer on the matter of reopening, and that the church officers are also putting a huge amount of work into this. I very much want us to be back together worshipping and socialising in community, but until it feels safe, I will still be recommending that we continue to be very very careful. So far we have been largely unscathed by the virus, and I really want that to continue.

I know that a lot of you are also conscious of the risks of going back too soon, and will decide not to come to services even when they resume. I absolutely respect this decision, and I promise you that even once gathered worship resumes, in whatever form that takes, I will continue to provide services-at-home and weekly letters to anyone who chooses not to join us in church.

The future will bring still more challenges and we will have to continue to find new ways to be a loving church community, but I have every confidence that we will do so, and that we will continue to evolve as the world changes around us.

I will be taking two weeks off from 6<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July inclusive, and although we are not taking the risk of going away anywhere, I am very much looking forward to a fortnight of lazy mornings, reading, and housework. There are further details about arrangements during that time later on in the Calendar.

As we struggle through or rejoice in this hot weather, and as we move through July, know that you are all in my prayers and thoughts.

As always, I send you my love.

**Kate Brady McKenna (with her minister's hat on).**

## **Presidential Matters:**

There is little to report, this month, as lockdown continues, and life proceeds according to the new normality. On the first Sunday in June, I produced the Sunday Service for Chowbent; this was a read-at-home service, to celebrate the chapel's 299th Anniversary, which considered the contribution made to Chowbent by Caleb Wright, a considerable benefactor of theirs, and of the local area; he was also the first M.P. for the new constituency of Leigh. Next year, I hope to be able to be present in person, when Chowbent celebrates its important 300th Anniversary!

I continue to tune in to services and other events at Padiham, Kendal, Stand and Edinburgh, and enjoy the variety of material and style available. I have been invited to deliver a service for St. Mark's Unitarian Church, Edinburgh; as this will be via Zoom, I am quite apprehensive! Padiham's first Zoom service was subtitled "Be kind---it's an experiment!" I know the feeling! Kate conducted Bury's first Zoom service, on June 14th, from her kitchen-table; it was good to hear her voice again, and we found this a moving service, especially when each member was mentioned by name and formally remembered. Thanks to Kate for everything she is doing for us, in order to sustain us and help us through this difficult time; thanks, too, to Ade for dealing with the technical-requirements of Zoom. All went beautifully.

During Kate's leave, in July, I have offered to write a service for Bury, and this will be available for the 19th; details will follow, once Kate and I have agreed what is to happen to provide cover during her absence. I continue to work hard, on the congregation's behalf; despite our continued closure, there is still much to be arranged, and discussions and decisions are ongoing. As I write, churches are reopening for private prayer, but we are still a considerable time away from a full reopening; in some ways, I wish it could be soon, but a prime consideration must be that nothing should threaten the health of our members, many of whom are very vulnerable indeed. I send everyone my best wishes; be patient---we will be together as soon as possible!

**Anne Mills**

## **Notes from the church building:**

It's summer, and hasn't the world made sure that we know that it's summer! We've had some extremely hot weather of late, broken only by a magnificent storm that has provided us with a glimpse of the late autumn weather to come. Despite this storm, and despite the fact we've all mostly spent this summer in our homes, it has still been largely glorious, a largely glorious summer indeed.

And the Church too, looks glorious, but then, to me, it always does. By now, I'm sure everyone knows how I feel about our building, and there are, in truth, a lot of different reasons for why I love it so, but paramount amongst them is the stunning design. That design however, brings with it the same problem that everyone with a flat roof has - which is the near incessant leaking that comes with persistently bad weather.

The property managers and trustees; past and present; indeed everyone responsible for the church over a very long period, have thrown an awful lot of time and money into repairing this issue, and bit, by bit, every issue that comes with having a flat roof on our very beautiful church has been quietly and professionally addressed. Our latest repair has been fully tested by the recent Autumn storm that our glorious Summer provided and I'm pleased to tell you that it seems to have all worked rather well.

The leaks may come again of course, such is the design of the building, but it hasn't happened this time, which is actually exceptionally good news.

As you read this, major electrical rewiring work has started on the building and the Church is closed to all but the contractors, Roger and myself. This is not only to ensure a clear space for the electricians during the day, but because the work is extremely dangerous. If you have keys for the church, please do not enter it until further notice.

**Adrian Brady**

## **Worshipping together:**

You will probably know by now that you can join the congregation remotely for the Sunday morning service-at-home each week (except on July 12<sup>th</sup> when I will be on leave).

We have done the service this way twice now, and around a dozen of us have been together for it. There have been some teething troubles, but my techniques are improving and there were fewer hiccups the second time.

The service is exactly the same as the service-at-home, except that we can sing along to a recorded choir (no one can hear you sing!) and you get to hear me read the address instead of reading it yourself. After the service we stay for a short chat.

It really is very simple to join us, and if you would like a practice I can arrange that! Margaret Miller says this about the experience:

*I have enjoyed joining in with the Sunday morning service via the telephone. It is very easy to do. You dial one of four numbers after which you will be asked to enter the meeting number, followed by the hash key (#). The next voice you hear is Kate's. It's as simple as that! Try it!*

The phone numbers you can use are

0131 460 1196,

0203 051 2874,

0203 481 5237

0203 481 5240

The meeting number is 849 7456 6116.

These numbers will stay the same until the beginning of September.

It really would be lovely to see or hear you!

## **IT in Lockdown.**

I've just come away from our second service-at-home via Zoom and have cause yet again to be so grateful for the opportunities offered by having access to the Internet. I realise how lucky I am to have the hardware that enables me to connect easily but also to have had opportunities to enjoy using it and thus build up my confidence.

I was amazed at how quickly so many organisations adapted to the new situation caused by the Covid 19 restrictions and were offering online versions of events. The first one to have any effect on me was the response of our General Assembly. No sooner was the cancellation of the annual meetings in Birmingham announced than an alternative 3 day programme of lectures and workshops was offered- some replicating the original programme but some completely new. I felt sad initially as I realised I wouldn't be seeing some familiar faces and friends from around the country. However, dare I say it, the advantages soon compensated for the disappointment – no prolonged travel by car or train, being more able to attend only those sessions that really appealed and therefore to have more breaks to absorb and reflect on the content. The programme was accessed via the same Zoom technology that we now use at our church. Some sessions were straightforward lecture-style presentations but most included some opportunity to interact in question times or discussions. As a child I used to believe that the presenters on TV could also see me in my living room – and now the technology had made that possible! The real highlights for me were the small group 'Breakout Rooms' which I had not experienced before. We were randomly assigned to a group of 3 or 4 and invited to introduce ourselves briefly – the usual introductions of where we were from and what our connections were to the Unitarian movement. These would normally happen at coffee breaks but here they happened without the agony of making the first move or worrying about breaking into a small group who already knew each other, at the same time as balancing a cup, saucer and biscuit, whilst surreptitiously looking for the programme of which room you should be in next and wondering if there was time for a visit to the loo! I met and connected with so many new and delightful people who I certainly wouldn't have connected with normally by sticking to my familiar acquaintances. I also found myself in small groups talking to

some of the 'big names' seen only in *The Inquirer* – normally I would be too shy to approach them and therefore miss out on an informal way of learning from them or being able to express an opinion. Far from there being *less* social contact because we weren't meeting in person, I felt there was *more* contact with a wider range of people.

The two Unitarian Societies of which I am a member should have been giving workshops at the original GA meetings and both decided to offer something online to existing members and encourage new ones. The Unitarian Earth Spirit Network adapted their workshop to consider ways in which people could continue to connect with nature during Lockdown, including some for those confined to their homes. People shared lovely examples of small floral arrangements, poems they enjoyed, programmes they listened to or watched and joined in a flower meditation similar to the ones we've enjoyed during our summer services at Bury. At the end people asked whether similar sessions could continue to be held. Since then, two online sessions have been enjoyed to celebrate Beltane at the beginning of May and the Summer Solstice in June. Instead of 6-8 individuals who normally meet in Bolton, the Solstice celebration attracted 41 Unitarians from as far away as Canada and Orkney who listened to beautiful live singing from a member of Chorlton church, poetry and readings about summer in different parts of the world and shared their memories of summers past and hopes for the summer to come. I very much doubt, good as our meetings are, that they would have made the trip to Bolton! No doubt we will be offering another session at the beginning of August to celebrate Lammas.

The Findhorn Unitarian Network (FUN) also offered an online meditation session via Zoom called 'Loving Kindness' led by Ralph Catts, retired minister from Hull Unitarian Church. Ralph is currently living in Australia and would certainly not have been able to be present at the GA meetings. Once again the success of the session led people to ask if something similar could be offered in the future, so the Network has offered 3 monthly meditation sessions on Saturday or Tuesday mornings, suitable for beginners as well as those who have meditated before. (Details below.) Word is beginning to spread and people are starting to invite their non-Unitarian friends.

We often wonder about ways of attracting new people to Unitarianism – both of these societies have increased their membership and considerably widened connections with audiences within and beyond the movement. Initial disappointment at the cancellation of the original meetings has led to creative solutions which have had far reaching benefits for these societies and, hopefully, the Unitarian movement as a whole; on a personal level I feel I now have even more kindred spirits to connect with around the country, some of whom I will perhaps meet in person next year when/if the meetings return.

Please do have a chat with me if you would like more details of the sessions offered by either society.

The next FUN meditation sessions are as follows:

**Saturday July 18 at 11 am; or Tuesday July 21 at 9.30 am**

*A loving kindness meditation. This will be an opportunity to use meditation to find peace within, and to offer blessings to all who are in need of kindness in this difficult time.*

**Saturday August 15 at 11 am or Tuesday August 18 at 9.30 am.**

*Using the breath in meditation. This session will identify ways to increase your control over your mind and to address the many thoughts that filter through when one tries to sit and be at peace with your own breath. Various strategies will be introduced and you will have the opportunity to apply these as you meditate in silence.*

Each meditation session will be conducted using Zoom (phone or IT) and is by invitation. To participate please send an email to Ralph Catts and indicate in the heading which session you want to join. Click on the email address here to respond to Ralph. [ralphunitarian@gmail.com](mailto:ralphunitarian@gmail.com)

**Val Chamberlain**

## Camera club:

Members have been meeting, every Monday evening, and plan to continue to do so, for the present; they are busy planning their next exhibition and have already decided the categories; the next step will be to assemble suitable photographs for each section. It seems that Zoom is a very suitable format for photographs, as pictures can be shown and shared quickly and easily. If you are interested in joining these meetings, please contact Janet Thatcher for details. The members are also responsible for choosing the picture for each calendar; thank you to them for all their contributions.

One exhibition-category is "The Past"; a snap was submitted of a Bury Metropolitan Borough white plaque to honour the Bury author, Richmal Crompton Lamburn (of "Just William" fame), on the wall of Malvern Villas, at the top end of Chesham Road; Richmal went to live there when she was 6 years old, after the family moved from 529 Manchester Road, where Richmal was born, in 1890---where there is another plaque! How unusual is it for a town to dedicate two plaques to the same person? Richmal proceeded to boarding-school and college, in her teens, and spent much of the rest of her adult-life in the Bromley, Kent, area. She wrote more than 40 novels for adults, in addition to her "Just William" ones. A writer in "Northern Life", 5 years ago, suggested that there should be a statue to Richmal, in a very suitable spot, just outside the Unitarian church; how right he was about the place, as this is where Victoria Wood's statue now stands!

**Roger Mills**



### **Book club:**

As the church now has its own Zoom account, thanks to Kate, it is possible for members to get together (virtually, of course) for meetings of various kinds. The Book Club met, on June 17th, to keep in touch and to discuss the books the members had been reading, during the past few weeks. A list has been compiled and circulated, and a "swap-system" seems to be in progress, so we emerged full of good intentions and ideas. We agreed a date for the next meeting: Wednesday, July 1st, at 7 p.m; when a Novel/Poem/Song Quiz will be held; if anyone wishes to join us for this, please let Kate know, and she will supply the log-in details; all are welcome, and the meeting will last for about an hour.

**Anne Mills**

### **New book:**

Humpty Dumpty (with a twist):

*Humpty Dumpty was an egg. With legs. Legs on an egg. And a face, with a big mouth. What do eggs eat? Is it wrong for them to eat chicken? He sits on a wall. No wonder he fell off; he is the right shape for rolling. And he ended up scrambled. How did he fall? Was he pushed? Were there witnesses? Did the king's men see what happened? Or the king's horses? Neigh? There needs to be an enquiry. And why use the king's horses to put him together again? How could they? With their hooves? Fancy someone so fragile sitting himself so high. What a numpty, Humpty Dumpty!*

(Karen Eckersley, a member of Chowbent Unitarian Chapel)

This is one of the creative-writing pieces produced at a retreat organised by The North West Provincial Assembly, in September, 2019, and sponsored by Horwich Unitarian Free Church. A Book of Writings, called "Grains of Sand, Rays of Light" was subsequently produced; it is available, at a cost of £5.00, which includes postage and packing, from Rev. Lynne Readett; the booklet presents an impressive collection of material, ranging from happy to reflective to sad---a positive bargain! Contact-details are available from Anne Mills.

### **Book loans:**

Kate and Ade are still very happy to drop books from the church bookstall off at your doorstep if you're running out of things to read, and we have a small supply at home from generous members of the congregation. Just shout if you'd like me to pop round. I can't promise anything specific, and I can't promise you won't have read something already!

### **Unitarian books:**

You may not know that the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches has its own publishing house, The Lindsey Press, and aims to publish either one or two new books each year (this is on top of a surprisingly vast collection of books published over the last two hundred or so years). You can find the whole catalogue online, but I will give details of one or two every time there is space in The Calendar. The church library has many of these, or there may be someone who can lend them to you. You can also buy them from Essex Hall (the headquarters of the Unitarian GA). Anne Mills has recently spoken about the two most recent publications, so I will start slightly further back (the descriptions are from the Lindsey Press website).

**The Larger View: Unitarians and World Religions**, by Vernon Marshall.

The first major survey of interfaith relations from a Unitarian perspective. It traces the development of Unitarian attitudes to major world religions over the last 250 year, showing how Unitarian value and ideas have been influenced by close contact with Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic and Judaic traditions, and mainstream Christian thought. *£8.99 plus postage.*

**On the Side of Liberty: a Unitarian Historical Miscellany**, by Alan Ruston.

Alan Ruston presents some of the individuals who have shaped the development of Unitarian thought over the past 300 years. From the famous to the almost forgotten, these singular individuals all upheld religious or political liberty, sometimes at great cost to themselves. The book brings them to life with distinctive extracts from their own writings. *£9.50 plus postage.*

## **Moving towards reopening:**

As you will know, the government have recently said that more businesses and organisations can open, provided certain regulations are in place. Their rules do include churches and places of worship, and the law now says that we can open for worship.

However, more important than what the law says we *can* do, is what common sense, integrity, and good conscience says we *should* do.

You will know that we have already committed to remaining closed throughout July, and this is still the case.

As your minister, and with a focus on the spiritual and pastoral wellbeing of the whole congregation, I have recommended to the Church Officers that we do not open in any form until at least September, and that when we do so it will not be a full opening of the church for services like the ones we are used to holding.

I have also had to consider the possibility that we will not be able to hold any large services or any social events, possibly until the end of the year.

I will be discussing these recommendations with the Church Officers in due course : these are recommendations not decisions.

Churches have been shown to be in a very high risk category for infection, and the current advice on social distancing is considered by many scientists to be far too relaxed. I am aware that I am saying this at a time when pubs and restaurants are allowed to open again, but that relaxation worries me deeply and I suspect we will soon see an increase in the number of infections, which makes me even more reluctant to open until we see what the next few weeks bring.

I very much miss worshipping together in church, and I want to be able to do that again when we can do so in a way which is both safe and pleasurable. But it is a matter of conscience and integrity for me that I do not encourage us to return to gathered worship until I can do so without the fear that it would put our congregation, and the wider community, at risk of serious illness or even death.

The Church Officers and I have a lot of questions we need to ask and discuss, and a lot of decisions to make about what is safe and sensible. We will be meeting by Zoom once I am back from my time off, and we will spend time together making a decision which we all feel is safe, sensible, and realistic. You have my word that this will be done with a view to the pastoral and spiritual needs of the entire community, but also with a very sharp focus on safety.

I have made these recommendations following a huge amount of thought and prayer, and in conjunction with my ministerial colleagues both locally and nationally. Myself and my colleagues in NELUM will also be giving this recommendation to all the congregations within the district. As the ministerial team within the district, we have spent many hours reflecting, praying, and speaking about this issue, and our recommendation comes with love and with a determination to keep everyone as safe from this awful virus as we possibly can.

I am very thankful that, so far, as a congregation we have been largely unscathed by Covid-19. I put this down, in great part, to the fact that everyone has been sensible, patient, and compassionate in the decisions we have made to respect the needs of the whole community. I am so proud of how this congregation has reacted to the events of the last few months, and my fervent wish is for us all to remain healthy.

I promise that when myself and the Church Officers have reached a decision about our next steps (bearing in mind that everything is always subject to change) we will let you know and we will talk to you about it.

If you have any questions at all about any of this, or anything else to do with our moves towards reopening, *please* ask me. And if you have any suggestions about how we can make things safe when we return, I would genuinely love to hear them.

If you need to talk about this, or anything else, please contact me.

With love,

Kate.

## **New Safeguarding Arrangements:**

The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is very important to everyone at Bury Unitarian Church, and we have been working on new arrangements and a new policy. At the Church Council meeting in February it was agreed that the Safeguarding Team for the church would be June Clarke (with special responsibility for children and young people), George Scaife, and Rev. Kate Brady McKenna.

The full safeguarding policy is available on request, and the abbreviated statement is below.

If you are concerned about anyone's safety, please discuss it with one of the Safeguarding Team. If you feel that anyone (child or adult, vulnerable or not) is in immediate danger you must call the emergency services.

**Bury Unitarian Church takes the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults very seriously, and seeks to be a safe place for people to be in and a reassuring place for people who need to disclose harm.**

**If you have concerns about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult (whether these concerns are about something at church or elsewhere) please approach one of our safeguarding team:**

**George Scaife, June Clarke, Kate Brady McKenna**

**If you have concerns and do not feel comfortable speaking to any of the lead people, or if they are unavailable, please call**

**ThirtyOne:Eight on 0845 120 4550.**

**IF YOU FEEL THAT SOMEONE IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK, YOU SHOULD ALWAYS CONTACT THE POLICE ON 999.**

**This is an abbreviated version of our full safeguarding policy. We encourage you to read the full policy, which can be found in the lounge cupboard and in the vestry.**

## A safeguarding statement from George Scaife

You will all see from the previous article from our Minister, Kate, that I have been added to the Safe Guarding Team in our Church. But, what do you really know about me?

You know that I used to be in the Police Force, and for quite a few of you, that is about all you know.

In 1996, after a quite wide ranging career, I was selected after interview, to work at Police Headquarters within the Child Protection Unit, where my work involved many aspects, such as updating the multi-agency guidance for child protection; attending multi agency meetings to discuss individual cases; attending area meetings to decide multi-agency approaches to safe guarding. I attended several high level meetings in London to increase my knowledge and expertise within this field.

On my appointment as a Police Officer I had to sign the Official Secrets Act, and the restrictions it imposed on me all those years ago are in force for life.

The position that I held at the H.Q. Child Protection Unit required very strict confidentiality discipline to be observed - a situation which I very much respect and observe today.

There may be an occasion where you may share information of a confidential nature with me. Rest assured that I will of course respect your sensitive and confidential information.

*There is of course a proviso.*

If in the event that the information shared with me indicates that the physical or mental wellbeing of an individual is at risk, then I will be obliged to inform the necessary authorities. i.e. The Police, Local Authority, Health or Education. The only other members of the Church that will be consulted

will be June Clarke and our Minister Kate. Together we will discuss the appropriate response to any particular situation.

I am aware that an opinion may be expressed, that because I am married, I will disclose information with my wife, Di that is confidential. Di joined the health service shortly after we started courting. (Such a nice, now old fashioned word which is rarely heard these days). Di, due to her Nursing career, was also subject to Confidentiality within and outside her work place. In her later position as an employer, she also had to conform to confidentiality issues with her employees and also her customers. So you can rest assured that it is within our remit to comply with and respect information brought to our attention. What am I trying to say is there will be no pillow talk!

I will lastly emphasise that it is the responsibility of all of us to safeguard the children, the elderly and vulnerable in our society.

Most of all June, Kate and I are here to listen and not to judge.

May you all have a safe and healthy time in the circumstances we are currently experiencing.

**George Scaife**

### **Keeping in touch:**

If you would like to join our email mailing list, you would be very welcome. You will get the weekly service-at-home, with a letter from the minister, and invitation links to the Zoom coffee morning and the Sunday service-at-home, as well as various emails as things crop up during the week. The minister tries very hard to remember to hide everyone's email address, so whilst there is never any guarantee that you won't receive spam, it shouldn't happen.

Contact Kate on [revkatemckenna@gmail.com](mailto:revkatemckenna@gmail.com) if you'd like to be added to the list so that you're informed about everything we're doing.

## **Kate's annual leave:**

As I mentioned in my letter, I am taking two weeks off from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July, inclusive.

I am not planning to go away (I feel we are still at too much risk from the virus to be travelling unless it is necessary) but I will not be checking my work emails, texts, or answerphone messages during that time. I normally say (and mean!) that I am happy to hear from you if you need me during my leave, but the truth is that – like all my ministerial colleagues at the moment – I am very much in need of a proper break, and so I am asking you not to contact me on church business during those two weeks.

I have made arrangements with colleagues to provide pastoral care whilst I am on holiday, and when I write to you next week with the service, I will include details of who they are and how to contact them.

I will be providing a service-at-home for Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, which will be sent out with the service for the 5<sup>th</sup>. This service will not be Zoomed, unless someone has a burning desire to do so!

Anne Mills has kindly offered to create, distribute, and lead the service on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, and I am very grateful to her for that.

## **Recent services:**

One of the pieces of information I generally include in my report to the worship committee and the church council is a list of the services I've provided over the previous few weeks. I haven't done that since lockdown started, so I thought it was time for a list of what we've thought about in the services at home!

Mothering Sunday; Glimpses of sunlight; Palm Sunday; Easter; Uncertainties; In Green Pastures; All the People; Hold on to the Goodness; Sacrifice; The Beauty of Ordinary Things; Nearer, my God, to Thee; Notice Things Now; Using our Voice; the Summer Solstice; and These Roses.

## Birthdays!

June Clarke has asked me to thank everyone for the cards and flowers she received from you for her eightieth birthday on June 19<sup>th</sup>. It sounds as though – quite rightly – the celebrations lasted several days.

Sue McMullen took flowers on our behalf, and the proof is below:



**Kate Brady McKenna**

This month, we celebrate two 90th Birthdays amongst our members: Dorothy Roberts, currently resident in Elmhurst, Unsworth, will be 90 years young, on July 14th, and Jean Taylor celebrates her 90th, on July 27th---a date she shares with Susan Mitchell and Sue McMullen (who are not quite as elderly!)

Many congratulations to Dorothy and Jean on achieving their "Big Birthdays"; we send them our love and very best wishes for a happy day. Best wishes to everyone with a July birthday; it's the best month in which to have been born - enjoy!

**Anne Mills**

### **Church flowers:**

The church flowers this month would have been sponsored by the following people:

July 5<sup>th</sup>: Kathryn Jackson and Sally Broadhurst, in memory of Tom Jackson

July 12<sup>th</sup>: Roy Wilkinson in memory of Edna.

July 19<sup>th</sup>: Lois, Leah, and Zilpha, in memory of Fred and Eileen Bowden.

July 26<sup>th</sup>: Janet Thatcher, in memory of Minnie Sharp.

**We send our love to Kathryn, Sally, Roy, Lois, Leah, Zilpha, and Janet.**

### **Outside support available:**

Although we are a loving and supportive community and you have friends in the congregation and a minister who is around to help, you may sometimes wish to talk to someone else, and there are several organisations which can help you, including those listed below.

Please don't try and bear things alone: talking is incredibly valuable.

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.

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.

You can also contact the Samaritans on 116 123.

### **Greetings from our friends at church:**

Roger and Anne send love and best wishes to everyone in the congregation, with hopes that we will all soon be able to gather together, once more.

**Anne and Roger Mills.**

It has been lovely to hear through Kate that so many of you have been asking after us. It will be a slow progress of recovery for Terry but we are told the surgeons believe they have removed all of the cancer. For myself I'm able to go for walks which I really am enjoying. Terry and I would like to thank everyone for their very kind wishes.

**Terry and Marguerite Brady**

### **Virtual Mikado:**

It seems that we have yet another star in our midst! Barrie (our organist) recently took part in a virtual Gilbert and Sullivan production, fully staged with music, song, costumes and props---and it was excellent. Music by Zoom is extremely difficult to control, as it is almost impossible to keep a group of instrumentalists and singers together, in terms of timing, owing to the various delays and demands on the system. But this group succeeded magnificently, as those of us who have seen the show can confirm. The impetus came from America; interested people were asked to get in touch, and, initially, 150 singers collected. Once they found out what was involved, however, this dwindled to about 25! Singers from all over the world participated, rehearsing strenuously for 6 weeks, before the final recording was achieved. Congratulations to Barrie for volunteering, in the first place, for staying the course, and for being part of a very successful musical venture. The show is available for anyone with internet-access, by entering You Tube and putting "Virtual Mikado" into the search-engine. Try it---you won't be disappointed!

**Anne Mills**

## From the archives:

Betty Kenyon has found this fascinating snippet in our church archives.

The Calendar 1880—1898

You'll be amazed!

Some surprising outings took place considering the transport of the day!

Public transport was a waggonette, brake, horse bus or train.



Barmouth, Bettws-y-Coed, Southport plus Aberystwyth leaving at 3.20am, including breakfast cost 4/9d.

Malham by rail fare 2/9d, breakfast and tea cost 5/9d.

Chester, Rhyl, Colwyn Bay and Llandudno leaving Bury at 4.00am returning at 6.15pm.

Skipton cost 2/6d including breakfast and tea.

Over the years these outings were held at Whitsuntide.

## Tealights

I understand some of you never received the tealight which I sent out back at the beginning of the lockdown (when the post service was in mayhem): I am really sorry about that. If you never got one, or if you got one but it's died, please let me know and I will make sure you get another. I hope that when we do return to full services, we can all bring our candles back to shine together, just like we do!

## A quiz!

This is stolen, with permission, from the newsletter of the Octagon Chapel in Norwich.

The vowels have been taken out of the titles or first lines of some well known (and some not-so-well known) hymns, and the letters scrunched together. So 'We Plough The Fields and Scatter' would be wplghthfldsndscctr.

See how you get on, and the answers will be in the August calendar. There are no prizes except the smug feeling you'll get if you get them all right.

And I'll know if you cheat (well, I won't, but you'll feel *awful*).

1. HWCNKPFMSNGNG
2. WNDRSSTLLTHWRLDSHLLWTNSS
3. WLLBLDLNDWHRWBNDPTHBRKN
4. HRKTHHRLDNGLSSNG
5. NMNNMDHDDNNDSHWN
6. NCTVYYMNNDNTN
7. DRLRDNFTHRFMNKND
8. SPRTFRTHRSTNNDRT
9. CMCMWHVRYR
10. LTTLWNFBTHLHM
11. SPRTFLFCMNTM
12. LLTHNGSBRGHTNDBTFL

Thanks to Susan Mitchell for sending the picture below: I know it made me laugh!

# Church bulletin board

The following appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.' The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'

Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

The Rector will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing 'Break Forth Into Joy'.

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5pm – prayer and medication to follow.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

This evening at 7pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.

Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7pm. Please use the back door.

The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge – Up Yours.'

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.

Compiled by Max Bowen

## **A walk in Chesham Woods, Bury**

For the last three months or so, Roger and I have been exploring the area near our home, whilst on our daily constitutionals. To our delight, we've discovered the six woods which surround the very top part of Chesham Road, almost to the point at which this road meets Lowes Road. At the side of Clarence Gardens, we first enter Danesmoor Wood, where Danesmoor House used to stand; there is little left of the house, nowadays, but we did find most of a set of sturdy stone steps, which, presumably led to a higher-level formal garden, and there are traces of path-edgings and walls, everywhere. The house was used for Channel Islands' evacuees, during the Second World War; the buildings on the site were demolished during the 1960's and 70's. Tracks abound, in all directions, and we can choose a different route, every day. We're protected by the foliage against whatever extremes of weather prevail, so this is pleasant walking, indeed. (Picture 1; see the inside back cover)

This wood leads seamlessly into Greenbank Wood, which also used to contain its own house, demolished in 1976; again, there are still traces of the building and its surrounding areas, but not enough for us to be able to form any real idea of how the site used to look. Gipsy Brook meanders through all the woods, but, sadly, despite its somewhat romantic name, it is not very attractive; it is stagnant, silted up and scruffy---definitely in need of some TLC!

We loop round, in a horseshoe-shape, and exit this wood, opposite the entrance to Chesham House Wood, where Chesham House used to stand; this was owned by four sisters---the Misses Walker---who worshipped at St. Mark's C. of E. Church; their transport (to church, to the Chesham Road shops, and to the larger Hornby Buildings' stores) was a horse-drawn carriage, which must have looked very splendid indeed. When the last Miss Walker died, the house was taken over by the local authority, who demolished it, in 1959; no trace remains, apart from the folly, which was

built into a corner of the boundary-wall, and has been sealed up, from the inside; the local authority of the time attracted a great deal of criticism on account of its various actions.

It is possible to walk across this wood and enter Clarence Wood, via a wooden-board bridge, but, ordinarily, we don't; instead, we turn right, out of Greenbank, and take a dozen or so steps along the same side of the road, before entering Chesham Green Wood. Chesham Green House still exists; it is inhabited and looks smart, perched, as it is, just by the uppermost entrance to its wood. It was here that we found a tiny garden, tucked around the base of a tree, bordered by a semicircle of branches; it contains plants, decorative stones, silver bells, paper butterflies---and a beautifully-polished wooden door, across which is carved "Norman's Folly". Who, or what, Norman is, or was, we have no idea---and nor have the various people we have encountered whilst walking---people who assure us that they have lived all their lives in the area, and walk in the woods, every day! We usually stop for a brief rest on the wooden bench near Norman's garden, to ponder further on the mystery. (Picture 2)

As we leave our third wood, we find ourselves right opposite the opening that allows access into Lower Lee Wood; Chesham Green Cottage stands to the left, and it, too, seems cared-for and comfortable. This is an enchanted wood, as fairies live here! Towards the end of May, we discovered a collection of "fairy doors", scattered about the trees---thirteen tiny arch-shaped doors, painted in delicate colours, bordered in blue, and numbered in black. We met people who had come to find and admire the trail, but, as time has passed, many of the original doors have disappeared, to be replaced by a variety of other pieces, some of which are quite basic and home-made, but others more elaborate. At first, we felt slightly cheated when the original items disappeared, but now that we've realised how imaginative and creative the replacement ones are, we're full of admiration; the doors have been supplemented by signs to the "magic

wood", fairy-figures, windmills, glitter, tinsel, and other appropriate pieces. (Pictures 3 and 4)

Finally, we find ourselves in Clarence Wood, having passed through the corners of the two woods to reach it. Our route then takes us past the skateboard park, past the back of Chesham Primary School, to one entrance into Clarence Lido, and on to journey's end. The terrain throughout is fairly rough---uneven, stony, and fraught with trip-hazards, in the shape of surface tree-roots. A.J. Wainright's words ("Watch where you're putting your feet!") are worth bearing in mind! Who would have thought that a pandemic, self-isolation, and social-distancing would have offered us the chance of so much enjoyment and pleasure? This has been an amazing experience, not least because we have learned so much about our area, its geography, and its history.

(Further information may be found by inserting the title of this piece into your search-engine.)

**Anne Mills: June 2020.**

**Absolutely no access to church building 29<sup>th</sup> June – 13<sup>th</sup> July**

Please note that there will be no access *whatsoever* to the church building from early morning on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June to early morning on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July. The building is undergoing extensive electrical work and will be unsafe for anyone except the electricians. Security checks will be carried out externally during that period, but post will not be collected and no other maintenance will be carried out. Please also avoid using the parking spaces, as these will be needed by the electricians.

# Pictures from Chesham Woods



**Stone steps in Danesmoor Wood**



**Norman's Folly, newly planted**



**Chesham Green Cottage, across  
the road from the Wood**



**One of the original Fairy Doors**

## **Church Information:**

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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)