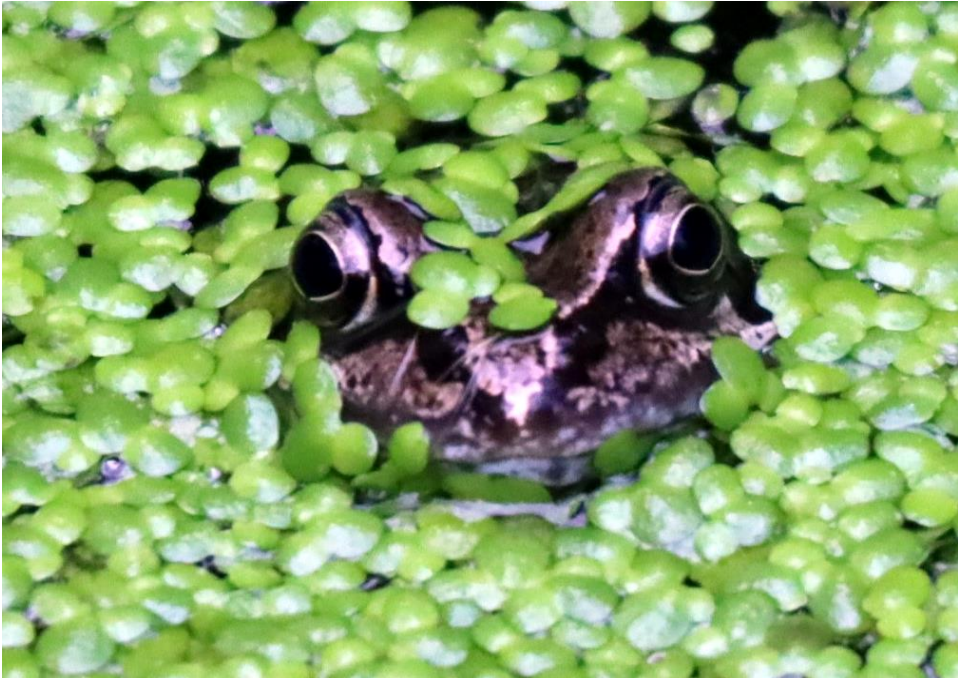


BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH



“The Eyes Have It!”

July 2023

Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

Well, we're past the Solstice, and the nights are (hardly noticeably) starting to draw in. And that's okay: we still have weeks of long light evenings ahead of us, before we're ready to turn towards autumn again.

The Book Club has been reading Tove Jansson's *The Summer Book* this month, and it's an absolute delight. It's set in an area which could hardly be more different than Bury (a remote Finnish island) but so much of the description of the feeling of summer rings true even seventy years after it's set and even in such a different landscape. I really recommend it, and it's also a nice, easy, quick read. I'm going to get hold of *The Winter Book* but I'm going to save that to read in midwinter.

It's not only the Book Club which has been doing things: the Camera Club meets regularly, and it's thanks to them and their hard creative work that we always have such amazing pictures in the Calendar.

I do love the fact that, despite everything the pandemic threw at us, and despite the fact that we are all still genuinely not yet back to the strength and vigour we had three and a half years ago, we are still managing to grow, learn, socialise, and be in community together. I've said it before (and you know I'll say it again!) but I genuinely do think that in the last three years we've all aged six years, and that while we have all the will and enthusiasm we could dream of, we simply no longer have the energy we used to.

And that brings grief. I know we miss all the things we used to be able to do, and it would be dishonest not to acknowledge that our social life as a community is less active than it was, but I'm proud that, as a congregation, we are being sanguine about it. We grieve for the things we miss, but we pause, and we breathe, and we wait, and we hope that in time things will

circle back round to the easier, lighter, times. In church life, as in nature, everything passes, everything grows, everything fades away and eventually something else grows where what has faded once was. This is so apparent at this particular time of year. I recently spoke in a service about how, at almost the very second the last of the blossom has faded and fallen, the first of the berries are appearing. The hawthorn at Holebottom is already showing us the gifts it's got in store for us in a few weeks, come autumn.

Some of you may be going away over the next couple of months, and if you are I hope that wherever you're going and whatever you're doing it's nourishing, restful, and enjoyable. We will miss you at church, of course, but we look forward to your stories and perhaps even photos when you return. I genuinely love hearing how people's holidays, breaks, and even days out have been. Very often when I hear of a jolly outing someone has been on I add it to an ever-growing list of things I'd like to do some time, and I hope I never run out of ideas on that list, and although we've been here for the best part of seven years now, I still keep hearing about new delights that we need to explore. One of the joys of ministry is that we can have days out midweek when things are quieter, and we often spend our Thursday Sabbath exploring something new, local, and fascinating. By the time you read this I hope that we'll have visited Smithills Hall in Bolton: I have to confess that our inspiration to go there sprang from a scary horror series we recently watched, where things got a lot more dramatic than we hope they will in real life!

I hope that I'll be in touch with you all soon, either at your house, in church, or out for a coffee. And please know that those of you who are struggling at the moment are in my prayers.

As ever, I send you my love,

Kate.

News of our community

Neville Kenyon

Many of you will know that Neville suffered a heart attack during June, and spent time in Fairfield hospital. He is currently recovering at home, and he and Betty, with the support of their family, are planning their next steps, along with his medical team.

Betty and Neville are very grateful for all the love and support they've been shown, and for all the cards, emails, and phone calls they've received.

We will, of course, welcome them back to services when they feel the time is right, and in the meantime they are in our love and our prayers.

Robin Ainsworth

After some better days, in which he was able to work on his stamp collection and even help with peeling and chopping carrots, Robin's condition has deteriorated and as I write it appears that he is very close to the end of his life. He is sedated and receiving pain relief, but is confused and barely awake. Brenda is absolutely exhausted, but they are both at peace with what seems to be coming. Hannah and I took them an arrangement of flowers after the flower communion so that they could be a part of that lovely occasion from a distance, and you can see a picture of them with the flowers on the inside cover of the Calendar.

As they have been throughout, they are in our prayers, and I know that our love is helping them during this difficult time.

This 'news of our community' section is here for anything you would like to share with us: sad or happy news, updates, birthdays, and memories are all welcome.

Regular Social Events

Book Club

The Book Club will meet on Wednesday 26th July at 7pm. The book to be discussed is: *Owl Song at Dawn* by Emma Claire Sweeney. We usually discuss the book for about an hour, depending on interest, and then break for drinks and nibbles. All are welcome. It's not compulsory to have read the book!

For information, we get the books we read at the Book Club from Bury Library who supply sets of books for readers' groups, absolutely free of charge.

Pam Gilbert

Camera Club

The July meeting dates for the Camera Club are yet to be confirmed: please contact one of the members (Ade Brady, Howard Maden, Janet Thatcher or Roger Mills) for details, and listen out for notices in church.

Social Gatherings.

The next Gathering will take place on **Saturday 29th July**, and is a chance to drink coffee, socialise, and help to collate the following month's Calendar. It's also a time and space just to "hang out" in company, and it's there to be used in any way we would like. Please feel free to drop in!

Second Sunday lunches

On **Sunday 9th July**, you're invited to join Kate for coffee, a drink, or lunch, at the Art Picture House after the service. If you'd like to join us but either can't afford it or have just forgotten your purse that day, speak to Kate: money should never be a reason not to join us.

Notes from the building.

The Sanctuary audio system has been an incredible servant of our church, it has, largely without fail, been serving our needs since the fourth church building was constructed, and, if my suspicions are correct, parts of it even pre-exist the building by some time.

You will no doubt have heard the phrase ‘they don’t make them like that any more’, and it’s certainly applicable to our sound system. The phrase is often used derisively, to suggest that modern things don’t last as long as the things that came before it. Is it true? Well, it may be that it has a touch of truth to it; but like most sayings the reality behind the saying is often based on a set of very murky assumptions.

As much as the Sanctuary audio system could be described in heroic terms given its longevity, it could also be described, fairly I’m afraid, as rather piecemeal in its construction. This is because bits have been lovingly added to it as and when needed - the second set of speakers are quite recent, and it has seen its way through no fewer than three wireless microphones and eight pro-audio cables in the last six years alone.

When we come to judge the system and its value to us, none of those considerations will come into play, none of those expenditures will be considered, because at least two of the core elements that make up our audio system have been in place for a very long time indeed.

The system will be remembered as it should be, as heroic. It is unimaginable that its journey should have lasted this long, but like the odyssey of Ulysses even incredible journeys must come to an end.

Now, with thanks to kind donations from Allan Hodgert and Hindley Unitarian Church, and with the complete agreement of our church council its journey is nearly complete. The Sanctuary sound system is due to be replaced this September with something new, a system that is a lot less piecemeal, with superior clarity and reach. Its journey is ending, let a new one begin.

Ade.

Stewards for Sunday services, July 2023

Sunday 2 nd July	Betty Kenyon Neville Kenyon
Sunday 9 th July	Susan Holt Susan Mitchell
Sunday 16 th July	Barbara Bamford Jean Brookhouse
Sunday 23 rd July	Howard Maden Jean Maden
Sunday 30 th July	Ewen Sim Janine Sim

Tea and coffee rota, July 2023

Sunday 2 nd July	Jean Maden and Howard Maden
Sunday 9 th July	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 16 th July	Marian Price and Susan Holt
Sunday 23 rd July	Norah Hickton and Peter Whewell.
Sunday 30 th July	Rita Boardall and Susan Mitchell

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!

Vestry Days: most Fridays, and one Saturday a month

Kate is generally in the vestry on Fridays, between at least 10am and 3pm, although she does sometimes pop out to get some fresh air or pop to the market. She loves it when people drop in for a cup of tea, a chat, or just to drop something off or have a quick (or leisurely) cup of tea.

She's also now in the vestry on one Saturday a month, generally the second Saturday. Her July vestry Saturday will be on **Saturday 8th July**.

The idea of the Vestry Saturdays is that you can just pop in for a chat over a cup of tea, in an informal way: hopefully it will be more accessible to some people than Fridays, partly because parking is easier. These vestry days very definitely don't replace pastoral visits to people at home where people prefer that, but some people prefer the more relaxed idea of simply popping in. They're not ideal for in depth or difficult conversations, because Friday is a day we often find contractors and other people popping in and out.

Minister's schedule, July 2023

Kate doesn't have any periods of annual leave or any training planned for July, although she may take a few days off midweek towards the end of the month.

Please remember that both Kate and Ade try to honour Thursdays as a Sabbath, and please try not to contact them on that day except in an emergency.

August Calendar

The deadline for entries for the July edition of the Calendar will be teatime on **Tuesday 25th July** and we'll collate it on **Saturday 29th July**

Hannah Stephenson

Hannah, one of the current ministry students studying at Unitarian College, has been working with us on placement since the beginning of her formal training in September, and her two weekends with us this month (the first and last of the month) will see the end of her placement.

The idea of student pastorates is that the student spends time shadowing a minister and getting a broader and wider picture of what the work of ministry really entails, so not only has Hannah led some excellent worship for us, but she's also joined me on pastoral visits, where she's been warmly welcomed by members of the congregation, and she's seen some of the more humdrum administrative sides of ministry as well – no one tells you how much printing there is! And I know that many of you have really appreciated her calm and skilful facilitation of two Lectio Divina sessions, and that we're hoping that a third can be arranged, possibly as a return visit if Hannah's placement is over before we can arrange one.

It's been a joy for me to work with Hannah, and I know that having her with us has been good for us, as well as (I hope!) for her. It's been great to hear some of Hannah's new and fresh ideas (all congregations need that sometimes!) and I think we've all benefited from hearing a change of voice, style, and content from the lectern.

Hannah's next step is to continue with her college work (both academic and vocational) and for the next academic year she will be on placement with a congregation who do not have a minister.

It won't be long (though it may seem it to Hannah!) before she is a Minister on the Roll of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, and I know that she will be a huge blessing to our movement and to whatever church ends up lucky enough to have her as their minister.

We will miss Hannah's presence among our community, and I know that you join with me in offering her love, support, and prayers as she continues this exciting and exhausting journey.

Kate

Looking ahead to Autumn

Book Club outing – open to all!

The Book Club are arranging a visit to the Gaskell House in Manchester – the home of Elizabeth Gaskell, Unitarian, and author of well-loved Victorian classics including Cranford, Mary Barton and North and South. The visit is open to all members of the congregation whether or not you've read the books!

Tuesday 5th September our group will have a private guided tour of the house lasting between an hour and a half to two hours and include tea/coffee and cake. Served in the tea room. Return transport to and from Church will be provided. The total cost of tickets, tour, refreshments and transport is likely to be in the region of £32-£35 per person. *If the cost of the tour causes any difficulty, please have a word with Kate.* If you have any other questions, including accessibility, please have a word with Val Chamberlain or contact via e mail or phone as in see the congregation contacts booklet. We are aiming to take 16 people. Please sign the notice on the board if you have not already had a word with Val. All details of how and when to pay to follow in July.

Val Chamberlain



Lammas

Lammas is the celebration of the first of the wheat harvest. We will be holding a Lammas celebration on Tuesday 1st August, and we hope it will be at Holebottom. The usual caveats apply: we won't let a little bit of rain put us off, but we might let a lot of rain put us off (in which case we'll meet in church).

Please let Kate know by the Monday morning if you'd like to attend: this isn't just some strange adherence to rules, but to give her time to create the celebration!

Heritage Open Days

This year's Heritage Open Days take place between the **8th and 17th September**. We will be opening the church on both Saturdays (9th and 16th), and the old record books (baptisms and burials) will be available for people to look at. Tea and coffee will be available.

We hope that we can offer some more activities and displays, and your suggestions and offers would be very gratefully received!

Harvest Festival and Harvest Lunch

This year's Harvest Festival will take place on Sunday 24th September, and will be followed by a congregational lunch. Further details to follow.

Strawberry Tea – cancellation.

The Strawberry Tea, which was going to take place on Saturday 15th July, will not be going ahead. I'm sorry for the disappointment I know this will cause. We will try to organise it for next year, and will be looking for support with that nearer the time.

Miscellaneous news

Sound system

You will have seen in Ade's *Notes from the Building* that the Church Council have decided to proceed with the new audio system for the worship area. This is really exciting news, and is possible due to a generous legacy from Allan Hodgert and a grant following the closure of Hindley Unitarian Church. Those of us who attended the demonstration of the new system know that we have a great improvement awaiting us. The work should be completed during September and should only take a day.

Kitchen windowsills

Following the last committee meeting, Rita and Kate have been looking at how our building looks from the outside, and one thing we noticed was that the windowsills facing Back St Mary's Place are rather cluttered. Ade has kindly removed all the items which were on the windowsills: if you're missing anything, Ade knows where it all is! Thank you to Rita for all her work on this. Over the next weeks and months the council will be having further discussion about this.

Preaching opportunities

The Octagon Chapel in Norwich is looking for preachers and worship leaders. If you're in the worship group, or even if you're not, and would like to visit them, they offer a £75 preaching fee, travel expenses, and overnight accommodation if needed. They're my second favourite Unitarian congregation, and I know they'll make you very welcome. Let me know if you'd like me to put you in touch with the pulpit supply person.

News from Ainsworth

Dear Members and Friends of the Chapel

Our next service:

10.30 am Sunday 9th July. There is no service on 2nd July because of the significant road disruption with the Bolton Ironman event. Rev Helen Mills has kindly stepped in to take this service

Following service: 10.30 am Sunday 6th August 2023 Preacher: Mrs Veronica Walker

Mrs Quita Brooks

Quita was delighted to recently welcome visitors Anne & Roger Mills to her home in Kirkcaldy, during their trip to Scotland.

Anne says that Quita keeps very well and they chatted for 3 hours, catching up with news. See photo of Quita and Anne in the conservatory. Wishing Quita a very Happy Birthday for 22nd July



NELUM AGM

I attended as Delegate for Ainsworth at the NELUM AGM on 19th June at Stand Chapel.

Mr Andrew Cowgill (Blackpool) was appointed Chairman, Rev Beryl Allerton continues as Secretary and Karen Diggle continues as Treasurer. Mrs Jean Longworth was elected as Vice Chairman.

Each Church within the NELUM area, is entitled to send two voting delegates to each meeting. The General Meetings are held about every 3 months and if anyone is interested in attending, as a delegate or a visitor, please see me.

The possibility of NELUM changing its constitution and becoming a (CIO) Charitable Incorporated Organisation will be further discussed at the next NELUM meeting in August. I have a hard copy of a 23-page consultation document by Rev John Allerton, which I am happy to post out if requested.

Room Hire Schoolroom

The Hall and Grundy Room are available for use Monday - Friday.

Please contact me, or pass on my details, if you know of any suitable, possible group that may be looking for a regular meeting place.

with good wishes to you all

Shirley

Hon Secretary
Ainsworth Unitarian Chapel

By-Gone Times no. 3 7by Betty Kenyon



Have you noticed these rings protruding from the wall in the worship area?
What are they for?

Here's a clue.

I have come across the Bury Times of 1957. It had this article about Scouts.
It said: *Between 600 and 700 will be on parade in Bury tomorrow (Sunday) afternoon for a St George's Day service in Bank Street Unitarian Church at 3.30pm. The parade will assembly half an hour earlier in Market Street near the Technical College.*

In the 1970's Joe Ashworth led the Cubs, Beryl Allerton (nee Beckwith) was Brown Owl and Brenda Ainsworth was Tawny Owl. Pat Haworth was in charge of Guides.

Answer: The rings were to hold Scout and Cub and Brownie flags after they had paraded in.

At the end of the Service, the parade carried their flags out.

Remains Scarcely Hidden, by Bill Grimke-Drayton

Presence within single moment
Remains scarcely hidden
As waiting for inner peace
Beyond limits of comprehension,
Bringing each atom through
Stillness of interrupted time,

Breathe new lungs of reality
Outside sullen, dim box
Of stultifying convention,
Where there is nurturing expanse
In creative spirit's womb;

Dark welcome shroud of close comfort
Covers life form, deep-set
In folds of Mother Earth,
For gathering from grains of dust
And then revealed in phoenix-like glory.

Thank you to Bill for sending us this poem to print. I'm always delighted to print people's creative work.

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!

Regular Events (all social events are subject to change)

Sundays:

11.15am Worship in person at Bury

First Sunday of most months:

10.30am: Worship in person at Ainsworth

Second Sunday of each month:

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

Last Sunday of each month:

12.30pm: Inclusive Communion Service at Bury

Second and fourth Sundays of each month:

2pm: Zoom worship (Zoom link: 849 7456 6116)

Second and fourth Mondays of most months:

7pm: Camera club (normally online)

Second Tuesday of each month:

7pm: Online midweek meditation session

Last Wednesday of each month:

7pm (summer): Book club

Most Fridays:

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

Second Saturday of each month:

10.am til 3pm approx.: Minister's Vestry Saturday

Last Saturday of each month:

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

What's on: July 2023

Sunday 2nd July

11.15am, Bury:	Service in church
2pm:	Zoom

Monday 3rd July

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

Friday 7th July

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day.

Friday 7th July

6.30 – 8.30 Sanctuary and hall booking

Saturday 8th July

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Saturday

Sunday 9th July

10.30am, Ainsworth:	Service led by Rev Helen Mills
11.15am Bury:	Service in church
12.30 approx:	Second Sunday lunch
2pm:	Zoom service

Monday 10th July

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

Monday 10th July

7pm: Camera club

Wednesday 12th July

11-1 Lounge booking

Friday 14th July

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Sunday 16th July

11.15am Bury:	Service in church
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Monday 17th July 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

Friday 21st July 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day.

Sunday 23rd July

11.15am Bury:

Service in church

2pm:

Zoom service

Monday 24th July

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

Monday 24th July:

7pm: Camera club (provisional)

Tuesday 25th July

Teatime: deadline for entries for the August edition of the *Calendar*.

Wednesday 26th July

7pm: Book club meeting in church to discuss *Owl Song at Dawn*, by Emma Claire Sweeney.

Friday 28th July

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day.

Saturday 29th July

11am onwards: Saturday social gathering and *Calendar* collating

Sunday 30th July

11.15am Bury:

Service in church

12.30:

Inclusive communion

Tuesday 1st August

7pm: Lammas celebration, either online or at Holebottom. Please let Kate know by Monday morning (31st July) if you would like to attend.

Church Information:

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

Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church

Church officers

Chair of trustees: Neville Kenyon 01204 887222

Chair of church council: Jean Maden

Church secretary: Karen Hampson 0161 766 2283

Chair of congregation: Betty Kenyon 01204 887222

Church treasurer: Lynda Arthur

Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager Adrian Brady 07736 107143

Charity reg no: 107857



Flower Communion at Robin and Brenda's



River Tay in Perth, Scotland



Sailing ships at Longyearbyen Norway



**Sculpture
in
Reykjavik
Iceland**



Larch Cottage Nursery, near Penrith