

BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH



MARCH 2022

Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

As I write, we seem to be working our way through a fair chunk of the alphabet of storms: we've greeted Dudley, Eunice, and Franklin, and as I write we're awaiting the arrival of Gladys. I hope that you all escaped any serious damage, and managed to stay warm and dry.

It's hard to believe that this time two years ago we'd barely heard of Covid, and yet later this month it's the second anniversary of the closing of our church building for (we thought at the time) two weeks. I remember a hopeful discussion in which we thought we might be able to have that year's Easter service, even if we had to hold it outside. Of course, we now know that it was going to be much longer than that, and I wonder how we'd have all felt had we known that we wouldn't be out of the woods even yet. We've certainly learned a lot and grown a lot since those days which now seem so innocent and untroubled.

But things are very much better now. I know that a lot of us (myself included) have some anxieties about the end of all the restrictions, and please be assured that we will do everything we can to make the church feel like a safe place for everyone, no matter how confident they are or aren't feeling. We will continue to be mask-friendly and to create socially-distanced places for those who would prefer them. If you don't feel confident about the arrangements in church *please* tell me or one of the church officers and we can work together to change that.

The Zoom services are also going to carry on: you're very welcome to join us either online or over the phone if you can't (or would rather not) join us in the church building. There will be a couple of weeks in March (while I'm on leave) where they don't happen, but please don't think that we're phasing them out!

If you join us in church on Sundays, you'll have noticed that we've started receiving the collection in person once again, and that we now have a rota

of stewards rather than having Ade doing it every week in his capacity as the Property Manager. Ade's done a great job over the last nearly-a-year, and I know we're really grateful, but it's lovely to have a variety of new people greeting us on a Sunday morning. I was actually very surprised by how moved I was when I received the collection in person for the first time in two years. It was yet another step forward.

By the time you receive this we will have had a Saturday Social Gathering, which I'm hoping to offer once a month in the future. They won't be like the coffee mornings we used to know, but the church will be open, the kettle will be on, and there will be (at least) biscuits: if anyone would like to bake a cake for a future Saturday, that would be lovely. I will be using those monthly Saturdays to collate and staple the following month's Calendar, so if you're coming along and would be willing to help with that, that would be super: you're very welcome to come even if you can't help out!

It is really exciting that in this issue of the Calendar we have news about some upcoming social events: although neither of them is until April, it is still good to have the 'give and take' event and our first church lunch in a very long time on the horizon: further details about both of these events are later on in the Calendar.

And outside of church life, there is other progress: I started by writing about the wintry storms, and we know they could continue for a while, but in about three weeks from you reading this, we will experience the Spring Equinox and see the clocks move forward. After that I promise we will start to see much more daylight and start to notice more warmth.

We're still on a long old road, both in terms of the weather and in terms of pulling ourselves out of Covid: but I have faith that we're heading in the right direction, and I know that we're supporting and upholding each other as we travel on.

As ever, I send you my love

Rev Kate Brady McKenna

Presidential matters

When I wrote last month's report, we were just about to take a holiday in Silverdale, as I was in the area, in order to conduct the Sunday service for Kendal Unitarians. Going back to Kendal's beautiful chapel was a delight for me; we have spent a fair amount of time there, over the past few years, and it feels like home---not only is the building familiar, but I feel I know so many of the congregation; it was good to greet Griff and Sally Jones, Don Kerr, Jo Rogers, and Helen Pollard, amongst many others. Mandy Reynolds, Kendal's Interfaith/Unitarian Minister is well-known to me, too, and the church-atmosphere is always welcoming and friendly. My service, on the subject of "Freedom", went well, and I was grateful to Bury members who chose to join by zoom, that morning. Mandy's notices were enlivened by her story of the cat she had recently adopted, from a refuge; she was supposed to confine the cat to quarters, for several days, once it arrived at her home---but the cat obviously hadn't been told this, and escaped, to explore, within 24 hours! A truly Unitarian animal! Our time in Silverdale was both enjoyable and relaxing; whilst the weather was cold, it was dry, on the whole, and we were able to enjoy familiar walks, all week (not to mention stocking up on Cartmel Puddings).

We attended Bury's service, at the end of January, on a rare Sunday "off"; it has become unusual for me to attend someone else's service, these days, rather than conducting my own, at a church other than Bury! February 6th took me to Walmsley, Bolton; this was my fifth service for them, over a period---again, I feel at home there; I recognise faces, even if I can't always remember names! The same could be said about Padiham, when I attended a service, there, on February 13th; at the same time, I was able to collect copies of "Our Extraordinary Year", now on sale from members of the LCM; see the separate article for further details. Latterly, I've been putting together a piece for the London District's event, FUSE 22, over the weekend of February 19th and 20th; my task was to offer a Welcome, Greetings from the GA, and a short talk about "Pilgrimage, in order to prepare the way for the keynote speakers, Alastair McIntosh and Jennifer Kavanagh, whose subject was: "The Pilgrimage of Life: Journeys of Spiritual Unfolding".

Alastair has a knowledge of the subject of spirituality, which is both broad and deep, and his willingness to share that knowledge is ever-present. Jennifer spoke movingly about her work with the vulnerable and homeless on the streets of London, and her words were an inspiration to everybody present. The early part of the first afternoon offered a choice of four workshops; I attended the one on Street Signs ---a type of meditation I'd not experienced before, but very much enjoyed and found rewarding.

Zoom offered an information-session about the chapel at Great Hucklow, mid-February, as the third of the "Meeting the Congregations" programme; the speaker was Ed Fordham, one of the chapel-trustees, whose energy and enthusiasm were impressive; likewise, his ideas about the future of his chapel, which those present felt ought to be offered as a prototype for other congregations. Services, at present, take place on the first Sunday of the month, at 11 a.m. During February, I have been involved in meetings which are devoted to preparation for the GA Annual Meetings, in April; there's much to discuss, and a great deal to be done! I was also invited to attend a meeting of The Stipend Review Committee, which decides stipend-increases for Ministers, and considers other, associated payments; very interesting! I have been glad of a breathing-space, in February, as I can see that March and April are going to be busy, and I have been using my time for various preparations.

Both Roger and I were saddened by the recent death of Allan Hodgert, and we send our sympathies to Barbara, and to Allan's family; his funeral-service, on February 10th, offered both sorrow and joy: sorrow that we have lost a popular, long-standing member of our congregation, but joy as we celebrated his long, full, varied life. I remember Allan asking me, some years ago, at a Lunch Circle Meeting, if he could borrow a hymnbook, so that he could choose the hymns for his funeral; the final number totalled about twenty, if I remember correctly! We will miss Allan; I suspect many of us will still expect him to appear during services, and will think of him particularly then, and remember him with affection.

I usually end these messages with thanks, and, this time, I do so, on my own behalf, in part. Following my decision to discontinue our church Traidcraft Stall, I was surprised and pleased to receive a thank-you card and wine (fairly-traded of course!) from the congregation. Thank you, everybody; both were greatly appreciated; I hope to remain a member of Bury's Fair Trade Group and to support Fair Trade into the future; we will remain as a Fair Trade Church, as long as we continue to purchase appropriate coffee, tea and sugar for church-use, and I very much hope that we can make this gesture of support for an extremely worthwhile cause.

I do, however, also thank Kate and Ade for all their efforts, on behalf of our church; now that covid-restrictions are to be discontinued, there is work of a different kind to be done, as we adapt to changes, yet again. We have been well-served and supported by Kate's and Ade's contributions, during the past two years; this has been a difficult, exhausting period for us all, but especially for them; how we would have managed, without them, hardly bears thinking about, and we must continue to express our gratitude for everything they have done, and will do.

Roger joins me in sending very best wishes to everybody; may we all remain safe from covid, as far as possible, and look after ourselves and those closest to us. Spring should be just around the corner (once we survive the rain and various storms); in the garden, the crocuses are growing; the rhubarb is greening; and the trees are starting to bud; all we need is warmth, sunshine---and hope! May it be so!

Anne Mills

News of our community.

John and Margaret Fitzpatrick

We've received the following message from John and Margaret (with permission to share their contact details). Although we will miss them very much, I know that we all send them our best wishes for this next stage of their life.

Hi all,

We have finally arrived in Halesowen and got internet.

71 Middlefield Avenue
Halesowen
B62 9QJ.

0121 601 4179. John's mobile is 07743364685.

We have settled in with a lot of help from Jo and Matt. We were sorry to leave Bury as we enjoyed our involvement with the church and look forward to the future. We send our best wishes to everyone at church and we will be buying something for the garden with the donation you kindly gave us.

Best wishes
John and Margaret

A note from Anne:

Last year, when John and Margaret had relinquished their church-duties, Church Council, on behalf of the congregation, sent them a thank-you card for their many years of service, in several spheres, and a cheque, so that they would be able to buy items for their new garden; they asked for their thanks to be recorded, and have sent assurances that they will be spending the money, very shortly. We wish them well, and hope that they will stay in touch.

Stephen Ramsay

Kate and I have been keeping in touch with Stephen, regularly, by text and email, as he remains in hospital; he is making progress, and had surgery, after which he should be able to return home. The hospital-food is good, and he is eating well, he says! Keeping himself occupied seems to be more of a problem, so a parcel has gone out to him, containing a book and a collection of assorted puzzles, to exercise the little grey cells. We continue to send our good wishes and hope Stephen will be back on the road to recovery soon.

Anne Mills.

Allan Hodgert

Last month's Calendar contained news of the death of Allan Hodgert, but at that stage we did not have details of his funeral. Allan's funeral took place in church on Thursday 10th February, followed by a committal at the East Lancashire Crematorium and a reception at Park Farm. The size of the turnout was a tribute to Allan's popularity, and it was good to meet with friends from other parts of Allan's life.

He will be much missed, and we send our love to Barbara, to his daughters Gill and Sue, and to everyone who loved him.



Why your copy of the *Calendar* has your name on it!

You'll have noticed that since the start of the pandemic, when you were all getting your copy of the *Calendar* through your door, you've had a copy of the *Calendar* with your name on the front. I know that some of you have been a bit confused by this, and perhaps I haven't explained it properly!

It isn't so that we can control how many copies are going out – you are very welcome to take spare copies if you have friends who would like to read it – but so that we know if someone hasn't been around to pick it up.

I normally keep someone's copy for two Sundays, and then if they've not picked it up, I pop it in the post and check that they're okay.

So while it's really helpful if you take the copy with your name on it, please also feel free to pick up a spare or two: we can easily print off more copies.

Please also remember that there are always at least two copies in large print (I generally print those in 18 or 20 point print), and that I generally record the contents for anyone who prefers to listen rather than read.

And if you're reading this and no longer wish to receive a paper copy, please just let me know.

April Calendar.

Because of my annual leave, **the April Calendar will be a week later than normal.**

The deadline for articles will be teatime on Tuesday 29th March, and I will be editing it later that week. The church will be open for coffee and (I hope) cakes on Saturday 2nd April, and if you could join us that morning to help collate and staple, that would be deeply appreciated!

The Calendar should be available on Sunday 3rd April.

Notes from the church property

Do you know, there are very few quotations in favour of complaints? Many great men and women, authors, poets, philosophers and scientists alike, have authored strong words against the simple and very human act of complaining. Even in the bible, Paul (Philippians 2:14) suggests we shouldn't grumble if we wish to share the mindset of Christ.

As anyone who knows my theology will note, I've never had much time for Paul, and on this issue I most vehemently disagree. I am much more inclined towards the position of author Franny Billingsley, who says 'You could at least complain... I adore complaining, it calms the nerves.'

The reason, I suspect, that more people take Paul's position over the position of Franny's is that complaining is seen as a negative thing, which is a shame, because positive change frequently starts only because of negative experiences being openly discussed. The general insistence that change only happens when one changes oneself, or that one should be the change one wants to see, is all very good; but you can't solve an issue which is larger than you, or if you cannot understand how a solution may occur.

A good example of this for us, is our audio system in the Sanctuary. We have had an issue for some time with the sound not being loud enough for everybody to hear the entirety of the service. The issue only really came to my notice last year when someone complained that they couldn't hear the minister. The complaint was a valid one, and over the last four months at least ten changes have been made to make the audio system work harder to provide everyone with an audible service.

We don't need to stop where we are with it, we don't need to insist that we have finished because a solution that is better for many has been found. If you still can't hear the service, then I would like very much for you to complain to me about it. I adore complaints, not only can they alert me to something which might require a solution, but, as Franny Billingsley says, they can help calm the nerves, especially when you have someone who will listen, and I promise to do at least that.

Ade Brady

Upcoming events (in March and beyond).

Saturday social gatherings

If you've been missing our coffee mornings, and I know a lot of us have, you are very welcome to join us one Saturday morning a month for a social gathering: this won't be like the coffee mornings we used to have: it is a gathering with coffee. You're very welcome to bring a craft project, or a book, or the crossword, and to join in with the chat or enjoy some quietness. I will be collating the Calendar on those mornings, and offers of help would be much appreciated!

If you know someone who used to come on Saturdays, please let them know about this!



Bury Unitarian Church Saturday social gatherings (in person)

Please join us on the following Saturdays between noon and 2pm.

Saturday 26th February

Saturday 2nd April

Saturday 30th April.

the kettle will be on; there will be biscuits, and there will be good company. Parking is available, and free.

Why not bring your knitting, or a project you're working on? You can also help us collate the next month's Church Calendar.

If you would like to join us, we would love to see you: everyone is welcome, no matter what.



Bury Unitarian Church Camera Club: An Exhibition

**In the worship area, throughout March
and early April 2022**

**You are very welcome to drop in and see
the exhibition at any time when the
church is open.**

Give and Take event in April

Back before the first lockdown, we held a very successful 'give and take' event at church: I'm delighted that we're holding another in early April. The poster below contains most of the details, and there's an article on the next pages which was in a recent copy of the Inquirer.

The event is a lovely way to have a clear out, and to receive freely given gifts from other people.

Please remember that you can bring as many items as you wish, but please make sure that each individual item will fit into a standard sized bin-bag.



Bury Unitarian Church "Give and Take"

**Saturday 2nd April, 11-2, and
Sunday 3rd April 12-2**

Please bring items to church on
Sunday, Monday, Wednesday,
or Friday the previous week

It is good to declutter, it is good to give,
and it is good to receive. Please join us
for this event, and maybe find something
you will love. The event works much like
a bring and buy sale, but everything is
offered and received as a gift.

**If you would like to join us, we
would love to see you: everyone
is welcome, no matter what.**

Kate's Inquirer article about the Give and Take event.

Back before lockdown, Bury Unitarian Church hosted an event which, we are very proud to say, made us absolutely no money at all. In fact, if you take into account the heating and lighting, and the minister's time, it cost us money.

And it was a huge success.

Not long after Christmas, we were pondering the sheer amount of *stuff* we all have. Some of it lovely, some of it meaningful, some of it just stuff; and we decided to redistribute some of it amongst ourselves and those who know about us.

Partly we wanted a way to shift our unwanted belongings to someone who would enjoy them. Partly we wanted to see if there were new things we would enjoy. But mainly we wanted to encourage a culture of receiving things graciously.

So we invited people to bring in their unwanted-but-good items over a few days in March, and then over a weekend (Friday afternoon, Saturday morning, and after church on Sunday) we invited people to go and have a look, and take away anything which took their fancy.

People found it very easy to be generous about giving. We had eight tables of items, and all of it was good. Much of it came with stories, and there was pleasure in hearing those stories. There was stationery (more of it from the minister's storage boxes than she cares to admit), and housewares, and books, and clothing, and a surprising amount of luggage and bags, and soft furnishings, and toys, and toiletries, and candles.

It was – and this was part of why we did it – a good bit harder to persuade people that they really could just help themselves to anything. That these

things had been given as gifts. That even if you hadn't brought anything in, you could most definitely take something away. That there was no limit on how much stuff you could take. That the only reason you needed to have to take something was that you'd taken a shine to it. People struggled a bit at first, but eventually relaxed into the strangeness. Underneath and within the shyness we all seem to have about getting something for nothing, there was some deep pleasure in receiving something as a gift. People went home with something they really liked.

It was a good way to redistribute physical stuff: some of the items might well have gone to landfill if they hadn't come into church. It was a tiny antidote to this world in which we sometimes confuse cost with value, and in which we feel everything should involve the exchange of cash. It was – above all – an exercise in the spiritual practice of giving and the vastly harder spiritual gift of receiving graciously.

It would, in all honesty, have been much easier to put prices on things, or to invite voluntary donations. It would have taken less explaining and been more familiar to people. But what lifted it from a bring-and-buy sale to something spiritually, socially, and environmentally nourishing was the insistence on things being gifts.

It was the least profitable event we've held, and we intend to do it again.

What's on: March and early April 2022

- Mon 28th February:** 7pm: Camera club (online and in person)
- Mon 28th February:** 7pm: Finance committee meeting (in person).
- Tues 1st March:** 4pm: Meditation (Zoom 812 3292 6975)
- 6.15pm: Vigil for Ukraine, in church.
- Fri 4th March:** Minister's vestry day
- Sat 5th March:** 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 6th March:** 10.30am Ainsworth: Service, led by Veronica Walker
- 11.15am Bury: Service in church
- 12.30pm Bury: Inclusive Communion Service
- 2pm: Zoom service (Zoom 849 7456 6116)
- Kate's annual leave begins.*
- Mon 7th March:** 7.15pm: NELUM General Council Meeting, Stand Unitarian Chapel.
- Sat 12th March:** 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 13th March:** 11.15am Bury: Service in church, led by the Worship Group
- No Zoom from Bury today*

- Mon 14th March:** 7pm: Camera club (in person and online)
- Tues 15th March:** No meditation this afternoon
- Sat 19th March:** 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 20th March:** 11.15am Bury: Service in church, led by Betty Kenyon and Susan Mitchell
- No Zoom from Bury today*
- Mon 21st March:** 6pm: Spring Equinox celebration, either at Holebottom or in church. Please watch out for notices.
- Tue 22nd March:** 12.30: LGBT+ Unitarian Voices, online event.
- Fri 25th March** 1pm: Lunchtime recital at Cross St Chapel Manchester.
- Sat 26th March:** 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Kate returns to work.*
- Sun 27th March:** 11.15am Bury: Service in church
- 2pm: Zoom service (Zoom 849 7456 6116)
- Mon 28th March:** Camera Club (in person and online)
- Tues 29th March:** Deadline for items for the April Calendar
- Weds 30th March:** Book club, 2pm (in person, but watch this space), discussing *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*.

Regular Events:

Saturdays:

11am Zoom coffee morning

Last Saturday of each month (subject to change):

12-2 Saturday Social Gathering

Sundays:

11.15am Worship in person at Bury

2pm Zoom worship from Bury

First Sunday of each month

10.30am Worship in person at Ainsworth

Alternate Mondays

7pm Camera club (online and in person)

First and third Tuesdays:

4pm Online midweek meditation session

Last Wednesday of each month:

2pm: Book club

Future events: Early April 2022

Saturday 2nd April:

Saturday Social Gathering 12-2, Including the Give and Take event.

Sunday 3rd April:

10.30am: Ainsworth: Anniversary Service, led by Rev John Allerton

11.15am Bury: Service in church

12: Give and Take Event

12.30: Bury: Inclusive Communion Service

2pm: Zoom from Bury

Sunday 10th April:

Church lunch

Church lunch

One of the things that people have missed during the last two years is meeting up with friends and being able to socialize in even small groups.

We do seem to be going forward now with small but sure and safe steps which is to be welcomed. With this in mind we have decided to have a lunch at church following the service on the 10th April 2022. The menu has not yet been decided but the cost will be £5.00 per person.

If you would like to attend would you please put your name on the list which will be on the notice board in the lounge or let me know – telephone 07876716563 or email Holt.Susan @ Hotmail. Com.

Lets hope that this is the start of getting back to our normal and very much missed social events.

Susan Holt

Book Club

Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier provided the focus for an enjoyable afternoon of discussion and conversation at our first meeting in 2022. Our books are loaned to us by Bury Library and we are currently adding to our list of requests. We read a wide variety of fiction and welcome all-comers; so if you enjoy reading, join us on 30th March at 2pm, when we will be discussing *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows: copies of the book are available to borrow.

Pam Gilbert

Camera Club

The Camera Club are hoping to have our first exhibition in two years set up at the back of the sanctuary before the calendar is out, and if you've been in the church building you may have already seen them. Feel free to ask any of the camera club members about the photographs that are there. We are always happy to discuss the images we produce and look forward to bringing our work into the sanctuary after such a long absence.

We have meetings pencilled in for the 14th and 28th of this month. We are hoping to fit one of the meetings around the image editing package called GIMP that many of us are learning to use together. You don't need to have even heard of the package before to benefit from joining us either, everything we do is directed to absolute beginners. If you want to see what we are doing, there's an example of the artistic effect that we are hoping to learn on the inside cover of the calendar. You'll see a picture of some flowers at the top and an artistic rendering of them underneath, the artistic rendering is all done by taking a few simple steps within this software.

If you feel like you might like to try photography, or even if you could simply use some company on the evenings we meet (and you are mostly happy to take part, or listen to others talking on the subject), feel free to contact Roger, Janet or Ade. We would love for you to join us and absolutely no specialist knowledge is required in advance.

Ade Brady

Could you help organise a concert?

We are hoping to host a concert by the Rossendale Male Voice Choir later in the year, but we need a group of people to organise the event. If you could bring a small group together to make all the arrangements, please speak to Kate, Betty, or Anne (you are not expected to do it yourself!)

The Minister's schedule, March 2022

I will be on leave from after the Zoom service on Sunday 6th March until the morning of Saturday 26th March.

Sunday morning services in person will continue as usual, but there will be no Zoom services from Bury on Sundays 13th and 20th March. Unless the weather is too dreadful, I will be breaking my leave to lead an Equinox celebration on Monday 21st March: there are further details elsewhere in the Calendar, but watch out for emails and church notices.

Ade will still be working for most of that time, except for a few days when we'll be in Dorset. Please try and remember not to give Ade work related messages to pass on to me while I'm off: either he forgets and I get cross, or he remembers and I get cross. He can't win, so unless it's an actual emergency, please save it for me until I'm back on Saturday 26th.

If you would like to speak to a minister in my absence, then my colleague Rev Cody Coyne, from Cross Street Unitarian Chapel in Manchester has offered to provide pastoral cover: you can contact him on minister@crossstchapel.org.uk or 0161 864 0019.

I generally try to take Thursday as my day off, and sometimes Wednesday as well. This does change when necessary, and of course if there's an emergency, I'm available even on days off.

Some weeks I don't manage a day off, so occasionally I'll take an extra one here or there.

I am generally in the vestry between at least 10am and 3pm on Fridays, and if you'd like to pop in for a chat you are very welcome. I do sometimes pop out to run errands, so it's wise to call first! Obviously, this month, I will only be in on the first Friday.

Inclusive Communion Services

For very obvious reasons, we have not been able to hold a Communion service in person for two years now. I feel that we can now manage to do so safely, with sensible precautions in place, and so starting from Sunday March 6th, there will be a communion service in the worship area at 12.30pm on the first Sunday of each month.

Everyone is welcome to this inclusive and sacred sharing of bread and wine (or juice). No matter what your religious beliefs or your history with communion, you will be made very welcome at our table, no matter what.

Spring Equinox Celebration

Unless the weather is too violent, we will be marking the Spring Equinox on Monday 21st March, at 6pm, at the old burial ground at Holebottom. We won't let a little bit of rain put us off, but we might let a lot of rain drive us into the church building instead. Please bear in mind that the site can be very muddy indeed, and that a) you'll want to dress appropriately and b) you might therefore see the minister in her floral wellies. Please keep your eye on emails and church notices for further details.

Church music

On February 6th, a volunteer-organist played for us, and was much appreciated; it was good to meet Alan Taylor and listen to his music; he is due to visit us again, soon; thank you, Alan.

Anne Mills.

News from around the district

News from Ainsworth

The next service at Ainsworth will be held on March 6th, at 10.30 a.m; when Mrs. Veronica Walker will lead worship. Support for Veronica will be appreciated.

The April Service takes place, on April 3rd, at 3pm; this will be the Anniversary Service, conducted by Rev. John Allerton, and everyone will be welcome.

Stand Incredible Edible: Community Project

Have you ever considered growing food to give to those in need?

What about being outside, in the open, do you need somewhere to go and others to be with?

Do you ever want to feel close to nature?

If you've answered 'yes' to any of these questions, come and join us. Our group is all about being outside, growing vegetables and flowers, and turning a blank canvas into somewhere special. Of course, nothing is compulsory, so if you only want to join us for a casual natter, that is just as good.

Stand Incredible Edible & Community Project is held on the field behind Stand Chapel on Ringley Road, Whitefield, M45 7JL. We meet every Thursday 1pm to 4pm. If anyone from Bury Church would like to join us, please contact Shammy on 07791 721295.

Lancashire Collaborative Ministry: news of a new book.

The Lancashire Collaborative Ministry has produced a book, to commemorate its eighteen months of lockdown, during 2020 and 2021; during this period, zoom services were held in Nazareth Unitarian Chapel, in Padiham, each Sunday, for the members of Unitarian congregations in Chorley, Padiham and Rawtenstall, primarily, but for all other interested parties, as well. The book, entitled 'Our Extraordinary Year', is now available for purchase, at a cost of £8.00 per copy, if collected personally, or £10.00, including postage and packing. 'Our Extraordinary Year' is a wonderful collection of sermons, written by such distinguished ministers as Rev. Jim Corrigall and Rev. Danny Crosby; by regular LCM service-leaders Rev'd. Dr. Shannon Ledbetter (who is also the book's editor), Tony Cann, Paul Hubbard, and Robert Foreman; and there are also two addresses by G.A. President, Anne Mills. As the services progressed, one of Padiham's members, David Cooke, set himself the task of writing at least one haiku, every week, to describe each service; he would read out his haikus, after the service ended. Sadly, David died, just before Christmas, last year, and the book pays tribute to his talents. Each item in the book has its author's permission for it to be used, so that copyright should not cause problems. For service-leaders, the book contains a wealth of quality material, which represents a valuable resource, from which full services could be constructed, at fairly short notice; it is, in addition, an historical document of some interest. A print-run of 100 copies has been ordered, initially, and we are hoping to sell them all; copies may be reserved by contacting Shannon Ledbetter, whose email address is: scledbetterosprey@gmail.com

Orders are now being accepted; thank you, in advance, for your interest.

Anne Mills, LCM Secretary.

NELUM

The next meeting of the NELUM General Council will take place on Monday, March 7th, 2022, at Stand Unitarian Chapel, at 7.15p.m.

NELUM's AGM will be held on Monday, May 9th, 2022, at 7 p.m; at Unity Unitarian Chapel, Bolton; all are welcome.

I have papers for both meetings; please let me know if you require copies.

Anne.

Cross Street Unitarian Chapel, Manchester: concert series

The series of Friday lunchtime recitals at Cross Street Chapel in Manchester have now resumed and take place on the last Friday of every month at 1pm.

The March recital is by pianist Alessandra Pompili. Further details will be available on the church noticeboard nearer the time

News from around the denomination

General Assembly Annual Meetings, 2022

At an Executive Committee Meeting, on January 14th, there was considerable discussion about whether this year's Annual Meetings could, and should, take place in-person; eventually, it was decided that we would go ahead, as originally planned, at The Metropole Hotel, Birmingham, between April 19th and 21st. Booking opened, on February 1st, and will close on March 1st; late bookings, for which there is an additional charge, will be accepted until March 22nd. All bookings are to be made online, although a telephone service will be supplied for those who do not have computer-access. Further information will be available via UniNews and from the uk unitarians website.

We are entitled to send two delegates to the Annual Meetings; if you wish to attend this worthwhile experience, please speak to Betty Kenyon or to our Minister.

Anne.

LGBT+ Unitarian Stories (online event)

Join us on Zoom to discuss an exciting new project around LGBT+ Unitarian stories, as we seek to gather, record, and share stories from the struggle for LGBT+ equality and inclusion within the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches – and our denomination's contribution to LGBT+ equality in wider society, in the past, present and future.

Everyone is welcome to join us for this hour-long Zoom call, hosted by Lizzie Kingston Harrison (Congregational Connections Lead) and Rev. Rory Castle Jones (Communications Officer).

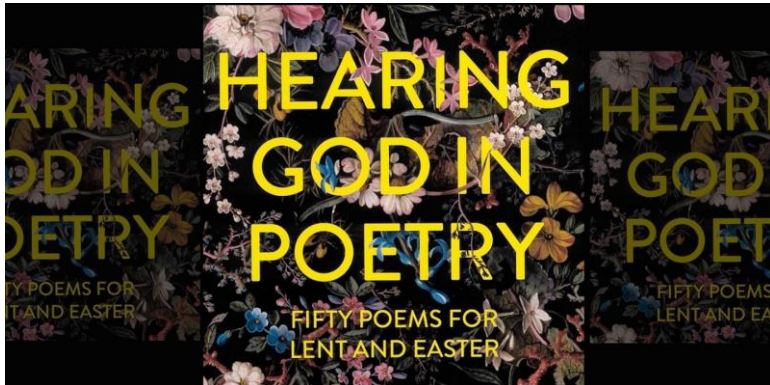
Whether you are an LGBT+ person or an ally, whether you helped your congregation to offer same-sex marriage ceremonies or yourself married your same-sex partner in a Unitarian church, whether you remember the historic struggles of the past or care passionately about LGBT+ inclusion today and in the future, all are welcome - we can't wait to hear your stories!

Tuesday 22 March, 12.30pm

Meeting ID: 820 7057 6510, Passcode: unitarian

A course for Lent

Rev Kate Dean (Hampstead) and Rev Winnie Gordon (Birmingham) are running this online Lent course, which may be of interest.



Open-minded course adapted from the Hearing God in Poetry book by Richard Harries. Read a poem every day and discuss each week.

An open-minded spirituality course adapted from the book 'Hearing God in Poetry' by Richard Harries. Led by Rev Winnie Gordon of Birmingham New Meeting Unitarian Church and Rev Kate Dean of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel.

There is a poem to read each day from 2nd March to 27 April and each week we will gather to share our favourite poems from the book or elsewhere and to discuss our inner journey through the season of Lent. We suggest that you obtain a copy of the book to read along with us but we have alternative options if you prefer not to.

Suggested donation for the full course: £5

Email Rev Kate Dean if you are interested::
minister@rosslynhillchapel.org.uk

By-Gone Times, by Betty Kenyon

Number 22: North and East Lancashire Unitarian Mission—NELUM

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (the umbrella body for Unitarians in the UK). Some time ago the UK was divided into 16 districts. Each district had an association, most of which formed in the 19th century, and which existed to promote Unitarianism in their district, and provide support for congregations within the district. In 1859 Rev Herford R. Travers wrote a history of NELUM 1859-1909.

Now there are 11 districts and there are 15 churches in NELUM. How much longer will this continue to be the case? Bury Unitarian Church belongs to NELUM. Our delegates are June Clarke and Neville Kenyon.

Mission Sunday



Who can tell me where this photo was taken?

Looking back in Bury's Church Calendars I came across Mission Sunday in March 1890.

It stated: We wish with all our hearts that our people would ask themselves in all earnestness whether there really is any need for such missionary work as the society in question tries to do. We want our Unitarianism to be better known, in the confident belief that then it will be better loved and honoured. There are those who say the liberal spirit is spreading everywhere and the work of Unitarianism is done. Some of us believe that our work as yet is hardly begun.

Mission Sunday March 1891. The work undertaken by the Mission is to give support to some of the weaker churches in the home district. The congregations of Bank Street, Bury and Bank Street, Bolton have from the first been the chief contributors to the Mission funds.

We have many Springs.

We see the promise of Spring even in November. Spring, from November.

That promise is given to us more clearly in January. And we see it in February, at Imbolc in the beginning, and in the middle, when the geese arrive back on the lake.

In early March, the news tells us we are in meteorological Spring. And in late March, Spring is shown to us again, when the Vernal Equinox, and the 'springing forward' let us feel Spring, and the coming of April proves to us that it's here.

We feel the delight of Spring even into May. Spring from November,
Spring until May.

We have many Springs.

It's dates in the calendar, and it is not dates in the Calendar. It has everything to do with the weather, and it has little to do with the weather.

it is the warmth of the sun, and it is lightness and it is temperature.

It is the longer days. It is high blue skies and white clouds. It is a quality in the air. It is a feeling, a feeling we know and which goes beyond words. It

is a taste, a freshness, a clarity in the air. It is the desire to stop and breathe in, rather than the need to put your face in your scarf and rush.

It is a smell, it is a sort of feeling. A fresh coldness different from the winter's cold. A scent, of new beginnings.

We have many Springs.

It is when we don't have to defrost the car. It is Crème Eggs in the shop.

It's leaving our hat, our scarf, our gloves, our big coat at home. It's watching Punxsatawney Phil, the groundhog, believing he might predict the weather, and knowing he won't. It's wearing a teeshirt outside. It's

drying the washing outside. It's swimming, outside, in water warmer than your cold tap. It is lunch on the garden bench, and it is tea in the light. It is getting up in the light and driving home without the car lights on. It is evenings which are light, despite the snow and hail.

We have many Springs.

We see it in birds as they start to fly to-and-fro with twigs, ready to build their nests; as they sing their hearts out; as they feed from our garden feeders; and we see it with the first evening sighting of a rabbit. The frogs in the pond and the lambs in the fields tell us that Spring is here.

We see it in snowdrops – beautiful winter flowers, but winter flowers carrying to us the news that hellebores are not far behind, and daffodils and crocuses and primroses, and tulips, and scyllas are following them. It is knowing there will be bluebells. We see it in trees as they bud, we see it in catkins, we taste it in when we nibble fresh hawthorn leaves.

Far from home, it is the flowering of tulip trees. We see it in the ground as the garlic springs forth, reminding us that the earth will feed us.

We have many Springs.

We feel it in our very souls. We feel it when we think of Aslan on the move. And it is intuition: we know it in our body and our spirit. It is the lifting of our hearts. Lift up your hearts! We lift them up unto the sun. We feel it when we start to expect, rather than to plod.

It is Lent, it is Candlemas, it is Easter, and like Easter, it moves. It is Imbolc, it is St Brigid, it is the equinox.

We have many Springs.

In January I asked the congregation (and my friends on Facebook) to answer two questions: When do you think Spring starts? and 'What tells you it's coming or is here?.

They have been gathered on the previous pages, inspired by a phrase in Val's answer: "I have many springs".

STOP PRESS

Vigil for Ukraine

**Tuesday 1st March 2022, 6.15pm-6.45pm,
in the Worship Area.**

In common with many churches and places of worship throughout the country, we will be holding a silent, candlelit vigil to show our grief over the awful events in Ukraine and our love and support for those most affected by the horror which is unfolding.

You are welcome to arrive from 6pm, and we need to vacate the building by 6.55pm.

Please watch out for further details in emails and church notices.

Church Information

Minister:	Rev. Kate Brady McKenna
	0161 460 3363 / 07751 240886
	revkatemckenna@gmail.com
Church address:	1 Bank Street, Bury, BL9 0DN
Church phone:	0161 761 3785
Website:	www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk
Facebook:	Bury Unitarian Church

Church officers

Chair of trustees:	Susan Holt	07876 716563
Chair of church council:	Betty Kenyon	01204 887222
Chair of congregation:	Anne Mills	0161 762 0943
		5, Arley Avenue, Bury, BL9 5HD
<i>Church secretary:</i>	<i>Vacant</i>	
Church treasurer:	Roger Mills	0161 762 0943

Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager	Adrian Brady	07736 107143
------------------	--------------	--------------

Charity reg no: 107857



Which is the photo and which is the painting?

