Bury Unitarian Church



"No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds; <u>November!</u>" (Thomas Hood)

November 2021

Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

Firstly, I want to thank everyone who 'held the fort' while I was on leave during October. It's always really comforting to know that the services are in excellent hands when I'm not here, and I think it's healthy and nourishing for people to hear a voice other than mine from the lectern every so often. They do say that if you're doing a job well you should be dispensable, and I'm glad to say that things always run smoothly in my absence.

This month marks five years since Ade and I first arrived in Bury. It's a cliché, but sometimes it feels much longer ago, and sometimes it all still feels very new. I very clearly remember the first evening we spent in the manse: we ate baked Camembert and part-baked bread from Aldi, amongst piles and piles of boxes. We've have the same meal on November 1st every year since. (We also always go out to the Bolholt Hotel for dinner on October 31st, because that's where we spent the first night we were up here).

There are still bits of Bury where we get lost, although all the months of delivering services every week have helped with that, but it very definitely feels like home now, and I get a warm buzz of 'homecoming' whenever I see the Peel Tower from the motorway.

When I first decided to take up the congregation's offer of becoming their minister, Ade and I both had a feeling that we'd like living in Bury, although we'd only visited once at that stage. What we didn't expect was that we'd very quickly realise that we really love it here. It really is an excellent place to live, with almost everything you could need, and within reach of everything else. I will confess that when anyone from Norwich visits for the first time, they expect a typical 'grim old Northern town', but then it generally takes them just one trip round the town centre and a drive around the surrounding countryside to realise what a great place it is to live. And they never believe me when I tell them just how huge the market is. East

Anglian friends, of course, are always impressed that from outside my front door I can see actual proper hills (though I suppose I must confess I will always miss Norfolk skies).

I hardly need to say that a lot has changed in those five years. Even before the pandemic hit and changed everything everywhere, things had changed, both personally and in our community. On a personal level those five years have seen me lose my mother, learn to drive, and get married. At church we have lost beloved members, and seen others move into residential accommodation, but we have also welcomed brand new members, and celebrated the birth of brand new babies.

Other things have remained constant, of course. We are still the genuinely welcoming community I discovered when I first visited back in July 2016, and I feel that we have a lovely combination of tradition and fresh ideas. I'm very proud to live in Bury and to minister with Bury Unitarians.

Things are, of course, still changing. The pattern of our services is still evolving back to something like it used to be, and we are slowly restarting some activities. There are some things which we miss, and on which we still need to have conversations and make decisions. I know that at the beginning of the first lockdown we thought things would close down for a few weeks and then restart exactly as they had been, and we now know that we were very wrong about that. Things change, and they develop, and that can be a really painful process, but if things don't change they simply decay. We have been thrown into turmoil, and we need to be very gentle with ourselves as we slowly work our way out of the mayhem.

We really do need our faith, right now, and to celebrate those times when we can truly feel positive. It is still a glorious world.

As ever, I send you my love.

Presidential matters

October has been yet another very busy month, although we did manage a few days of holiday at the start, which enabled us to relax, and which we greatly enjoyed. On the first Sunday of the month, we enjoyed attending our own Harvest Service, at Bury, after an absence of several weeks. Kate preached with her usual cheerful effectiveness, and the contribution of items for the Food Bank was heartening to witness; Harvest-time, as well as its practical side, is a season for thanksgiving and gratitude. This was a theme that I pursued, on the same afternoon, when I conducted Ainsworth's Harvest for them; I considered memories of Harvests past, mostly with pleasure, although my inability to decorate and fill a Harvest-box artistically haunts me to this day! This service was conducted in the presence of the Deputy Mayor of Bury, Councillor Shaheena Haroon, and her Consort and husband, Raja Khan, and Shaheena very graciously welcomed the congregation, as well as thanking them for their attendance, afterwards. As always, the chapel was beautifully decorated, by Shirley and her team, and, later, there were harvest-items available for the congregation to take home. A delicious afternoon tea was served, and much enjoyed, and not a little conversation ensued. A good time was had by all!

On the following Sunday, I again conducted a service for Walmsley, Bolton, at the end of which I received a compliment---I think! One of the congregation, on his way out, remarked: "Some people 'ave it, and some 'aven't; you 'ave!" And off he went! Afternoon Tea followed immediately after the service, and, no sooner had everyone been served, than the papers for the Congregational AGM were distributed, and the meeting began. It is always interesting to observe how other churches organise themselves, whether for worship, business, or

social-activities, and I congratulate Walmsley on their efficiency and pleasantness. I was able to offer useful information, during the meeting, and I delivered a short prayer, at the end, so I felt that I had earned my tea!

From Walmsley, we drove to Padiham, who had invited us to attend a special South African Evening. This began with an exhibition of drumming, which set feet tapping, and created great excitement. The main part of the evening was devoted to a talk from a black South African woman, Protasia, who recounted stories of her life, both there and in the UK; she has been spectacularly successful, in various spheres (nursing, teaching, lecturing, and social-justice work, to name but a few), and her account was heart-warming and heart-breaking, by turns. When she met her future husband, he turned out to be white, Roman Catholic, and a priest, so there were several barriers to be overcome, before the two of them could marry. This was inspirational, and I'm eagerly awaiting Pro's book, which, she says, she has "nearly finished" (but in African time!) Meanwhile, I'm reading her husband's life-story and finding it fascinating. The evening ended with mountains of delicious South African food---and conversation---both of which Unitarians always seem to enjoy! Those of you have attended our zoom services might like to know that Valerie Walker was present in person, and she and I enjoyed a lengthy conversation.

A zoom service followed, on the next Sunday, when I "returned" to Newcastle, for the fifth time. A small but enthusiastic congregation were in attendance to listen to my service about "Change", which I had expanded considerably since I first devised it, in July, 2020. Newcastle are in the throes of selling their premises, but the sale has been delayed because various checks by the local authority are needed, but haven't yet been carried out. The congregation have been meeting in person,

for a few months, but have now returned to zoom, whilst the sale completes and refurbishments are completed, which is expected to take several months; they will be able to retain a modest hall, in their building, once the work has been done, and can then decide how to proceed into the future. I wish them well!

On the day before the Newcastle service, I had attended a family funeral, in London, so the weekend was one of travel, and very tiring. Ironically, I had been invited to attend the London District Provincial Assembly's Autumn Quarterly, in Croydon, in person, but had had to decline, on account of other commitments. Rev. Jim Corrigall was to be inducted as the LDPA Minister, and I was asked to provide Opening Words for the event, as well as Greetings from the GA, and congratulations to Jim, which I was delighted to do; I worked with him for over five years, when he was The Lancashire Collaborative Minister, and came to admire his work greatly; he will be excellent, in his new role! The meeting also welcomed four new ministers: Revs. Michael Allured, Robin Hanford, Jennifer Sanders, and Jane Blackall, all of whom are enthusiastic and committed in their work, and will be assets to the denomination. Jane was valedicted and ordained, by zoom, on October 8th---a ceremony I attended and enjoyed; Jane herself spoke well, and she was praised, during the event, by such eminent people as Revs. Sarah Tinker and Bob Janis-Dillon. It is gratifying indeed to see so many new ministers emerging from Unitarian College and to know how excellently they have been prepared for the demanding paths they have chosen. I received a very last-minute invitation to Rev. Laura Dobson's Valediction and Ordination; luckily, I was free on the evening of October 22nd, and greatly enjoyed the service, directed by Ant Howe; Laura's deep spirituality and true sense of vocation were stressed, throughout, in a beautiful service. She is to undertake a joint ministry at Chorlton and Macclesfield, where she will prove to be a

valuable asset. The following Sunday saw me at Dukinfield, to conduct their service; the Old Chapel is a beautiful building (although difficult to maintain), the congregation were welcoming and appreciative, and we spent a pleasant afternoon together. From my vantage point, behind the lectern, I could see the church's fine stained-glass windows, through which autumnal sunshine was filtering gently---a splendid sight, but one generally denied to the congregation; I expressed my pleasure at the picture in front of me, in the hope that everybody would remember to glance in the same direction, as they left.

I continue to carry out my duties for Bury and for the LCM, and, on occasion, I am called upon to respond to demands from the Chief Officer, from the Executive Committee, and from individual Unitarians; I try to help, if I can. Those of you who know Christine Leather, from Blackpool, may have heard that she fractured her wrist, on October 3rd, on her way to Ainsworth; Celia Cartwright has been ill with covid and post-fatigue syndrome, but is now recovering; I have sent get-well messages to both of them.

Kate and Ade have been able to take holidays and leave, during October, and I hope that they return from their breaks refreshed and renewed; we must continue to appreciate all their efforts in keeping the church functioning smoothly, in what are still troubled times. Covid remains with us, and it seems reasonably likely that restrictions might be re-imposed on us, if figures do not start to fall again, in the near future. Let's all do our bit by having our Covid booster and flu jabs, as soon as we can; Roger and I have had all ours, so we can claim to set a good example! Best wishes from both of us; stay warm, safe and well, this winter

Worship in November 2021

Sunday services in person

We continue to meet to worship in person on Sunday mornings at 11.15am in the worship area.

The seating is all back-to-normal, and you are welcome to sit wherever feels safest and most comfortable for you.

After the service we meet for tea and coffee in the lounge, and you are very welcome to join us.

Sunday Zoom

We meet for worship on Zoom on Sunday afternoons at 2pm (except for Sunday 14th November, when the Zoom will be at 3pm). The Zoom service lasts around 30-35 minutes and is followed by a chance for a chat.

You are very welcome to join the Zoom by phone or over the internet, and if you haven't joined us before you're very welcome to come along.

Midweek Zoom meditations

There will be midweek Zoom meditations this month on Tuesdays 2nd and 16th November.

I am very open to considering a different day and time for these meditations: please let me know if there's a time that would suit you better and we'll see what we can do.

Services for Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday

Thursday 11th November, 10.45:

Short service for Remembrance Day, in the worship area

Sunday 14th November

10.55: Remembrance Sunday service, with wreath-laying at the war memorial. The wreath will be laid by Peter Whewell. *Please note the early start-time for this service.*

1.30: Poppy laying ceremony at Holebottom Burial Ground. We will be laying poppies on the two war graves: please let Kate know if you would like a lift.

You are welcome to eat your lunch in the church lounge between the service and the poppy-laying ceremony.

3.00: Zoom Remembrance Service.

I hope to have a supply of poppies (both red and white) available in church by Sunday 7th November.

This year, the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches will be represented at the Cenotaph in Whitehall by Anne Mills, in her capacity as President of the GA.

Anne takes our love with her: this is a very proud moment for herself and Roger, and I know that she will represent us and the whole denomination with dignity and grace.

News from our extended community.

Rene Hollos

I met Rene's son, David, mid-October, and he was able to assure me that Rene remains in reasonably good health, despite continued hearing-problems, occasional dizziness, and reduced mobility. He and the family are well, too, and able to give her the help she needs. Rene would welcome visitors, now that she is unable to attend church; she is also hoping to visit Jean Taylor, in Burrswood.

Anne.

Susan Mitchell

Following her stay in Fairfield Hospital and then at Killelea, Susan has recently returned home to continue her recovery: she has been really grateful for all the messages she has received, and I hope that she knows how very much she's been in our thoughts and prayers. Hopefully her recovery will be quick and she will be back in our midst soon.

Mike Connolly

Most of you will, by now, have heard the sad news that Mike Connolly, former Mayor of Bury, friend of many members of our congregation, and a great supporter of our church, died in late October.

I know that you will join me in sending prayers and love to his husband Ian Hargreaves.

Sunday tea and coffee rota, November 2021

7 th Nov	Jean Maden (milk)	Howard Maden
14 th Nov	Lois Williams (milk)	Brenda Ainsworth and Pam Gilbert
21 st Nov	Marian Price (milk)	Susan Holt
28 th Nov	Norah Hickton (milk)	Peter Whewell

Bury Unitarian Church

In-person worship

Every Sunday at 11.15am

Bury Unitarian Church, Bank St, Bury, BL9 0DN (by the Victoria Wood statue!).

Please join us for a service of words, music, prayer, and silence. We are a welcoming community from a variety of backgrounds, and our services cover a wide range of topics.

face coverings are required in the building, unless you are exempt

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

What's on: November 2021

Mon 1st **November** 7pm: Camera club (online and in person)

Tues 2nd November 7pm: Meditation (Zoom 812 3292 6975)

Sat 6th November 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)

Sun 7th November 1030am: Ainsworth: Service of Remembrance.

Shirley Horrocks

11.15am Bury: Service in church

2pm: Zoom service (Zoom 849 7456 6116)

Thur 11th November 1045am: Armistice Day service, in church

Fri 12th November Minister's vestry day

Sat 13th November 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)

Sun 14th November 10.55am: Remembrance Sunday service, starting

outside at the war memorial

1.30pm: Laying of poppies at the war graves at

Holebottom Burial Ground

3pm: Zoom Remembrance Service

5pm: Rawtenstall Unitarian Church Interfaith

Service, followed by a meal.

Mon 15th November 7pm: Camera club (online and in person)

Mon 15th November 7.15pm: NELUM meeting, Chowbent Unitarian

Chapel

Tues 16th November 7pm: Meditation (Zoom 812 3292 6975)

Fri 19th **November** Minister's vestry day

Sat 20th November 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)

Sun 21st **November** 11.15am: Service in church

2pm: Zoom service (Zoom 849 7456 6116)

Tues 23rd November Teatime: Deadline for entries for the

December/January Calendar.

Weds 24th November Book club meeting.

Fri 26th November Minister's vestry day

10am approx: Calendar collating party

Sat 27th November 11am: Coffee morning (Zoom 839 0159 23)

Sun 28th November 11.15am: Service in church

2pm: Zoom service (Zoom 849 7456 6116)

Mon 29th November 7pm: Camera club (online and in person)

Regular Zoom events

Bury Unitarian Church

Zoom worship

Every Sunday at 2pm

Meeting ID: 849 7456 6116

Please join us for a service of words, music, prayer, and silence. The service lasts around forty minutes, and then we gather for conversation.

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



Notes from the church property

Do you know where we get the phrase 'Christmas in July'? I didn't. It's a phrase I've heard throughout my life, and the phrase has become a mantra for me these last few months. I have found myself saying, far too often, 'Like Christmas in...' and then I insert at the end of the sentence, whatever month it actually is, and yes, I started doing it in July. Christmas... in July.

Christmas in July is an actual thing, and it isn't the marketing conspiracy you might think such a day would be. It started in the Keystone girls summer camp in Brevard in 1932. It started as a celebration replete with cotton-ball snow and a hearty Mrs Claus - because Keystone was (and still is) a girls' camp, and it was the camp director's way of bringing a small piece of that winter joy into the heavy summer months of South Carolina, and their campers continue to celebrate it to this day.

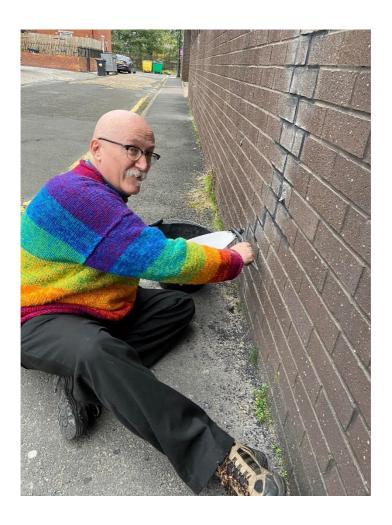
Although I never knew about its origins, the phrase has always carried with it that sort of unexpected thrill, a moment of joy at a time when you couldn't see it coming. I've had many of those moments since the start of the pandemic.

I spoke last month of how hard it has been to find items like sand and cement and that is because for a year now, one of the jobs on my 'to do' list has been to fix the mortar on the Back St. Mary's side of the church. I was been met, however, with a complete lack of material to do the job.

I have managed to get the material since; a small miracle happened and I got a tiny box of cement in July... and it felt like Christmas. Christmas in July. August came and so did sand, giving me that Christmas in August moment. September came and enough cement to do both sides of the building appeared. In October, a kindly gentleman knocked on my door and presented me with a box of mortar dye, so I could more closely match the original mortar colour of the building, and at that point, I honestly thought I had won the lottery of monthly Christmases.

So, Christmas in July, that's my theme for the year and I'm taking it forward. Every time something nice but entirely unexpected happens, I'm going to treat it like it's Christmas. Now if you'll excuse me; I still have a lot of mortar work to do, which isn't much of a Christmas tradition I guess, but that's how I'm celebrating this Christmas in October.

Ade Brady



Book Club

The book club will meet on Wednesday, November 24th at 7pm either on zoom or face to face. The book to be discussed will be The Red Queen by Philippa Gregory. New folk very welcome. No need to have read the book!

Camera Club

Our next Camera Club meetings will be held at the church and on-line (Zoom) at 7.00 pm on Monday the 1st, 15th and 29th of November. You are most welcome to attend any of them, and here's what we will be doing. Although we call ourselves a "Camera Club", we are still mainly interested in pictures. From time to time, we receive some interesting and useful tuition regarding cameras or photo-editing software, but our main interest is in photographs. Indeed, many of our photos are taken on mobile phones! In the next couple of meetings, in addition to reviewing pictures taken recently by club members, we will be assembling printed pictures for display at our next exhibition. We will soon be receiving some tuition from one of our members on the power of photo-editing software. If you would like to join us, just come along to the church or use the following: Zoom meeting ID: 837 3432 6101.

Roger Mills.

Collections

Please note that, from the beginning of November, Margaret Pollard will be dealing with collections paid to the church through the envelope-system. Welcome back, Margaret! Any payments, or questions, should be addressed to her, and cheques will be especially welcome. Thank you to everyone for your co-operation, over the past fourteen months.

Anne.

Thank you to Anne and Roger, who have been handling the cash donations over the past few months.

Sunday stewards

From December, we hope to start having stewards again for Sunday services: if you are willing to volunteer, either on a regular basis or to be a 'reserve', please speak to Betty or Kate, and we will draw up a rota.

The role of the stewards is to make sure that people are greeted warmly at the door (particularly visitors, who may not know where to go, and may not know their way around the service) and to provide everyone with an Order of Service and the relevant hymn books. Stewards also receive the collection during the service, and hand it to the minister, and then collect hymn books and unwanted Orders of Service at the end.

Church Flowers

It is a huge delight to have had real flowers back in church over the last few weeks, and I am really thrilled and grateful that our talented flower team – June Clarke and Sue McMullen – have offered to provide us with flower arrangements once a month.

Their arrangements always last at least two weeks, and sometimes more, and they enhance our worship enormously.

If you would like to offer floral arrangements on the weeks Sue and June aren't doing so, please speak to Betty: please bear in mind that you are *not* expected to fund the flowers yourself!

Flower cupboard

If you have items which you think should be in the flower cupboard, please could you leave them outside the cupboard, in the corner by the lift, and speak to Sue or June about where they should go, rather than putting them in the cupboard yourself?

Calendar deadline.

The deadline for entries for the joint Calendar for December 2021 and January 2022 is teatime on Tuesday 23^{rd} November. I will host a collating party in church on Friday 26^{th} (subject to people being available for this), and the Calendar will be with you either at church on Sunday 28^{th} November or just before or just after that in the post.

The minister's schedule, November 2021

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!

I will be away from Thursday 4th – Saturday 6th November, but I don't have any other big engagements this month.

News from around the denomination

News from Ainsworth

Our next service will be our usual, early, 'Service of Remembrance', at 10.30 a.m; on Sunday, 7th November, led by me, with Barry kindly offering to bring his Yamaha Organ. Please let me know if you would like to do a reading. With best wishes to you all; I hope you'll be able to join us. Our Christmas service will be held on, December 5th.

Shirley Horrocks.

Rawtenstall

Rawtenstall Unitarian Church Interfaith Service: Sunday 14th November from 5pm – refreshments meal served afterwards.

We will explore the themes of the COP26 Climate Summit and offer our varying faith perspectives on the environment. It is hoped we will also discuss practical ways we as a group can offer positive action. Our service consists of sharing our contributions of readings, poems, theological writings or piece of music that connects to the theme. We then have a 'Jacobs Join' shared meal together.

Pope Francis, "COP 26 in Glasgow is called to provide effective responses to the unprecedented ecological crisis and the crisis of values we are presently experiencing, and in this way to offer concrete hope to future generations. "Let us accompany it with our spiritual closeness." 6 Oct 2021.

For further information please email admin@lancashirecollaborativeministry.org or phone 07341 932558 and speak to Paul Hubbard.

NELUM

I have now received the Agenda for the next meeting, which will be held on Monday, November 15th, 2021, at Chowbent Chapel; a Pie and Peas supper will be served afterwards. I also have copies of the minutes of the last meeting; if anybody would like a personal set, please let me know. At the last meeting, the closure of Hindley Chapel was announced. Another item on the agenda concerned the conversion of loans (made to several of our churches) into grants; although the meeting was generally in favour of this, it was not possible to confirm the decision, as the meeting was not quorate. Anne.

General Assembly Annual Meetings, 2022

Arrangements have been made, provisionally, for the Annual Meetings to be held between April 19th and 21st, in person, at The Hotel Metropole, Birmingham, which has been used previously. We are usually entitled to send two delegates to the Meetings; if you are interested in attending, as one of our delegates, next spring, please speak to Kate or Betty, who will give you further information about what is involved.

Anne.

By-Gone Times, by Betty Kenyon

No 18 Entertainment:

What have you done during the last 20 months?

Back in the 1890's and early 1900's travel was by foot, horse, bike, waggonette, brake and later the railway and cars of a sort!

Entertainment was home-made. Definitely no TVs or any sort of computer.

Here at BUC there were: lantern lectures, a reading room, lending library, whist drives, concerts and plays and pantomimes, soirées, dances, conversasiones, handicrafts, Glee Club and clubs for women and men.



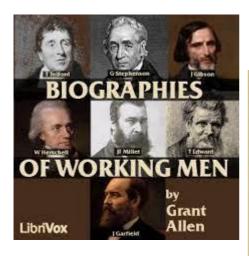
During late 1800s Lantern Lectures were about: North Africa, the Mediterranean, Holy Land, Rome, Niagara Falls: all attended by 600-700 scholars.

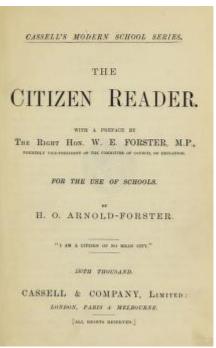
In June 1908 Rev J.M. Bus spoke on the Fleshpots of Egypt!

Starting time 8 pm prompt. Admission 1d.

Of particular interest is The Home Reading Circle.

From the Calendar of January 1890: *The Home Reading Circle, is likely to prosper, and prove both pleasant and helpful*. I wonder is this a fore runner of our Book Club?





They were reading Arnold Foster's 'Citizen Reader', Grant Allen's 'Biographies of Working Men', Dicken's 'Tale of Two Cities'.

The Calendar stated: 'What better mutual improvement society for our young people could we devise, than this circle of ours. It gives us the means of free and friendly talk. Those desirous of becoming members would do well to consult the leader of the circle, Mr F. Crawshaw"

Advent and Christmas: advance notice of services and events

Further details of all these services will follow in due course.

Sunday 5th **Dec. 11.15am**: Christingle service

2pm: Zoom Christingle

Tuesday 7th **Dec. 7pm:** Zoom 'Blue Christmas' meditation

Sunday 12th Dec. 11.15am: Zoom service

3pm: Carol service (time to be confirmed)

Sunday 19th **Dec. 11.15am:** Service in church

2pm: Zoom service

Tuesday 21st Dec. 7pm: Solstice celebration either in church or

at Holebottom

Saturday 25th Dec. 11.15am: Christmas morning service, after a

shared breakfast in the lounge

Sunday 26th **Dec.** No services from Bury. We will provide details of

other churches holding Zoom services.

We hope to arrange a congregational lunch on a Sunday in December: please watch this space for announcements.

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: <u>www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk</u>

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

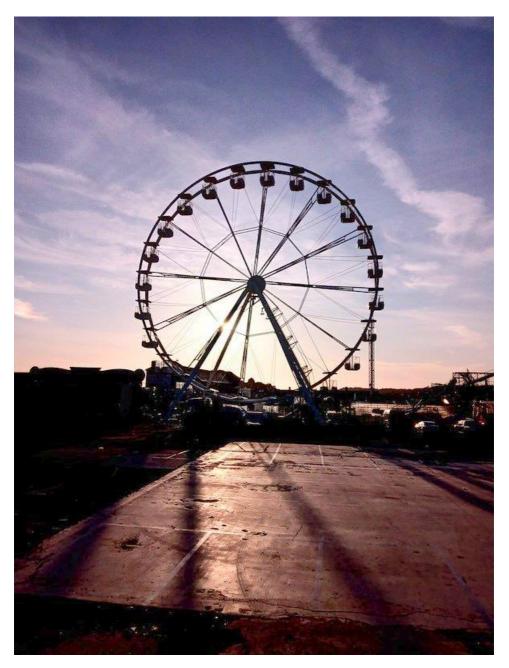
Church secretary: Vacant

Church treasurer: Roger Mills 0161 762 0943

Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager Adrian Brady 07736 107143

Charity reg no: 1078570



The Ferris wheel in Cardiff Bay



Autumn in South Lakeland





Autumn in Cardiff

