



NEWS & VIEWS

GLASGOW UNITARIANS JUNE 2011



This Global Chalice Lighting is submitted in English and Spanish by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

***We speak different languages.
We live on different continents.
And yet we share a common
love, a common faith, and a
common destiny.***

***We share a commitment to
create a world where
compassion guides us, where all
are cherished, where all are free.***

***We light this chalice in
recognition of our enduring
connections, in honor of our
shared legacy, and in
anticipation of the future we
shall create together.***

Peter Morales
Unitarian Universalist Association

Hablamos idiomas diferentes y vivimos en continentes distintos, pero compartimos un amor común, una fe común y un destino común. Compartimos el compromiso de crear un mundo en el que nos guíe la compasión, donde todos seamos amados, donde todos seamos libres.

Encendemos este cáliz en reconocimiento de nuestras relaciones duraderas, en honor de nuestro legado compartido y en la expectativa del futuro que crearemos juntos.





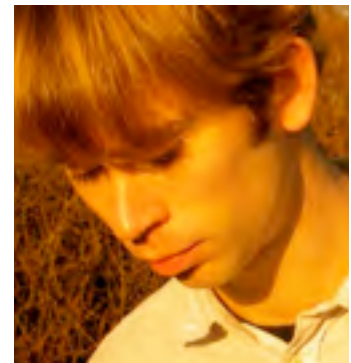
NEW PIANISTS at GUC...

We are delighted to welcome 3 new pianists who will be expanding our musicians' rota at GUC.



Calum Low

They are **Calum Low, Tom Gibbs and Kirsty Cox**. (Kirsty hopes to join us at a later date, once her new job allows). All three are piano teachers and freelance musicians and we look forward to their input at Sunday services. This is a much needed development as our friend Mairi has had to drop out of the team meantime because of family concerns and Lyanne and husband, Hugh will be retiring to the Isle of Bute in the near future. It is so good to have extra musical support, especially over the Summer holidays.



Tom Gibbs

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...and GUC has a new Secretary.

At our AGM on Sunday 15th May, Jane MacLeod was welcomed back to the post of GUC Secretary. Jane is no stranger to the job as she held the post some years ago. Jane comments - *"The other trustees have been most welcoming and with their help, I hope to be able to fulfil their expectations."*



**Glasgow Unitarians 72 Berkeley
Street, Glasgow G3 7DS
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Visit of Harry Wylie - GUC's oldest member



Jim Millar, Harry and Joan

On Sunday, 1st May, our oldest member, Harry Wylie, came to Church with his wife, Joan, daughter Anne and son-in-law Tom Gilchrist. The Wylies have been living in Christchurch on the south coast since 1990, so Margaret Paxton introduced them to our newer members and friends.

Harry, who is now 100 years of age, stood up and gave a ten minute reply, telling us of his early years from 1923 at the Ross Street "Working Man's" Unitarian Church where the minister, Rev. Richard Lee, was famous for his social conscience and for his outspoken sermons. Good informer he may have been but his members left the Church as quickly as they joined.

Harry's father joined with Kenneth Street and Cecil Harris to open the "Tin Church" off Rutherglen High Street. Harry played the organ there.

One Sunday in 1928, the service was taken by Rev. Herbert Vincent Mills, the interim minister at St. Vincent Street Church. Mr Mills invited Harry, who was 17 at the time, to join the young people at St Vincent Street. Harry joined the Bible Class taken by James Twaddle which became the L.S.D. Club, the Literary, Social and Dramatic Club, the forerunner of the Unitarian Players.

The L.S.D. Club fostered several long lasting marriages. Alex Dand married Esther Roy, Willie Roy married Mary Hart, Ina Hart married Leslie Matheson and Harry Wylie married Nan Millar. These couples became the main movers in the St.Vincent Street Church for many years.

Harry taught Mathematics in Glasgow. He was in charge of the Mathematics programmes for the Glasgow Educational Television Service. He was one of twenty teachers chosen by the Scottish Inspectorate to write the text books for the New Mathematics, a task which lasted from 1963 to 1988. In 1966 he became Head Teacher of City Public Senior Secondary School in Dobies Loan and three years later was moved to be Head Teacher of the new Govan High School. He retired in 1973 and thereafter became a temporary lecturer at Jordanhill Teacher Training College for three years.

In 1985 Harry met Joan Cooke at the AGM of the Unitarian Lay Preachers Association. Joan was President that year. Harry married Joan in 1988 and they moved to Christchurch in 1990, the year that Joan was the President of the Unitarian Women's League. Joan is a third generation Unitarian. She was baptised at the Rochdale Unitarian Church. She is an Honorary Member of the Manchester District Association.

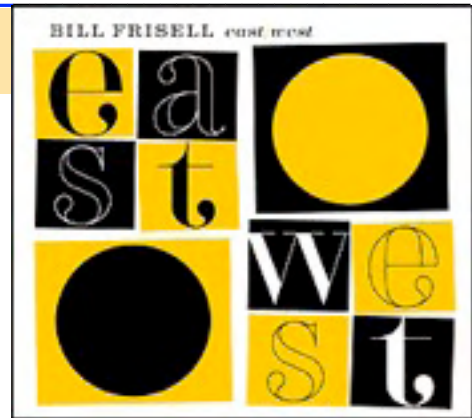
In 1985 Joan was awarded the Certificate in Theology of Manchester University after studying for three years at Unitarian College Manchester.

Both Joan and Harry have been inspired and guided throughout their lives by Unitarian principles and continue to be interested in Unitarian affairs.



Should we face East or West ?

Our Unitarian roots are surely firmly rooted in the West. Our history is of the West we have many friends in the Unitarian Universalist movement and America. Yes tradition decrees we are of the west in both attitude and faith. However the West is rather set in its ways and we live in a period when change is occurring so rapidly. Maybe we should aim to be apart of that change.



We could set our faces to the East, out beyond Mecca to the vast rapidly changing countries sited in the lands of the rising sun and the direction from which comes the increasing light. Many of these areas have much to offer in the understanding of existence , ways of life and are now moving on apace.

We now have a meeting place with lovely white walls facing both to East and West. Walls presenting a great screen for the projection of ones own thoughts and meditations. A great blank screen on which our minds may write our futures.

To the East the wall is flat and could indeed easily be adorned as in the previous meeting place. The leaders desk can be placed central and indeed one could be back in the seemly familiar place that we have used for many years. Is this why we moved? Oddly enough we would be facing East and the lands of rapid change.

Alternatively we can choose to face West. West to a wall with curved ends. It seems to me that the whole room is then changed. Changed acoustically in a way I cannot start to explain. But also it starts to appear more like an acting area. An area in which great truths and myths may be revealed and made clear.

Do we really have to make a decision? Could we not just be typically Unitarian, consider all the ideas, debate at length the points and then leave it to the person taking the meeting? After all it could be an interesting discussion for many years .

If the aim is to provide a good traditional Unitarian meeting let us face east by all means , the area of such rapid change in the world, light our chalice and get on with it as we have in the past.

However if the leader wishes to be more adventurous, maybe less formal or traditional in his service presentation, lets encourage use of the different parameters available to us by facing to the West . With the passage of time experience will show the benefits that may arise from the increased flexibility of ideas .

The observant may notice that I have avoided the use of the words 'Service' or 'Worship'. This was deliberate. Are either appropriate as a description of so many of our meetings? Now there is another subject for possible discussion. Think well.

Clive Briggs



..... *'To turn, turn,
will be our delight'?*

One of the great benefits of having chairs as opposed to fixed pews in our worship space, is that we can change direction fairly easily!

As a member of the musicians rota, I would like to express my own preference.

Sadly, the organ is now tucked far away in a distant corner, no matter which way the congregation is facing. I think that is something we shall have to live with.

I do not notice any difference acoustically, I have to say. However, the position of the piano lends itself much more happily to facing the straight wall. If the worship leader is tucked into the curved space, the piano needs to be turned round if the pianist is to be able to see him or her. Having the *back* of the piano exposed, at an angle, to me looks messyas if the musician is a temporary afterthought within the service.

I prefer the shape of the congregation fanning outwards from the curve, with the pulpit, piano, etc against the straight wall (as we were upstairs) I feel the chairs better fit the space this way.

Finally there is the question of our patchwork wall hanging, which has been cleaned, but has yet to be hung. It has become, in my mind, almost the 'visual brand' or logo of GUC. If we face into the curve, and the wall hanging is hung on the straight wall, it will be *behind the congregation*. What a waste! I feel sure that many of us, like me, very much enjoyed being able to scan and enjoy the colours and patterns during the service. To me, it is a lovely visual focal point. I am not at all sure that it could be hung successfully on the curved wall, should we decide to face that way.

I would like to suggest that we need longer to make this decision. In the meantime, let's use and enjoy our *flexible seating facility*. If a Worship Leader has strong feelings about which direction we should face, he or she can ask for help to change the seating around before their service. This should become the Worship Leader's responsibility - (*not George Paxton's. George does more than enough for us!*) It entails a little effort, and pre-planning but it will allow us all to make up our minds.

In the end, perhaps the decision about our final direction should be put to a congregational vote....but only after the musicians and congregation have had time to experience both directions....

..... *'Till by turning, turning, we come round right.'*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS - SWANSEA 2011

At the Swansea Annual Meetings I was installed as National President of the Unitarian Women's League. I view it as a great privilege to serve The League in this way. Until responsibilities with children took up too much time and energy I was active in the Glasgow Women's League, which meant a lot to me as a Welsh incomer to both Scotland and Unitarianism in my early days in Glasgow.



The League goals of friendship, service, caring and sharing were made real for me in the welcome I received, particularly from Theresa Taylor and I hope to be able to promote these goals in my presidential year's visits around the country.

Other aspects of the League meeting, attended by some 80 people, included the handing over of a cheque for £8,500 for last year's Project, which will provide a library and social room in the Annie Margaret Barr Centre run by Khasi Hills Unitarians in Northeast India and a presentation about this year's fund-raising Project, **Combat Stress**.

Combat Stress is a charity founded in 1919 that helps ex-servicemen and women who need psychological help and support. In the coming year I hope our Project will help us all learn more about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which, by the way, can affect 'civilians' as well as military people.

The Annual Meetings being in Wales meant a lot to me. The excellent Quiet Room (many said it was the best ever) was organized by the Aberdare congregation, in which the League is very active. The women in Wales made thousands of Welsh Cakes, distributed at the League stall and at the Anniversary Service social. Rev Eric Jones was honoured a few times and his quiet, humble manner is a fine example of those who serve without the need for inflating their own egos. I attended the service about Michael Servetus organized by Rev Cliff Reed, the presentation by Rev Bill Darlison about the Zodiac motifs in the Gospel of Mark and the York congregation's presentation on Elizabeth Gaskell, all very interesting. I appreciated the overall theme of the Meetings, "Honouring our Volunteers" and the way it was presented in the course of the Meetings. Welsh music in the form of a harpist and award-winning children's choir were prominent. The Anniversary Service was held in the Brangwyn Hall in Swansea, when past ministers Revs Trevor Jones, Austin Fitzpatrick, David Monk, and Roy Packer were remembered. Rev Ann Peart, known to many in Scotland, was installed as GA President, and she will be our guest at the SUA meetings in June. And, of course, husband John was welcomed onto the GA Executive. The Meetings were busy but interesting days.

Barbara Clifford

Ruth Gregory's AGM Address - Sunday 15th May 2011

The lighted chalice is a powerful symbol of our Church. It will predominantly mean different things to different people but for me it is principally a flame of freedom—that freedom which is the principal strength of our Church society---the freedom to explore belief and spirituality---to seek for meaning to our lives in the company and with the support of others without any degree of coercion whatsoever. These are the ingredients which differentiate us from other churches---the precious twin freedoms of thought and of association.

Here in Glasgow and the West of Scotland we are so lucky, we have in our church the forum for exercising these freedoms. We live in a stable country where we can largely think and act as we like. So that's the first thing we should be doing to-day—celebrating the continued existence of our church....

So here we are on the day of our AGM ---a day to rejoice in our freedoms of unfettered thought and free association. But also a day to do what is necessary to preserve our little church here in Glasgow and, by preserving it, to keep it as a place where others may come to exercise these freedoms. This IS a time for action. You all know at this time, virtually the whole of the Arab world is in a ferment over the denial of these freedoms in the sphere of politics, whilst in other parts of our world the growth of fundamentalist belief is quite scary in its denial of what education and science has discovered for us about our marvellous planet, and in its insistence on one interpretation alone of how we got here. Our freedoms are thus more precious now than ever. Our church is now more worth defending; it is now more worth working on the expansion of its role, and now even more worth the effort to ensure that others actually know of its existence.

That's the second of the reasons we are here to-day.—to ensure the successful continuation of our church. Our church doesn't run itself. It takes time, money and commitment. There is a mundane side to the pursuit of religious truth within this community and I know that you all acknowledge that I don't have a talk for you to-day full of interesting facts and insights. My message is simple and that is to ask each of you to give your minds and energies to the important tasks before you this morning.

So I ask you to make common resolution with me to strengthen our community through service. What are the primary duties in front of us this morning that we should discharge? To-day is a day to examine carefully the past year and to consider the stewardship of the trustees throughout that time. Are we on course for where we want to be? In addition we have to identify those amongst us who will carry the prime responsibilities of taking us safely forward.

Let us resolve to be generous in our appreciation and encouragement for work well-done but, importantly, let us also resolve not feel constrained about voicing concerns. If these do arise, let us resolve to discuss them constructively and openly, neither apportioning blame nor taking offence where none is intended. Let us resolve to always give others the benefit of the doubt and whilst doing that, to allow for differences in personality and style, to remember that we all have different needs and that we are all volunteers with other demands on our time and energy. One thing is certain—whatever we choose to do, we won't be perfect at it!

Let us resolve to be willing to help where we can. This year there are plenty of opportunities for everyone to play their part in forwarding the life of the Church. The trustees have set up various sub-committees to address particular areas of our society and I am suggesting to all of you that you have a look at what you could do to help. It doesn't need to be much but, if everyone did a little, it need not be burdensome and, more importantly than that, it will certainly help build our sense of community. Let us resolve to translate into action what we decided as a Church to do a few years ago with Cathal Courtney and that was – to work towards being a caring community. As a church, we will be what we make ourselves.

We so resolve.



June Diary 2011

SERVICES at 11am

June 5th - **Alastair Moodie**

June 12th - **Leslie Hart**

June 19th - **Barry Bell**
The Importance of Personal Experience

June 26th - **Sue Good**
(Aberdeen Unitarians)

Music

Tom

Lyanne

Calum

Lyanne



OTHER EVENTS in June

June 4th - SUA AGM in Dundee 11.0 for 11.30am (Own sandwich lunch, light buffet meal to conclude)

5th - Meeting to discuss amendments to the new draft Constitution 1.0pm

19th - Retirement Lunch for Rev Bob Wightman in Queens Hotel Dundee 1.30 for 2.0pm

26th - Special General Meeting on Constitution 12.45pm

ALSO IN THE CENTRE

G = Ground, B = Basement

June

- 2nd Recorder Players B / Ruskaya G 7.30
- 4th Incorporated Society of Musicians G1.30 / Orders and Medals Research Society B 2.0
- 5th Baha'is G&B 3.0
- 6th Society of Organists B 7.30
- 7th Trinity College Music Exams G&B 9-5
- 9th Ruskaya G 7.30
- 10th Trinity College Exams G&B 9-5
- 11th Trinity College Exams G&B 9-5
- 13th Trinity College Exams G&B 9-5
- 14th Trinity College Exams G&B 9-5
- 16th Ruskaya G 7.30
- 17th Trinity College Exams G&B 9-12
- 19th Choral Classics for Malawi G 2.30
- 24th SCAMPS B 11-2 / Baha'is G&B 7.0



COFFEE

June 5th - Janet
June 12th - Ruth & Bill
June 19th -
June 26th - Margaret & George

JUNE

FLOWERS

June 5th - Wilma
June 12th - Ruth & Bill
June 19th -
June 26th - Margaret & George

