



Spring Newsletter 2012
of the
Merseyside Unitarians (M.D.M.A.)
Including
The Women's League Newsletter

**The Chinese Year of
The Water Dragon**

The Chinese Dragon is often seen as the symbol of divine protection and vigilance. It is regarded as the Supreme Being amongst all creatures. It has the ability to live in the seas, fly up the heavens and coiled up in the land in the form of mountains. Being the divine mythical animal, the Dragon can ward off wandering evil spirits, protect the innocent and bestow safety to all that hold his emblem. The Chinese Dragon is looked upon as the ultimate symbol of Good Fortune.

The Dragon brings upon the essence of life, in the form of its celestial breath, known to many as sheng chi. He yields life and bestows its power in the form of the seasons, bringing water from rain, warmth from the sunshine, wind from the seas and soil from the Earth.



unitarians - many beliefs, one faith

March 20th we celebrate the return of Spring at the Equinox

Cultures across the globe and throughout time have honoured the Spring Equinox as a time of new beginnings and rebirth. We emerge from winter hibernation ready to begin a new cycle in the great turning of life. In our Equinox celebration we will welcome the sun's growing light, awaken our inner own fire and celebrate signs of new life sprouting in nature and in our lives. - **Julie Lange Groth**

Meditation on the Equinox - Thomas Rhodes

Over our heads, the great wheel of stars shifts,
the autumnal (or spring) equinox manifests itself,
and for one precious instant darkness and light
exist in balanced proportion to one another.

Within our minds the great web of neurons shifts,
new consciousness arises,
and for one precious instant experience and meaning
exist together as revelation and epiphany.

Within our hearts the great rhythm of our lives shifts
a new way of being reveals itself,
and for one precious instant
the nexus of the body and the seat of the soul
truly exist as one.

Let us give thanks for those times in our lives
when all seems in balance.
For those times are rare and precious.
The equinox shall pass, the revelation may be forgotten,
and our actions will not always reflect our true selves.
But through our gratitude
we may remember who we are,
reflect on who we may become,
and restore the balance which brings equanimity to our lives.

Lighting the Chalice

We are gathered here to celebrate the spring equinox - the first day of Spring. On that day there is an equal amount of light and darkness. The forces of death and life, summer and winter, light and dark are equally balanced.

Now the light is increasing, each day will be a little longer until we reach the summer solstice. This celebration, this ritual comes from the Celtic Tradition, Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles. Pagan is a misunderstood word which comes from the latin referring to people who lived in the country, the rural areas and were not able to get to the great temples of Rome. These people lived in the far north where winters were long, dark and cold. The seeds and bulbs sprout and baby animals will be born. Today we celebrate this season of rebirth.

Prayer: (followed by a moment of meditation)

Great Spirit as you make the earth blossom once more, bless our lives with good food, good friends, loving family and opportunities to grow and to learn. As we grow and change let us remember everything born must also die, even great mountains are ground down by time and will one day disappear. Teach to let go of old ways we have out-grown so we can make way for the new. Spirit of spring fill our lives with warm sunshine so we can dance, and share and grow.



2012 Dates for the Diary!

General Assembly Annual Conference April 3rd - 6th 2012 at Keele University

A special opportunity to meet fellow Unitarians, take part in interesting information and discovery sessions, participate in worship and find out what's going on in other congregation communities.

Your Church Secretary will have details on the events shortly including how to book. Or contact the General Assembly (address below) for a Booking Form.

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches
Essex Hall, 1-6, Essex Street, London WC2R 3HY.
info@unitarian.org.uk

Closer to home! Merseyside District Service

Merseyside Unitarians District Service
at the Quaker Meeting House Heswall
Sunday 13th May 3pm



The MDMA
welcome
Lis Dyson-Jones
President of the
General
Assembly of Unitarian
and Free Christian
Churches

North Drive
Heswall
CH60 0BD



*Parking available on the main road
Light refreshments available after the
service.*



This event is hosted by Wirral Unitarians.
For more information please contact Helen
0151 625 5488
or www.ukunitarians.org.uk/wirral



Meet ...

Lis Dyson-Jones

to be national President 2012-2013 and will lead our District Service on May 13th

A fifth generation Unitarian, Lis Dyson-Jones was born in Salford, Lancashire where as a child and young adult, she attended Pendleton Unitarian Church. Lis attended Sunday school, districts Spring Festivals and as a member of YPL (Unitarian Young Peoples League) she enjoyed many

Since then, Lis has belonged to congregations in Sheffield, Leicester and South Wales. Currently a member of the Cardiff congregation, she serves as its Chair, holds office as the South East Wales District Secretary and is a member of the Welsh Department Committee. During 2001 - 2003 she was District President. Lis has also been a member of the General Assembly Executive Committee and the Denominational Support Commission.

As a Justice of the Peace in her local area, Lis finds that her Unitarian beliefs sit well with community justice. She has said that the work involved has taught her to be fair, honest and impartial without losing the passion she has for 'justice for all'.

Lis is a committed Unitarian. She respectfully holds dear, the values of the past and rejoices in the courage of those who have gone before and who have opened up the path for the rest of us to follow. However, she also strongly believes in taking forward only those things which are of value and not those which are obsolete. She says

'we are very much a faith for now and for the future. We must believe in ourselves, developing trust and recognizing that we can and do make a difference for many seeking to be welcomed into a loving community of free faith'.

Abridged from the article on the national website

Any articles for the next issue need to be sent to Eileen Wiggins, 78 Western Avenue, Blacon, Chester, CH1 5PP.

Email pocketsow@hotmail.co.uk. You don't have to type it hand-written will do. The closing date for these articles is 14th June 2012.

Thank you. Eileen

Filming at Park Lane Chapel



During November 2011, Lynne announced to the congregation that Brian Worthington, a Wigan man wanted to use Park Lane Chapel as a location for a scene in the film he was making about the young life of Stan Laurel. Our chapel was chosen for its authentic interiors and period setting.

Being an extra (as they say in the film industry) was a new experience for me, when I offered my services as a choir member it was because I was so surprised at the lack of volunteers. Also Lynne eased any concerns I might have had by saying "It doesn't matter if you can't sing" Filming took place on November 27th, bonnets and shawls were provided or as I should say props, it didn't go down too well when I felt good dressed up, getting into character Ian Lowe came along told me I looked good but added with the same serious face, "Are they your own clothes?" "Yes" I said "Ken doesn't allow me money for new clothes!" It was while under direction from Brian, during one of the many cuts that I gave some thought to Lynne's statement, (regarding not having to be a good singer) perhaps she was telling me something, do I stand too near to her at the front of the Chapel? I think attending Park Lane has given me a complex...

The hymn we sang was a good old Unitarian written harvest hymn, Come ye Thankful People Come, the hymn had to be written before the 1870's otherwise it would have been out of period, it was penned by Anna Letitia Barbauld who was brought up at Cairo Street Chapel in Warrington, this well know tune allowed us all to give a good rendition. We were fortunate enough to have Lucy, grand-daughter of Ian and Susan Lowe, in our choir with her young voice and pretty young face. We were also kept in control with our own George Walsh conducting; we all started singing at the same time and even managed to finish altogether at the end of each line.

During the 1870's not much smiling was done, hence our serious faces. As you can see in the picture the corner chosen for the choir rehearsal is ideal showing off the beautiful stained glass windows also the memorial plaque? There are also some external shots as the intended couple leave the Chapel and walk towards the Lych-Gate.

I enjoyed my short film career very much; I was pleased that I had volunteered to take part and even more pleased when George told us we all sang in key.

At the time of writing this, filming is currently in production, hopefully in the next issue of our magazine it will announce that the planned DVD will or has been released, so watch this space and forth coming attractions. If you want to look at the screen shots of our 'choir' go to www.stanschildhood.org

Dot Webster

Unitarians: 'many beliefs- one faith'

As Unitarians we find a bond of unity in shared values e.g.

- the nurture of life's spiritual dimension.
- the use of reason and honest doubt in the search for truth.
- mutual respect and goodwill in personal relations.
- constructive tolerance and openness towards the sincerely-held beliefs of others.
- peace, compassion, justice and democracy in human affairs.
- reverence for the earth and our natural heritage.

For more information, local and national contact:

Helen: 0151 625 5488 (Wirral) Sylvia : 01829 740533 (Chester)

Website: www.wirralunitarians.org.uk/wirral
www.chesterunitarians.co.uk

The Bentley Singers at Ullet Road Church

Just to let you know we are having ' The Bentley Singers Centenary Concert' singing a selection from the shows from Gilbert and Sullivan, on Saturday 7th July in Ullet Road Church hall. Tickets and flyers coming soon. The concert is in aid of SACH, as an area fundraiser. For further information, ticket prices, etc. please contact me at Ullet Road.

Angela Howard



The Bentley Singers

An Invitation to the celebration of Gateacre Chapel's Diamond Jubilee

On **Sunday 8th April** Gateacre Chapel will be holding their **Easter Sunday** service at 11.00 a.m.

Sunday, **3 June** at 11 a.m. the will be holding a special service to commemorate their **diamond Jubilee**. A warm welcome is extended to all to help celebrate this special occasion.

David Buckley



The Women`s League Newsletter

The Golden Rule

Grieve not your heart for want of place,
Nor yearn for easy praise;
But fit yourself some task to do,
And well employ your days.

From wise and foolish both alike
We should all try to learn,
For one can show us how to live,
The other what to spurn!

Be fair to people when they err,
When good, your pleasure show;
Their faults be quick to understand,
In judging them, be slow.

But this above all else obey,
It is the best of goals,
What you would wish not done to you
Do not to other souls.

Confucius, 551 - 479 B.C.
Recast by John Andrew Storey

Confucius says ... It's the "Golden Rule" and the essence of real **compassion** . Not compassion as in looking down on someone and have pity for another, this is no real compassion. Compassion

means seeing another person 100% equal to yourself (in value, not in differentials on the surface which ultimately do not matter). In fact it is seeing yourself in every other person. And therefore you cannot harm anyone without also harming yourself.



It doesn't mean to lose individuality or self-worth, on the contrary – but the other person earns the same gift.



At Christmas time the Women`s League of the Merseyside District came together to share a time of fun, friendship and food.

The sharing of food, fun and friendship is a blessing that lasts and warms our hearts. John Readett was laid low with a bug so could not come and lead the singing. Jean Flynn stepped in and found Christmas poems that were read by the different ladies. When the poems had been read the poems were awarded points to find the winner.

Thank you for filling the breach Jean.



The fellowship, singing and readings were all a pleasure to share.



We had a sales table towards raising funds for those who have been in the forces and find life difficult to come to terms with. Thanks to all those who bought.



We sang Carols which were accompanied by Linda Owens on the piano. Thank you to Linda



Many small presents were provided for the ladies to share.



Warm mulled wine awaited us when we arrived. There was also a glass of non alcoholic wine to share with the meal.

There was a choice of Turkey or Salmon, puddings, mince pies and mints. Everyone had a good time.



“Mother Goddess”

Sinking gratefully back into the land,
Into the folds of the Mother,
Her creases in time and reality,
Her magic is a wrinkled apple,
A golden ball dropped from a tree`s galaxy of branches
into Her green and fertile lap
Where it will decay and then grow into a tree.



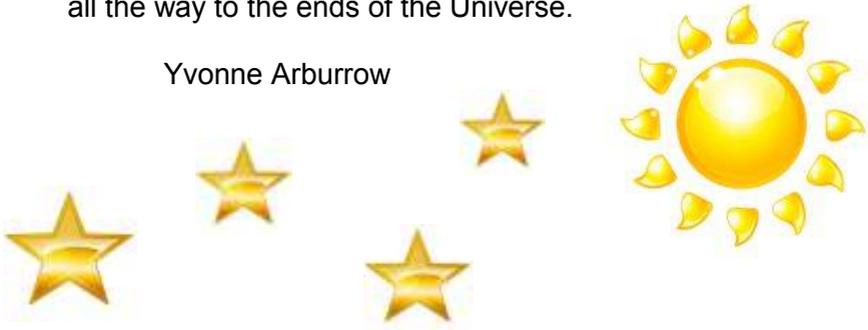
O mother I hear your call,
the wild clear call of the Moon,
the barren and compassionate one
who gazes down upon the Earth,
your green and blue sister.



May I dance with the Sun, Moon and stars;
May I feel their dance within me
and know that it is the One at play in the many -
the dance of being and non-being,
the laughter and tears of the divine at play
in each one of us -
wearing different masks,
now tragic, now comic.

May I hear the song of the stars,
feel the rhythms of the Earth pulse in my body,
lie upon the beloved land
and know that my depths are Her depths
all the way to the ends of the Universe.

Yvonne Arburrow



**North West Provincial
Assembly
Annual General Meeting
Saturday 28th April**

**Ullet Road Unitarian Church
57 Ullet Road, Sefton Park
Liverpool L17 2AA**



- 10:30** Arrival and coffee
11:00 Worship
12:00 AGM
13:00 Lunch (bring your own.
Tea and coffee provided)
14:00 Ullet Rd presents a play: " The Great
Ejection" an amusing account of the
"selected ejected".

Followed by, a musical treat by John Readett, who will be singing songs to mark the occasion.

A very entertaining afternoon :16:00 Departures



Tel: 01298 871218

the nightingale centre

The Holiday & Conference Centre set in the heart of the Derbyshire Peaks

Why Not Visit the Nightingale Centre

The Nightingale Centre is a registered charity. The trust is administered by the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. Unitarianism has a liberal Christian and social responsibility tradition. The Centre is happy to provide hospitality to groups from all faiths or none, and welcomes all those who wish to spend reflective time in a quiet environment and close to nature. There is an ambience of peace and calm that lends itself ideally to people who enjoy this kind of interlude.



A beautiful little chapel in the village holds regular Sunday services.

Accommodation is in well-appointed single, twin or family rooms - some en-suite. There is also dormitory accommodation available for up to 23 people with leaders rooms adjacent. This may also be used on a self-catering basis.

The recently refurbished dining room serves excellent food and our chef, Ann, is always willing to prepare special menus to suit individual groups.

The Nightingale Centre - Spring and Summer



And see the wide choice of art classes
in the separate table

For enquiries about general activities at
the centre contact

Stella Burney 01298 871 218

info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk

Contact for further information

16 th -18 th Mar	NYP Inters and Seniors Weekend	John Harley 07985 900935
4 th -6 th May	FOY Conference The MYSTERY of the MURDER MYSTERY in our CULTURE Open to non-members	Joan Partington 01228 670 565
9 th -13 th July	Unitarian Discovery Holiday 'Ways of Seeing- all in the eyes of the beholder	Marjorie Walker 07718 1067320 or 01506 493 612
6 th -10 th Aug	Fun Days Away	John Harley 07985 900935
10 th -12 th Aug	Merseyside Congregations Weekend	Rev Lynne Readett 01942 893 965
11 th Aug	Open Day!	Centre manager
18 th -25 th Aug	RE Summer School 'Sacred Living'	Rev Margaret Kirk 01845 574 542. info@hucklows Summerschool.org .uk
25 th -27 th Aug	Papercraft Party Do you love working with paper scissors and glue?	Gwyneth Roper 0161 941 4794
25 th -27 th Aug	'Come and go as you please' Free to do as you wish.	Centre manager
28 th -31 st Aug	Mid-week break Free to do as you wish.	Centre manager
31 st Aug -3 rd Sept	Unitarian Music Society Summer Conference	Adrienne Wilson 01483 421 905

Wirral Unitarians: **Minister: Rev John Keggen.**

Services Normally 6.30 on 2nd and 4th Sundays
(except August) at the
Quaker Meeting House, North Drive, Heswall

- into spring!

**Discovery Group 7.30pm
at the Quaker Meeting House North Drive Heswall**

Tuesday 3rd April 'Can we ever find straightforward answers to those tricky questions' led by Rev John Keggen

Wednesday 2nd May

Poetry reading with Peter Sampson

Peter is one of our best known Unitarian poets.
Eight of his poems have now been set to music
in our new 'purple book'



All are welcome

**.....and finally Charity Classic Concert
Sunday 3rd April 3pm
in aid of the children's hospice Claire House**



Come and enjoy a hour of varied music perfect for a Sunday afternoon

EBB AND FLOW

In and out
Up and down
Highs then lows
This is how my spirit goes.



	<p align="center">Art at the Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow</p> <p align="center">Calling all experienced and budding artists For more information contact Sue Field 01433 621 420 www.fieldbreaks.co.uk</p>	
<p>23rd-25th May</p>	<p>Grasses and Meadow Flowers in Coloured Pencil, Watercolour or Graphite</p>	
<p>8-10th June</p>	<p>Landscape Painting in June</p>	
<p>22nd-24th June</p>	<p>Early Summer Landscape Painting</p>	
<p>1st-3rd Aug</p>	<p>Leaves for the Terrified! In Coloured Pencil, Watercolour or Graphite</p>	
<p>12-14th Sept</p>	<p>Vegetable Patch Harvest in Coloured Pencil, Watercolour or Graphite</p>	
<p>19th-21st Oct</p>	<p>Autumn Colours – Landscape Painting weekend</p>	
<p>7th-9th Nov</p>	<p>Have Fun with Eggs & Feathers in Coloured Pencil</p>	

**Come and make music in the Heart of England
Unitarian Music Society
Summer Conference 2012**

**Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire
Friday 31st August to Monday 3rd September
Full board from £156**

Talks
Concerts
Workshops
Informal Sessions
Worship
Social time

Everyone-join-in
Big Work:
Gilbert & Sullivan`s
Comic opera
Trial by Jury

Singers,
Instrumentalists and
Listeners welcome!

Contact Adrienne Wilson
adie@adiewilson.co.uk
Tel 01483 421905

Merseyside District Congregational Weekend 10th-12th August

A relaxing weekend to catch up with people you may know and/or make new friends across the District. This weekend will also coincide with the centre's Open Day so enjoy the Open Day activities, meeting those coming along, perhaps go for a walk, visit nearby attractions or just 'chill out' in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside. In the evening perhaps enjoy a sing-song.

For more details about the weekend away contact
Rev Lynne Readett
01942 893 965 rev.lynne@hotmail.com

Hucklow Open Day Saturday 11th August

A chance to see the changes at the Centre and meet up with fellow Unitarians

*Combine with the Merseyside weekend or
just come for the day if you can't stay longer*



Chester will not have a service on the 1st Sunday in June (June 3rd) as their room is not available. You never know - we might visit you instead.

Coming Events

At Chester we have found that Oswestry have built a new town park and within this park they have built a turf Labyrinth. →



On the 5th of May 2012 it is World Labyrinth Day and at 1.00 p.m. we will be walking this Labyrinth with people doing the same all over the world. There will be nothing organised just walking in solidarity with like minded people.

Also at the summer solstice on June 20th 2012 we are going to walk this Labyrinth together. With Dorothy Haughton from Oswestry, Chester Church and the Midlands Unitarian churches and anyone else who wishes to join us we will be welcoming the Summer Sun. We are walking at 8.00 p.m. as sunset is about 9.30 p.m. and we want to watch it set together.



The Labyrinth is at Wilfred Owen Green and can be accessed from Ambleside Road and Brookhouse Road or from Sainsbury's car park and is near the Railway Museum. The site is an area of public green space with a range of facilities including play equipment and a labyrinth.

Look at the Chesterunitarian.co.uk website and the Facebook page Labyrinthing for developments.

Merseyside District Churches

<http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/merseyside/congregations.php>

Ancient Chapel Toxteth, Park, Liverpool, L48 4UE	11.00 a.m. (Fortnightly from Dec 7th)
Chester Chester Offices Sports Club Lounge, Plas Newton Lane, Chester, CH2 1PR www.chesterunitarians.co.uk	10.30 a.m. (1st & 3rd Sundays) Tel: 01829 740533
Gateacre Chapel Gateacre Brow, Liverpool, L25 3PB www.ukunitarians.org.uk/gateacre/	11.00 a.m. each Sunday Tel: 0151 608 7271
Isle of Man Fellowship Meeting in members homes	As arranged
Park Lane Chapel Wigan Road, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Wigan, WN3 0BY http://parklanechapel.ukct.net	11.00 a.m. each Sunday
Southport Unitarian Church Portland Street, Southport, PR8 1LT www.ukunitarians.org.uk/Southport	11.00 a.m. each Sunday
Ullet Road Church Cheltenham Avenue, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 2AA www.ukunitarians.org.uk/ulletroad	11.00 a.m. each Sunday Tel: Vestry 0151 733 1927
Warrington Cairo Street Chapel Cairo Street (off Sankey St) Warrington, WA1 1EE www.ukunitarians.org.uk/warrington	1st and 3rd Sunday 3.00 p.m. Tel: 07966 883 694
Wirral Unitarians Quaker Meeting House, North Drive, Heswall, Wirral, CH60 0BD www.ukunitarians.org.uk/Wirral	6.30 p.m. (2nd and 4th Sundays) (No services in August) Tel: 0151 632 5256
MDMA President	Ray Beecham
MDMA Secretary	Mr Richard Merritt : 37 Kings Walk, West Kirby, CH48 8AF Tel: 0151 625 5488
Lay Preachers Secretary	Miss Beryl Black Tel 0151 733 2927