

**Stalybridge Unitarian Church is a  
Free Christian Congregation.**

**A member of The East Cheshire Union of Unitarian and  
Free Christian Churches.**

**A member of The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free  
Christian Churches.**

**A member of The North Cheshire Unitarian Sunday  
School Union**

**A member of The Unitarian Christian Association**

# **THE CHALICE**

**STALYBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH  
MAGAZINE**

**February 2011**

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS  
SPONSORED  
In memory of  
William (Bill) & Emily Hallat**

## MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

Recent events have reminded me of an inter-faith group I occasionally attended when I was Minister at Stockport. It was a fascinating group which included all shades of Christians including a retired bishop, as well as Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Baha'is. We discussed a wide range of issues in a spirit of tolerance and openness and did our best to promote understanding and friendship in our increasingly multi-faith community.

I particularly recall one occasion when someone raised the point that most people in Britain today have only a residual interest in religion. They like it to be there for them when they need it but can see little use for it most of the time. Given the behaviour of some of the people who like to call themselves Christians this attitude isn't too difficult to understand!

We also considered the age old problem that people will argue about religion, fight for it, even die for it, but very few are actually prepared to live it! Loving a neighbour who thinks and behaves the same way and believes the same things is easy but loving a neighbour whose thoughts, behaviour and beliefs are different is difficult. Yet Jesus did not distinguish between the two.

One member of the group told us this story which I thought was worth sharing with you:

A rabbi and a soap maker went for a walk together. The soap maker said, "What good is religion? Look at the misery in the world after thousands of years of religion. If religion is true, why should this be?" The rabbi said nothing. They continued walking until he noticed a child, filthy with mud and grime, playing in the gutter. The rabbi said, "Look at that child. You say that soap makes people clean. We've had soap for generations yet look how dirty that child is. Of what value is soap?" The soap maker protested, "But Rabbi, soap can't do any good unless it is used!" "Exactly", replied the rabbi.

Every blessing.

Andrew

## **FOURTH WEDNESDAY PRAYER GROUP**

The Fourth Wednesday Prayer Group will meet on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 7.30 pm. Everyone is welcome.

## **FUNERALS**

10<sup>th</sup> December Alice Berry aged 79 years. Service in church followed by committal at Dukinfield Crematorium, the Minister officiating.

14<sup>th</sup> December John Bryan Stafford aged 77 years. Service in church followed by interment at Hurst Cemetery, the Minister officiating.

## **MUSIC DURING THE SERVICE**

### February

6th	Choral " Nun Danket Alle Gott " - G Friedrich Kaffmann.
13th	Song Linden Lea - R Vaughan Williams
20th	Voluntary based on the hymn tune St Mary - C Darnton.
27th	Pastorale in C Major - J H Rogers

## **WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

The monthly meeting for March will be held on Wednesday 2nd at 3. pm when the hostess will be Mrs Olwyn Murphy.

## **OLD CHAPEL PANTOMIME**

Old Chapel will be putting on "SINBAD THE SALOR" from 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> February. This is great entertainment for all the family. Tickets will be available shortly and can be purchased from Jenny Halsall on 0161 3397450.

## **FUND RAISING & SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

We hope you have all had a peaceful and joyous Christmas and feel ready and refreshed to start attending our next fund raising events at church.

As promised in the last Chalice, I said I'd let you know how we got on at the Christmas Fair. Well, we did very well and managed to make at least £1062 on the day with occasional donations still coming in. It was an improvement on last year, so thank you to all who came and spent their money as well as to those who helped run the stalls and donated so much to make it a success. Let's hope we have more of the same for the Summer Fair later in the year.

Our first event in February will be the Whist Drive which will take place on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> starting as usual at 7.30 pm. Please come along if you are interested – it is a fun night out and you may even win a prize. The cost is £2 each which covers refreshments and prizes including a raffle. We have missed the two previous Whist Drives due mostly to bad weather, so we look forward to seeing as many as possible on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

At the end of February we shall be holding the monthly coffee morning on the last Friday as usual which in February will be the 25<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to come along to church from 10 till 12 for a drink and a bite to eat as well as a chat. Children are also welcome so we hope to see plenty of you there.

At the beginning of March on the 4<sup>th</sup>, we shall be hosting a St David's Day dinner. The cost will be £8 and you will be served a full dinner. Please enter your name on the list on the notice board so we know how many to cater for. Please mention it to your friends so we can be sure of having plenty of people.

Looking more into the future, we hope to hold a Royal Wedding Evening on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Further details will be given next month, but please put the date in your diaries to ensure you will be able to attend.

We are very keen to have any new ideas for fund raising, so anyone who thinks they may be able to help in any capacity, please come along to our next Fund Raising meeting which will be held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February at 7.15 at church. You will all be very welcome.

Hope to see you in February!

Sue Howard

### **STEWARDS FOR FEBRUARY**

6th	Bill Atkin
13th	Wendy Maher
20th	Don Andrews
27th	Ken Howard

### **FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY**

6h	Mrs Margaret Hallsworth in memory of Vic
13th	Mrs Jessie Sykes in memory of Mrs Annie Norfolk & Miss Ada Blackburn
20th	Mr & Mrs Derek Worthington in memory of Mr & Mrs Albert Worthington
27th	Mr & Mrs Ken Howard in memory of Miss Margaret Hitchen

## **WARDEN'S NOTES**

Those of you who were at church on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January were fortunate enough to hear Andrew preach both an important and enlightening sermon.

Andrew gave us all a potted history of Unitarianism and Free Christianity from our difficult beginnings to our place in Christian society today. He explained the reasoning behind our existence and reminded us that we all have the ability to think and judge for ourselves. He also touched on the thorny subject as to why other Christian denominations are reluctant to accept us as Christians.

It was a sermon that deserved a much wider audience and should really have been heard by more people both from within and from outside our own small denomination.

One of the essences of Unitarianism is tolerance, and because of that we find it difficult to understand why certain other denominations refuse to tolerate us. Unitarians have always drawn inspiration from other Christian denominations and other world faiths and that in part makes up part of what we stand for.

For other denominations to denounce us is, as I see it, a very un-Christian and hypocritical attitude to take. What seems to make matters worse is that it appears to be members of the clergy who want to make waves while most ordinary church-goers get on with things in a normal manner.

What we have to remember is that our forefathers fought hard for our religious freedom and nobody can take it away from us now.

We are Unitarian Free Christians; we may sometimes think differently from other people, we may even think differently to our friends and family members. We are not sheep blindly following the instructions of others; we are all searching for the Kingdom of God in our own way while trying to follow the message of Jesus; surely there is nothing wrong with that.

The last two lines of last Sundays closing hymn are worth repeating:

*The Lord hath yet more light and truth  
To break forth from his word.*

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One of the best parts of being Church Warden is the opportunity to meet and welcome new worshippers to our congregation.

Recently we have welcomed quite a few people to our fellowship; we hope that they continue to enjoy our worship and our fellowship and we really hope that they find a religious home with us.

Ken Howard



Part of our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in 2012 we would like to make a disc of old photographs. If any of you have ANY photos related to church or Sunday School we would like to borrow them.

Any other relevant memorabilia is also required to make up a suitable display

### **EVERYTHING WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU**

Please put everything you have in a suitable container clearly marked with your name and hand them to me. It would be helpful if the photographs were dated (just the year is enough).

**FUNDING**—There is now a large collection jar at the back of church. We would be grateful for any donations no matter how big or small to help with the funding for this important anniversary.

# Calendar February 2011

Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	3.00 pm	Ladies Congregational Society Monthly Tea
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Whist Drive
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup>	7.15 pm	Women's Institute
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup>	7.15 pm	Fund Raising Meeting
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Church Committee Meeting
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	7.30 pm	Fourth Wednesday Prayer Group
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 am – 12 noon	Coffee Morning
Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG

## **MARCH 2011**

Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	7.30 pm	St David's Day Dinner party
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