

**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**

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**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS
SPONSORED BY
Mrs Olwyn Murphy**



MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

This summer has not been particularly good to us in more ways than one! Leaving the torrential rain aside, a number of people in both my congregations have had quite serious health concerns and some have needed to spend time in hospital. We are so lucky in this part of the world to have a number of excellent hospitals and specialist medical staff so that you could be treated quickly and effectively. We give thanks for them and for the treatment you received. I know that all of you received the best possible care whether you needed to be treated in hospital or were able to remain at home and I hope that you are now feeling much better and fully on the road to recovery.

In July, it was a great pleasure for me to be able to spend an afternoon with Stalybridge's senior member, Miss Frieda Harrison, who was celebrating her 105th birthday. A number of friends joined her on that afternoon and we enjoyed a good buffet provided by the home where she now lives. We all admired her many birthday cards including her second card from Her Majesty the Queen. Not many people achieve that! Frieda always maintains a lively interest in church and our activities and we send her our congratulations and very best wishes.

A few weeks ago I attended a meeting where it was suggested that churches and chapels should have "mission statements" rather like hospitals, nursing homes and other institutions and businesses have these days. I have to say that when I was in the Civil Service my experience of mission statements and other fashionable management techniques such as the use of targets was not good. I recall people spending inordinate amounts of time preparing and then monitoring these things, time which would have been much better spent actually doing the job! If all the staff that are employed to monitor mission statements and targets rolled their sleeves up and got on with some real work much more would actually be achieved. Churches and

chapels are not the same as businesses or large public institutions anyway and should not be treated as if they are. Having said all that though, I found this discussion rather amusing because the Christian Church already has a mission statement and has had one for nearly two thousand years now! It was given to us by Jesus himself. He said "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." (Luke 10 v 27) There really is nothing else which needs to be said!

Wishing you every blessing

Andrew

EAST CHESHIRE UNION OF UNITARIAN AND FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

These celebrations will be held at Old Chapel Dukinfield on Saturday 10th October. The programme is as follows:

4.00 pm Worship conducted by GA President Rev Bob Wightman

5.30 pm Buffet Tea

7.30 pm Cabaret

This event is being funded entirely by the ECU. A notice is on the board with more details. Please make an effort and let us have a good presence from Stalybridge at this important event.

As part of the cabaret Stalybridge will be performing a one act play/ play reading. If anyone is interested in taking part please let me know. I only need about half a dozen people.

Ken

WARDENS NOTES

As we move towards the end of our “barbecue summer” I hope that those of you who have been away had a good holiday. For those of you who stayed at home I hope you enjoyed the occasional periods of good weather. Sue and myself are going to Cornwall in September with Jennifer and family so we are hoping for an “Indian Summer”. (I suppose that it is now considered politically incorrect to call it that!).

Traditionally the size of the congregation diminishes in August as many people go away. I hope that we can now get back to a more stable attendance. We must all try to attend church more often; let us aim to have a congregation of between thirty and forty every Sunday. In the last couple of years we have been pleased to welcome new worshippers in our congregation but we must continue to attract and encourage new people.

As Warden I try to keep up with developments at The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, particularly any proposed changes that may affect our own church. At the General Assembly AGM earlier in the year a resolution was passed to look into the possibility of changing the name of the denomination. Too long and too cumbersome is the official reason for this proposed change but I can tell you that it is much more cynical than that. This is a blatant attempt by some sections of the denomination to get rid of the “Free Christian” element of the name. This argument has been going on within the denomination for almost 100 years (since the last name change) and it rears its ugly head when some people find they have nothing better to do.

I find it difficult to understand why the denomination would want to get involved with this at a time when finances are tight, there is an acute shortage of ministers, churches are closing and the number of overall worshippers is dwindling. Some people seem to think that if we drop “the C word” then coach loads of people will turn up at all our churches every Sunday, fighting to get a seat! This is just a selfish attempt by those who consider themselves not to be Christian to fashion the GA to suit themselves.

Rest assured I will keep a close eye on this situation. The most important thing to remember is that we do not have to be a member of "The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches"; we do not have to send our quota payment if we do not want to; and I for one would not be happy being a member of an organisation from which I was excluded on the grounds of faith.

The congregation "owns" and is responsible for Stalybridge Unitarian Church, nobody else.

Ken Howard

FLOWER SECRETARY

FLOWERS FOR SEPTEMBER

6th	Mr & Mrs Geoff Spiby in memory of The Schofield Family
13th	Mrs Janet Pearson in memory of Mary Dagnah
20th	Mr David Dawson in memory of Mr & Mrs Harry Dawson
27th	Mr Bill Atkin in memory of Mrs Margaret Atkin

FUND RAISING

Well, it seems quite a while since I was last writing this piece for Challice, but hope you have all managed to enjoy the few good days of summer weather that we have managed to have. We have a few things lined up for you, so here goes!

Our first event in September will be on Friday 4th September starting as usual at 7.30 pm at church. The evening will cost you £2.00 which includes refreshments, whist prizes and a raffle. All are welcome, so please feel free to come along, you don't have to be an expert. Our October whist drive will be held on Friday 2nd October – as above.

Later in September, on Friday 25th, we are continuing our cultural evenings, when we shall be holding our French Night. There is a notice on the board, so please put your name on if you wish to attend. We shall be serving French food, French wine and will learn more about the cultural side of France. It should be a good night, so please come along. If you wish to join us but cannot get to church at the moment, please give me a ring and I will put your name on the list.

Moving on a bit, we shall be holding our next evening of Desert Island Discs on Friday 23rd October. Our marooned guests will be Julie Maher and Bill Atkin. As previously we shall be having a potato pie supper to end the evening.

To look even further ahead, our Christmas Fair (known to many of you as the Bazaar) will be held on Saturday 28th, so please put all these important dates in your diary.

Our next fund raising meeting will be held on Monday 21st September at 7.15 pm to which everyone is invited. If you feel you could help with fund raising in any way, either with ideas or in a more practical way, please come along and join us – you will be more than welcome!

Till next time then, please keep supporting our fund raising efforts – we need all the help we can get. Please see the separate article in this magazine regarding the Recipe Book.

Sue Howard

HARVEST SERVICE

This will be held on Sunday 27th September at 11 am. Gifts of fruit and flowers etc will be received at church from 10 am to 12 noon on Saturday 26th September.

RECIPE BOOK

As mentioned in the last edition of Chalice, we have decided to publish a recipe book with all requested recipes. I am very often asked for recipes after we have had a particular event, so we are happy to publish them for everyone to share and also any recipes which you think other people might like. So if you would like a recipe or would like to share your favourite recipe, please let me have them so we can start this project off.

Sue Howard

UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

All young people, whether they attend regularly or are just visiting, are more than welcome to join us at our UYPG meetings which take place during morning service (after the 2nd hymn) every Sunday. If you have any queries, please ring Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872. We have recently been illustrating the story we have heard earlier in the service and we shall continue to do that over the next few months and then we will have to start preparing our Christmas items. We are always busy and would love to have lots of children come and join us.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

The September meeting of the Women's League takes place on Wednesday 2nd September at 3pm. The hostess will be Margaret Halls-worth.

£1 A MONTH CLUB

July's winner was number 69, Nora Caton. Congratulations!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

September 20th NCUSSU AGM at Flowery Field

September 27th Harvest Service

October 3rd-11th Trip to Rome

October 10th 150th Anniversary celebration at Old Chapel, Dukinfield

October 18th Ladies Service

November 8th Remembrance Sunday

December 20th Carol Service

STEWARDS FOR SEPTEMBER

Sunday 6th Bill Atkin

Sunday 13th Don Andrews

Sunday 20th Tom Whitehead

Sunday 27th Stuart Hinchcliffe

Sunday 31st Stuart Hinchcliffe