

THE WAKEFIELD UNITARIAN

The Newsletter of Westgate Chapel, Wakefield
www.ukunitarians.org.uk/wakefield

December 2012

When the song of angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas begins: to find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among the brothers, to make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman



From the website of the UU
Community; East

Westgate Chapel was opened in 1752. Its congregation was established in 1662 and became Unitarian in view in the eighteenth century. It has taken a leading part in the economic, social, educational, political - and spiritual - development of Wakefield and its vicinity.

Sunday Services in December

2nd December **10.30am**: Stephen Carlile *World Aids Day*

9th December **3pm**: Bill Darlison

16th December **3pm**: Anthony Dawson (*this service will look at Christmas and changing beliefs through the lens of Terry Pratchett's "Hogfather".*)

23rd December **3pm**: Bill Darlison *Carol Service*

25th December **10.30am**: John Goodchild

30th December **3pm**: Anthony Dawson (*this service is entitled "So this is Christmas" and all are invited to bring along thoughts or memories about Christmases past.*)

Welcoming Rota

Welcomers have an important role in ensuring everyone, members and visitors alike, feel welcome and included in our services. Do remember to arrange a swap if you are unable to make your rota day.

2nd December: John Goodchild

9th December: Nancy Denison

16th December: Pat Howard

23rd December: Ralph Denby

25th December: Kate Taylor

30th December: John Goodchild

Christmas Collections at Westgate Chapel

It was agreed at the November chapel committee meeting that we should hold a retiring collection at the Carol Service for the new children's hospice. There will also be our usual retiring collections over the Christmas period for the Send-a-child-to-Hucklow fund.

The Chapel Anniversary

Our anniversary service this year was lead by the President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, Lis Dyson-Jones (pictured below) who brought greetings from the GA and its constituent bodies.



News from the Chapel AGM

At the annual meeting the following officers were elected:

President: John Goodchild

Secretary: Kate Taylor

Treasurer : Bill Humphreys

Finance Secretaries: Paul Dawson and John Goodchild.

Work commitments meant that Chris Pilkington did not stand for re-election to the committee; Ralph Denby and Tony Scott were re-elected for a further 3-year term and Sally Fairweather was newly elected.

Wakefield City of Sanctuary – an invitation

Open Meeting Party and AGM

Brook House Working Mens Club

Sandal, WF1 5NU

Sunday 2nd December 6pm for 6.30pm start

There will be food music and an opportunity to find out what the City of Sanctuary movement is doing in Wakefield

Come along and join in, see what you could be involved in

A time to come together, party and appreciate the rich diversity of the district

For more details phone 07901057388



Wakefield Night Shelter

We've often commented on our concerns about the homeless of Wakefield. The Baptist Church runs our local nightshelter, and need volunteers... Could you help?

They need VOLUNTEERS who can:

- Cook a meal for 15 people
- Look after the users of the shelter from:
 - 7.30pm—11.30pm
 - 11.30pm—6.30am
 - 6.30am—8.30am
- Do laundry in the morning
- Care and chat to vulnerable people

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mark Phillips at Wakefield Baptist Church

Tel: 01924 382966

Email: mphillipswbc@gmail.com

YORKSHIRE UNITARIAN UNION



meet for a full day of activities at LEEDS
(Mill Hill)

on SATURDAY JANUARY 19th 2013

10.30 Tea/coffee before the YUU Lay Worship Leaders (Lay Preachers) session at 11.00. This will be led by Rev. Alex Bradley (Principal of Unitarian College, Manchester)

12.30 Lunch – bring a sandwich, drinks provided

After lunch we welcome to the YUU

Lis Dyson-Jones, the GA President for 2012-2013.

She will at...

1.30 conduct Opening Devotions

1.45 lead a session exploring the theme of 'journeys'

3.00 YUU Quarterly Meeting

4.00 Tea and chat...before departures



Everyone is welcome to all or any part of the day's programme. Easy access from Leeds railway station.

The November Westgate Forum – reflecting on ‘The Unitarian Attitude of Mind’

At our November discussion, John Goodchild presented us with ‘One Unitarian’s attitude of mind. It is surely worth relaying:

‘A happy but always questioning attitude towards human nature and actions, towards politics, religion, and the law of the land. An ability always to be not quite certain, but to be satisfied with that uncertainty; an ability to say “I believe” and to mean it, but always with an edge of uncertainty.

‘A belief in the goodness of humanity and myself, while recognising the power of ambition, selfishness, and plain waywardness. A need always to place actions as against the sentiments of the Lord’s Prayer and the Sermon on the Mount. An ability to mock as well as to question and identify one’s own self interest; not always to accept what is, and to recognise the possibility of something better and to strive for it. To see the beauty in nature, in human nature, in words and music and art; to see something of the mistakes and the achievements of the past. Always to strive, within the confines of what one sees as one’s abilities.’

We set beside this the General Assembly’s Objects (set out in each issue of *The Inquirer*). They were simply what all Unitarians would support but perhaps the ‘attitude of mind’ is something more personal, individual. One claimed scepticism as the essence of this Unitarian attitude, a demand for hard evidence before accepting anything as true. Scholars must have such an attitude. We traced it back to Socrates and decided that philosophers must, essentially, have this habit of questioning.

We talked about seeing beauty in nature. This seemed a relatively modern attitude of mind, manifest from the late 18 century. It would not have occurred to protestant dissenters in 1662. And we talked about the tensions between independence of mind and committing oneself to the membership of a group – be it the congregation, a local society, or some political party. We dared to say that the Unitarian attitude of mind would draw one to the Liberal Democrats or the Labour Party rather than to the Tories.

*What do YOU think?
Send your ideas to the
editor, Mel Prideaux,
for inclusion in the
January edition.*

*The December Forum:
How should we treat
the natural world?
Tuesday 4th December
10.30am*

Unitarianism is a liberal and creedless faith, rooted in the Christian tradition, yet on a spiritual adventure in search of truth, justice and healing for the world. We are a faith community for those on a spiritual journey, for those who believe there is still more to be discovered in religion. We believe in religious exploration - through the intellect and through the spirit. Through the intellect we explore religious questions in sermons, lectures, courses and dialogue. Through the spirit we explore with worship, music, ritual, meditation and prayer.

Stephen Lingwood

The Chapel Pastoral Care Team

Members of the Chapel's new pastoral team are willing individually to provide a confidential ear if anyone feels the need of this. They are also happy to visit people at home. Contact Kate Taylor (kate@airtime.co.uk).

The Engagement Group

An 'Engagement Group' consisting of Unitarians and non-Unitarians, is organised by Mel and Steve. The group chooses a different location and theme for each meeting, actively engaging with one another following engagement group principles. We explore and discuss spiritual themes, and the beliefs and attitudes which shape our lives. The group has been dormant for a while, so if you are interested please do get in touch. Newcomers are welcome, and should contact Steve (boudicca7@talktalk.net) or Mel (melpx@hotmail.com).

Safeguarding

The Chapel Committee recently approved a new policy on how we will deal with concerns about, or allegations of, abuse of children and vulnerable adults. The policy needs to be finalised after the launch of the denominational safeguarding policy. While developments continue please contact the Safeguarding Officer, Mel Prideaux (01924 781020 or by email) with concerns and/or questions.

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