

**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 corporate member of The Unitarian Christian Association

THE CHALICE

**STALYBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH
MAGAZINE**

DECEMBER 2007/JANUARY 2008

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE
IS SPONSORED BY
MR & MRS IAN BRADBURY
In memory of
FRANK GREEN**

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends

As the year once more draws to a close we have our usual round of Advent and Christmas services to look forward to. As you will see in the calendar, this year we have taken the unusual step of holding the Family Carol Service and the Candlelight Carol Service on different days. This is because it has become obvious in recent years that an increasing number of you do not want to come out to two services on the Sunday before Christmas. Last year we had record attendances at both services, over 80 in the afternoon and 60 in the evening but less than a dozen people attended both services! The evening service in particular was very poorly attended by church members. By holding one service on the Sunday afternoon and the other on Christmas Eve we hope that more of you will feel able to attend both.

Earlier in December we will be holding two Christmas Memorial Services. There will have to be two because of the number of people who want to attend. The two services will be identical except for the names of the deceased loved ones who are being remembered at that service. You are welcome to attend either and to have names of loved ones included. It is important however that I know in advance which service you are coming to so that the names are read out at the right one. The first service will be on Thursday December 6th at 7.30pm and the second one on Sunday December 9th at 6.30pm. There will be forms available at the back of church for you to indicate the service you will attend and list the names of those you want to be included.

Looking ahead to 2008, plans are well in hand for our next trip to Rome. This will be from 24th to 31st May. Word obviously got around about the last trip as this one was soon full with people who didn't come last time! Some people who did come last time are so keen to go again that they are planning to stay in a hotel or apartment near the convent for the same week. Luckily, due to the cancellation of another small group I am now able to offer some of these people rooms at the convent. I don't want anyone to feel left out so I want to remind all of you who came last time of the possibility of arranging your own accommodation. If you do that I can include you on our flight list. Hotel rooms are about twice the price of the convent rooms so groups of three or more might be better looking for an apartment as one group of four have already done. I am afraid that it is now very unlikely that any more rooms will become available at the convent but if you wish to be on a reserve list in case any of our group have to cancel just let me know.

Wishing you every blessing,

Andrew.

SOROPTOMIST SUNDAY

As many of you may be aware, this year's President for the Soroptomist's is Gina Ullman. In honour of this there will be a Soroptomist service on Sunday 2nd December. This will be incorporated as part of our Advent service and conducted by the Minister, Rev. Andrew Parker as usual.

The Mayor has been invited to attend and soup will be served afterwards. This meal is described as a shared lunch and is intended to remind us that there are many in the world who would value a meal as simple as soup and bread, and are not nearly so lucky. There will be a charge of £3 for the meal and all funds will be donated directed to Gina's charity of choice, Send a Child to Hucklow.

WARDEN'S NOTES

As we look forward to the Christmas Season and the New Year let us look forward to a season of happiness and goodwill. Christmas is an important part of the Christian calendar and one which is to be enjoyed by all.

It is another opportunity to meet family and friends who perhaps we have not seen since last Christmas. We come together at home and in church to celebrate our love of each other.

It is also a chance for us to celebrate the birth of the man whose teachings we strive to follow. As we hear and sing about the familiar Christmas story which now sounds almost idyllic, let us remember that the birth of Jesus was not so simple. It was a dangerous time for the baby and his family, Jesus was born in pretty horrible circumstances and one has to consider that surviving the journey to Bethlehem and surviving the birth was in itself a miracle.

Even more important is that the message of Jesus is still followed over 2000 years later. Every single day new people are coming to Christianity and finding peace and comfort within it. Our own particular brand of Unitarian Free Christianity is a perfect place for all people to find a comfortable congregation to worship with.

While we celebrate Christmas we must not forget that many people in the world are unable to celebrate Christmas in the way that we do. It is a sad fact that the most common Christmas present this year will be – NOTHING! There are also people who will be unable to celebrate Christmas with their friends and family.

Sue and I will be spending Christmas with our family in Northern Ireland; this sadly means that we will miss all the special Christmas services. We will think of you and we will be singing Hob Hill and Chime On with you in spirit.

Have a lovely Christmas.

Ken



CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT GREAT HUCKLOW

Arrangements are now well under way and the menu is on the notice board at Church. The coach will leave Old Chapel at 11.00 am, Wednesday 12th December, then pick up at outside Church at 11.15 am. We expect to return around 5.30pm There are still one or two places so let me know if you would like to join us.

Margaret

MEMORIAL SERVICES

These have been arranged by Rev Andrew Parker as follows:

Thursday 6th December 7.30pm

Sunday 9th December 6.30pm

We hope that those people who attend will find comfort and solace in the sanctuary at Stalybridge Unitarian Church

OLD CHAPEL PANTOMIME

This year's production will be Sleeping Beauty. Performances will be from Saturday 9th February to the 16th February. If you would like tickets please see Ken

FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL GROUP



First of all, may I thank **everybody** who had anything whatsoever to do with the Bazaar. A lot of effort was put in by many people and we managed to make over £1000 on the day. I think Bill said he was still getting some donations in, so hopefully we will be able to make it up to last year's total. I'm beginning to sound like Terry Wogan with Children in Need! I don't think we had as many people coming into church on the day as we did last year, so special thanks to all who did make it – your efforts are much appreciated as this is our main fund raiser we have during the year.

At the time of writing this, we are getting ready for the Family Christmas Party. There will be a buffet style festive supper, games and entertainment suitable for everyone, young and old and maybe even a visit from a special someone! We haven't done this in a good while, but hopefully it will go down well and everyone who comes will have enjoyed it. I will report on it in the next Chalice, by which time it will probably be a distant memory as this is our double edition!

Our next whist drive will be held on 7th December which will be our Christmas edition!. Please come along and start off the Christmas celebrations with a game of whist. It will start as usual at 7.30 pm at church, so please come along and join us when, for £2, you get the chance to win a prize and receive tasty Christmas refreshments as well. The January one will be held on Friday 4th starting at 7.30 as usual. .

A notice has been put up in church inviting anyone who wants to come along to put their names on to go and see "The Wizard of Oz" on Wednesday 13th February 2008 which is being held in Uppermill. Please put your name up as soon as possible as we need to know how many to book for before it is too late. If you can't get there, please ring me and I will put your name on the list.

Our next meeting will be held on Monday 3rd December at 7.15 which is just before the main church committee meeting. If you feel you could help in any way, please come along.

As this is our last edition of Chalice this year, may I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year

Sue Howard



£1 A MONTH CLUB

Anyone wishing to renew their membership or join for the first time, please contact me on 0161 344 0942, 45 Church St, Dukinfield SK16 4PR.

Beryl Bradbury

LADIES CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY (WOMEN'S LEAGUE)



The December meeting will take place on Wednesday 5th at 3pm and will take the form of a Faith Meal. In January our meeting will be on Wednesday the 8th. Tea is to be provided by Mrs Margaret Hallsworth.

UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

The leaders for the next few weeks will be:

2 nd December:	Claire Bullock
9 th December:	Ruth Mills
16 th December:	Sue Howard
23 rd December:	No UYPG as Family Christmas Carol Service
30 th December:	Claire Bullock
6 th January:	Ruth Mills
20 th January:	Claire Bullock
27 th January:	Ruth Mills

All young people, whether they visit 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 when we usually make or prepare something either connected with that day's service or for a forthcoming church social event. If you have any queries, please contact Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.

JUVENILE MEMBERSHIP

Parents who would like their children to be Juvenile Members of Church should contact Clare Bullock (0161 3038872). She will require the full name of the child plus £1 membership. The membership certificates will be distributed during the Juvenile Membership Service.

CHURCH FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER/ JANUARY



- 2nd December: Mr & Mrs Tom Whitehead in memory of Mr & Mrs Tom Whitehead Senior
- 9th December: Susan & David Roberts in memory of Mr & Mrs Frank Roberts
- 16th December: Janet D. Pearson
- 23rd December: Ladies Congregational Society in memory of past members
- 30th December: Mr & Mrs Norman Bradbury
- 6th January: Vacant
- 13th January: Mr & Mrs E. Caton in memory of Mr & Mrs Elson Caton
- 20th January: The Men's Guild
- 27th January: Mr & Mrs Stuart Hinchliffe

Flower Calendar

The vacant date on 28th October has kindly been filled by Alison and Julian Stafford in memory of Baby Jack Taylor. Unfortunately this was arranged too late to print in the October Challice

SERVICE TO CELEBRATE THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

This service will be held at STALYBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH on Sunday 20th January at 6.30pm. This service will be attended by members of all the Stalybridge churches. Please

DIAMOND WEDDING

Our congratulations go to Mary and George Horbury who celebrated their Diamond Wedding, surrounded by all their family in the Isle of Man, on the 22nd November.

George has also celebrated his 80th birthday in the same month.

Many of you will remember George from the many Pantomimes he appeared in and co-produced with Tom Whitehead.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Dukinfield Old Chapel will be holding a service on the evening of Sunday 23rd December. They will be including our special carol, "I heard the bells on Christmas day" sung to "Hob Hill" and they have extended the invitation to members of our congregation to join them.

STEWARDS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

2 nd December:	Tom Whitehead
9 th December:	Bill Atkin
16 th December:	Ken Howard
23 rd December:	No UYPG as Family Christmas Carol Service
30 th December:	Stuart Hinchliffe
6 th January:	Wendy Maher
13 th January:	Tom Whitehead
20 th January:	Bill Atkin
27 th January:	Ken Howard

NCUSSU CAROL SERVICE

This will be held at Mossley Unitarian Church on Friday 21st December Starting at 7.30pm

DECEMBER

Sunday	2nd	11.00am	Morning service and UYPG
Sunday	2nd	12.15pm	Soroptomist Lunch
Monday	3rd	7.15pm	Fund Raising & Social Group meeting
		8.00pm	Church Committee Meeting
Wed	5th	3.00pm	Ladies society Monthly Tea
Thursday	6th	7.30pm	Memorial Service
Friday	7th	7.30pm	Christmas Whist Drive
Sunday	9th	11.00am	Morning service and UYPG
		6.30pm	Memorial service
Tuesday	11th	7.15pm	Men's Guild put up Christmas tree
Wed	12th	11.00am	Christmas Lunch, Great Hucklow
Sunday	16th	11.00am	Morning service and UYPG
		12.15pm	Carol singing practice
Friday	21st	7.30pm	NCUSSU Carol service at Mossley
Sunday	23rd	2.30pm	Juvenile Membership Service
Monday	24th	6.30pm	Candlelit Carol Service
Tuesday	25th	11.00am	Christmas Day service
Sunday	30th	11.00am	Morning service and UYPG

JANUARY

- Friday 4th 7.30pm Whist Drive
- Sunday 6th 11.00am Morning service and UYPG
- Wed 9th 3.00pn Ladies Society Monthly Tea
7.30pm ECU Council Meeting at
Stalybridge
- Sunday 13th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG
- Sunday 20th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG
6.30 pm Service to celebrate The Week of
Prayer for Christian Unity
- Sunday 27th 11.00am Special Service to celebrate 10
years ministry of Rev Andrew
Parker followed by lunch

