

**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**

**DECEMBER 2009 & JANUARY 2010**

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS  
SPONSORED BY  
Mrs M Bennett in loving  
memory of William (Bill) and  
Emily Hallatt**



## MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

Over the last few months I have conducted services at a number other churches, most recently I have been to Rawtenstall, Padiham, Knutsford, Styal and Flowery Field. It is always interesting to meet the congregations and to see the buildings they use for worship. Often I pick up ideas for our own worship from the conversations I have and the experience is certainly very worthwhile.

Strangely, there often seems to be something at the church or chapel which fits in with the service I have prepared but which I knew nothing about beforehand. At one chapel I was preaching about St Paul and turned round to find a magnificent stained glass window featuring the saint right behind me as I spoke. At another I had prepared a sermon about the wisdom of King Solomon (without the congregation knowing this) and arrived to find the pulpit Bible open at the right page! On another occasion I mentioned St Martin of Tours in my sermon only to discover afterwards that there was a visitor in the congregation that morning who lives at Tours which is in central France. God works in mysterious ways!

I mentioned St Martin that morning because his feast day was a few days later. St Martin of Tours is not a particularly well known saint but he and his story should be better known. The day set aside in the church calendar for remembering St Martin is November 11<sup>th</sup> so unfortunately he gets lost each year in the annual Remembrance/Armistice commemorations. I visited Tours a few years ago and while there I did go to see the shrine of St Martin who was a native of Gaul in the fourth century and who at the age of fifteen was forced to serve in the Roman army. Later in life he was to become Bishop of Tours but the story for which he is best known occurred in his younger days in the army. Whilst stationed at Amiens during a severe winter, Martin is said to have come across a beggar at the city gate who was almost naked and trembling with the cold. Martin watched in distress as everyone ignored the beggar but he himself had nothing but his weapons and his cloak. He drew his sword, divided his cloak in half and gave half to the beggar to the great amusement of the other bystanders. That night Martin is said to have received a vision of Jesus, who came to him wearing the half of the cloak that he had given away.

It is an interesting coincidence that St Martin's day should now be better known for the Armistice in 1918. The story of St Martin gives us a very simple yet powerful lesson about the Christian duty to sacrifice our own comfort and even security if required for the good of others. The stark reality of what that duty can lead to was brought home to those of us who visited the British War Cemeteries at Rome and Monte Cassino a few weeks ago. The group included members from Dob Lane and Stalybridge as well as Flowery Field, Lewes, Oldham and two ministers from County Down. The memory of those peaceful and very beautiful places which are also very sombre and even tragic places will remain with us for a long time to come.

Wishing you every blessing,

Andrew.

## **CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Once again we will be holding a Christmas Memorial Service in church, this year on Wednesday December 16<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm. All the families that the Minister has conducted funerals for during the year will be invited and as in previous years we expect that quite a number will wish to attend. You are also invited and if you wish a departed loved one to be remembered in the service please write the person's name on one of the forms which are available on the table in the vestibule and hand it to the Minister or the Warden by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December.



## **WARDEN'S NOTES**

As we look forward to Christmas once again we will have to search through the modern day nonsense to find the true Christmas. More and more the real meaning of Christmas is being taken over by all sorts of nonsense.

Supermarkets have been playing Christmas music (not necessarily carols) for the last month and their shelves seem to have been stocked with Christmas goods forever.

The television programmes will be dominated by Z-list celebrities trying to tell us how important they are by simply being able to dance a bit, sing badly or eat a cockroach. For some reason people seem to think that these things are important.

The true message surrounding the birth of Jesus will be lost among the trappings of modern day excess and only a minority of people in this country will stop and think about the real reason for the celebrations.

Councils are putting up Festive Lights instead of Christmas Lights. Some outdoor trees are being replaced by plastic ones to avoid injuries to passers by. When was the last time you heard of anybody being killed by a falling Christmas tree?

This joyous and happy time of year is being taken over by the politically correct and the "elf n safety" brigade" and sadly we are letting them get away with it.

Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of a very special man, a time for peace, love and enjoyment; a time to reinforce our faith.

As you meet with your friends and families enjoy yourselves to the full; Christmas is a time to be happy. At the same time make time to remember the reason for it all.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you.

Ken

## **CONDOLENCES**

We were sorry to hear about the death of the sister of Minnie Parker. We would like to offer our condolences to the Parker family at this sad time.

## **ILLNESS**

We have heard that George Horbury is not well in The Isle of Man. We wish George all the best and promise to sing Chime On a little bit louder this year.

## **MEMORIAL TREE**

As some of you may have noticed, we now have a Memorial Tree at the back of church. If anyone would like someone remembered, please get in touch with Clare Bullock, Sue Howard or Ruth Mills and we will arrange for the children to make your tag to hang on the tree. You can choose your shape – we have a flower, a bird, a butterfly and a leaf up to now, so you need to decide what shape you want and what colour and also we need a brief message to be written and it can then be hung on the tree. There is no cost involved, it is just a project the UYPG have undertaken. The more we have on, the better it will look, so please get in touch!



## **FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

Hasn't this year just flown by! 2010 is nearly upon us, so let's hope you're all ready for Christmas and the New Year.

First of all, our next Whist Drive which will be the Christmas Whist Drive will be held on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December starting at 7.30 pm at church. Please come along and join us for an enjoyable evening out when you may even win a prize! The cost is £2 which includes a raffle and refreshments. Everyone is welcome, you don't have to be an expert!! The one after that will be held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2010, so we look forward to seeing you all then.

By the time you are reading this, we would have had our Christmas Fair which I hope you all enjoyed and that it all went well. You will have to wait until the end of January to get a report on that as this edition of Chalice is a double one which takes us over into January 2010.

After that, it will be time for our Christmas party which will be held on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December starting at 6.30 pm. All children (and adults) are welcome and I believe Father Christmas will again be making an appearance at about 7 pm, so I hope all you children have been good boys and girls and that Father Christmas will have something nice for you. As last year, a buffet supper will be held and the usual games and fun for all. Please get in touch with me if you would like your names putting on the list or of course put your names on yourself. If you have children coming, we need to know their names and ages.

Going on into next year, we just have a couple of things arranged, the first, as I have already mentioned, is the Whist Drive on 8<sup>th</sup> January and we will also be holding another Desert Island Discs Night on 25<sup>th</sup> February when our castaways will be Wendy Maher and Ken Howard. We will be putting a notice on the board (probably after Christmas) to get numbers for our usual potato pie supper, so please look out for that.

As I mentioned last month, we are trying to start a recipe book, but up till now, I have only received about half a dozen recipes - so if anyone has a recipe they would like or have one to share with others, please contact me and I will add it to our 'book' which will be on sale shortly to help our fund raising efforts. It will be in a format which allows you to add new recipes. Once you have bought the original book, you will be given any 'new' recipes as they become available.

Our next fund raising meeting will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2010 at 7.15 pm which is just before the main church committee meeting. Please feel free to join us if you feel you could help in any way. Let's hope a new year will inspire us with loads of new fund raising ideas. We need help from you ALL.

Finally, I would just like to wish all our members and friends who come and support our fund raising efforts a very happy Christmas and a prosperous, happy and healthy new year.

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 2<sup>nd</sup> hymn) every Sunday. If you have any queries, please ring Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.



## **OPUS ANGLICANUM**

There will be a 10 session course in Metal Thread embroidery – one of the embroideries of the Opus Anglicanum type – starting at Church on Wednesday February 17th and running (with a two week break over Easter) until May 5th. This is a type of embroidery that manipulates metal threads (usually gold) on the surface of brocades and silks and is used in religious, ceremonial and heraldic embroidery. All the essential techniques for executing this type of embroidery will be taught, including the history, use of colour and symbolism.

Gina Ullman, who will lead this course, has taught Gold Work Embroidery for Adult Education in Oldham and Glossop, and for the WEA (Workers Educational Association) in the Manchester Area. She was also a member of Manchester Cathedral Embroidery Group for 10 years, and was tutor of the Cathedral embroiderers from 1993 to 1997. This course is open to all who are interested - men as well as women! There is no fee for the tuition, the only costs involved will be for the purchase of materials and a £1 per session contribution to cost of heating and lighting. If you are interested in joining this group please have a word with Gina at church, call her on 0161 338 4762 or email [L.Ullman@btinternet.com](mailto:L.Ullman@btinternet.com)

Andrew

## **WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

There will be no meeting in December as we are going for our Christmas lunch on Wednesday 2nd. A Meeting for January 2010 will depend very much on the weather. We hope to meet on Wednesday 6th, if the weather is kind to us.

### **STEWARDS FOR DECEMBER**

Sunday 6th Don Andrews

Sunday 13th Ken Howard

Sunday 20th Tom Whitehead

Sunday 27th Stuart Hinchliffe

Sunday 29th Wendy Maher

### **STEWARDS FOR JANUARY**

Sunday 3rd Bill Atkin

Sunday 10th Don Andrews

Sunday 17th Ken Howard

Sunday 24th Tom Whithead

Sunday 31st Stuart Hinchliffe



## **FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER**

6th Mr & Mrs Tom Whitehead in memory of Mr & Mrs Tom Whitehead Senior

13th Janet Pearson in memory of Mrs Mary Dagnah

20th Susan & David Roberts in memory of Mr & Mrs Frank Roberts

27th Women's League in memory of Past Members & Friends

## **FLOWERS FOR JANUARY**

3rd Mrs Margaret Bennett (Hallatt) To remember all UYPL friends

10th Mr & Mrs E. Caton in memory of Mr & Mrs Elson Caton

17th Geoff Kirkham in memory of sister Jean Kirkham

24th Mr & Mrs Stuart Hinchliffe

31st Men's Guild To remember past members

# Calendar December 2009

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> Ladies Society Christmas Lunch

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Christmas Whist Drive

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Christmas Party

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Memorial Carol Service

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm NCUSSU Carol Service at Flowery Field

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> 2.30pm Family Carol & Juvenile Membership Service

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> 6.30pm Candlelit Carol Service

Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG



# Calendar January 2010

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> 11.00am Morning service and UYPG

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Whist Drive

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning service and UYPG

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning service and UYPG

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> 7.15pm Fund Raising meeting

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> 8.00pm Church Committee Meeting

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm ECU Delegates Meeting at Denton

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG