

**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**

**MARCH 2009**

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS  
SPONSORED BY AN  
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THANK YOU**

## MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends

I am writing this letter on a very calm, somewhat dull but reasonably mild day. The worst of winter is now hopefully over and the birds are reappearing in the garden and the first green shoots of the daffodils are starting to appear through the grass. Despite all the media hype about the bad winter we have just experienced it was actually nothing compared to winters even I can remember from my childhood and I'm sure that those of you with longer memories can remember even worse ones. Yet it still took most people by surprise, we seem to have become soft over the last thirty years or so!

It is surprising what a difference the brighter, milder days make to our feeling of well-being and when we get a few sunny days we really notice the difference! This time of year, when winter gradually turns into spring is always a most encouraging time. We all look forward to the longer, warmer days and the new life we see in our gardens is often mirrored by a new strength and vitality in our own lives. It is a time of planning and preparing for the year ahead. In our churches and chapels we plan the dates for our special services, social events and so on. We always seem able to be far more enthusiastic about things as the season begins to turn.

This seems to be a part of the natural rhythm of the changing seasons. In centuries past when people relied more directly on the land for their livelihood folk would have been far more conscious than we are today of this. Even though we have largely distanced ourselves from the countryside apart from an odd afternoon out, we remain just as much a part of the created world as all the things we like to see around us. It isn't all that surprising then that our feelings and outlook can change with the seasons when we remember that we are a part of creation, not separate from it.

Wishing you every blessing

Andrew.

## **BAPTISM**

February 22nd. Alfie James Price born on 9th December 2008, son of Ian and Jennifer Price (and grandson of Ken and Sue). It was wonderful to have a full church for this happy occasion and we wish Alfie everything good for his future.

## **FROM THE TREASURER**

The church financial year end is the 31st of March, so there is still time for those people not on the envelope scheme, and who would like to members, to pay their subscription. You may give your £5.10 to any member of the committee who will pass it on to me.

M Andrews  
Hon. Treasurer

## **WARDENS NOTES**

Church and Sunday Schools are different things to different people.

One most important role is the ability to provide enjoyment during happy times and comfort during sad ones. A church is a place where we should all be able to share our feelings with people who love and respect each other.

Many of you know that I have just taken part in the Old Chapel pantomime and once again I had a great time. People will tell you that pantomimes are only for children. Don't believe them! Adults get just as much fun out of the friendship generated when a small group of people work together closely over a fairly long period of time. The look on the children's faces is a joy to behold, not just those in the audience but those on the stage as well, to see young people enjoying performing in something as difficult as a pantomime is absolutely wonderful.

On a personal note the Christening of our grandson Alfie was both an enjoyable but very emotional day. For me the main point was that I felt the whole history of our church surrounding us. I felt safe, I felt happy, and very, very content. I hope Alfie was able to feel the same things I did.

At sad times the church is also able to wrap its arms around us and provide solace and friendship.

Surely this is what a church is for. It is a place where anyone can come to receive spiritual help and support in any given situation. If we can not provide this then we are nothing.

Many people say that churches are not necessary in this modern age of fast and furious living. I would say that a church is exactly what people need simply to balance out their lives, to provide the thing we all need more than anything else, and that is unconditional love.

It is our duty to make sure that the sceptics in our society come to recognise how important and how vital churches really are.

Ken Howard

**Thought for the Month**

## **FUND RAISING**

By the time you read this, we would have had our talk on Queen Victoria's Funeral presented by Andrew. I hope you all enjoyed it – I know some of us had seen/heard it before, but it was worth a second airing for those people and if it was the first time, I'm sure you found it most interesting. So thank you Andrew.

I hope those of you who went enjoyed the pantomime at Old Chapel when two of our members had starring roles – didn't they do well? Oh yes they did!

Our Whist Drive this month will be held on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 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!!

I mentioned last month that we were to hold an evening of Desert Island discs on 27<sup>th</sup> March, but unfortunately this has had to be changed as both the 'question master' and one of the guests were unable to attend on that date. It will be held instead on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April when we will hopefully have a potato pie supper. It should prove interesting to hear what other people's favourite pieces of music are. We shall have additional guests on another night if it proves to be popular. A notice will go up on the board, so please enter your name if you wish to attend so we know how many to cater for. If you can't get to church before then, please give me a ring and I will put your name down for you.

Hopefully we will start to see an improvement in the weather soon when we can start arranging more spring/summer type of events. We are always looking for new ideas, so if you feel you could help in any way, either with ideas or with some 'hands-on' assistance, please come along to our next meeting which will be held at 7.15pm at church on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Our fund raising meeting is held just before the main committee meeting, so we can guarantee it won't go on for too long.

See you next month.

Sue Howard

## **£1 A MONTH CLUB**



Last month's winner was Anne Holden, congratulations.

If you wish to renew your membership or indeed join for the first time, please contact me on 0161 344 0942, 45 Church St, Dukinfield SK16 4PR. All cheques must be payable to Stalybridge Unitarian Church.

Beryl Bradbury

## **WOMEN'S LEAGUE**

The meeting in March will be held on Wednesday 4th at 3pm, all ladies are invited.

## **LETTER FROM THE EDITOR**

Thank you to everyone who has sent their renewal forms and subscriptions. As always it's gratifying to know our little church holds such a widespread interest and you are all keen to receive the monthly updates.

Also, thank you to those of you who make either a regular contribution to Chalice or send in notes of interest. We also need to thank Colin Horsfield, who updates the newsletter onto the Unitarian website:

[www.stalybridgeunitarians.org.uk](http://www.stalybridgeunitarians.org.uk)



## **FLOWERS FOR MARCH**

- Sunday 1st Mr & Mrs Eric Caton in memory of Mr & Mrs Harold Bullock
- Sunday 8th Mr & Mrs Norman Bradbury
- Sunday 15th Mr & Mrs Geoff Spiby in memory of The Schofield Family
- Sunday 22nd Mrs Janet Pearson
- Sunday 29th Mr & Mrs G. Thomas in memory of Mr James Scullion

## **STEWARDS FOR MARCH**

- Sunday 1st Tom Whitehead
- Sunday 8th Stuart Hinchcliffe
- Sunday 15th Wendy Maher
- Sunday 22nd Ken Howard
- Sunday 29th Bill Atkin

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Women's World day of Prayer, service to be held at Stalybridge Unitarian Church
March 8 <sup>th</sup>	ECU Songs of Praise to be held at New Chapel Denton
March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Mothering Sunday
March 28 <sup>th</sup>	UCA AGM at Padiham
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Palm Sunday
April 10 <sup>th</sup>	Good Friday
April 11 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Eve
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Sunday
May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	ECU AGM at Hyde Chapel
May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Arts & Crafts Exhibition at Old Chapel Dukinfield
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Whit Sunday
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	Church Anniversary service

September 20<sup>th</sup> NCUSSU AGM at Flowery Field

September 27<sup>th</sup> Harvest Service

October 3<sup>rd</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Trip to Rome

October 10<sup>th</sup> ECU Autumn Meeting at Stalybridge

November 8<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Sunday

November 15<sup>th</sup> Ladies Service

December 20<sup>th</sup> Carol Service

## **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 contact Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.

## Calendar March 2009

Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	3.00pm	Ladies Society monthly tea
	7.30 pm	NCUSSU Delegates Meeting at Old Chapel
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup>	2.15 pm	Women's World day of Prayer Service at Stalybridge Unitarian Church
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Whist Drive
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
	2.30 pm	ECU Songs of Praise Service New Chapel Denton
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	7.15 pm	Fund Raising Meeting
	8.00 pm	Church Committee Meeting
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	11.00 am	Mothering Sunday Service and UYPG
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup>	1.45 pm	Unitarian Christian Association AGM at Padiham
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG (Minister on holiday preacher TBA)