

**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**

OCTOBER 2007

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS KINDLY
SPONSORED BY
MRS E. KILROY
in memory of
JACK LEES AND JOAN BUXTON**

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends

During my holiday this year I was able to visit a number of interesting places that I hadn't been to before. I visited our church at Great Yarmouth; the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham; the Palace of Versailles; and I was privileged to be granted a private visit to the Imperial crypt at Farnborough Abbey where the Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress Eugenie of France are buried. A varied, and some might think unconventional programme for a nonconformist minister! All of these were first visits for me – new experiences and each one was very special in its own way especially in the things that were unexpected, that I didn't know I was going to see there.

Unexpected delights are often very special and memorable simply because they are unexpected but the unexpected always carries an element of risk, for you never quite know what might happen. For some people, this risk element can be quite threatening and dangerous.

Perhaps one of the problems with religion in this country today is that it has almost become synonymous with the conventional. Churches are almost always conventional places. Some of them treat tradition as so sacred that it may never be changed (our churches are no exception to this!). Some branches of Christianity allow only a medieval interpretation of the Bible, refusing to consider any new insights which might be more relevant to our modern age.

But Jesus was often unexpected, and God is often unpredictable. The conventional may sometimes be a barrier keeping God out, so if we never see beyond the conventional, we may miss God altogether. And then we shall not only miss the unexpected pleasures and delights which God has in store for us, but we may also miss God's call and God's healing power restoring our lives.

Wishing you every blessing.

Andrew



CHRISTMAS LUNCH AT GREAT HUCKLOW

Will take place on Wednesday December 12th. The cost will be approx £22.50 including transport. Please put your name on the list on the notice board or ring me if you would like to go. I have not received the menu yet but will pass it on later. We have usually had a "sell-out" for this event, so don't delay.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Andrew will conduct our usual Advent Services. Our main carol service will be held on Christmas Eve.

Sunday 23rd Dec 2.30 pm Juvenile Membership Family Carol Service

Monday 24th Dec 6.30 pm Candlelit Carol Service.

Tuesday 25th Dec 11.00 am Christmas Day Service.

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.

WARDEN'S NOTES

I can not go very long without having to hear or watch a news bulletin, I feel lost without a morning paper, I need to know what is going on; does that make me interested or nosey?

They used to say that no news is good news, nowadays we get twenty four hour news coverage and it seems most of it is bad. We are surrounded by personal tragedies and sometimes it is so intrusive that I feel like a peeping tom. Of course a lot of the news broadcast to us is not news at all, it is mere speculation given by the broadcaster/journalist who would have us believe that they know a lot when a most of the time they are just guessing.

It is very difficult to take some news broadcasters too seriously when they consider the resignation/sacking of a football manager to be the most important news of the day. Much more important things are happening in the world yet these events seem to get relegated too easily when a major sports story comes along. Sport used to be back page news and that's where it should stay (or perhaps the business pages would be a better place!).

This is another way of getting the public to take their minds off the major issues of life. It suits the powers that be for us to be worrying about sport instead of their inefficiency. Politicians of all persuasions like to make speeches when they constantly re-invent the wheel and never actually have any new ideas. Of course we also have to be frightened every day just to keep us in our place, today it's our diet, tomorrow our drinking habits, the day after climate change and so on and so on. Very soon we will have to eat or drink nothing and not go out, we will have to stay in our bed where the contents of our duvet will no doubt eat us!

Somehow we have all allowed our priorities to be manipulated to a point where we are not so sure what they should be any more. Life has always been hard but now people seem to want to complicate it as well.

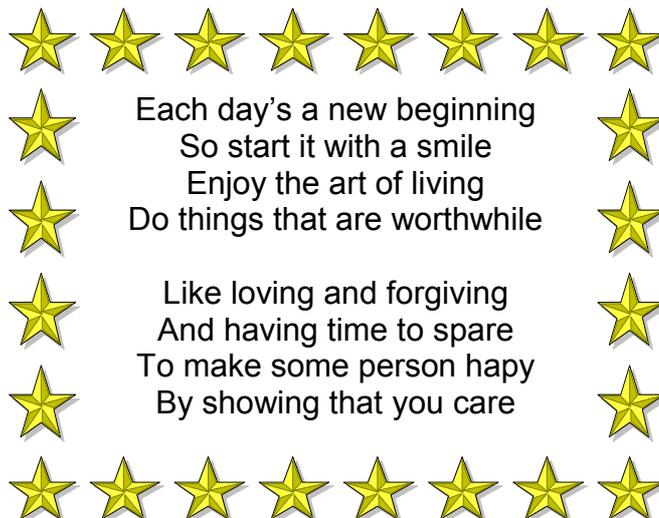
It's time that decent ordinary people were put in charge of things so that we can go back to a world where common decency is more important than fame and fortune. A place where people can be trusted to tell the truth, a place where people in authority will not continue to pull the wool over our eyes.

The question is where do we start? Well how about St Matthew's Gospel Chapter 22:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord the god with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these: on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

If all people thought about these words a bit more then that really would be headline news worth listening to!

Ken Howard



FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL GROUP



We start October with our harvest supper on 1st. We have decided to hold it on the Monday this year as we simply had too many other things on the Fridays around the date of the harvest service. So probably by the time you are reading this, we will probably have already had it or very close to having it. Anyway, let's hope it goes down well and a good time was had by all.

We have selected dates for our next three whist drives, as dates start to get booked up round this time of the year, so firstly our October whist drive will be held on the 12th, our November one on the 9th and our Christmas whist drive on December 7th. As normal, they start at 7.30 at church and everyone is welcome. Please come along, and for £2 you could win a prize, including a raffle, have some good refreshments at the end as well as having a bit of fun playing whist.

The big event coming up will be the Bazaar on 3rd November starting at 11.00 am. All the usual stalls will be there, so if you are one of those who contribute to a stall, now is the time to start thinking about buying, saving, collecting, cooking or making. Your contributions are invaluable as is the contribution from those who visit us on the day and spend their money. Please be sure to keep the date free in your diary!

Another event to look forward to is our Family Christmas Party at the end of November, on Friday 30th. There will be entertainment, games and refreshments. The cost will be £5 for adults with children getting in for free. Please enter your name on the list on the notice board if you would like to attend. There will be something for everyone, especially the children we may even have a special Christmas visitor, so please put the date in your diary so you don't miss it!

The nights are starting to close in now, so make sure you don't get stuck indoors feeling fed up, come along to one of our social affairs instead. If you are having trouble getting there give me a ring and I am sure something can be arranged.

Finally, our next fund raising meeting will be held on Monday 29th October at 7.15 before the main church committee meeting. Everyone is welcome especially if you feel you can contribute something, all new ideas for fund raising will be well received.

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. Last month's winner was Christine Clough

Beryl Bradbury

LADIES CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY (WOMEN'S LEAGUE)

The Monthly meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd October when the hostess will be Mrs Margaret Andrews.



UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

Leaders for October

7th October: Ruth Mills

14th October: Sue Howard

21st October: Clare Bullock

28th October: Ruth Mills

Over these four weeks we will be keeping very busy with preparations for the Family Christmas Party, the Bazaar and Christmas as well as keeping up with our 'Friends of Jesus' posters to fit in with Andrew's talks every week.

All young people, whether regular attendees or visitors, 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 contact Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.



CHURCH FLOWERS FOR OCTOBER



7th October Mrs Mary Dagnah

14th October Table: Mrs Edith Howard in memory of Carrie & Steven Howard

Font: Mrs Marjorie Mather in memory of Mr Mather

21st October Miss Jemma Dagnah

28th October Vacant

STEWARDS FOR OCTOBER

7th October: Ken Howard

14th October: Stuart Hinchcliffe

21st October: Wendy Maher

28th October: Tom Whitehead

NCUSU

The North Cheshire Unitarian Sunday School Union AGM will take place here at Stalybridge at 3 pm on Saturday 6th October. The Rev Andrew Parker will be installed as the new President. If you would like tea please put your name on the list on the board.

ECU

The East Cheshire Union Autumn meeting will take place at Newcastle-under-Lyme on Saturday 13th October. The speaker will be GA President Rev Celia Midgley. A coach will be going to Newcastle and tea will be provided. Please put your name on the list if you would like to go.

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

A Family Christmas Party will be held on Friday 30th November 2007 for children, mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers. There will be entertainment, games, a light buffet and, of course, a visit from Father Christmas.

There will be a charge of £5 for adults but children will be admitted free.

A list will soon be displayed on the notice board for those wishing to take part to add their names.

A visit to a local pantomime for all the family is being considered. A date and venue is yet to be decided but anyone who is interested is asked to place their names on a list shortly to be displayed on the noticeboard.

CHURCH STEWARDS

We are delighted that Wendy Maher has agreed to join our group of Church Stewards.

Thank you Wendy.

VISITS TO THE SICK AND ELDERLY

From the beginning of November a book will be displayed in the foyer to meet the requirements of the disabled persons regulations. Provision has been made to include in this book information on any church members who require a visit or would appreciate some flowers. If any member of the congregation is aware of any such person, would they please put the information in the book so that a visit can be arranged.

WELCOME

IMPORTANT 2007 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 1st October	7.30pm	Harvest Supper
Saturday October 6th	3 pm	NCUSSU AGM at Stalybridge
Friday 12th October	7.30pm	Whist Drive
Saturday October 13th	2.30 pm	ECU Autumn Meeting at Newcastle-under-Lyme
Wednesday 17th October	7.30pm	Discussion group
Sunday 21st October	11 am	Ladies Service
Monday 29th October	7.15 pm 8.00 pm	Fund Raising meeting Committee meeting
Saturday 3rd November	11 am	Bazaar
Sunday 11th November:	11 am	Remembrance Sunday Service
Sunday 2nd December:	11 am	Soroptomist Sunday at Stalybridge
Sunday 9th December:	6.30 pm	Memorial Service
Sunday 23rd December:	2.30 pm	Juvenile Membership & Family Carol Service
Monday 24th December:	6.30 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelit Carol Service
Tuesday 25th December:	11 am	Christmas Day Service

OCTOBER

Mon 1st 7.30pm Harvest Supper

Wed 3rd 3.00 pm Ladies Society Monthly Tea

Sun 7th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.

Fri 12th 7.30pm Whist Drive

Sun 14th 11.00 am Morning Service & UYPG

Wed 17th 7.30pm Discussion group

Sun 21st 11.00 am Ladies Service and UYPG

Sun 28th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG

Mon 29th 7.15 pm Fund Raising meeting
8.00 pm Committee meeting