

**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**

OCTOBER 2010

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS
SPONSORED BY
Mrs Joyce Hughes
in memory of
Geoff**

MINISTER'S LETTER

Dear Friends

I recently read a story about a bee that was told by the nineteenth century French novelist, Victor Hugo. One day a bee became trapped inside Victor Hugo's study and in its attempt to escape from the room, it was furiously bumping itself against one of the windows. Hugo saw on the floor other bees that had already killed themselves doing the very same thing, so he decided to rescue the small creature that was dashing out its little brains on the window. First, he opened the window and using a napkin he tried to shoo the bee out, instead, the bee flew in the opposite direction. Hugo realized that he would have to catch the bee in order to save it and so with his napkin he began to track the bee down. When the bee saw Hugo coming it flew away towards another window - which was closed and again began to beat itself against it, this time with even greater frenzy than before. As the bee flew at the window repeatedly, it buzzed loudly. Hugo was sure the bee was buzzing a message to him - saying to him: "Cruel executioner, why do you not leave me alone, why do you persecute me?" Hugo paid no attention to the message he thought the bee was trying to send however. Instead he gently pinned the bee between the window and the napkin and began to fold the bee inside the cloth. Even then the bee struggled against his fingers and the cloth, trying to sting him - but at last the job was done and Hugo managed to get it to the open window, and put it outside. For a moment the bee seemed stunned, perhaps amazed, then it flew off to its chosen destination.

Hugo told that story because he realised that the story of the bee is also our story. Each of us wishes to escape the chaos and the constant threats of our world. We want to avoid the dangers of daily life, and create for ourselves and our families a future in which there is no need to worry about losing our lives - a future in which we do not have to worry about what we shall have to eat, or what we shall have to wear, for all we need will be guaranteed to be there for us. There is nothing wrong in these goals, but like the bee, we often get into trouble in working towards them, because the methods we use are wrong.

As we have tried to protect ourselves and our future, millions of people have suffered drought and starvation. As we try to enjoy a standard of living that is beyond all reason, a standard of living based on limitless consumption of the world's non-renewable resources - the ozone has thinned, cancer has increased, wars have multiplied, and many in our society have become bitter, unhappy, troubled, and violent.

Like the bee, we keep hitting the window. Also like the bee we have an author trying to save us, trying to get us to the very goal that we seek; trying to help us. There is an author to our personal stories, an author like Victor Hugo, chasing us around his study - trying to let us go free, so we can fly in the larger world without fear or worry. Our author is of course our God.

Every blessing.

Andrew.

FOURTH WEDNESDAY GROUP

Our second meeting will be on 27th October (the fourth Wednesday in October) at 7.30 pm, consisting only of quiet music, prayer and silence. There will be an opportunity for those present (if they wish) to name people or concerns for the group to pray for that evening and in the month ahead but nobody will be *required* to say anything, all our prayers, whether spoken or held within our hearts will be equally important. Please join us for this time of peaceful, meditative prayer. Everyone is welcome and if you have family or friends who do not attend church but who you think would value this quiet time together do invite them along. Future meetings will be on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

FAVOURITE HYMNS SERVICE

We will be holding a Favourite Hymns Service on Sunday 10th October. Please let me have your choice as soon as possible. The ten most popular choices will be sung. - Ken

FUND RAISING & SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Doesn't time just fly by – I can't believe our light evenings are already on their way out and we're starting to think of entertainments for the darker colder nights as well as Christmas of course.

I'll start off as usual with our whist drives. Our next one will be held on Friday 1st October starting at 7.30 pm at church. Please come along even if you're not a regular whist player – you'll soon get the hang of it and you could of course win a prize and you will always have the opportunity of enjoying a cup of tea and some nice refreshments. The one after that will be held on 5th November starting at the same time of 7.30 pm and the one after that (if I dare mention it) will be the Christmas Whist Drive which will be held on 3rd December when we have Christmas style refreshments as well as a little glass of sherry! We look forward to seeing more of you joining us!

As well as having regular Whist Drives (normally on the first Friday of the month) we also hold a regular Coffee Morning which is held on the last Friday of the month when it gives people the opportunity of coming and having a good chat as well as lovely refreshments. It is held from 10.00 am to 12 noon and everybody is very welcome including little ones, so grandmas and granddads, don't keep away, we like to have a few youngsters around!

As I mentioned last month, we will be holding a Craft Evening on Friday 15th October starting at 7.30 pm at church. We have invited a few local talented ladies who are happy to show you how they make their various crafts, from cards to jewellery and even hopefully some cake decorating. Refreshments will be served and all the ladies will be demonstrating at the same time and you will be able to just walk round and watch the ones that interest you. £5 entrance fee will be charged and a raffle will also be held. Please put your name on the list on the notice board and bring as many friends along as you like – we just need to know numbers in advance to get the catering right. If you cannot come to church before then, please give me a ring and I will put your name on the list for you.

Following that we shall be holding a 'Friday Night is Music Night' when we shall be having 'Show Tunes' and this will be held on Friday 12th

November. Everyone is welcome and anyone who has a favourite show tune or a song from a musical is asked to bring the disc or tape along and we can all hear the most popular ones. Refreshments (by way of potato pie) will be served with probably a glass of wine or two if wished. If you have a song you would like to share, please let Ken or Sue have it a little while before hand so we can form some kind of programme. If you have a favourite song and don't have it on a CD, let me know and we will do our best to find it. If this night proves successful, we hope to have other nights with perhaps jazz or classical - whatever people want. There will be a notice going up on the board for this, so please enter your name if you wish to come along so, once again, we know how many we are catering for.

Soon after this, on Saturday 27th November we will be holding the Christmas Fair starting at 11.00 am. Our usual stalls will be there, so any contributions will be welcome. Margaret's tombola this year will be a Christmas tombola, so any Christmas-related goods would be most welcome. The usual tombola is being run as well as the usual raffle and of course the Home Bake, Gift Stall, Books and Plants. There will also be some children's games and a Secret Santa. All are most welcome, so please put the date in your diary and come and help us raise a few funds at this busy time of the year.

Whilst on the subject of Christmas, we will be holding our Christmas party on Saturday 18th December starting at 4 pm. We are hoping Father Christmas will have time to come along and plenty of people will come and join us to play a few games and enjoy a little buffet. The entry price is £5, but our own UYPG members do not have to pay to come. Please enter your names on the list including all children's names and ages. Once again, if you cannot get to church within the next month or so, please give me a ring and I'll put your name up.

I think that is all I have to tell you about at the moment, except our next fund raising meeting will be held on Monday 11th October 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. We always need help with new fund raising ideas and it might be YOU who can provide them.

Sue Howard

WARDEN'S NOTES

I think it is safe to say that the summer is now behind us. One good thing about the end of summer is that people are back from their travels and the size of the congregation is now getting back to normal. Sunday worship is the most important part of our fellowship and it is vital that we all attend Sunday worship as often as we possibly can.

The Fund Raising Committee has been working hard to provide entertainment and we have just about finalised our programme until the end of the year. Please try hard to support these fund raising events.

I am pleased to inform the congregation that Tilly Pugh has agreed to become part of the UYPG team of leaders. Tilly is a life long member of the congregation and it is particularly pleasing to see that she is willing to help the congregation, and particularly our young people, in this way.

Rachel Plant has started at Post Graduate course at The University of Aberystwyth. We wish her well and thank her for continuing to produce the Chalice for us even while she is away.

Ken

HARVEST FESTIVAL

The Harvest Festival service will be held at 11 am on Sunday 3rd October. We have decided to move away from our traditional donations of produce this year. Instead of the usual donations of produce and flowers we would like to ask the congregation to donate an equivalent amount of money which will be collected and given to the charity "MEDEQUIP4KIDS". This is a North west based charity that supplies specialist medical care and equipment for sick children in the area. The committee feels that this is a very worthwhile cause which deserves the support of the congregation. We will still retain a small traditional harvest display but we would ask that the congregation supports this initiative. Please hand your donations in a suitably marked envelope to any committee member.

EAST CHESHIRE UNION OF UNITARIAN AND FREE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

The ECU Autumn Meeting will be held at Stalybridge on Saturday 9th October, the programme is as follows:

- 1.30 pm Canal Boat Trip (for those who have put their names on the list)
- 3.30 pm Service Conducted by Rev Andrew Parker
- 4.15 pm Talk by Mr Neville Kenyon (President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches)
- 5.00 pm Tea

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

Having studied attendances at recent Christmas services and taking into account the fact that our organist, Barry, has commitments at another church, we have decided to change the timings of our Christmas services. This year we will have **ONLY ONE SERVICE ON SUNDAY 19TH DECEMBER STARTING AT 4 pm**. By starting at this time we will still be able to distribute the Juvenile Membership Certificates. By the end of the service it will be dark enough for us to sing Silent Night by candlelight. By combining services we are hoping for a much bigger congregation to sing our traditional carols.

There will be no service on Christmas Day but we will have a service on Boxing Day which this year falls on Sunday.

Ken

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

The October meeting will take place on Wednesday 6th at 3.00 pm, and the tea will be provided by The Rev Andrew Parker and his mother Mrs Minnie Parker who has recently joined our group,

The Manchester District Autumn meeting will be held at Monton Chapel on Saturday 23rd October. There will be a service and business meeting followed by lunch. Anyone wishing to attend please give names

Calendar October 2010

Friday 1 st	7.30 pm	Whist Drive
Sunday 3 rd	11.00 am	Harvest Festival Service
Wednesday 6 th	3.00 pm	Women's society monthly tea
Saturday 9 th	1.30 pm	ECU Autumn Meeting at Stalybridge (onwards)
Sunday 10 th	11.00 am	Favourite Hymns Service
Monday 11 th	7.15 pm 8.00 pm	Fund Raising Meeting Church Committee Meeting
Friday 15 th	7.30 pm	Craft Evening
Sunday 17 th	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Sunday 23 rd	11.00 am	Morning Service and UYPG
Friday 29 th	10.00 am	Coffee Morning
Saturday 30 th	2.00 pm	UCA Lance Garrard Lecture at Cross Street

MUSIC DURING THE SERVICE

3 rd	Chorus (Tell It Out for Harvest)
10 th	Favourite hymns—No music.
17 th	Hymn tune for O Jesus I Have Promised.
24 th	In a Monastery Garden— A W Ketelbey.
31 st	Fantasie - Prelude on Crimond—H Geehl.