



THE WAKEFIELD UNITARIAN

The Newsletter of Westgate Chapel, Wakefield

Telephone 01924-373307

website: www.ukunitarians.org.uk/wakefield/

Westgate Chapel was opened in 1752.

Its congregation was established in 1662 and became

Unitarian in view in the eighteenth century.

**It has taken a leading part in the economic, social,
educational, political - and spiritual - development
of Wakefield and its vicinity.**

JULY 2010

Thought for the month

Francis David (1510-1579), the founder and first bishop of the Unitarian Church in Transylvania, regarded it as an eternal principle, that the work of reformation must be continued and extended, ‘Those who have been enlightened by God's spirit’ - he said – ‘must not cease to speak nor can they suppress the truth. Such in the power of the spirit, that the mind of man, - putting aside every false artifice - strives only to add to the glory of God, let the whole world rage and oppose it.’

From the website Unitarian Believes (sic)

Services in July, at 10.30am on 4 July, and at 3pm on all other days

4 July	Dr Melanie Prideaux
11 July	Neville Kenyon
18 July	Elizabeth Faiers
25 July	The Reverend Geoff Usher

Rota of Welcomers

4 July	Ralph Denby
11 July	Nancy Denison
18 July	Pat Howard
25 July	John Goodchild

As always, if you are unable to act as welcomer on the day indicated, you are asked to arrange an exchange.

The Westgate Forum, Tuesday 6 July at 10.30am in the Vestry

The Westgate Forum will meet on 6 July when the topic for discussion will be ‘Is Freedom always a good thing?’. Our group is small but splendidly focused. Do come.

Chapel Committee, Monday 12 July at 7pm

Unusually the Chapel Committee is to meet on a Monday. This is because of the course on the Coroner, noticed below, which begins on Tuesday 13 July. The Committee meeting is in the Vestry at 7pm.

Death, disaster and treasure: the work of the Coroner from medieval times, 13, 20 and 27 July at 7pm

John Goodchild M Univ, is to give a series of three talks in the Chapel on Tuesday evenings in July on the work of the Coroner. The talks are based on new and original research and are organised in association with Wakefield Historical Society. Admission is free of charge. The talks are provided as a contribution to the national Festival of British Archaeology. Do come.

The Enlightenment: the Hibbert Trust sponsors a seminar

Following the brief but provocative debate at this year's General Assembly on the motion put forward by Westgate Chapel, the Hibbert Trust is to sponsor a seminar at the Nightingale Centre on 18-19 February 2011 on the subject of 'The Enlightenment: How relevant is it to Unitarianism today?' Only twelve places are available. There will be two principal speakers, the Reverend Dr Ann Peart and Jo Backus, Lecturer in Religion and Philosophy at Bath Spa University. The Hibbert Trust will finance meals and accommodation but participants (or their chapel communities) will need to cover the cost of travel. To attempt to secure a place, contact the secretary of the Trust, Mrs Kay Millard, Tel 01373 827856, e-mail kay.millard@btinternet.com

Work in the Chapel grounds and its environs

The construction company, Clegg, has now attended to the removal of our great Ash tree which was seriously damaged when their workmen cut it back to allow room for the scaffolding for Block C. They have employed the tree experts, Earnshaws, who have also tidied up the two Sycamore trees and the Laburnum which suffered too from maladroitness chopping. Kate has been in regular touch with the local authority's Arboricultural Officer, Mark Jennings, about the problems and he has now pronounced himself reasonably pleased with what has been effected. The access drive has been resurfaced but as this newsletter goes to press nothing has been done at all to re-turf the grass at the side of the drive or to give our notice-

board a firmer footing on flags. We anticipate that the additional glazing to the windows on the east and north sides of the Chapel will be installed in the week beginning 28 June.

The Art Walk on 26 May



The Art Walk on the evening of 26 May was a great success. Well over 80 people visited the Chapel where eight local artists had displayed their work on easels borrowed from the Art House. The promoters offered wine and nibbles, including quite delicious cake. There was soft music and a warm and friendly atmosphere. We are grateful to Jan Millington for organising the event. We hope that, when the organ has been restored next year, we can take part in the Art Walk on a regular basis.

The Reverend Austin Fitzpatrick

Readers will be saddened to learn of the death of Austin Fitzpatrick in June from cancer. He had been in a hospice for a short time.

Treasures Revealed in Wakefield

The Treasures Revealed festival has been a splendid idea but perhaps rather poorly executed. Numbers visiting the Chapel for our open day on 5 June were disappointing and those coming for the two-hour Saturday mornings of the Faith Trail have been minimal – one on 12 June and two on 19 June. We are open from 11am to 1pm on 3 July, too. Considerable money (from the Heritage Lottery Fund) has been spent on colourful booklets containing plenty of good reading. But we have hundreds of these! It would be a shame to send them all to the Waste Paper Recycling service. If anyone feels like dropping some through letter-boxes, please take a bundle. Then, too, we have been given an attractive pop-up display panel and two sizeable information boards. These are ours to keep so we can bring them out on future open days.

Wakefield Pagan Federation held open-gazebo days in the Chapel grounds on 29 and 31 May but again they attracted few visitors.



The Treasures Revealed initiative has been promoted by the Yorkshire and Humberside Faiths Forum. This has come into being since the previous Government realised the importance of faith communities in helping to create social cohesion. The intention was for places of worship of all faiths to take part in the local festivals. In Wakefield this did not happen but Kate attended a Treasures Revealed conference in Halifax on 24 June where there was a good sprinkling of Muslims. One of them, Raja Khan, gave an excellent talk on Celebrating Islamic Faith.

Thanks to all the members of Chapel who have come to the open days to welcome visitors and look after tea, coffee and washing up. We have an excellent team.

General Assembly President, Neville Kenyon, takes our service on 11 July at 3pm

It will be good to have Neville Kenyon with us again, now in his capacity as General Assembly President, on 11 July. For his year as President, Mr Kenyon has adopted the theme **Nurture Our Freedom**. As individuals, Unitarians have the freedom to adopt whatever form of spirituality is appropriate to them at any time of their lives. They are free to change their views according to life's experiences. Congregations are free to develop their own forms of public worship according to the wishes of the congregation.

‘As Unitarians’, he says, ‘we are free to develop our personal and public attitude to religion but we are sometimes so preset in our attitudes and in our forms of worship that we fail to remember that we are essentially a dynamic movement which should always be changing to accommodate new ideas and social developments. We are in an ideal position to reflect a growing imperative for a spirituality unfettered by narrow creeds and dogmas’.

Please try to come to hear him.

Wakefield – City of Sanctuary

Wakefield's City of Sanctuary scheme was officially launched during Refugee Week at a seminar in the Treacy Hall, Wakefield Cathedral, on 17 June. The organisers are seeking pledges from individuals and groups to make asylum seekers and other refugees or immigrants welcome in their midst. The Bishop of Pontefract is pictured here signing the first pledge.



The Way to Heaven, by an unknown contributor:

I was testing children in my Barnsley Sunday School class to see if they understood the concept of getting into heaven. I asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big jumble sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into heaven?"

"NO!.not nivver!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the garden and kept everything tidy, would that get me into heaven?"

Again, the answer was 'No,. not ivver!'

By now I was starting to smile. "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave sweeties to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into heaven?"

Again, they all answered 'No!'

I was just bursting with pride for them.

I continued, "Then how can I get into heaven?"

A six year old boy shouted, "Tha's daft thee, tha's got t' be Chuffin' dead"

The Engagement Group

An 'Engagement Group' consisting of Unitarians and non-Unitarians, is organised by Mel and Steve from Westgate Chapel. The group meets every month, choosing a different location and theme for each meeting, but actively engaging with one another following engagement group principles (see website: <http://www.unitarianengagementgroups.org.uk/>). We explore and discuss spiritual themes, and the beliefs and attitudes which shape our lives. Newcomers are welcome, and should contact Steve (boudicca7@talktalk.net) or Mel (melpx@hotmail.com), either at Chapel or by email.

The Unitarian path is a liberal religious movement rooted in the Jewish and Christian traditions but open to insights from world faiths, reason and science, and with a spectrum extending from liberal Christianity through to religious humanism. (Prologue to The Unitarian Path by Andrew Hill.)

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