

THE WAKEFIELD UNITARIAN

The Newsletter of Westgate Chapel, Wakefield

www.ukunitarians.org.uk/wakefield/

June 2013

All natural results are spontaneous. The diamond sparkles without effort, and the flowers open impulsively beneath the summer rain. And true religion is a spontaneous thing, — as natural as it is to weep, to love, or to rejoice.

- E. H. Chapin, Universalist Minister



Unitarian Universalism
NURTURE Your Spirit. Help HEAL Our World.

This image is taken from the 'Inspirational Quotes from Unitarians, Universalists and UUs' on facebook. Though an American page it is well worth looking up for those who use facebook.

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

Services in June

First service of the month is at 10.30, all other services at 3pm

2 nd June:	Stephen Carlile
9 th June:	David Arthur
16 th June:	Rev Ernest Baker
23 rd June:	Sally Fairweather
30 th June:	Robert Ince (GA Sunday)

Welcoming Rota

Welcomers do an important job in making everyone feel welcome at our services. As always, if you are unable to act as welcomer on the day indicated, you are asked to arrange an exchange.

2 nd June:	Kate Taylor
9 th June:	Pat Howard
16 th June:	Ralph Denby
23 rd June:	Nancy Denison
30 th June:	John Goodchild

Flowers

Flowers are provided by Nancy Denison. If you can offer to provide, arrange, or pay for the flowers in any week please do let her know!



Events at the Chapel in June from Kate Taylor

The Westgate Forum, Tuesday 4 June at 10.30am in the Vestry

We shall explore whether we value words enough. The topic has been prompted by an article in *The Inquirer* of 5 January 2013 when Christine Avery asserted, 'We Unitarians should love language more'. She refers to a character in a novel set in the time of the Cold War of whom it was said, 'It was his words that kept hope alive, spoken honestly at a time of lies, saying what you thought but couldn't or dare not say'. Christine adds, 'This is the kind of thing that language can do. Surely Unitarians should be fully alive to its numinous soul-saving achievements?'

Chapel News from Kate Taylor

Following up the General Assembly Resolutions There is little point in the General Assembly making resolutions unless these are then pursued. Accordingly, and following the meeting of the Chapel Committee in May, Kate Taylor has written on our behalf to Mary Creagh MP, urging her to support Lord Falconer's bill on the legalisation of assisted dying, and to support the setting up of an Inquiry into whether there are better ways of dealing with drug-related problems than by criminalising them. Other members of the Committee who live in other constituencies offered to write to their MPs too. We shall pursue the resolution to hold interfaith services for peace on the third Sunday in October each year by planning to do this this year. Perhaps representatives of each faith or denomination which attends might provide a contribution (a prayer, a few words of encouragement etc) to the event.

The series of organ recitals...

... has gone quite well, each one bringing between 14 and 20 people to the Chapel. Particular thanks to Nancy Denison for coming every week to ensure that visitors had tea or coffee before the recitals and to deal with all the clearing up in the kitchen. The recital on 17 May was Philip Tordoff's 1,000th public performance at an organ or a piano. The Yorkshire Post published a superb photograph of Philip at our organ the following day.

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches **Annual Meetings, 11th-14th April 2013, Nottingham**

Delegate's Report from David Arthur

I am very grateful to Westgate Chapel for appointing me as its delegate to the Annual Meetings this year, and for the financial help which allowed me to attend. Quite apart from the important business to be transacted, I always find the Annual Meetings a source of spiritual uplift for me, and this year was no exception. Not just the buzz of being with over 300 Unitarians in one place at one time, although that is very powerful; but I was impressed by the quality of debate, and the deep thought which contributors had given to each contribution. The worship sessions were also of a high standard.

The John Rely Beard Lecture, which marks the beginning of proceedings, was thankfully well attended, and raised the important and sensitive issue of bullying, or other misuses of power, in religious communities. The scale of the problem was shown to be far larger than most people would think; luckily we are fairly guiltless in Wakefield in this regard.

Thereafter the meetings proceeded much as planned; Lis Dyson-Jones proved surprisingly efficient at keeping us to time in the business meetings. GA Zette duly appeared each morning, ably edited by Tilly Pugh and George King (I have something of a proprietorial interest in GA Zette, as I edited it in 1969 and again 25 years later in 2004, the first person to edit it twice); I have a full set of issues which anyone is welcome to peruse.

Clearly the major interest of many centred on the two controversial motions, both scheduled for the same day, on assisted dying and drug policy respectively. The motion on assisted dying survived several attempts to derail it – wrecking amendments, calls for secret ballot, even a procedural move of next business – and after a well-reasoned and polite discussion, was passed by 101 votes to 40. Less divisive, although no less radical, was the debate on drugs policy, which made it clear that present legislation is neither coherent nor effective, and the Unitarian voice will now be added (we voted by 154 votes to 3) to those calling for a Royal Commission to re-examine our whole attitude to drugs. I must say that while I agree that the law is an ass, the whole subject of drugs scares me rigid; so I kept my mouth firmly shut during that debate!

Other highlights of the Meetings were: the Anniversary Service, where we sang a new anthem composed, as ever, by David Dawson (he has a wonderful gift of composing a relatively simple, easy-to-sing piece which sounds just right on the night), and the Rev. Feargus O'Connor spoke very well indeed on his perennial theme of respect for all life; the social evening, where we had performers ranging from string

quartets to pop groups, from operatic arias to funny monologues – something for everyone, in fact.

Of course the climax of the Meetings was the installation of Bill Darlison as President of the General Assembly. Maud Robinson, in her speech of proposal, spoke movingly of the time when Bill was apparently on the verge of death, and his miraculous recovery; Bill himself spoke about his Catholic upbringing, and his boyhood dream of becoming Pope; now he has the next best thing, and wants to adopt two of the Pope's titles - Pontifex Maximus (bridge-builder in chief) and Servus Servorum Dei (the servant of the servants of God). He will surely do the denomination proud.

This was the second time we had held the Annual Meetings at Nottingham, and I hope we go there again. The accommodation and meeting rooms were good, the food was excellent, and we got quite used to walking up and down past the lake. Next year we are to be at Whittlebury Hall near Towcester, a specialist conference hotel which is apparently going to be less expensive. We can start looking forward to it already.

If you have not previously attended the General Assembly Meetings please do consider being the Chapel delegate for next year. The Committee is particularly keen to support those who have not attended before. More information on the 2014 meetings is available here:

<http://www.unitarian.org.uk/ga/index2014.shtml>

Yorkshire Unitarian Union
SCARBOROUGH Unitarian Church
Saturday June 22nd 2013

10.30: Church open with a welcoming drink

11.15: Yorkshire Unitarian Lay Preachers' Association Meeting

Margaret Kirk will talk about the Foundation Step of the GA Worship Studies Course for Unitarian Lay Preachers. The course is now running in Yorkshire over four sessions, the first one already completed on the 18 May at our St. Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel, York

All are welcome to attend from those who lead worship, to those who are simply interested in any of our sessions.

12.30: **Lunch** – bring your own sandwich – drinks provided

1.30: Opening Devotions led by Andy Parkinson

1.45: Andy talks about the Worship Studies Intermediate step

2.15: YUU Quarterly Meeting – with key items to discuss including report from the YUU Executive Committee and Ministry in Yorkshire.

3.30: **Afternoon Tea.** Earlier than usual to give you time to explore Scarborough a little before your homeward journey

Scarborough Unitarians look forward to our visit.

All are welcome to any part or all of the day's activities

The Chapel Pastoral Care Team

Members of the Chapel's pastoral team are willing to provide a confidential ear and to visit people at home. Contact Kate Taylor (kate@airtime.co.uk).

The Engagement Group

The group chooses a location and theme for each meeting, engaging with one another following engagement group principles. The group has been dormant for a while, so if you are interested please get in touch. Contact Steve (boudicca7@talktalk.net) or Mel (melpx@hotmail.com).

Safeguarding

Our Safeguarding Policy is now available in the Chapel Vestry, and the summary statement and poster on display on the entrance noticeboard. If you have any concerns about the safety of our children and vulnerable adults please contact the safeguarding office (Mel Prideaux) immediately. All contact information and procedures are in the policy document.

Fire Evacuation Procedure

A chapel fire procedure is available on the noticeboard. Fire Officer is Paul Dawson, who can be contacted at Chapel with any queries or concerns.

Officers of the Chapel Committee:

Chairman: John Goodchild, 12 Shakespeare Avenue, Normanton, WF6 1EA

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