



# THE YORK UNITARIAN

St. Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel, York, YO1 8NQ

July 2019

## FROM THE MINISTER

July is traditionally a holiday month at least where I grew up. Term finished at the end of June in Scotland and we went back to school a week or so before the end of August. In Glasgow we had the fair fortnight when businesses and factories closed and everyone took off 'doon the watter' to the coast or stayed at home and went to the funfair on Glasgow Green.

I often read of people who remember sun-kissed holidays which stretched to eternity. Mine were inevitably raining and chilly involving paddling in wellie boots in Loch Lomond or picnicking in a steamed up car while the rain streamed down the windows. My cousins always rented the same house at the seaside but my aunt said she just exchanged one kitchen sink for another.

I wonder if you have happy sun-kissed memories of holidays when you were young. Maybe just not having to go to school was enough. Glasgow no longer has a fair fortnight or even a fairs week. It has a Bank holiday Monday in the middle of July. All of us seem to be required to work harder and longer than before. Everything has to be open and available to us 24/7 so people have to work those hours.

Mothers are working long hours and trying to fit in childcare, exercise and finding themselves. They are enabled in this by the ready availability of ready cooked 'food' kept frozen in plastic or portioned packages covered in more plastic. Plastic packaging means we only have to shop once a week.

I think holidays should be a chance to do what you don't normally do. If you are locked up in an office for hours, go for long walks in the countryside. If you are always busy with your work, your kids, your life, just getaway on your own for a retreat. If you never have time to visit all the historic places you'd love to see or the Art galleries or the concerts, do that on holiday. But probably not all at once or you will need another holiday! Live alone? Go on a group holiday. Craving a rest somewhere warm? The beach is calling you. Never get time to finish a book? Lie in that hammock. A change is as good as a rest they used to say.

Maybe that's the best idea, changing so that we make more time in our everyday lives for the things that nourish and restore us. Bringing balance back into our daily lives.

Happy Holy Days!  
Nicky Jenkins



**from the food pantry at  
First Parish (Unitarian Universalist)  
Wayland, Massachusetts, USA**

## A MONTH OF SUNDAYS

at 11.00a.m.

Sunday 7 July  
Revd. Nicky Jenkins  
Music by David Hammond  
2nd retiring collection for  
Unitarian General Assembly

Sunday 14 July  
Jenny Jacobs  
*Arguing with God*  
Music by Helen Drewery  
Sparklers Children's Programme

Sunday 21 July  
Revd. Nicky Jenkins  
Music by Laura Jones  
12.30p.m. Chapel Committee

Sunday 28 July  
Claire Lee  
*Lamas: the first harvest*  
Music by David Hammond

## OTHER EVENTS IN JULY

- Monday 1 July 7.30p.m. *Soon Amore rehearsal* (Chapel)
- Tuesday 2 July 7.30p.m. *York Interfaith Association: Visit to Leeds Sikh Gurdwara*
- Thursday 4 July 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Saturday 6 July 1.00p.m. *Late Music: Il Cor Tristo* (Chapel)
- Saturday 6 July 7.30p.m. *Late Music: John Potter (tenor) & Jacob Heringman (lute)* (Chapel)
- Sunday 7 July (rehearsal 1.30 p.m.) concert 4.30p.m. (afternoon) *Early Music Festival: Minster Minstrels* (Chapel)
- Wednesday 10 July 1.00p.m. concert *Early Music Festival: Bethany Seymour soprano, Helen Charlston mezzo-soprano, Peter Seymour harpsichord - 'Noble and masterly turns'* (Chapel)
- Thursday 11 July 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Friday 12 July 12.30p.m. *Occasional Friday: James & Ruth Sanderson (piano & violin)* (Chapel)

- Saturday 13th July 7.30 p.m. De Costa Academy of Singing (Chapel)
- Thursday 18 July 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Sunday 21 July 12.30p.m. *Chapel Committee* (Upper Room)
- Thursday 25 July 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Friday 26 July 12.30p.m. *Last Friday concert: Mousai String Quartet* (Chapel)

## SCARBOROUGH UNITARIANS VISIT

Sunday 4 August  
Bring and Share Lunch



The Scarborough Unitarian congregation will be joining us for morning worship on Sunday 4th August.

We plan to have a bring and share lunch following the service. A sign-up sheet for food will be on the notice board.

## FROM THE CHAPEL COMMITTEE

Our minister, Nicky Jenkins, has informed the C h a p e l Committee that she wishes to retire around the end of this year. The exact date is not yet fixed. She will continue to



live in York, and we hope to see her from time to time. We wish her well with her future plans. More information will be available later.

Please note that Nicky is now just using her <nickyjjenkins@gmail.com> e-mail address.

## CHAPEL TWITTER ACCOUNT

**Twitter account**

York Unitarians@YUnitarians

## FROM THE CHAPEL COMMITTEE

- The Chapel Committee met on Sunday 9 June. All members were present.
- The Chapel should be receiving £1000 for the Chapel's use as a polling station at the recent local government and European elections. *Simon Hardy* was thanked for opening and closing the Chapel at 6.30a.m. and 10.00p.m. on each occasion.
- Matters relating to the sale of alcohol by outside users of the Chapel were clarified. The Chapel is not licensed for the sale of alcohol so hirers, who wish to provide alcoholic drinks must either have their own license or provide drinks free.
- Our St. Crux Hall sale on Saturday 11 May was disappointing compared with previous years when we had dates later in the year. Income was under £1000. However it compared favourably with other groups for the time of year. Also, there was a rival event in Parliament Street and some regular helpers were on holiday.
- There was a clarifying discussion about whether or not (under the CIO constitution) the chapel may make grants for people attending conferences.
- The minister thanked those who had helped steward a wedding the previous day. She also gave notice that, having reached statutory retirement age, she would be retiring as the Chapel's minister at the end of this year.
- The treasurer, *Nick Morrice*, produced the independent examiner's report on the 2018 chapel accounts. An error in 'the brought forth balance of investments' had been identified and corrected. The committee approved this correction and authorised the approval of the accounts based on the Charity Commission format.
- The treasurer has acquired a new software accounting package favoured by many churches for use with the York Unitarians CIO accounts. Bank statements need re-directing to Nick Morrice as treasurer. Some rationalisation is needed in the handling of gift-aided contributions.
- The secretary requested that someone else take over arranging 'pulpit supplies'. *Laura Cox* volunteered.
- It was noted that Chapel member *John Grange* had died.
- Peter Exley has replaced the 5 light bulbs in the Chapel's central chandelier.
- The £25 monthly contribution towards the honorarium of the Yorkshire Unitarian Union administrator was reviewed.

- *Laura Cox* brought to the committee's attention 'The Demand a Future: night forum on climate emergency' at York Explore on 21 June from 4p.m. - 11.00p.m.
- The next meeting will be on Sunday 21 July.

## FROM UNI-NEWS for JUNE 2019 from Unitarian HQ at Essex Hall in London

- A new Unitarian fellowship for Forres and Findhorn in the north of Scotland has recently been established. Former York Unitarian *Lesley McKeown* is involved.
- The new fully elected Executive Committee has met for the first time with *Marion Baker* as convenor. The new Unitarian General Assembly President, *Revd. Celia Cartwright* and the new Chief Officer, *Liz Slade* were in attendance. Among matters discussed was the feedback from the shortened annual meetings. *Revd. Mark Hutchinson* was added to the GA's roll of ministers
- Unitarian HQ staff member, *John Crosskey*, will be retiring on 28th June after 35 years of loyal service.
- *The Unitarian Society for Psychical Research* together with *the Quaker Fellowship for After Life Studies* are holding a joint conference at Golders Green Unitarian Church, Hoop Lane, London on Saturday 13 July.
- There will be Governance Seminar for representatives of churches which may be considering CIO [Charitable Incorporated Organisation] status on Saturday 6 July at New Meeting Birmingham.
- There will be a Ministry Inquiry Day for interested persons on Tuesday 16 July at New Meeting, Birmingham. For more information contact *Simon Bland* 0115 888 2955 or by [email](#).
- *The GA Youth Programme* will have a Five Days Away (FDA) event for 12 to 17 year olds at the Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow, Derbyshire 5-9 August.
- You can follow Unitarians UK on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)!
- Our friends at *Mill Hill Chapel Leeds* were recently featured in The Daily Mirror for sharing their Priestley Hall on Friday lunch times as city centre prayer space for local Muslims.

**I WILL GO INTO THE GARDEN**  
by Celia Midgley

**I will go into the garden and say my prayer  
on my knees I will take the trowel to the soil  
and give thanks for each yielding dew-wet weed  
each opening flower each slender trusting blade.**



**What is this purpose when the sun is warming  
to dig and pull in the moist under-earth,  
what when the blackbird sing in the twilight rain  
is the force that bends my willing back for more?**

**And when God drew Eden from the water  
seeing first a likeness smiling up  
did the great artist thrill with restless power  
to shape what others would forever paint?**

**Forget- me- not and buttoned feverfew  
feathered herb robert and bindweed winding close  
or poignant stand of passing tidy tulips  
or perfect rose or prized chrysanthemum –**

**These modest offerings from our hands  
tell their own story which we must help reveal  
marking our place among all that lives and gives back  
an epitaph of praise and co-creation.**

*The author is a Bradford Unitarian and  
a retired Unitarian minister  
from 'Green and Dying: reflections on growth and change'  
(Unitarian General Assembly Worship Committee, 1999)*

**YORK UNITARIANS CIO**

A new bank account has been opened for York Unitarians CIO. Information has been sent to those with standing orders asking them to change their standing orders to the new account, and other members and friends have been asked to consider supporting the Chapel in this way. Standing order forms are available on the Chapel table.

If you pay tax and contribute in this way, please fill in a new gift aid form, these too are available on the Chapel table.

Friends who have been attending for six months may wish to consider becoming members, and new membership forms are also available on the chapel table. Membership application forms should be passed to Claire Lee, the membership secretary, or to the Chapel secretary.

**THE UNITARIAN PATH**

The Unitarian path combines personal freedom in religious faith with mutual, interdependent and supportive community.

It prefers reflective thinking to rigid believing. Emerging from the Jewish and Christian faiths it is fiercely loyal to Jesus and his teaching that we should love both God and our neighbours as ourselves.

This has brought Unitarians to a grateful recognition that their neighbours may be of other faith or different values, and may draw upon alternate resources of faith and strength.

Unitarian religion is more earthy and practical than heavenly and passive.

It maintains an ongoing conversation of mind and body defining, refining and incarnating those qualities of life, growth and love which make for a better world.

## WHERE THE BEE SUCKS

The sermon by Andrew Hill  
on Sunday 9 June 2019

### UNITARIAN ROOTING

Our Unitarian faith is broad and wide; often reaching out far and near to faiths and cultures of close and distant lands.

- Sometimes it touches Buddhists and Hindus;
- sometimes it embraces Taoists and Shintos; acknowledges Moslems and Jews;
- and at other times it may engage with faiths and cultures both humanist and theistic, natural and transcendental, secular and sacred

while at the same time remaining rooted in its own deep earth – an earth rich with the loam of Judaism and its Christian child.

Together, the sacred texts of Jews and Christians are known as *The Bible* – a varied and complex collection of writings:

- from many sources;
- in different styles and
- recorded in either Hebrew or Greek

but mostly read in vernacular translations dependent upon imperfect sources and human wiles; and differing widely according to the time and place of the translators' culture.

For those who use English language the classic vernacular is seventeenth century English and known as *The Authorised* or *King James' Version*; and succeeded over the past century and a quarter by a succession of revised versions each one improved according to ancient texts recovered and contemporary language used. The first of these was The Revised Version of 1899 for which this Chapel's then minister, George Vance Smith, played a controversial part – but the most significant of which has been the *New English Bible* of 1961 with its bravado use of contemporary English; and its more recent 1989 gender inclusive revision called *The Revised English Bible*.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

I came, recently, upon a fascinating article all about insects in *The Revised English Bible* by someone called Gene Kritsky [*American Entomologist* Fall 1997]. It seems that the classic *Authorised Version* got a lot wrong about Bible insects and that more recent research has discovered "so many [wrong things] . . . that they require the 'insects' from the Bible be re-examined". The result, explains the article, is that in *The Revised English Bible* not only are there:

no beetles, no hornets, no cankerworms and no palmer worms but several new insect species have been identified: for example, maggots [and] even the mole cricket [it says] may have joined this unique insect collection . . .

The result, however, is not that the number of insects and arthropods references in *The Revised English Bible* has risen but that the number of references has gone down and is now fewer than the number found four centuries previously in *The Authorised Version*. In fact, across 378 years the number of insect and arthropod references has actually dropped from 120 to 98 with the loss of:

2 Ants; 4 Bees; 8 Fleas; 2 Grasshoppers; 5 Grubs; 5 Hoppers; 1 Louse; 31 Locusts; 8 Maggots; 1 Midge; 1 Mole Cricket; 6 Moths; 6 Scorpions; 1 Spider; 3 Fly Swarms; 2 Swarms of locusts; 1 Teaming creature; and 11 Worms

### IS IT WORTH IT?

Now, whether or not this reduction of insect references in different versions of sacred scripture corresponds in any way with the reduction of the insect population as reported recently in the general news media I wouldn't have the faintest idea beyond recognising that our knowledge of insect life, as a whole, is probably considerably greater now than it was 400 years ago. Nevertheless, we should probably pay considerable attention to three recent widely reported studies:

- First, one reported from the journal *Biological Conservation* – that as a result of intensive farming methods, the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, deforestation, urbanization and the resulting loss of habitat - the insect biomass is falling to extinction eight times faster than the decline of mammals, birds and reptiles; and that particularly threatened are moths and butterflies; pollinators like bees; dung beetles and other insects which help decompose feces and detritus.

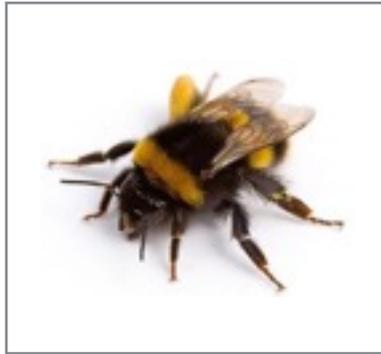
- Second, February's [*United Nations' Global Assessment Report*] in which 450 scientists and diplomats warned that a million species are at risk, largely as a result of human activity accelerating the decline of the Earth's natural life-support systems at an alarming rate.

- Third, last month's *Bees Under Siege* report that as a result of climate crisis, habitat loss, pollution and disease 27 species of pollinating bees are now regionally extinct [in Britain] – including the great yellow bumblebee, the potter flower bee and the cliff mason bee – with another 25 types threatened and another 31 of conservation concern. [*Guardian* 20 May 2019]

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INSECTS

So does this matter? Well, yes it does because flying insects have really important ecological functions for which their numbers matter a lot.

- They pollinate flowers – flies, moths and butterflies are as important as bees for many flowering plants, including some crops;
- Flying insects provide food for many larger creatures – birds, bats, some mammals, fish, reptiles and amphibians; and
- Many of them are predators and decomposers – flies, beetles and wasps:



According to a helpful crib sheet provided recently by *The Guardian* newspaper:

There are more than one million species of insects compared with just 5,400 species of mammals, and they are the cornerstone of all terrestrial ecosystems. Without insects, there is what scientists term a “bottom up trophic cascade”, in which the knock on effects of the insect collapse surge up through the food chain, wiping out animals higher up. And without healthy ecosystems there can be no clean air or water. [Damian Carrington *The Guardian* 11 February 2019]

which all brings richly into focus these commanding words of the ancient Hebrew wisdom writer:

Go to the ant, you sluggard; observe her ways and gain wisdom.  
She has no prince no governor nor ruler,  
but in summer she gathers in her store of food  
and lays in her supplies at harvest.  
How long, you sluggard will you lie abed?  
*Proverbs 6:6-9*

And these words of the ultra orthodox 4<sup>th</sup> century Christian theologian, St. Gregory of Nyassa, who wrote:

Let those who would pry into the mysteries of the life of God, realise just how little they understand of the mysteries of the life of an ant.

And about insects in general the current prophet of the environment, broadcaster and environmentalist, David Attenborough, has written:

By any standards, the insect body must be reckoned the most successful of all the solutions to the problems of living on the surface of the earth. Insects swarm in deserts as well as in

forests; they swim below water and crawl in deep caves in perpetual darkness. They fly over the high peaks of the Himalayas and exist in surprising numbers on the permanent ice caps of the Poles. One fly makes it home in pools of crude oil welling up from the ground, another lives in steaming hot volcanic springs. Some deliberately seek high concentrations of brine and others regularly withstand being frozen solid. They excavate homes for themselves in the skins of animals and burrow long winding tunnels in the thickness of a leaf. The number of individual insects in the world seems beyond any computation, but someone has made the attempt and concluded that at any one time, there must be something of the order of one thousand million thousand million. Put another way, for every human being alive, there must be about a million insects – and together these insects would weigh about twelve times as much as he [or she] does. [*Life on Earth* (1979) p.87]

Attenborough – combining his two worlds of expertise – the natural world and the world of television broadcasting – has, surely, become a true prophet for our age.

- So too has the Swedish teenager, Greta Thunberg, who has spearheaded a global call for action by teenagers and young people – it being hard to dismiss her judgement that survival comes before education.
- And so too have been the actions of the Extinction Rebellion movement with its recent occupation of London bridges and London traffic intersections.

It is hard to resist the judgement that our British politicians have been playing fiddles – Nero-like – these past few weeks and months – while the planet burns.

In a recent *Guardian* newspaper review supplement to mark her retirement as poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy wrote:

Which is lovelier and more true:

- “Brexit means Brexit” or
- “Where the bee sucks, there suck I”?

“The ugly meaningless of Theresa May’s dire mantra [wrote the retiring poet laureate] . . . is a prime cause of our current political chaos, just as surely as Ariel’s sweet song continues to remind us of our vital connection to the natural world.”

## NEWS ABOUT FLOWERGATE CHAPEL, WHITBY



To Friends of Flowergate Unitarian Chapel  
HMRC Charity ref. No EW85630.

We would like to thank you for your generous response to last year's appeal and give you an update as to how we are progressing.

The strategic funding arrangements for Heritage Lottery Grants changed this year and we were unable to submit an application for the Our Heritage Lottery Grant scheme last year in time to meet the deadlines that existed. This particular grant is no longer available.

At the Chapel AGM in March, it was agreed to continue the search for grant funding until the autumn in the hope that applications could be submitted by then. Match funding is required for most HL grants so we are looking for other grant providers.

The officers of the Friends of Flowergate Chapel have agreed to work on this together with Margaret Kirk (retired Minister). We feel we have a good Heritage project in promoting Francis Haydn Williams's social activism in Whitby and are heartened to discover that the Whitby Civic Society are discussing creating a blue plaque to celebrate this.

The Heritage Open Days organised by Whitby Civic Society (15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019) will include a presentation about Francis Haydn Williams:

"One man's crusades against wealth and power in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Whitby. A presentation about the social activism of Francis Haydn Williams, Minister of Flowergate Unitarian Chapel 1888 – 1910"

We will let you know about further progress before the end of the year.

Kind regards

Claire Fox

Treasurer of FOFC

aclairefox@gmail.com

We are grateful for all donations towards funding the restoration of the chapel and our project to make its most famous Minister better known in the town. (Membership of FOFC is £10 per annum and in the event of our project being unsuccessful, we will reimburse all donors.)

## THE TREES SAY TO US

*at the Bright Lights Intergenerational service in June Claire Wilton invited us to write messages from the trees to us.*

*Here are our 25 messages.*

**Spend time with me each day - it will do you good. Plant more of me!!**

**Don't burn me till I'm dead**

**When humans have learnt the wisdom of trees- you will be wise indeed.**

**Be calm.**

**Trust me as the treasured gift I am**

**The Lament of the ash tree. 'People Beware! Your actions brought the fungus to this country which is killing us!**

**Enjoy our shade and let us breathe.**

**Listen to the silence and the music.**

**Be grateful for everything.**

**Plant native trees in appropriate places. Look after them, prune if necessary. Let them self seed and grow more.**

**I make long-term plans . . . REALLY LONG-TERM! Please do likewise.**

**I have cared for YOU. Please, now, care for ME.**

**You still need us for life and beauty and poetry.**

**Be strong.**

**I love the sunny sugary sun. I love my funny fungus friends. I love the rainy, refreshing rain.**

**I love the messy, muddy mud. I love my lovely living life.**

**Let me breathe! We are here with you and to help you.**

**HELP! Chop, chop!!**

**Come sit with me. Think of me and all my kin, of what we give, what we need. What you need. What you can give. Learn.**

**Be happy.**

**Take care of us and we will take care of you.**

**Let me grow old.**

**How foolish you have become.**

**Seek the sun but do not lose touch with the earth.**

**Dear human friend. I love you walking in my shade and I love the wind blowing through my leaves. May you be happy as I am happy.**

## ABOUT PEOPLE

Richard Thompson is due to have an operation in a Hull hospital. Tom Hughes has been in hospital, briefly for an eye operation. Our best wishes to both of them.

Simon & Marta Hardy, Dee Boyle, Adrienne Wilson, Claire Lee, Sue Elliot, Laura Cox and Andrew Hill, together with Anneliese Emmans-Dean and Adrian Lovett all attended the Extinction Earth 'Demand a Future' event at York Explore on June 21st. Our special thanks to Laura for organising the Chapel's stall.

Susan Elliot our regular attender self published a book of poetry entitled "Making Waves". She wrote the poems over a period of grieving for her mother's death. Copies are available on the chapel table with a request for a donation to chapel funds of £5.

## SUPPORT FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY PROJECT

We are supporting 'The Lunar Project' in which provides women and girls with sanitary items they would otherwise have difficulty affording to buy. They are also working with 'Free the Flow' who work out of York University as both aim to alleviate period poverty in York. There will be a box in chapel from July for donated items.

We are also continuing to support the homeless people using CareCent by providing items they need. They sometimes need sanitary items but at present they need other items more urgently. These are baby/cleansing wipes, shower gel, disposable razors and tooth-brushes. If you can help with any of these items we would be most grateful. All items will be delivered to either CareCent or York Explore every few weeks when the box is full.

Please remember that if you don't come in to chapel you can always put any of these items in the general food bank collection boxes at most large supermarkets and they will be distributed to those most in need who use the food banks. Many thanks for your support. Dee Boyle

**The world is waiting for new saints,  
ecstatic men and women  
who are so deeply rooted in the love of God  
that they are free to imagine  
a new international order.**

[Henri Nouwen]

## USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS



York Unitarians CIO,  
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[www.york.unitarians.org.uk](http://www.york.unitarians.org.uk)

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Secretary: Margaret Hill  
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<mhill.york@gmail.com>

Treasurer: Nick Morrice  
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<nickmorrice@gmail.com>

Chapel Committee Members:,  
Barbara Barnes, Dee Boyle, Laura Cox,  
Elizabeth Faiers, Simon Hardy, Andrew  
Hill, Jenny Jacobs, Joan Sinanan and the  
Officers

St. Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel Charity  
(registered charity: 230167) Trustees:  
Elizabeth Faiers (Treasurer), Simon  
Hardy, Jen Atkinson, Andrew Hill (Chair),  
Sue Catts and Claire Wilton.

Colton's Hospital Trustees  
Elizabeth Faiers (Treasurer), Dee Boyle,  
Trevor Gant, Marta Hardy, Simon Hardy,  
Nicky Jenkins (Chair), Carol Lawson,  
Richard Thompson, Geoffrey Williams,  
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