



THE YORK UNITARIAN

St. Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel, York, YO1 8
November 2019

FROM THE MINISTER

In October we thought about belonging and part of that sense of belonging stretches back into the past. November's theme is remembering. We will, as usual, be celebrating Remembrance Sunday on 10 November and I am hoping that you will be able to bring along some photographs or memorabilia of someone in your family who lost their life in a war to give our remembrances a more personal and human element.

At the beginning of the month, on 3 November, we will hold a Unitarian version of All Souls when we will be honouring

our dead. Those whom we have lost we will remember with gratitude and sorrow mixed with joy for the gifts they shared with us.

Memory is a strange thing. It is certainly a selective thing. We have memories of our childhoods which don't match with those of our siblings. Each of us has our own personal experience. Our perspective is down to all sorts of things; our position in the family, what else was going on at the time, other messages we got

from society. If we have the opportunity, it's worth going back to talk to others who were there to check out what they observed or knew about that we didn't understand when we were little.

I find myself remembering more and more incidents from my childhood as I get older and they give me comfort. I have a sense that I have actually lived a life. As I approach retirement, I am happy to draw a breath and look back. I may sound a little maudlin, but it is nice to slow down a bit and not have everything hurtling by.



I also feel a little guilty that I was not in the moment more, that I found looking after little children more

stressful than joyful.

I am determined to 'remember' in the present now. I will remember myself and stop and notice. The autumn gold on my amelanchier is stunning against a lowering sky and the hawthorn hedges are weighed down with bright berries this year. Will I remember? Perhaps not, but I will feel the joy and gratitude while I look. Now and in the future.

Nicky Jenkins

**A MONTH OF SUNDAYS
at 11.00a.m.**

Sunday 3 November
Revd. Nicky Jenkins
All Souls Day: honouring our dead
Music by Laura Jones

Sunday 10 November 10.55a.m.
Revd. Nicky Jenkins
Remembrance Day
Sparklers' Children's Programme
Music by Helen Drewery

Sunday 17 November
Meike Dux Harrop
St. Martin of Tours: an act of sharing
Music by David Hammond
12.30p.m. Chapel Committee Meeting

Sunday 24 November
Andrew Hill
Atheist still, thank God!
Music by Laura Jones

OTHER EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

- Saturday 2 November 7.30p.m. *Enkelit Singers: concert of Finnish music* (Chapel)
- Monday 4 November 7.30p.m. *Soon Amore rehearsal* (Chapel)
- Tuesday 5 November 7.30p.m. *York Interfaith Association: faith approaches to questions of sexual identity* (Hudson Room, Council Offices)
- Thursday 7 November 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Monday 11 November 7.30p.m. *Soon Amore rehearsal* (Chapel)
- Thursday 14 November 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Interfaith Meditation* (Upper Room)
- Saturday 16 November 7.30p.m. *De Costa Academy - opera gala concert* (Chapel)
- Sunday 17 November 12.30p.m. *Chapel Committee* (Upper Room)
- Monday 18 November 7.30p.m. *Soon Amore rehearsal* (Chapel)
- Thursday 21 November 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Monday 25 November 7.30p.m. *Soon Amore rehearsal* (Chapel)

- Thursday 28 November 10.30 for 11.00a.m. *Meditation Group* (Upper Room)
- Saturday 30 November 7.30p.m. *Micklegate Singers - Immortal fire: a St. Cecilia theme concert* (Chapel)

**ALL SOULS DAY
SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER**

Nicky writes "Honouring our dead. Those whom we have lost we will remember with gratitude and sorrow mixed with joy for the gifts they shared with us."

**REMEMBRANCE DAY
SUNDAY 10 NOVEMBER**



The service on Remembrance Sunday, 10 November, will start at 10.55a.m. in time for the traditional two minutes of silent remembrance for all those who have died as result of warfare. Nicky writes "Please bring photographs or mementos of family members who died as a result of war to display at our Remembrance Day service."

CARECENT FOOD COLLECTION 2019

As in previous years we will have a collection of food etc. for *Carecent*, who provide breakfasts for the homeless at the Central Methodist church along St. Saviourgate, on Sunday 3rd November. There will be a table in front of the pews. Put donated items on the table before or after the service. They will be taken to *Carecent* later in the week. *Carecent* depends entirely on donations – of money, food, clothing, toiletries – and time. This year they would be very grateful for donations of:

- Food: spam, ham, corned beef, baked beans, tinned fruit, cereal, porridge oats, sugar, biscuits
- pasteurised fruit juice, squash, cordial.
- Toiletries, shower gel, shampoo, baby wipes, razors, roll-on deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste
- Clothing especially jeans and tracksuit bottoms and also gifts of new underpants please!

FROM THE CHAPEL COMMITTEE

- The Chapel Committee met on Sunday 29 September. In the absence of the chairperson, David Zucker, Nick Morrice took the chair. Apologies were received from David Zucker and Simon Hardy.
- Issues relating to the 'vesting' (i.e. transfer) of St. Saviourgate Unitarian Chapel and The Chapel Charity with York Unitarian CIO were gradually being attended to. Roderick Ramage is available for help when necessary.
- Laura Cox has the rota of 2020 service leaders in hand with January and February Sundays complete.
- Minutes from the Yorkshire Unitarian Union's March general meeting had been received but none from recent meetings of its Executive Committee. This has resulted in a lack of conveniently available information about the activities of the YUU and its churches. The YUU AGM is at Hull on Saturday 25 October.
- There was an extensive, but inconclusive, discussion regarding a suggestion from the previous meeting regarding social action lunches. Joan Sinanan provided much helpful information.
- The minister, mindful of the Chapel's ethical investment policy, is interested in possibly moving a motion at the 2020 Unitarian General Assembly meetings relating to the ethical investment of GA funds. She also reported on the annual trustees' visitation with the residents of Colton's Almshouses.
- Chapel hiring charges were reviewed and updated for 2019-2020; also the wording of the Contract and Indemnity Agreement updated after a hirer recently locked the Chapel gates during a concert.
- The treasurer, Nick Morrice, mentioned that Adie Wilson and Jill Chippett have both been providing much valuable help. Some rationalisation is necessary of the Chapel's bank accounts.
- The secretary reported that the Chapel would be required as a polling station for the 'forthcoming' General Election - rental will be £500. She also reported that York residents' Weekend was 25/26 January and with an exhibition on 'Then and Now'.
- An application for Chapel membership from Susan Elliott was approved.
- Dee Boyle reported that York Interfaith Association would soon be marking its 30th anniversary and that on Saturday 10 November there would be an Interfaith Walk.

- Barbara Barnes mentioned that bringing a selection of chapel library books down from the Upper Room on a Sunday morning was successful. She will do it again.
- The next Chapel Committee meeting will be on Sunday 17 November.

WHY I WAS ARRESTED

York Unitarian, Laura Cox, was in London recently for Extinction Rebellion's October series of demonstrations.

At 3.40pm on the 7th of October, I was bundled into a police van and taken to Croydon Custody Centre. Why? The short answer: wilful obstruction of a highway. Specifically, sitting in an orange tent in front of a line of police officers as they advanced down Millbank, the Northern site of the International Rebellion.

But why, *really*? Getting arrested was something I wanted to do, to stand up and be counted for Extinction Rebellion's aims. The movement calls for mass arrest tactics. In my mind, if there's anything worth getting dragged into a police van for, then it's pressuring the government to address the climate emergency.

I'd had [Non-Violent Direct Action](#) (NVDA) training. I'd spoken at length with people who had been arrested already. I was as prepared as I could possibly be. And I was tired of adding my name to petitions and watching the blatant greenwashing campaigns spewed out by public and private companies alike.

As consumers, we have purchasing power, but this only goes so far. Our civic power, as citizens, is also severely limited. Yes, we can vote and we have relative freedom of speech. But forcing an inactive government to make real, tangible changes to reverse the damage we have done to the planet... Well, the science doesn't lie. Look at any climate statistics and the message is the same.

FROM PETITION TO PROTEST

The time for petitions is past. We've seen time and time again that they just don't work. What *Extinction Rebellion* is doing right now, and will continue to do, simply can't be ignored. This is the point of mass peaceful protest and Non-Violent Direct Action – to act in solidarity, in peace, and expose our flawed system.

One of the common criticisms of *Extinction Rebellion* protestors is that we are wasting police time. It's not us that's wasting their time – it's the institution that employs them. The police

should not be spending their time arresting climate activists – that's something we can all agree on. Instead, law enforcement should be supporting the movement, because it's in the interests of every single person living on planet Earth. It highlights just how broken the system is when the collapse of our environment isn't the number one item on the agenda.

RESPONDING TO NVDA

It saddens me that the most we can do as citizens is chain and glue ourselves to things, or refuse to move out of the way. It's even more telling that, when we are pushed to relative extremes to be heard, we are swept into vans and locked up. Police brutality is certainly much less of a problem in the UK than elsewhere, but as the International Rebellion continues we can expect to see more institutionalised violence and cruelty. The system doesn't have an effective response for NVDA, which is why it is so powerful. It challenges the government on an intellectual level and exposes the flaws in how the country is run (or not, as the case may be).

THE CONFISCATION OF A WHEELCHAIR



One of the most upsetting photographs I've seen from the Rebellion is the confiscation of a wheelchair.

There is something seriously wrong when the institution turns from preserving citizens' rights to making it impossible for them to participate in civil disobedience ... Let alone when those citizens can't walk unaided. The wheelchair is incredibly symbolic: the state will take everything they can from us before they accept they need to change.

Another reason why I was arrested is because, unlike so many others, I could. Those with certain jobs, physical ailments, dependents, and other responsibilities can't risk arrest. I don't have a DBS record to keep clean or a pet to feed. I wanted to make sure that as many names were added to the list of arrestees as possible – not just for my own reasons, but for the people who would be arrested if they were able.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE CELL

In *Extinction Rebellion*, we have developed a complicated relationship with arrest. Instead of something to avoid, getting arrested in the name of climate justice has become almost desirable. It has become a 'badge of honour', a way to prove that you're fully committed to the environment and standing up to the toxic system. This has got to change. Getting arrested shouldn't be taboo, but it shouldn't be glamorised either. Going forward, this is one of the most important conversations we need to have both inside and outside of the movement.

All in all, I would describe my arrestee experience as positive. While getting arrested isn't something I would recommend, the unwavering support of XR York and XR in general meant that I never felt worried or alone. If that doesn't demonstrate a healthy and regenerative culture, I don't know what does.

BY LEAVES WE LIVE

This is a green world with animals comparatively few and small, and all dependent on the leaves.

By leaves we live.

Some people have the strange idea that they live by money. They think energy is generated by the circulation of coins. Whereas the world is a vast leaf colony, going on and forming a leafy soil: not a mere mineral mass, and we live not by jingling our coins, but by the fullness of our harvests. *Sir Patrick Geddes*

**MEMBERSHIP SUNDAY
5 NEW CHAPEL MEMBERS
RECOGNISED AND WELCOMED**



On Membership Sunday, 6 October. we were pleased to welcome 5 new members of our Chapel community:

Keith Brown
John Brogden
Richard Brown
Susan Elliot
John Issett

The new members were welcomed as members by Claire Lee as membership secretary (deputising for David Zucker). Each new member signed the Book of Members and together the congregation spoke these words:

This is my church. It is composed of people like me. We make it what it is.

I want it to be a church that is a lamp in the path of pilgrims, leading them to Goodness, Truth and Beauty. It will be if I am.

It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver. It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I bring them.

It will be friendly, if I am. Its pews will be filled, if I fill them. It will do great work, if I work.

It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith; a church with a noble spirit - if I who make it what it is, am filled with these.

Therefore, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all of these things I want my church to be.

**A FREE AND INQUIRING
RELIGION**

*The sermon by Revd. Nicky Jenkins
on Membership Sunday 6 October 2019*

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of this church does not involve agreement to a set of beliefs. We have no creed. A key principle of the Unitarian approach is the conviction that the search for truth and wholeness, developed through the spiritual life of the individual and the community, can best be pursued in an atmosphere of open enquiry. Freedom of belief and conscience have been the basis of our faith ever since the foundation of our earliest congregations.

THINK WHAT YOU LIKE?

Some people think this means that you can believe what you like. But that is not strictly true either. The individual Unitarian must hold to the insights of reason and their own conscience. Beliefs that do not respect others such as homophobia or racism have no place in Unitarianism. The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches is just that, a gathering of independent churches who have joined together for mutual support. There is no overriding control from that Assembly, however we can have a vote at the Annual meetings into matters of governance and statements of political and social stances.

OUR OBJECT

Membership of this particular church is open to anyone who wishes to further our declared object and is in sympathy with our aspirations. What is our object?

The object of York Unitarians CIO ("the Congregation") is the advancement of religion in accordance with the usages and practices of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, and for other charitable purposes that the Trustees may from time to time determine.

Our aspirations may mean more to you. They are to aspire to be a loving, caring religious community in which we:-

- Value people in their diversity and uniqueness
- Encourage freedom of thought and speech
- Support spiritual exploration

- Create celebratory worship
- Advocate justice, liberty, honesty, integrity, peace and love.

We therefore strive to:

- Make the best of the life we have;
- Be democratic in our practice;
- Celebrate life in its many forms; and
- Respect people whose beliefs and attitudes are different from our own.

JOURNEY OF MEANING

Our congregations exist because of the free choice of their members to be gathered into covenantal relationship with each other. This idea of 'free choice' and being a 'gathered' church were quite challenging in the past when people went to their local parish church because of where they lived and so became de facto 'members'. Nowadays, when we continue in our gathered tradition, we are entering in to a covenant to continue to journey alongside each other despite our theological differences. Our journey is one of making meaning rather than adhering to creeds.

We have no higher authority creating our congregations. They are what we make them. Membership is therefore at the heart of our congregational life. And it is a dynamic process – a process which begins when someone makes a conscious choice, as *John, Keith, John, Richard and Susan* have, to affiliate to a particular congregation - but that decision marks a beginning not an end.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

We are always happy to welcome new members because that is what we are here for – to provide a spiritual home for the seeker. And we hope to provide a place where you too can contribute according to your talents and abilities.

We are bound to each other by more than a contract. We are here to support each other, to listen respectfully and to gently challenge. This requires patience, affection, listening, attention and acceptance. Among other things, Membership includes our commitment to the wellbeing of our congregation spiritually, organizationally, and financially. Personal spiritual growth is only one aspect of our church life, however, as we are also outward-looking and seeking to put our beliefs into action in social transformation.

A FREE AND INQUIRING RELIGION
Our General Assembly has an object:

"To promote a free and inquiring religion through the worship of God and the celebration of life; the service of humanity and respect for all creation; and the upholding of the liberal Christian tradition."

Complete agreement with the object is not required of any congregation. It is better understood as a guide and as an attempt to articulate what it means to be Unitarian in the 21st Century. We are free to affirm the liberal religious heritage and learn from the spiritual, cultural and intellectual insights of all humanity.

MY SIGHT YORK



My Sight York (formerly York Blind and Partially Sighted Society) has been the Chapel's chosen charity to fund raise for during 2019. We are coming to the end of the year, and a cheque will be presented to Karen Froggatt, Chief Executive of *My Sight York*, at our service on Sunday 1st December.

Fundraising has been a U3A concert in April, a sponsored walk in September, and throughout the year the Pink Elephants collecting boxes have been in the Chapel. All money from the sponsored walk should be with the treasurer, Nick Morrice, as soon as possible. The last day for donating via the Pink Elephants will be Sunday 17th November. Please donate generously over the last few weeks!

My Sight York is a thriving, local charity working to help people with sight loss make confident choices about all aspects of their lives. Their aim is to support people in York to live well with sight loss. Its office has recently moved from Rougier Street to 4 Merchants Place, Merchantgate, York YO1 9TU.

YORK INTERFAITH WEEK

SATURDAY 9 - SUNDAY 17 NOVEMBER

- **Saturday 9 November 10a.m.-12noon *Tree Loving Care*** Clifton Bridge area with 'Tree'mendous York
- **Sunday 10 November 2-3.30pm *The Ampersand Challenge***. Interfaith Friendship Walk: Memorial Gardens to Museum Gardens through central York. Get to know new people from other faiths or no faith.
- **Monday 11 November 7.30pm *Film: Dawn of the Light***, commemorating bicentenary of the birth of the Bab. De Grey 016, York St John University, Lord Mayors Walk.
- **Tuesday 12 November 11am-4pm – *Mosque, Bull Lane Open Day*** see new building and talk with Mosque members.
- **Tuesday 12 November 7.30-8.45pm *What is Buddhism?***. Studio Building, Millers Yard, Gillygate, YO31 7EB. Hear about various Buddhist groups practising in York. No disabled access.
- **Wednesday 13 November 7.30-9pm *Promoting interfaith understanding amongst young people*** Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Acomb, York YO24 4HA.
- **Thursday 14 November 11-12noon. *Interfaith Meditation*** Unitarian Chapel, St Saviourgate. York. Refreshments at 10.30a.m.
- **Thursday 14 November 7.3pm-9pm *Faith in Fostering*** with James Lee - City of York Council, Children's Services. Bar Convent, 17 Blossom Street, York YO24 1AQ.
- **Friday 15 November pm-3pm *Interfaith Café*** Friends Meeting House, Castlegate. Chat with members of faith groups (01904-624065)
- **Saturday 16 November 11-12.15pm *Liberal Jewish Community Interfaith Service*** Friends Meeting House Bring & share lunch (vegetarian & permitted fish).
- **Saturday 16 November 4-6pm *Hindu & Sikh Prayer session*** Contemplation Room, York St John's University.
- **Sunday 17 November 2-4pm *York Interfaith Group 30th Anniversary celebration & social*** – De Grey 125, York St John University, Lord Mayors Walk.

A PRAYER FOR INTERFAITH WEEK

We are people on journeys.
Apparently our journeys have different names,
which makes it hard for us to see
that we may be travelling the same road:

- If we are Jewish
we call the road Exodus
- freedom;
- If we are Hindu
we call the road Moksha
- release ;
- If we are Christian
we call the road Christ's Rising
salvation;
- If we are Brahma Kumaris
we call the road Jeevanmukti -
liberation in life;
- If we are Moslem
we call the road Islam
- submission to God;
- If we are Pagan
we call the road Nature -
respect for our environment;
- If we are Buddhist
we call the road Bodhi -
awakening;
- If we are Bah'ai
we call the road Estahad
- unity;
- If we are Sikh
we call the road Seva -
service.

But it is the same road -
the road which starts with self
and travels towards some larger dimension.
In our very brief walk together on this road
may we travel just a little further
on our journeys.
Amen.

ABOUT PEOPLE

- We were pleased to see our former minister *Myrna Michell* one Sunday in October. Myrna has returned from New Zealand and is house hunting in the UK.
- *Claire and Mark Lee* have been in Boston USA visiting daughter Rebecca. While there they met up Chapel friend *John Howe* who was a regular attender while living and working in York.
- *Jenny Jacobs* had an article in 'The Inquirer' about 'rethinking our animal relationships'.

MINISTER'S RETIREMENT

The final Sunday our minister, Nicky Jenkins, will be with us as minister is Sunday 12th January 2020. We are planning a special lunch after the service, followed by an entertainment. Please put this date in your new diaries (or even in the back of your old ones) and we hope as many people as possible will attend.

FROM THE LATEST UNI-NEWS

23 October <info@unitarian.org.uk>

- At its last meeting the Unitarian General Assembly's Executive agreed to (a) review approach to youth work with better investment in families and young people; (b) support congregations manage buildings and heritage; (c) develop new staff role building connections between congregations; (c) agreed 2019-20 budget with support for strategic initiatives.
- Highlights Unitarian participation in *Extinction Rebellion* protests including York Unitarian, Laura Cox's blog 'Why I was arrested' [see text in this *York Unitarian*]
- Provides details of upcoming events: Interfaith Week 10-17 November; Unitarian Association for Lay Ministry at Great Hucklow 22-24 November; Festival of Unitarians in South East 21-23 February; and Unitarian General Assembly (Birmingham) 7-9 April 2020.
- Provides link to GA Chief Officer *Liz Slade's* blog post <https://medium.com/the-babies-and-the-bathwater/the-path-ahead-8c2323fde16> and the blogs of 7 Unitarian ministers.
- References 5 press regarding Unitarian heritage including Whitby's crowd funding appeal.
- Provides links to Interfaith Week website; reports successful agreement between the new Unitarian College and the Unitarian College Manchester; and links to 13 other press references about Unitarian activities including 'suspected thieves get stuck on Todmorden Unitarian Church roof'!

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS



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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, Nick Morrice, and Claire
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Elizabeth Faiers (Treasurer), Dee Boyle,
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