

Ipswich Unitarian



Volume 3, Issue 2

March 2017

Looking forward

This issue of the Ipswich Unitarian has lots of information about future events, both for interest and for charity fundraising. This means we are moving away from the cold winter months when we were tempted to hibernate, away from the time when statistically more people suffer from depression and towards the light and hope of Spring.

Blue tits are checking out the nesting box in our garden, the grass is growing, Spring bulbs are poking through the ground and starting to bloom – including the bulbs around the Meeting House.

Photo below taken at our Celtic Spring concert in 2016



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Famous Unitarians

Below is the list of famous Unitarians from the BBC website, sadly a page which is no longer updated for some reason. Do we know of additional people who we would want to add to the list?

- John Quincy Adams - US president
- Louisa May Alcott - children's writer
- P. T. Barnum - circus owner
- Béla Bartók - composer
- Dorothea Dix - social reformer
- Ralph Waldo Emerson - writer and thinker
- Elizabeth Gaskell - novelist
- Edvard Greig - composer
- Sylvia Plath - poet
- Mary Wollstonecraft - feminist
- Christopher Reeve - actor
- Tim Berners-Lee - creator of the world wide web
- Pete Seeger - musician
- Lord Bullock - historian

It seems that this list is quite varied. Is one of the things these people have in common an ability to 'think outside the box'? Certainly they have made their mark in very individual ways, sometimes against strong opposition.

We have an information board in the Meeting House with examples of other celebrated Unitarians, including author Charles Dickens, novelist JB Priestley, author and journalist Daniel Defoe, mathematician, astronomer and physicist Isaac Newton.

These are all familiar names. How many people also realise they are/were Unitarians?

Many Paths – part 2

By John Ellis.

'Many Paths – part 1' was the title of an address given by me approximately 17 months ago. *'There are many paths to the same summit'* is a Buddhist quotation. Part 1 was about Islam.

Shortly before Christmas last year, I went to Mauritius for a week of golf instruction and play. Whilst there, I decided to treat myself to a massage. I went to the spa attached to the Paradis Hotel which was being run by people who appeared to me to be Indian women.

I said *'are you all Hindus?'* 'No' said the person in charge, *'I am a Christian.'* 'I am a Hindu, most of us are Hindus' said another. *'Are you all single? None of you have a red spot on your forehead like some of the other women around the hotel.'* 'No, we don't all follow that custom, we have rings like you, - look –' said one woman, showing her left hand.

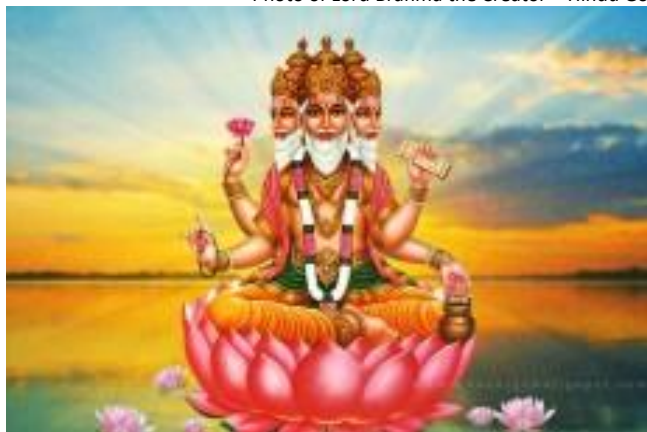
'... and we celebrate Christmas!' said another. I said *'Surely you can't? Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, believed to be the "Son of God"'. Do you send cards to one another and give presents?'* 'Oh yes, the children love it' was the answer.

Then another woman stated *'But there is only one God!'*

I thought, that's the end of the discussion, said 'Oh' and went for my massage.

I then thought that actually here was 'another path' and fairly obviously a peaceful one. Why can't all the different religions of the world hold such a relaxed view of each other?

Photo of Lord Brahma the Creator – Hindu God



Your six word faith story-

In the last issue I invited you to think about describing your personal religious journey/story and your view of our Unitarian Community in only six words. That takes some time and reflection and here are two examples from our Minsters to get you thinking and reflecting –

Cliff Reed wrote –

My Unitarian experience –

A lifetime
Keeping our
Chalice alight

My Unitarian faith –

One World
One Humanity
Divine Unity

Lewis Connolly wrote –

My own faith journey –

God is?
Up there?
Beyond Existence!

The Meeting House –

Technicoloured Tapestry,
one body,
furling compassionately

Maybe you have other suggestions? I hope to include more ideas and reflections to share over the next few issues. Please give it your time and thought. As we have no creed, there are likely to be an infinite number of descriptions, all as valid as the next.

Links of interest?

The Congregation of Dunham Road Chapel, Altrincham, Cheshire express their thoughts:

https://youtu.be/wKXGSt_XzpA

At a Western Union meeting in Bridgwater, Rev Bill Darlison asks if Unitarian worship could be improved by ensuring it contains different styles:

<https://youtu.be/3JeXrl41LQs>

A Unitarian Sunday Service at Rochdale Church:

<https://youtu.be/ffEYw8Xe-TE>

Poetry Group

This month the poetry group are reading a book by poet Stanley Kunitz. Morag Blue sent in this photo with the caption-

*'My garden, my life, my poems –
A planned disorder'*

Stanley Kunitz



UFOS – Unitarian Focus on Seeing- In February the theme for the photos was 'Hands', so these gardening hands above and sewing hands from Riena below are good examples.



Events - in March -

Saturday 4th – Pride Concert – Ipswich Corn Exchange 7pm

Tuesday 7th – Cambridge Poets for Oxfam – Cambridge Church Hall 7.30 for 8pm - £5 on the door.

Thursday 9th – Suffolk Theology Forum – Co-Op Education Centre 7.30pm Prof Tom O'Loughlin on *'From Jerusalem Temple to Parish Church: the Confusion of Tables with Altars in Christianity'*
Monday 20th – Trustees meeting

Advance dates for your diary –

April 10th to 13th - UK Unitarian General Assembly meeting in Birmingham

April 23rd – Exploring Insights into existential questions based on science and religion – 3pm to 7pm Zoroastrian Centre Harrow HA2 9TL

April 29th Rebecca and Imran's wedding

May 13th & 14th Framlingham Meeting House

Tercentenary celebrations

June 26th to 1st July – Michael Lumb's piece 'Redemption' exhibited at the Meeting House.

July 15th – Music on the Green – charity event at our MH – more below

August 13th – charity BBQ at Maggie's home after the service

Services

Our Minister Lewis Connolly will take services each Sunday at 10.45. All welcome.

Sunday 26th March is Mother's Day, so we will have a special service and decorate the Meeting House with daffodils.

Sunday 30th April is our Anniversary Service with lunch afterwards in the Hall. Ann Baepler is co-ordinating this.

Music on the Green

We will be doing a lot of maintenance and renovation work on our Meeting House later this year and to help fund this we are organising a music event on 15th July which we hope you will all support. We will have live music (all sorts) on the green beside the MH hall, teas, coffees, cakes, raffle, books stall, white elephant stall ... so will need a lot of support please. Contact Tessa to volunteer or offer cakes, music, loan of gazebos, ideas, white elephants ...

Refugees - by Roger Chapman

Here are two photos taken in October 2016 on a visit to Poland. Both photos picture the transport of local children to safety from war. One photo is of a memorial to the event outside Gdansk railway station - the other again near to the railway station at Gdynia. Such a memorial statue is also to be seen near to Liverpool Street Station, London. It was interesting to see the two memorials dedicated to the compassionate event which included children from Poland whilst I was in Poland. An example of two ends being brought together as one through love.



It was the recent move to halt the programme of child refugees to the UK that prompted me to put forward my photos.

Roger Chapman



As Liverpool Street station is where we come into London from Ipswich, I am sure many of us have seen the statue of the children there – again children with baggage (Ed.)

Birthdays in March

Happy birthday this month to Joel Waller on 7th and to Jenny Pile on 24th

Thank you

At our Christmas collections we raised £373.43 for Christian Aid. Here is an extract from the letter sent by Linda Howes, the Regional Administrator – Your response to our emergency appeal for Syria is greatly appreciated.

We have long-standing partner organisations that urgently need funds to continue supporting existing vulnerable families and prepare to reach thousands more. Our partners can provide essential humanitarian supplies such as food, fuel for cooking, hygiene and sanitation kits, water containers and cash assistance, as well as psychological support for those who are suffering because of the conflict. So far, we have reached tens of thousands of people within Syria and in neighbouring Lebanon and Iraq with a combination of food, essentials like blankets to keep warm, cooking sets, health and hygiene kits, and psychosocial support. Your support is enabling our partners in Lebanon and Iraq, and within Syria itself, to continue to respond to the desperate humanitarian needs of some of the most vulnerable displaced communities.

The ongoing civil war in Syria, which is now in its fifth year, has left 13.5 million people needing humanitarian assistance. Christian Aid is very concerned at the plight of civilians throughout Syria, many thousands are still living in siege-like conditions. Christian Aid calls for a total ceasefire and humanitarian access to civilians in besieged areas. Christian Aid is renewing its call for the UK government to significantly step up its diplomatic engagement on Syria to hasten a political process for ending the nearly six-year long conflict, and prevent the deaths of even more civilians.

Thought for the month –

A clear conscience is the sign of a bad memory.

Anon

Ipswich Unitarian Newsletter –

For contributions to future newsletters, please email them to Tessa at - ipswichunitarian@gmail.com or post them to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS before the copy deadline for the next issue of Wednesday 29th March 2017. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive this regularly by email, please just ask.

To contact our secretary Riena Jackson, ring 01473 210064/email - mjack76748@aol.com

To contact our Minister, Lewis Connolly, you can email him at revdlewisconnolly@gmail.com or ring him on 01473 422528.

