



## Vigil for Turkey and Syria



Photo by Ben Parker – BBC

Ipswich held a vigil on 15<sup>th</sup> February to remember and show support for the people suffering in Syria and Turkey following the earthquake which affected large areas of both countries. Families in Ipswich are also affected and speakers from the local Kurdish, Turkish and Syrian communities along with the Mayor of Ipswich and a C of E minister spoke of their distress and the need to donate to the disaster fund -

<https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal?gclid=CjwKCAiAxvGfBhB-EiwAMPakqsAcrSUAI4OGWRKYw-GiwzzTal4nmjJiZks6uOQCfrp94bm1C->

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We also remember in our prayers and services those who are affected by the natural and unnatural disasters in the world. In his service on 26<sup>th</sup> February, Rev Cliff Reed read the prayer he wrote at the beginning of the Ukraine war to mark the anniversary of Russia's invasion -

### A Prayer in Time of War: for Ukraine

For the people suffering under aggression and unjust war we ask the strength and endurance to prevail. And may we find wise ways to help them to do so.

For the aggressor and the tyrant we ask the grace of utter defeat, that they may learn humility and be freed from the folly of their arrogance, their inhumanity and their criminal ways.

For the human instruments of the oppressor and the warmonger, those fooled or forced into the commission of evil deeds, we ask the insight to see the wickedness and illegitimacy of their master's orders – and the courage to disobey them.

For ourselves and all humanity we ask for the impulse to be kind, to be generous to those driven from their homes and homeland, those in desperate need of welcome, food and shelter, those seeking refuge from the scourge of war, those cruelly touched by violence inflicted on them without valid reason or just cause.

For us all we ask for the love to heal all enmity and for the wisdom to bring us, weak and sinful as we are, to the way of peace with justice.

May it be so.

Cliff Reed.

## **Finding My Way – an Essex Ministry**

This is a lecture organised by the University of Suffolk and will be given by Ivor Moody, the Vice-Dean of Chelmsford cathedral who will be speaking about responding creatively to the challenges of our contemporary world and changing British society, drawing on his past experiences and his present role as Vice Dean and Canon Pastor of Chelmsford Cathedral since 2010.

Ivor is Chaplain to Essex County Council, Chair of the Mid-Essex Inter Faith Forum and also Chair of Essex Mind and Spirit, a community voluntary organisation which seeks to promote positive relationships between faith and spirituality and mental health issues.

Wednesday, 12 April 2023,  
18:00 to 19:30

Waterfront Building, University of  
Suffolk, Neptune Quay, Ipswich, IP4 1QJ

Ann Baeppler intends to go to this and would welcome some company. Contact Ann on [annbaeppler@gmail.com](mailto:annbaeppler@gmail.com)

### LESSON OF TIME - **KARMA**

When a bird is alive.. It eats Ants.  
When the bird is dead.. Ants eat the bird.  
Time & Circumstances can change at any time. Don't devalue or hurt anyone in life.  
You may be powerful today. But remember. Time is more powerful than you! One tree makes a million match sticks... Only one match stick needed to burn a million trees... **So be good and do good.**

Thank you to Linda King for this contribution.

## **Unitarian Weddings Initiative – “All you Need is Love”**

Advertised as “Would you like your Chapel or Meeting House to become the perfect place for a wedding this year?”, this online event was hosted by Rev. Melda Grantham, who leads on the Unitarian Weddings Initiative. Unitarians from across the UK joined in to hear Rev. Melda Grantham, Rev. Phil Waldron and Joanna Drake share ideas, stories, and practical tips to help Unitarians develop their buildings as a wedding venue, ably hosted by Lizzie Kingston-Harrison on Monday 16 January 2023. We heard some excellent advice from some very experienced wedding venue managers, including what to do if your chapel is bang in the middle of a busy city centre with no parking!

What stood out was the need for professionalism, if your chapel or church is going to be a successful venue in the middle of a crowded market – this was especially emphasised by Rev. Waldron. It's certainly the case that any congregation thinking of doing this should seriously consider if you have the resources in terms of experienced co-ordinators and organisers, and assistants – perhaps best of all, paid assistants – to offer people the best experience you possibly can. If not, it's best to get the infrastructure in place first rather than risk letting people down. The stories were inspirational, and it's great to hear Unitarians moving forwards. Many thanks to Rev. Grantham for organising it, and to the speakers!

By Louise Reeve – Chairperson of Newcastle Unitarians – reprinted with permission from their newsletter.

At Ipswich we have held weddings, blessings and civil ceremonies (as well as funerals) for many years and look forward to more enquiries. We do everything we can to make the experience special. Our Meeting House is a beautiful venue and can welcome up to 150 people to celebrate with the couple.

### **From the Archives-**

A snippet from the Secretary's Report to the AGM of the congregation, March 15<sup>th</sup> 1964.

...with no particular reference to any age group, it is an accepted fact that Unitarians do not regard church attendance as such an essential spiritual necessity as more orthodox church members, but surely some form of regular contact is essential, if the common bond of free thought which unites Unitarians is to be strengthened, and enabled to make some impact on the life of the community. In the coming year, I hope we shall all increase our effort to play as active a part as is humanly possible in the life of this church, as the life or death of Unitarianism in this town is the responsibility of each one of us.  
Doreen McNeil.

Contributed by Linda King who, with Paulette Reed, is gradually working through our archive papers, sorting them and shredding anything which is redundant. We hope she may find other gems.

### **Services in March**

5<sup>th</sup> March - Andrew Benedict, East of England Faiths Agency

12<sup>th</sup> March - Rev Cliff Reed, Minister Emeritus.

19<sup>th</sup> March - John Stevens, Ipswich Unitarians.

26<sup>th</sup> – March - Ann Baeppler, Liz Constable and Paulette Reed. - Ipswich Unitarians.

### **Advance notice**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April we will be celebrating the 323<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Meeting House. The service will be led by Rev Sarah Tinker, for many years minister to the Kensington Unitarians worshipping at Essex Church, London. Following the service there will be a congregational lunch. Everyone is welcome – pop the date in your diary!

## **Unitarian Women's Group Conference – 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2023 Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow**

*Exploring the Spiritual Quest and  
Women's Experience*



**Women of all ages are welcome to this weekend of friendship**

We will explore through workshops and discussion. The conference will be facilitated by **Lynn Davies and Rev Celia Midgley**. Alongside the thoughtful exploration of the issues raised, there will be fun and laughter!

Booking forms can be found on the side table at the Meeting House – or speak to Linda King - [lindapendal@gmail.com](mailto:lindapendal@gmail.com)

The Nightingale Centre:  
[info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk](mailto:info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk)

or 01298 871218

Remember to book early to ensure a place!

### **Poetry Group**

Our next poetry meeting will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm and we will look at poems by John Donne.

All are welcome to share their ideas – contact Riena Jackson for more details -

[mjack76748@aol.com](mailto:mjack76748@aol.com)

## **Trans Awareness Training November 2022**

Following the passing of the resolution at our General Assembly in April 2022:

FROM THE FOY SOCIETY

The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

- a) Affirms with joy that each person's understanding and statement of their own gender identity is a matter of conscience;
- b) Affirms that transgender rights are human rights
- c) Joins the British Medical Association, the Trades Union Congress and others in civil society in urging the adoption of a self-declaration model for gender recognition by the UK and devolved governments; and
- d) Requests that the Chief Officer lobby for this model in response to UK or devolved government consultations and on any other suitable occasion.

many Unitarians commented that they felt that they would like to be more aware of trans history and related social issues, and a space to discuss questions and learn more. The Northern Unitarian Association and FOY Society provided funding for north east trainer, Ellie Lowther FRSA of Essential Learning Curve Ltd., to provide two online trans awareness sessions on 17th and 19th November 2022, with Louise Reeve at Newcastle Unitarians doing the organising!

40 Unitarians and fellow travellers joined the Thursday evening session, and around 20 joined on the Saturday morning. Over two hours, Ellie (a trans woman and person of faith) led us through the history of trans people in the UK, issues many trans people face, and touched on issues of language and what the correct terminology is. Her down-to-earth and friendly approach helped people ask questions and explore these topics and contributed to a positive learning environment. If anyone would like to know more, you can contact Ellie Lowther here:

<https://essentiallearningcurve.com/>

By Louise Reeve – Chairperson at Newcastle

## **Birthdays in March**

Happy birthday to Joel Waller on 7<sup>th</sup> and to Jenny Pile on 24<sup>th</sup>. We hope you both have a great celebration.

## **Book Group**

We next meet on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm via Zoom to discuss 'Demon Copperhead' by Barbara Kingsolver. Feel free to join us – contact Tessa Forsdike for the link –

[tessa@tessajordan.co.uk](mailto:tessa@tessajordan.co.uk)

## **St Patrick's Day Blessing**

May your glass be ever full,  
May the roof over your head always be strong  
And may you be in heaven half an hour before  
the devil knows you're dead



## **Disclaimer**

We welcome contributions from all members and friends of our congregation. Views expressed in the articles are those of the individual and not necessarily those of our congregation or of our Unitarian community.

## **Contacts**

Contributions PLEASE for the next newsletter to Tessa before the deadline of Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March by email to [jpswichunitarian@gmail.com](mailto:jpswichunitarian@gmail.com) or post to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS

To contact our Secretary, ring 01473 728498 email [tessa@tessajordan.co.uk](mailto:tessa@tessajordan.co.uk)

Website – [www.unitarianipswich.com](http://www.unitarianipswich.com)

## **Thought for the month**

The God who existed before any religion counts on you to make the oneness of the human family known and celebrated. - Desmond Tutu