



Pulling Out All the Stops!



Our organist Robert Waller has been playing for us for fifty years this March and that is such a special achievement we want to celebrate and to thank him.

Generous to a fault, Robert is organising a concert to be held on Saturday 16th March at 7pm. He and his friend Andrew Garfath-Cox will each be playing the organ, Matthew Smith will be singing accompanied by Robert on the piano and we hope to have a representative from Bishops (the family company which has looked after the organ for many years) to give a short talk about the history of the organ itself.

There is no entry fee for the concert, and all are welcome. We will however be inviting donations to the charity we are supporting this year – Brave Futures.

We will also be serving refreshments. Do publicise the event and invite all your friends – fifty years is well worth recognising!

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An urgent humanitarian response to the suffering in Gaza and Israel



"We express our solidarity with the urgent pleas for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, a lasting peace and common security in Israel-Palestine by the United Nations General Assembly, Red Cross/Red Crescent and other international aid agencies, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Pope Francis, Religions for Peace, Jewish, Muslim, Quaker, Roman Catholic, Unitarian and other religious peacemakers as well as people of goodwill around the world who wish to see an immediate end of the death and destruction caused by this war and achieve a just peace and true reconciliation between the people of Palestine and Israel.

We encourage all who are concerned by the grave crisis in Gaza and Israel and the suffering of all victims of war and violence, civilian and military, in Gaza and Israel to respond generously to the lifesaving British Red Cross Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory Appeal to enable the sending of urgent medical and other humanitarian aid to victims of this dangerously escalating war endangering ever increasing numbers of Palestinian and Israeli lives."

(Response signed by Unitarians). If you wish to respond to this emergency appeal please donate by phone on 0300 456 1155, [online](#) or by post to: Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory Appeal, British Red Cross, 44 Moorfields, London EC2Y 9AL. Thank you.

Cheque for Suffolk Sight



We welcomed Wendy Johns, Communications and Engagement Officer for Suffolk Sight to our service on 11th February when we presented a cheque for £700, which was the amount we raised for the charity. Wendy was very pleased, thanked us and included a mention of our fundraising in their latest newsletter.

Our charity focus in 2024 is to raise funds for Brave Futures. Please talk to Liz Constable about any fundraising ideas.

Teddies for Hucklow

A few years ago, Hucklow Old Chapel (Unitarian) started collecting teddies and decided to donate them to the Send A Child To Hucklow Fund, our own Unitarian children's charity. They live in the chapel until a group of disadvantaged children (not the regular school children) are visiting.

At this point Ann, the housekeeper at The Nightingale Centre, takes time to choose an appropriate teddy for each child to take home. And, yes, this includes the boys.

With 400 children visiting this year alone we need to keep up a steady supply. So, I invite all of you to see if you can knit, sew or buy a small teddy to donate. I can assure you these teddies are much loved by the recipient.

This appeal has been received from Sue Catts (prev. Cooper) a former member of our congregation. If any reader of the Ipswich Unitarian is able to respond, I will be very willing to deliver on my visit to Hucklow in September. Linda King

Jamaica

“Get it together in Jamaica.
Soulful town, soulful people,
I see you’re having fun.
Dancing to the reggae rhythm,
Oh, island in the sun! Come on and
Smile, you’re in Jamaica!”

Bob Marley from Smile Jamaica

Four of us (Clifford, Stephen, Matthew, and Paulette) travelled to Negril, (in the west) Jamaica for a well-earned rest, and to top up our vitamin D. Our first week in an all-inclusive adults only resort was bliss. The aptly name Sunset in the Palms was the perfect setting with several varieties of palm trees and home to Jamaica’s national bird the streamertail hummingbird and others like the bananaquit, loggerhead kingbird, and the over-wintering American redstart.



Week two we drove along the north coast road 174 miles (280km) to the parish of Portland, in the east; passing through townships and markets where local craft and seasonal produce is for sale. Our accommodation at Pimento Lodge was more basic but perched high up on a hillside with wonderful views of the warm azure blue Caribbean Sea.

Top of our list was to explore at a leisurely pace the non-tourist areas and bird-watching. One day we went to a local attraction, Reach Falls. Stephen and Matthew braved it into the cooler waters then with a guide swim behind the falls through the water and up to the caves. Clifford and I sat and waited for them to return, looking out for any birds that may come by.

Paulette Reed

Mayor’s Charity Quiz



We four Unitarians – David and Tessa Forsdike, Sue Pollard and Liz Constable – entered the Mayor’s charity quiz, representing the Meeting House, especially as the charity fundraising was partly for our charity of the year, Brave Futures. We did our best and were particularly grateful to have David on our team. At the half way stage we were 8th and finished 14th out of 20 teams – so we didn’t disgrace ourselves, made our presence felt and contributed to the funds.

Book Group

We next meet on Thursday 14th March at 7pm via Zoom to discuss ‘Politics on the Edge’ by Rory Stewart. Anyone interested is welcome to join for this meeting and/or all future ones. Just let Tessa know you would like the link.

Birthdays in March

A very happy birthday to Joel Waller on 7th and to Jenny Pile on 24th.

Services in March

3rd - Paulette Reed, Ipswich Unitarians

10th - Linda King, Ipswich Unitarians - Mothering Sunday

17th - Gemma Smith from 'Brave Futures' with Liz Constable & Linda King

24th - Rev Margaret Kirk, Retired Unitarian Minister, Whitby. (via ZOOM)

29th - Rev Cliff Reed - Good Friday (& Communion)

31st - Rev Cliff Reed - Easter Sunday

Lighthouse Bags

When we were supporting Lighthouse Women's Aid as our main charity, we gathered items for bags to gift to women and children who had had to escape from their homes at short notice. We have just a few items now and would like to pass these on to the charity. Currently what they are seeking are – hairbrushes; combs; body sprays; deodorants and shower gel. If anyone wishes to contribute these items – or to gift money to buy them, please contact Liz Constable - elconstable@gmail.com
Thank you in advance.

Interior Decoration

We are pleased to report that the interior decoration of the Meeting House is now all complete and we have almost finished sorting and cleaning so that we feel ready for our summer opening in May. We are particularly grateful to the Friends of the Ipswich Unitarian Meeting House for their donation of £1,750 towards the cost of this work.

The Friends are a secular group who support and fundraise for the Meeting House because of its history and national importance. If you would like to join them, do contact Membership Secretary Sue Pollard on iuhfriends@gmail.com

ONLINE MEDITATION GROUPS

Looking for insight, tranquillity, and fellowship? Sit with Unitarians and friends in these online meditation circles.

Stillness at 7 (Mondays, 7pm) - reflective, meditative, space with Rev. Mark Hutchinson. [Zoom Link](#). Passcode: 3c9Pb1.

Meditation with the Unitarian Transformers (Tuesdays, 7.30-8.15pm) - Our meditations are always gentle and suitable for people with no prior experience of meditation. Sometimes we use guided meditation, sometimes breath work and mantra, and sometimes poetry and music. All welcome. With Rev. Laura Dobson. [Zoom Link](#). Passcode: 3c9Pb1.

Sacred Stillness (2nd Tuesday of the month, 7.30-8.45pm) - Meditation and mutual support for worship leaders and anyone who regularly holds space for others. With Richard Bober and Lizzie Kingston Harrison. [Zoom Link](#).

Contemplative Prayer and Chanting

(2nd Wednesday of the month, 7.30-8.30pm) - A time of chanting and guided contemplative prayer to open the heart to Love through three forms of contemplation: praying for others, mindfulness, and opening to loving encounter with the Beloved. This practice is rooted in the conviction that there is a universal, unconditional source of love within each person and that it is possible to have a personal encounter with this source. The source has many names, but we often name them as "God". With Rev. Stephen Lingwood. [Zoom Link](#). Meeting ID: 853 9756 6800.

Together in Meditation (Thursdays, 7.15-8.45pm)

- Open to everyone, both Unitarians and non-Unitarians, those with no experience of meditation are invited to join alongside those with an established practice. We aim to create an open, loving, and inclusive space for all to find tranquillity and insight through meditation. With Richard Bober, Rev. Sheena Gabriel, Rob Oulton, and Lizzie Kingston Harrison. [Email for the link](#)

Passwords

Caution – if easily offended – please do not read this article –

Senior (or anyone?) trying to reset a password.

Windows: please enter your new password

User: Cabbage

Windows: sorry the password must be more than 8 characters

User: boiled cabbage

Windows: Sorry the password must contain 1 numerical character

User: 1 boiled cabbage

Windows: sorry the password cannot have blank spaces

User: 50DAMNboiled cabbages

Windows: sorry the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively

User:

50DamnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDontGiveMeAccessNow!

Windows: sorry the password cannot contain punctuation

User:

ReallyPissedOff50DamnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDontGiveMeAccessNow

Windows: sorry that password is already in use

Thanks to Paula Chapman for finding this to share!

Poetry Group

The poetry group will meet on Thursday, 28th March at 2 pm and will look at poems by Langston Hughes. Contact Riena Jackson for details - mjack76748@aol.com

Ipswich Weekender

The Spring Weekender events will be held in the town on 22nd to 24th March. There will be craft activities and music events. More details on the website – www.ipswichentertains.co.uk/ipswich-weekender

Celebrating 325 Years of Dissent: Unitarian Meeting House Ipswich

We are very proud to be organising a conference in co-operation with the Department of Humanities of the University of Suffolk. It will be held on Friday 17th May, with conducted tours of the Meeting House in the morning, followed by presentations at the Hold (the record office) in the afternoon. Rev Cliff Reed will be talking about the congregation who built the Meeting House and what was important for them when designing it. Dr Elizabeth Kingston Harrison will be talking about the development of dissent through to Unitarianism. All the Meeting House records will be in display at the Hold. This will be an opportunity to learn more about our movement and our history.

The Ipswich Society will be sponsoring the event and will support with volunteers. The University will be supplying refreshments at the Hold and helping with publicity.

Put the date in your diary now!

Thought for the month

There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing, be nothing. Aristotle

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 Forsdike before the deadline of Wednesday 27th March, ideally by email to tessa@tessajordan.co.uk
To contact our Secretary, ring 01473 728498 (or email tessa@tessajordan.co.uk) or ring our Treasurer Robert Waller on 01473 610723