

Anniversary Service and Lunch



We celebrated the 322nd anniversary of the opening of our Meeting House with a service on 24th April and a shared potluck lunch afterwards. As ever, there was more food and drink than we could eat – a definite loaves and fishes scenario! The photo shows some of those who stayed for the food and the chat.

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SUFFOLK PRIDE

Suffolk Pride hosts the LGBTQ+ Pride Festival in Ipswich. Alongside this, they work with the community to promote diversity, community, acceptance & inclusion.

In 2020 a virtual parade was held after the Waterfront parade was postponed because of COVID. Suffolk Pride will be returning to the Ipswich Waterfront on Saturday 18 June.

The festivities will begin with the Pride March, starting at midday from Dance East along the Waterfront.

Ipswich Unitarians have regularly supported the Pride Festival in Ipswich and have again registered our interest in participating in the Pride March 2022.

Please put the 18 June in your diary and join us behind our ‘celebrate diversity banner’ in support of Suffolk Pride.

Throughout the day there will be entertainment, colour, fun, noise and lots of smiling faces!

Further information from Liz Constable or Linda King.



Report on the Unitarian General Assembly Meeting 2022

Gratitude and transformation were the two themes that stood out for me at the GA meeting in Birmingham. Gratitude first of all, to the Trustees for allowing me, as your delegate, to spend two whole days with an amazing group of fellow Unitarians. Gratitude for the opportunity to come together again after Covid was also expressed in the Opening Service. Covid has forced congregations to think of ways to keep connected which has resulted in innovative services attracting often more than the usual attenders to their zoom meetings. We have shown that we are able to adapt and now have an opportunity to transform our experiences into even stronger intentions and actions for the future.

With these encouraging words in our ears the plenary business sessions started, skilfully led by our President and Chair Ann Mills. The Motions were discussed at length but also to a very strict time schedule and four out of the four motions we had discussed the week before were carried. This means that our vote against the logo-investigation-motion did not prevent the motion from being carried. People felt very strongly that the congregations should have been consulted – like we did - and wished to find out what the reason for non-consultations had been and a possible return to the old logo - unlike us. It was made clear that the new logo will be used by Essex Hall but that individual congregations can keep their logo if they wish to do so.

The NHS anti-privatisation motion was passed and very moving speeches were made in favour of the transgender right to self-declare their own gender. This motion was passed too. The motion for the ‘We the People Campaign’, arguing for a bottoms-up democracy and more say for indigenous people in the UN was passed too, though it needs to be worked out further. The days are well organised and there is hardly a free moment apart from the coffee and tea breaks and of course lunch and dinner, where you can join any table and meet Unitarians from all over Britain and other countries. Having been previously to the GA, I am always amazed how easy it is to start a conversation and even begin a

friendship with your neighbour at the table. It must be because we have so much in common on a deeper level.

I went to several workshops and learned a great deal. The workshop I found most inspiring was led by the UUA Minister for Worship Erika Hewitt. She led us through a service with the help of Google Earth and space exploration pictures allowing us to experience the wholeness of the cosmos and our place in it, connected to everything. She also engaged us in learning a song and had us talking to each other after questions she posed. There were words, pictures, music and participation. She used this service to help those who take services to ask themselves: What makes you story/service spiritual; How does your message engage your relationship with the Universal Spirit/with that which is larger than us; What transformation is embedded in your story; How does your story embody hope; How does your story invite people to a new engagement with others, the world and with that which is larger than us? I felt spiritually uplifted by this engaging service. Her modern, deeply spiritual approach to services had also impressed Cliff and he encouraged me to buy her book *‘The Shared Pulpit’* for our Meeting House. This, together with another publication called *‘Why Are We Here?’* will be on our bookshelf and can be borrowed.

There was much more of course: the rousing address by the Welsh minister Wyn Thomas in the Anniversary Service, the interesting Keynote Lecture and workshop by Indra Adnan about the *“Politics of Waking-Up; Power and Possibility in the Fractal Age”* in which she talked about inner transformation that is essential in the work to tackle the crises of our time. Her lecture will no doubt be published in *The Inquirer*. Overall I was impressed by the spiritual depth of the meetings this year and feel enriched by my attendance.

Riena Jackson

Poetry Group

The Poetry Group will meet next on Thursday 26th May at 2pm and will be discussing work by W B Yeats.

Contact Riena Jackson for more details – all welcome.

Book Group

The next meeting of the Book Group is on Thursday 26th May at 7pm via Zoom. We will be discussing *‘The Manningtree Witches’* by A K Blakemore. For the link ask Tessa Forsdike – all welcome.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy birthday in May to Daniele Falcinelli on 2nd; to Simon King on 16th; to Gerrie Hudson on 28th; to Paula Chapman on 31st. May the sun shine on your celebrations!

Sandra and Malcolm Hawes recently celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary with family and friends –



Congratulations too to Claire Johnson and Cass on their first wedding anniversary. They held a ceremony last year at the Meeting House when Covid restrictions meant the number of guests was limited to 15. They are still hoping to go away for their honeymoon.



We wish both couples many more happy years together.

Wedding in Kenya



Our organist Robert Waller and wife Hottensiah travelled to Kenya for a family wedding in March. Here they are pictured with the bride before leaving for the church.

Be careful what you write ...

During a transcribing 'session' of old Parish Records at the Suffolk Archives, a colleague recently came across the following entry:

Pettistree 1744/5

Ref: FC104/D1/1

William Jaye was buried the 24 day of Mar (being the last of his name in this parish and an end of a very worthless, malicious, ill-natured family having for ages been remarkable for oppressing and (as much as in them lay) for defrauding the minister of this parish of their just dues which character this person kept up to the last day of his life. Witness my hand Richard Temple, Vicar.

Linda King

Services in May

1st - led by Rowland Howarth - Faith & Spirituality Network and former L'Arche Community Member.
8th - led by Rev Cliff Reed. Minister Emeritus.
Service followed by Communion.
15th - Helen Mason. - Director of Unitarian College.
22nd - Andrew Benedict - East of England Faiths Agency.
29th - t.b.c.

This year our Trustees will be advertising the vacancy of Minister to the Ipswich Congregation. Have you ever wondered how Unitarian Ministers are now trained?

Now's the opportunity to find out as Helen Mason, Director of Unitarian College will be leading our service on the 15th May.

A born Unitarian (Helen's grandfather was a Minister) her career has been as an educator mostly in mainstream Further Education before she took on the challenge, three years ago, of heading up the new College. She enjoys travelling around the UK meeting Unitarians and talking about the work of the College. She lives in Southampton and has a teenage daughter.

CAN – Clean Air Now

The government has promised to set new legal targets to reduce air pollution.

However, they want to wait until 2040 to take action. This is not good enough.

You may want to join with Tony Horner (organiser of Ipswich CAN) in contributing to the Lungs for Mums response to the government's consultation. <https://envirotarget.uk/mums-for-lungs>

You might also like to email your MP expressing your view on this issue.

You can let Tony know you are supporting the campaign by emailing him on tonyhorner2@gmail.com

East Anglian Women's Group

The East Anglian Unitarian Women's Group will be meeting in Ipswich at 11am, Tuesday 17th May. All Unitarian women are welcome. Further information from Paulette, Riena, Liz or Linda.

Code of ethics: an invitation to contribute from the Findhorn Unitarian Network and Executive Committee

At the 2021 General Assembly AGM, a resolution was passed that requested the GA Executive Committee to consult widely and to prepare a Unitarian Code of Ethics. The initial step in the process is for the GA Executive Committee to 'call for submissions from member congregations, affiliated societies, districts, Ministers, Lay Leaders and others employed or engaged in the Unitarian movement'.

To this end we invite you to complete a questionnaire which also includes a request for any documents in use to be made available. It is hoped that this work will be a resource for all Unitarians in the UK and is a way to articulate our core principles. It is therefore vital to incorporate the perspectives and experience of as many of you as is possible.

Responses are invited from both individuals and from committees representing Unitarian congregations, Districts, and Societies as well as from those employed in a Unitarian post.

Please respond to the survey from the perspective of your Unitarian experience. The GA Executive Committee has delegated the collation of responses to a working party. Responses will be held in confidence.

You can complete the survey here:

<https://srvy.pro/2D5J6PZ>

Suffolk Preservation Society

Our Meeting House is featured in the latest issue of the Suffolk Preservation Society newsletter – on page 18. Here is the link to view it -

<https://www.suffolksociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Suffolk-View-Spring-web.pdf>

Lighthouse Women's Aid

We were pleased to present a cheque for £2000 to Deb Johnson, Business Co-Ordinator for Lighthouse, who came to our service on 3rd April when we also gave her the next batch of Care Packs for the women and children who have to leave their homes at short notice. The photo shows some of our women who have been involved in sewing and filling the bags. We fill them with essential items and a few special treats, such as books and toys for the children. If you would like to contribute items or money towards them, please contact Tessa Forsdike.



L to R – Rachel Sloane; Ruth Day; Tessa Forsdike; Deb Johnson; Paulette Reed; Karen Poulter; Paula Chapman. Thank you to all.

Build Your Own Theology/ Beliefs

The first session of the BYOT/B course started in the Upper Hall on Thursday 21st April from 6.30 to 8.30. It is led by Adam Whybray and follows a Unitarian course with the aim of helping us to clarify what we do personally believe. There is no prescribed credo to aim for – more an invitation to develop your own. We meet alternate weeks at the same time. The next session is on Thursday 5th May at 6.30pm. You are welcome to join at that meeting, after which the group will be closed to new people. Contact Adam for more details - adamwhybray@gmail.com

Events for your diary

Friday 29th April – Launch of Peter Watkins' poetry book – 'As if Everything Were a Miracle' – Meeting House at 6.30pm

Wednesday 11th May – Life's Stages – music, art, memorable quotes, humour, poetry – at The Hold 2pm to 3.30. Free

Friday 20th May 7pm - Organ Recital by our organist Robert Waller in aid of Lighthouse Women's Aid. Donations invited.

Saturday 25th June 11am to 3pm – Bric a Brac/ Jumble organised by the Friends group in aid of our Meeting House - £5 per table.

HELP PLEASE

We need volunteers to sit in the Meeting House and welcome visitors on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 12 noon to 16.00 from May to September – please see Adam Whybray and the rota in the entrance porch.

David Forsdike needs some help with bricking up a wall behind the Meeting House – voluntary labourers or bricklayers invited to support him. Contact David on 07855 297909.

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 Wednesday 25th May by email to

ipswichunitarian@gmail.com or post to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS

To contact our Secretary ring 01473 728498 email tessa@tessajordan.co.uk

Website – www.unitarianipswich.com

Thought for the month

To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance.

Oscar Wilde