

**Stalybridge Unitarian Church is a  
Free Christian Congregation.**

**A member of The East Cheshire Union of Unitarian and Free  
Christian Churches.**

**A member of The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free  
Christian Churches.**

**A member of The North Cheshire Unitarian Sunday School  
Union**

**A corporate member of The Unitarian Christian Association**

# **THE CHALICE**

**STALYBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH  
MAGAZINE**

**JULY/AUGUST 2007**

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS KINDLY  
SPONSORED BY  
MARGARET AND ROY COOPER  
IN MEMORY OF HAPPY TIMES  
AT HOB HILL**

## MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

I am writing this letter on June 21<sup>st</sup> the Summer Solstice, better known to most people as the longest day. Sadly, the weather isn't too good today so I don't think we will be able to appreciate the long light evening fully! June 21<sup>st</sup> is the day which marks the official beginning of summer in the northern hemisphere and the beginning of winter in the southern hemisphere despite what television and radio stations seem to think these days when they incorrectly announce the change of seasons on the first day of June, September, December and March. Quite a number of churches will mark this event in some way but it is something which can easily be misunderstood. It is often thought to be the preserve of our New Age friends and something which should be avoided by Christians.

Actually, the Summer Solstice is a festival which should be important to Christians. God's blessing and presence is declared by the cycles of the sun. (Read Psalm 19 verses 1-6). We do not worship the sun but neither should we worship God apart from God's creation; we worship God in deep gratitude for all of nature's messengers and blessings. Christians have always been wary of tying worship closely and overtly to the cycles of nature. It was a way Christians distinguished themselves from pagan ritual practice. However, in doing so we may have moved too far in the direction of diminishing the importance of God's creation and the seasons in worship. We minimize the place of nature at our peril. All too easily we become insensitive to the wonder of God's world and our interrelatedness with all the other creatures. When that happens it is only a small step to the abuse of the natural world which we see all too often. Let us never diminish the importance of God's creation in our lives or in our worship.

A Prayer for Summer:

Radiance of heaven, Light of our souls, Splendour of God's glory bright, we greet you with joy as we begin the summer of the year. We want to play, holiday, and change our pace under the warmth of your sun. Save us from forgetting you. Give us new eyes to see what you are doing in others ...in those who have sunshine but no relief from suffering ...in the inner places of our hearts that need your truth and light ...Refresh us in hearing what you are saying through the Goliaths we face ...through the deprivation as well as the fullness ... through the storms that threaten us but cease when they hear your voice ...We thank you for the coming of summer and the radiance of your living Word shining among us. Amen.

Wishing you every blessing.

Andrew.



## MONTHLY DISCUSSION GROUP

Our discussions have got off to a good start and we have already looked at our thoughts about God and about scripture. Over the next few months we will be looking at human nature, Jesus and our own liberal Christian tradition. The next meetings will be held on:

Wednesday July 18<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm

No meeting in August

Wednesday September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm

Wednesday October 17<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm

Everyone is welcome to join us.

## WARDEN'S NOTES

Every so often a television programme (other than the news or sport) comes along that I just have to watch. I have been captivated by TRAWLERMEN 2 showing on BBC1 every evening this week. It is a documentary about fishing boats working some of the most dangerous waters in the world so that we can have our fish and seafood on our plates any time we want them.

It is obvious that these are hard men, but more importantly they are very brave. Brave is a word that is overused these days; footballers are "brave" for going into a tackle; politicians are "brave" for proposing unpopular legislation. This is plainly nonsense.

Fishing is heavily restricted by quotas and this makes the job of the fishermen even more difficult. Remember, they have to catch fish to get paid.

On one of the programmes one of the boats was attempting to fish in a force 8 storm with waves over 16 feet high, if they managed to catch any fish the crew then had to gut them on a boat going up and down like a mad roller coaster ride. Towards the end of the programme the boat "lost" its nets valued at £4000 and this reduced the hardened skipper to tears. It was humbling to watch. I suspect that insurance on fishing nets is either very expensive or maybe even impossible to obtain.

These men are working in dangerous conditions; their lives are at risk every minute they are out at sea; that's bravery. Every time I watch the programme I feel that all 60 million of us British citizens should go to Peterhead to thank them for doing a job that most of us wouldn't do for all the tea in China!

Bravery is a special quality not exclusive to fishermen, we could all name jobs where people are brave; military personnel, firemen, policemen, nurses etc etc, the list would be quite long.

Jesus was brave, He started and maintained His ministry in an extremely hostile environment, people were out to get Him from the start but He did not let this deter Him, but just like the skipper of the trawler the situation sometimes moved Jesus to tears. Even when He was being murdered He went to His death with hardly a word of complaint.

We also have to stand up and be counted; we have to continue to fight to be Unitarian Free Christians within The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches. Some people within the GA would like to sideline Free Christianity, we, and the many other churches like ours have to make sure that this is not allowed to happen.

Ken

## **JOINT SERVICE WITH THE CONGREGATION OF DOBB LANE**

Our friends from Dob Lane will be joining us on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> July for morning service.

This is a good opportunity to meet our friends from Andrews other church so please come along and let's give them a good Stalybridge welcome.

Ken

## FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL GROUP



Well we managed to hold our Summer Fayre this year in reasonable weather and many thanks are due to all who donated, helped or visited us during the afternoon. It helped to raise more than £600 towards our fund raising fund.

We shall be holding our usual Whist Drive on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Please come along and join us starting at church at 7.30 pm when for £2 you get the chance to win a prize and receive tasty refreshments as well. You don't have to be an expert and we guarantee you will have a laugh! If you can't make it in July, then we shall be holding the next one on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

Our other event in July will be a drive out followed by a light buffet at the Wharf Tavern in Stalybridge on Friday 20<sup>th</sup>. Please put your name down on the list on the church notice board so that we know how many to cater for. If you haven't got a car, don't worry as we will find a lift for you. Here we are going depends on the weather, but don't worry, we will find somewhere pretty and interesting to visit.

We hope to organise an organ recital in the autumn, but further details of this will be announced nearer the time. Apart from that we have no immediate plans as people are away on holiday during the summer period, and we will all be having a rest, ready to start thinking about the Bazaar to be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

We are still looking for people to come up with some new fund raising ideas, so if you feel you could help, please come along to our next meeting which will be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> August at 7.15 pm which is just before the main church committee meeting.

Sue Howard

## **LADIES CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY (WOMEN'S LEAGUE)**



The July meeting will be held on Tuesday 3rd at 3.00 pm when there will be a Faith Tea. All ladies are welcome. There will be no meeting in August.

## **ARTS AND CRAFTS**

I apologise for failing to mention last month that The Teenage Award was won by Tilly Pugh with a remarkable 36 points. This is a great achievement. Well done Tilly!

Ken

## THE UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The Unitarian Christian association will be holding the annual Lance Garrard lecture at Stalybridge on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July**. The speaker this year will be Rev Nigel Playfair who is Clerk to Synod of The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The lecture is entitled “**WHAT IS TO BE DONE?**” Knowing Nigel from my work as UCA Clerk I can promise you that it will be an interesting and thought provoking talk and I would urge as many of you as possible to attend.

The programme for the day is as follows:

- 2.30 pm Service including Communion conducted by Rev A R Parker and other Ministers.
- 3.15 pm Lance Garrard Lecture followed by a question and answer session.
- 4.30 pm (approx) Tea

A notice will be put on the board for those of you who want tea.

Ken

## THE UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The 5<sup>th</sup> Synod of The Unitarian Christian Association will be held on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> August at Great Meeting (Unitarian) in Great Yarmouth. Both Andrew and myself will be attending this meeting as UCA officers.

Ken

## ROME 2008



I am still hoping to be able to take another group to Rome in May 2008. However, it looks as though the number that can be accommodated at the convent will be much less than on our last visit. I am flying over to Rome for a few days at the end of June so that I can get everything sorted out (and have a little break!). As soon as I get back I will get the details of dates and cost out in a letter to those who are interested. The restriction on numbers will mean that priority will have to be given to people who were not able to come on the last trip, but do still register your interest as there might be some places available for those who went last time. Did you throw your coin in the fountain?

Andrew

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* Thought for the Month \*  
\* A friend I know walked by today \*  
\* It made me feel downcast \*  
\* But when he turned and came to me \*  
\* The time sped by so fast \*  
\* His joy and sparkle cheered me up \*  
\* With such friends we cannot fail \*  
\* As he left to go I waved my hand \*  
\* But he just wagged his tail \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

## **MINISTER'S HOLIDAYS**

The rest of Andrew's 2007 holidays are as follows:

Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> August	Visiting preacher – to be confirmed
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	Visiting preacher – Bob Pounder
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> August	Visiting preacher – Lynne Readett
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> August	Preacher –Ken Howard
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> November	Visiting Preacher – to be confirmed

If anyone is in need of the services of a Minister during these times please contact the Warden who will put you in touch with another Minister.

Ken

## **STEWARDS FOR JULY**

1st        Closed  
8th:       Tom Whitehead  
15th:      Bill Atkin  
22nd:     Don Andrews  
29th:      Ken Howard

## **STEWARDS FOR AUGUST**

5th:       Stuart Hichcliffe  
12th:      Tom Whitehead  
19th:      Bill Atkin  
26th:      Don Andrews

## **£1 A MONTH CLUB**

I am at church most Sundays, but if you do not see me there I can be contacted on 0161 344 0942 or at 45 Church Street, Dukinfield, SK16 4PR.  
Beryl Bradbury

## **UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP**

Leaders for July

8<sup>th</sup> July: Ruth Mills

15<sup>th</sup> July: Clare Bullock

22<sup>nd</sup> July: Sue Howard

29<sup>th</sup> July: Ruth Mills

As children are on holiday during August, there will be no official UYPG. However, if there is any child who wishes to come to church, please feel free to come along and there will always be one of the leaders there who will keep the children occupied, it is just that there is no official programme organised for August. We shall start again on September 2<sup>nd</sup> during the service at 11.00 am.

All young people, whether regular attendees or visitors, are more than welcome to join us at our UYPG meetings which take place during morning service (after the 2nd hymn) every Sunday. If you have any queries, please contact Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.

# WELCOME



## CHURCH FLOWERS FOR JULY

- 1st: Church Closed
- 8th: Mr & Mrs Inman, Mrs B. Weltman & Mr & Mrs R. Hall  
in memory of Mrs Betty Hall & Miss M..Dawson
- 15th: Mrs Catherine Morris in memory of Mr Steven Morris
- 22nd: Mrs Margaret Barr in memory of Rev Fred Barr
- 29th: Mr & Mrs Peter Goacher in memory of Mr &  
Mrs W.H. Hallsworth

## CHURCH FLOWERS FOR AUGUST

- 5th: Mrs Mandy Pugh & Tilly in memory of Mr Trefor  
Pugh
- 12th: Mr & Mrs Don Andrews
- 19th: Mrs Olwyn Murphy in memory of Mr Charlie Murphy
- 26th: Mrs Margaret Whitehead & Mrs Marjorie Morton in  
memory of Mrs Norton

## **IMPORTANT 2007 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Sunday July 1st		Church closed (Hucklow weekend)
Sunday July 8th	11 am	Anniversary Service
Saturday July 14th	2.30pm	Annual Lance Garrard Lecture
Saturday August 4th	2 pm	5th UCA Synod at Great Yarmouth
Sunday Sept 30th	11 am	Harvest Service
Saturday October 6th	2 pm	NCUSSU AGM at Stalybridge
Saturday October 13th	2 pm	ECU Autumn Meeting
Sunday 21st October	11 am	Ladies Service
Saturday 3rd November	11 am	Bazaar
Sunday 11th November:	11 am	Remembrance Sunday Service

Sunday 2nd December:	11 am	Soroptimist Sunday at Stalybridge
Sunday 9th December:	6.30 pm	Memorial Service
Sunday 23rd December:	2.30 pm	Juvenile Membership & Family Carol Service
Monday 24th December:	6.30 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelit Carol Service
Tuesday 25th December:	11 am	Christmas Day Service

# JULY

- Sun 1st 11.00 am Church closed
- Tues 3rd 3.00 pm Ladies Society Monthly Tea
- Fri 6th 7.30 pm Whist Drive
- Sun 8th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Sat 14th 2.30pm Annual Lance Garrard Lecture
- Sun 15th 11.00 am Morning Service & UYPG
- Fri 20th TBA Drive out and Buffet
- Sun 22nd 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG
- Sun 29th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.

# AUGUST

- Sun 5th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Sun 12th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Fri 10th 7.30pm Whist Drive
- Mon 13th 7.15pm Fund Raising and Social Affairs  
Committee meeting  
8.00pm Committee meeting
- Sun 19th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Sun 26th 11.00am Morning Service and UYPG.