

**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**

MARCH 2007

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS KINDLY
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NORMA AND ARTHUR**

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends

Lent, the forty days before Easter has traditionally been kept as a period of abstinence and fasting, based on the forty day fasts of Moses, Elijah and especially Jesus. It has also been seen as a time of penance and abstinence from festivities and the luxuries of life. For example, many churches do not have flowers at all during Lent. What should we, as liberal or Free Christians make of it all?

In the gospel account, Jesus is tempted by the devil - the personification of the temptations that beset us all. The devil offered to give Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth and told him to throw himself off the temple pinnacle if he was truly the Son of God - tempting him to believe that he could be all powerful and do anything. Are we not all tempted in the same way?

Humans seem to have a tendency towards overconfidence, even arrogance. Just consider modern developments in genetic engineering or the way we misuse the rest of creation for our own ends - particularly the mistreatment of animals.

Human beings seem to think that they can do anything and achieve anything. "And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority..."

I would suggest that our task for Lent is not to give up chocolate, or flowers in church or whatever else we might decide, but to stop for a moment. To put ourselves into a temporary wilderness as Jesus did and to confront the temptations that beset us, whatever they may be.

In particular, Lent should be a time when we seek God's forgiveness for our arrogance and overconfidence in our abilities and when we learn the simple truth that we are not central to creation, we are just minor players - God is central to all things - not us. "Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Wishing you every blessing.

Andrew.

EAST CHESHIRE UNION

The ECU Songs of Praise service will be held on March 11th at Old Chapel Dukinfield. The service will start at 6.30 pm. Please make an effort to attend this enjoyable service.

UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

The AGM and the 4th Synod of the UCA will take place at Kingswood Meeting House (Birmingham) on Saturday 17th March. If you would like to attend please contact either Rev A R Parker or Ken Howard

Mothering Sunday Service
Sunday 18th March
at 11 am

WARDEN'S NOTES

Commitment

The Annual General Meeting of the congregation will take place on 6th May. A long time away you may think but we all know that it will be upon us in no time at all. I want us all to think well in advance where we want our church to go in the future. Our Unitarian Free Christian credentials are well established both within The General Assembly and in the wider community.

It is part of our job to ensure that this congregation continues to thrive. For this we need commitment. Many people are involved in our church but we definitely need more people to be committed to it.

A good analogy to show the difference between involvement and commitment is the egg and bacon breakfast:-

“The chicken is involved in the breakfast but the pig is committed to it!”

Many people do a lot of work for the congregation but I want you all to ask yourselves (particularly the younger and more active people) **“Can I do a little bit more?”**

I know that people are busy, I know that we only have a certain amount of spare time but I would ask you to consider if some of that free time could be given to the church.

The AGM is your opportunity to elect people who you feel are committed to the cause to serve you for the next year. Let's not leave it to the last minute, let's think about it, let's try to involve new people and new ideas.

Ken Howard

£1 A MONTH CLUB

We are now well into the second six-month period of this year and we still have a few people who have not renewed from last year. It is never too late and if you wish to rejoin or become a member for the first time, then please contact me. 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. Last month's winner was Mrs Margaret Cooper.

Beryl Bradbury



ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

This will be held on Saturday 12th May at Old Chapel Dukinfield. Copies of the syllabus are available on the table in the porch. Please collect your copy and get making/knitting/practising. Let's try to make it a winning year .



LADIES CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY (WOMEN'S LEAGUE)

The March meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th at 3.00 pm when the hostesses will be Mrs Eileen and Miss Clare Bullock. All ladies are welcome.

FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL GROUP



I hope all of you that attended enjoyed our British Isles Dinner which took place just after the February edition of Chalice went out. It appeared to go very well and my thanks to Margaret and Clare for their assistance.

Are you all filling in your 'Count Your Blessings' form—we started on Tuesday with a few pancakes for tea and much enjoyed they were too! Even though it cost us 50p for the privilege! We shall meet on Friday 20th April at church for a big count up, so please put your name on the board if you wish to attend as food will be served and we need to know numbers.

Our next 'big' event is our Night in Rome when Andrew will be taking us on a virtual tour of Rome allowing us to join in with their trip last year. Photographs will be shared and once again we will be serving food, so please put your name on the board in good time, so we know how many people to cater for.

Our normal Whist Drive will be held on Friday 2nd March at 7.30 pm at church, so please come along if you fancy it. Refreshments are served and you stand a good chance of winning a prize.

Finally, just so you don't forget, here are a couple of other dates for the future also worth noting:

Summer Fayre on 16th June
Bazaar on 3rd November.

Please feel free to join us at our fund raising meetings if you feel you can help in any way—we are always keen for new ideas. Dates of meetings are announced in church.

Sue Howard

THE TONGUE IN CHEEK COLUMN

SIMPLE PLEASURES GO UP IN SMOKE



From 1st July this year smoking will be banned from all football grounds. Can you really believe this, you will no longer be able to sit in your uncomfortable seat in terrible weather watching your absolutely hopeless team lose another home match. Football supporters have to put up with a lot, increased prices (it's now £10 to watch Stalybridge Celtic & sometimes over £40 to watch Manchester United), poor teams, poorer managers and useless referees. But still we go, still we put up with it.

It is frowned upon to enjoy yourself, I'm convinced the powers that be would prefer us to watch football on the television. The Saturday afternoon football ritual is a thing of beauty which is being systematically destroyed. Most of the so called professional matches are played on any day except Saturday. Smoking is being banned, once the Westminster bullies have that in place I suppose they will target the half time pint or the iffy meat pie.

What annoys me is that I am really good at smoking. I am far better at smoking than the current Stalybridge Celtic team is at playing football. I am also very good at being a football supporter and now I am being forced to choose between the two.

But what is next, a few years ago the hunters were hounded (no pun intended) the smokers have now got their comeuppance and the motorists are obviously next on the agenda. So none of us are safe. Whatever you enjoy doing do it now because you may be next!!!

I need a cigarette, I'll just nip behind the bike shed!

Ken Howard

This article does not seek to glorify smoking, it is simply an opinion.
Ken

UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

Leaders for March

4th Feb: Ruth Mills
11th Feb: Sue Howard
18th Feb: Clare Bullock
25th Feb: Ruth Mills

All young people, whether regular attenders 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.

A NIGHT IN ROME

Friday 16th March
at 7.30 pm

Following the successful trip to Rome we are holding a night of slides, photographs and commentary. This should be an interesting night giving us a special insight into Christianity and Rome.
A supper will be served.
Price £3.50 per person



CHURCH FLOWERS FOR MARCH

- 4th Mr & Mrs Eric Caton in memory of Mr & Mrs
 Harold Bullock Senior
- 11th Mr & Mrs Norman Bradbury
- 18th Mrs Janet Pearson
- 25th Mr and Mrs Geoff Spiby in memory of
 the Schofield family

WELCOME

STEWARDS FOR MARCH

- 4th Ken Howard
- 11th: Stuart Hinchliffe
- 18th: Tom Whitehead
- 25th: Bill Atkin

IMPORTANT 2007 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday March 11th	6.30 pm	ECU Songs of Praise at Dukinfield
Saturday March 17th	2 pm	UCA AGM and 4th Synod, Kingswood
Sunday March 18th	11 am	Mothering Sunday
Saturday April 7th	8 pm	Easter Vigil
Sunday April 8th	11 am	Easter Day Service
Saturday April 14th	11 am	MDA Ladies Meeting at Stalybridge
Saturday May 5th	2 pm	ECU AGM at Denton
Sunday 6th May:	12 noon	Church AGM
Saturday 12th May	2 pm	Arts & Crafts at Old Chapel
Sunday 27th May:	1.30 pm	Whit Sunday (no morning service)
Saturday June 16th	11 am	Summer Fayre
Sunday July 1st		Church closed (Hucklow weekend)
Sunday July 8th	11 am	Anniversary Service

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	Soroptomist 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

MARCH

- Fri 2nd 7.30 pm Whist Drive
- Sun 4th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Wed 7th 3.00 pm Ladies Society Monthly Tea
- Sun 11th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Sun 11th 6.30 pm ECU Songs of Praise at
Old Chapel Dukinfield
- Wed 14th 7.30 pm ECU Delegates Meeting at
Old Chapel Dukinfield
- Fri 16th 7.30 pm A Night in Rome
- Sat 17th 2.00 pm UCA AGM and 4th Synod at
Kingswood Meeting House Birmingham
- Sun 18th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG
Mothering Sunday Service
- Sun 25th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.