

Bury Unitarian Church



A nest of eggs - Happy Easter!

April 2021

Welcome!

It is now a year since I took over the job of editing the Bury Unitarian Church Calendar, and I owe some thanks (and one apology).

My first thanks are to Pam Gilbert who was the editor of the Calendar for many years, until the pandemic struck. Doing the editing for the last year has given me an idea of how much work it must always have involved for Pam: I have a much simpler printer, which does at least half the work for me, and so, although I thanked her at the time, I offer my thanks again, with the benefit of a year's experience!

I also owe Pam an apology, somewhat belatedly, for all the times I was late with my ministerial letter when she was the editor!

I'd like to thank the camera club, for offering up so many lovely images for the outside and inside covers, and Roger, who designs and prints all the covers.

Anne is very generous with her time and skills, and contributes a great deal of the material for the Calendar: I know I'm not alone in my gratitude for that, and it's lovely to have running 'columns' with the Presidential News and Anne's 'hymn-ponderings'.

Betty Kenyon is also very generous with her monthly 'bygone times' article: it's fascinating to hear what's gone on in the long history of this publication (which, for its first decades, must have been a phenomenally huge editing and printing job: not for them the glories of Microsoft word and a printer which knows how to do double sided printing!)

Ade is always interesting and occasionally timely with his 'letter from the building,' and I think it's been particularly important whilst we haven't had the use of our building that we hear from it regularly.

Janet never forgets to let me know if there are special anniversaries during the month. Thank you to them!

If anything is ever amiss, it's down to me, not any of the contributors: please don't hesitate to let me know of any slip-ups.

Kate Brady McKenna (editor).

Letter from the Minister.

Dear all,

As I write, we have just passed the Equinox, and so the days are already slightly longer than the nights. By the time you receive this, the clocks will have gone forward, and so the longer days will be even more apparent.

That also means, of course, that if you are joining us to worship together in person (as we very much hope to be able to do from the beginning of the month) you will have to get up an hour earlier, but it's worth it for the longer lighter evenings.

We are hopeful that, at around the same time the church opens for worship, we will start being able to see our friends and loved ones outdoors. I hope that by the end of this month I will be able to chat to you on your doorsteps, but we must keep a watchful eye on that!

I know that, even once we start to open the church building for worship, many of you will still choose not to attend for a while: Even once we are fully open with no restrictions (and I feel that might still be some months away) I know that some of you are very vulnerable and may prefer to stay away from groups. I absolutely understand and respect that, and no one will be under any pressure at all to attend in person: I will continue to provide written services for as long as they are needed, and the Zoom services will continue, although they will move to the afternoon.

It will be a while before our services in church are how they used to be: we currently need to abide by the same regulations as we had before. You will still need to book in advance, and enter and leave in your household bubbles, and we all still need to wear masks. I have no idea how long it will be before singing together is considered safe, but believe me when I tell you that I am checking that all the time!

On a more positive note, the church officers, the property manager, and myself have decided that we can – very safely – slightly increase the number of people who can join the Sunday services. So many of us have been vaccinated that we can now fit somewhere around twenty or twenty-two people in the worship area safely, depending on what size the groups are.

As we move towards reopening, nothing that we have built up over the past year will be taken away, and I really hope that those of you who have not received the nourishment you need will begin to be able to. We have all done our best, but the situation has meant that we have not been able to do all that we want to.

Our community has remained strong, but I do know that there is also a lot of ground to make up, and a lot of healing to do. Our experiences over the past year, though, convince me that we will do that, and do it well.

You will know that I recently had a week off, and I would like to thank Anne for leading worship on the Sunday: her report on the experience is in her article later in the Calendar. I had a lot of plans for the week, and I'm actually quite proud to announce that I achieved none of them. We had a lovely relaxing time, and discovered a part of Burrs Country Park that I hadn't previously known existed. I did not know that there was a natural waterfall in Bury!

This is a time of discovery: discovering our environment in different ways, and discovering how we deal with change and disruption. One day it will be over, and I know that when that day comes, we will be able to look back on it with sadness, yes, but also with pride at how we dealt with it.

As always, I send you my love.

Rev Kate Brady McKenna.

Presidential matters.

My main task, during March, has been to prepare the material for our own Mothering Sunday Service, on March 14th; this went very well, and the people who either attended it, or read it, seem to have enjoyed it. Roger provided the technical support for the service---no easy task---but all went off smoothly; we had sound when we needed it and not when we didn't, and some excellent photographs, into the bargain; thank you, Roger. Padiham Unitarians offered a taster-course for those interested in the technical side of Zoom services, which Roger found both interesting and helpful, and Robert Foreman, who ran the course, was of great assistance with our service; thanks to him, too. We enjoyed four readings from excellent readers; it's good to hear different voices, from time to time. Much to my surprise, and with a little help from their father, both my daughters attended the service, and enjoyed it, too!

Roger and I have attended the services at Padiham and Bury, on other Sundays in March; they dovetail nicely! On Easter Sunday, I have been asked to take the service at Blackpool, and this will be in-person; the material is nearly ready, with only one or two items left to complete. Unfortunately, this means that we will not be able to attend either Bury's service, or Ainsworth's, on that day, but our thoughts will be with both congregations.

Discussions about my contributions to the GA Annual Meetings continue; some of the portions are to be recorded, in advance, just in case, and it is seeming more likely than not that I will, finally, be installed as President; I will not, however, have the Presidential regalia, on the day, as this must remain with Celia Cartwright until she has finished chairing the Meetings

and formally relinquished her post; it will then be couriered to me, and my Vice-President's medallion will be couriered to Sue Woolley. On the day, the installations will probably take place, between 4 and 5 p.m.; I will then conduct the Closing Devotions, so there is a fair amount of devising and writing to be done, before then; decisions are not completely in place; I will let everybody know, once I've been informed.

Preparations for our Congregational AGM have occupied my time, these past few weeks, and I'm most grateful to Kate for all her help with printing, collating, and distributing required material; Hopefully, all the extra work will prove to have been worthwhile---and maybe we shall have learned how to streamline our future AGM's. Thank you to everyone who voted, and for doing so in a helpful, constructive way; all compliments have been appreciated!

Once again, I thank Kate and Ade for all their hard work, this month; we have very much enjoyed Kate's Tuesday Meditation services and found them restful and soothing. All the usual weekly services continue, but it is no easy feat to produce services suitable for zoom and to be read at home, and April should bring in-person services, too. If our Easter Sunday re-opening should prove permanent, this will represent a huge and positive step. I really am looking forward to seeing many of the Bury folk, at church, in the very near future; in the meantime, Roger and I send you all our love and very best wishes.

Anne Mills

Pam Oxley

Many of you will have heard by now the very sad news of the death of our friend Pam Oxley.

Pam had been ill since just before Christmas, and had spent time in hospital and respite care since then. She died in the morning of March 22nd, and all of her daughters were able to visit her in the days before she passed away.

Pam will be very deeply missed in our community. She was a gracious, gentle and kind presence amongst us. She maintained her intelligence and humour, and I will remember her sharp (but never, ever unkind) wit.

I hope she knew how loved and liked she was and what an impact her death will have on those of us who mourn her.

I know that you will join me in sending love and prayers to her daughters Susan, Lena, and Inga. Your cards and notes over the past week have been a source of great comfort to them.

Pam's funeral will take place in April, and will be conducted by the minister. Attendance at the service will be by invitation only, but the service will be streamed, which means that those of you who have access to the internet will be able to be there in spirit. I will provide more details closer to the time.

Kate Brady McKenna



Some memories of Pam from Susan Mitchell

I have only known Pam well for the last two years, although obviously I knew her to talk with at church for a lot longer. She was one lovely lady, always so smart, appreciative of what Bury Unitarian Congregation meant to her, and how much she had enjoyed not just coming to church but, when she was able, joining in the social activities.

During the last two years I had visited her both in residential rehab. and at Faraday House and on occasion taken her out in the car. I held her in the greatest respect, and enjoyed enormously both her company and our phone conversations. Her wisdom, knowledge and long life experiences coupled with her common sense and caring concerns alongside her sense of humour were a joy and I shall miss her enormously. Our community is a poorer place for her passing but I hope she knew how much she was loved and that her spirit is an example to us all which will not be forgotten.

Some memories of Pam from Janet Thatcher:

Pam liked talking about her childhood in Yorkshire, the “naughty” things she did (spending the change from shopping or her church collection on sweets, coming home with white socks muddy). It sounded a happy childhood. I think it was from those days that she knew Anne McLelland, whose husband Jim was minister at Bury before John Allerton.

I remember Pam as being very tolerant and understanding of other people, which I felt came from having lived in various places with different cultures.

We often talked about gardens and plants. When she lived alone in her bungalow in her 90s, she had a gardener, but I don't think there was much doubt who was in charge. She knew exactly what needed to be done and when, and she had a little vegetable patch there until she left the bungalow.

Our lily of the valley and ajuga came from Pam, and I shall enjoy remembering her when they flower.

Sunday services

You will see on the 'what's-on' pages in the centre of the Calendar that we very much hope to be able to be open for worship in person from Sunday 4th April. Unless the situation changes, the service-in-person will be at 11.15am, and there will be a Zoom service (live from the manse!) at 2pm.

On Easter Sunday we may hold two services, depending on the number of people who wish to attend: Kate will be in touch about this.

Midweek meditation services

Our midweek meditation sessions continue to take place on Tuesdays at 7pm, on Zoom, and everyone is welcome to join us. The format changes sometimes, but at the moment we arrive and settle in to music, and then briefly introduce ourselves before moving into a meditation. The theme of the meditation has varied, but people have found the sessions to be relaxing and nourishing.

If you are interested in joining us, you will be very welcome. If you would like something along the same lines but a bit different, or if the timing doesn't suit you, please let me know!

Communion Services

There will be a Zoom communion service and Good Friday reflection on Friday 2nd April at 3pm.

After that, there will be a Zoom communion after the Zoom service on the last Sunday of every month. The April communion, therefore, will be on Sunday 25th April.

I'm afraid I think it will be some time before it feels safe to hold communion in person.

Kate Brady McKenna

Congregational AGM 2021: Minutes

The 51st Annual General Meeting of the Congregation of Bury Unitarian Church was held virtually, on Sunday, March 28th, 2021. A booklet of Reports and other necessary information was circulated one month beforehand, in order to allow members time to read the material, nominate church-officers, and vote. Voting was possible by post, email, or telephone.

A quorum of twenty-five members was required; this would be established by counting the number of votes cast; a list of the names of those who submitted votes has been compiled, and will be retained with the Minutes, as will the booklet.

In total, twenty-eight votes were cast. The various Reports, as detailed in the Agenda, were accepted and approved unanimously, as were the appointments of the GA Delegates (Betty and Neville Kenyon) and those of the NELUM Delegates (June Clarke and Neville Kenyon).

Nominations were received, as follows:

- Chairman of the Congregation: Anne Mills, proposed by Pam Gilbert, and seconded by Margaret Fitzpatrick;
- Chairman of Church Council: Betty Kenyon, proposed by Susan Mitchell, and seconded by Abi Elliott-McGuffie;
- Church Treasurer: Roger Mills, proposed by John Fitzpatrick, and seconded by Susan Holt.

As there were no other nominations, the above were deemed to have been elected.

No nominations were received, despite the deadline being extended to March 26th, for the posts of Church Secretary and Deputy Treasurer; this matter will be discussed at the April Church Council Meeting.

Approval of changes to the church-rules received twenty-five votes in favour, and three against; those who voted against felt that there had been insufficient time for discussion; this will be dealt with at the April Council Meeting.

Votes of Thanks were proposed by Rev. Kate Brady McKenna and Betty Kenyon. In particular, thanks were expressed to John and Margaret Fitzpatrick, who are due to relocate, later in the year; John and Margaret have worked long and hard, on behalf of the church, in a variety of capacities, and over many years; we wish them well and are grateful for all their contributions.

One item of Any Other Business was allowed: Susan Mitchell proposed that:
"a huge vote of thanks from the congregation should be given to our Minister, Kate; to our Property Manager, Ade; and to all the church-officers; they have all worked extremely hard, during the past twelve months, to keep our congregation together, as a loving, supportive church-community, and to keep our beautiful building safely-maintained. Many thanks, also, to Anne, Kate, Ade, and Roger, for their hard work in preparing and distributing all the information for the 2021 Congregational AGM."

The date of the next Church Council Meeting is Wednesday, April 14th, 2021, at 7 p.m.

Anne Mills: March 28th, 2021.

Notes from the church building.

In my time as property manager, I've come to see our building as a living thing, and there's nothing quite like being a part of building work to make that an obvious concept. While I've been setting bricks as if they were bones and patching the plaster as if it were skin; we've had contractors in to put in the new fire alarm system and they have been laying electrical wiring in the roof in giant red looms that honestly, rather reminded me of veins.

Our fire alarm installers were kind enough to also disconnect the old system from the main electrical board while they were working. This has made it very easy for me to dispose of much of the old system and replace the ceiling panels that they were built on to, and that too, oddly felt a bit like we all were performing a type of surgery on a very living thing.

And the end result of some of this surgery is that the building has a new and distinct voice; it's a deeper tone than she used to have, but more insistent, and it suits her well. As before you'll only ever hear her call you when there's a particular problem, or, of course when we are having a test of the new alarm, but as before, she will certainly make herself heard.

You'll see too, that following this surgery the building has a little more bling to show off, she's been graced with manual call points, so that if a fire does break out anywhere, we can play the part of smoke detectors too, and set the building's new voice into song.

She certainly sounds alive when she sings this way, but the truth is that no matter what I, or others do to her, the building isn't, right now, a living thing, because it's missing the key ingredient that makes it come to life. She is missing her heart.

As we move towards Easter and our first service of 2021, the heart that is the missing piece of our living building will hopefully be returning, not in its entirety of course, we're not there yet, but there will be enough to bring it back to life, and that's a wonderful thing.

Ade Brady.

Book Club.

We meet next on Wednesday, April 7th, at 7 p.m.; when we shall discuss "The Yellow Wallpaper", by Charlotte Perkins Gilmour", and "What Katy Did", by Susan Coolidge. Both books are available online, from The Gutenberg Project; alternatively, they can be obtained fairly cheaply for Kindle devices. All are welcome to join our meetings; contact Anne Mills for further details.

Camera Club.

Members will meet next, on Monday, April 12th, and Monday, April 24th, at 7 p.m. All are welcome to come along; further details from Janet Thatcher. The group are already preparing for another exhibition, although it has not yet been possible to set a date; photographs have begun to be collected, and some of the categories have been decided; these include: Teddies; Rainbows; Corona Spring; and Raindrops. Please feel free to contribute your own pictures. The Camera Club members, although not individually acknowledged for Calendar-contributions, are submitting some very high-quality photographs, these days; thank you to those who are prepared to show their work. Thank you, too, to Marian and Alan Price, who have generously donated several packets of top-quality photographic paper, which will be used for the exhibition; this will help to defray costs.

Anne Mills.

Special memories

If you have a date you would like remembered in the Calendar, please let either Janet Thatcher or Kate know. These are the sort of dates for which you might have donated flowers before the pandemic. We don't ask for a contribution: this is a chance to remember those who you would otherwise have remembered in church.

Once we are meeting more freely again, we will, of course, resume our practice of naming the people and events which the flowers are marking each week.

Let us pause in our reading, now, and hold in our prayers and our thoughts all those in our community and beyond who are in need of our love: let us hold a moment of prayer for those who have been ill, at home or in hospital; for those who have faced shocks and upsets; those who are bereaved or concerned about their loved ones; and those who are simply tired and in need of support.

Kate Brady McKenna

In-person worship in April 2021

We very much hope that we will be open for worship in person from Sunday 4th April, and these details are all given on that basis.

If anything has to change, we will let you know as soon as possible.

You will still need to book a place in advance, by letting Kate know your wishes (she will ask you about this); seating will still be socially distanced and allocated in advance; and we still can't sing together. But we can be together in the same space, and we can now safely have a few more people in the worship area.

Zoom services in April 2021

We will continue to meet on Zoom, but the services will now be at 2pm. You are welcome to join us over the internet or by phone.

The Zoom services will continue to run even as we move to more openness.

Log in details are the same for every service:

Meeting ID: 849 7456 6116

Phone numbers: 0203 901 7895; 0131 460 1196; 0203 051 2874; 0203 481 5237; 0203 481 5240

Midweek reflection, sharing, and chat.

Our midweek meditations continue every Tuesday at 7pm. After a short time to introduce ourselves and check in, we have a guided meditation on a theme which changes from week-to-week. After the meditation you're welcome either to leave during some music, or to stay for some quiet conversation.

Log in details are the same every week: Meeting ID: 812 3292 6975

What's On, March 2021

- Fri 2nd April:** 3pm: Good Friday reflection and communion (on Zoom)
- Sat 3rd April:** 11am: Coffee morning. (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 4th April:** **11.15am: Service in church. Please book a place**
2pm: Zoom service. ID 849 7456 6116
10.30am: Ainsworth service (see article)
- Tues 6th April:** 7pm: Meditation (Zoom ID 812 3292 6975)
- Weds 7th April:** 7pm: Book club (see article)
- Sat 10th April:** 11am: Coffee morning. (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 11th April:** **11.15am: Service in church. Please book a place**
2pm: Zoom service. ID 849 7456 6116
- Mon 12th April:** 7pm: Camera club (see article)
- Tues 13th April:** 7pm: Meditation (Zoom ID 812 3292 6975)

- Weds 14th April:** 7pm: Church Council Meeting (on Zoom)
- Sat 17th April:** 11am: Coffee morning. (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- Sun 18th April:** **11.15am: Service in church. Please book a place**
2pm: Zoom service. ID 849 7456 6116
- Tues 20th April:** 7pm: Meditation (Zoom ID 812 3292 6975)
- Sat 24th April:** 11am: Coffee morning. (Zoom 839 0159 23)
- 11am: General Assembly Annual Meetings (online)
- Sun 25th April:** **11.15am: Service in church. Please book a place**
2pm: Zoom service. ID 849 7456 6116
- Mon 26th April:** 7pm: Camera club (see article)
- Tues 27th April:** 7pm: Meditation (Zoom ID 812 3292 6975)
- Teatime: deadline for articles for the May Calendar

Church Information

Minister: Rev. Kate Brady McKenna
0161 460 3363 / 07751 240886
revkatemckenna@gmail.com

Church address: 1 Bank Street, Bury, BL9 0DN

Church phone: 0161 761 3785

Website: www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk

Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church

Church officers

Chair of trustees: Susan Holt 07876 716563

Chair of church council: Betty Kenyon 01204 887222

Chair of congregation: Anne Mills 0161 762 0943

5, Arley Avenue,
Bury, BL9 5HD

Church secretary: Vacant

Church treasurer: Roger Mills 0161 762 0943

Charity reg no: 1078570

News from the denomination.

GA Annual Meetings 2021

These are to be held, via Zoom, on Saturday, April 24th, between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. There will be several sessions, during the day. If you wish to attend, you must register individually, by Saturday, April 3rd. The details are contained in Uni-News. It is highly likely that Anne Mills will be installed as the GA President, towards the end of the proceedings. If you need assistance with registration, Anne can help.

EC Elections.

General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches:

Election to the Executive Committee (EC) 201.

Result of ballot: (4 to be elected)

JOHN BATES	New Unity CIO	699	
REV CELIA CARTWRIGHT	Unitarian Fellowship Peace	889	ELECTED
SIMON HALL	Leicester Great Meeting	701	ELECTED
JENNY JACOBS	York Unitarians	746	ELECTED
REV JO JAMES	Mill Hill Chapel	799	ELECTED
Spoilt ballot papers		4	
Total ballot papers received		1136	39%
Total ballot papers dispatched		2931	

Given the close vote, a 100% recount of all votes cast for all candidates was undertaken.

National Women's League President's message to all Members,

Warm greetings to you all once more.

This time I have much to report and I trust you will receive this information with great delight and be ready to act upon it enthusiastically when you are given the go-ahead!

We finally managed to have a Central Committee meeting, albeit via zoom, on Wednesday, 17 March. I think all those present would agree that the meeting achieved far more than any of us could have predicted, as there were weighty matters on the agenda that, to be honest, I was not hopeful of settling. However, take heart – we made the following appointments:

League Letter Editorial Co-ordinator: Sue Toulson from Upper Chapel, Sheffield.

LL Publication & Distribution Administrator: Paul Hubbard – for 12 month trial period (currently undertaking administration duties for Rochdale congregation and LCM, the Lancashire Collaborative Ministry, which includes Padigham, Rawtenstall and Chorley).

League Conference Secretary: For this year only Joyce Ashworth from Rochdale congregation and national President.

With regard to the League Letter, this is the plan going forward:

District Secretaries and other contributors will forward their text to Paul Hubbard (rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com), electronically wherever possible, otherwise to him at 10 Bishop Street, Accrington, BB5 2NE.

Sue Toulson will provide editorial and likewise submit directly to Paul. The meeting gave Sue permission to seek additional editorial, where appropriate for particular topics, from other female Unitarians.

The decision was made to reduce, for a trial period, publication of the League Letter to quarterly issues to offset the cost of employing Paul to work for us in publishing and distributing the Letter. It is envisaged that the next issue will cover the quarter July, August and September so that it can report on the combined AGM and Rally to be held at The Nightingale Centre, 28/29 June 2021. In order to keep communication continuity, I will endeavour to write a President's message and

upload it to the WL website part-way through each quarterly period, so do keep an eye open for them.

AGM and Rally

The Nightingale Centre has been booked and a deposit paid. Staff at the Centre will only return to work on 4 May to prepare for reopening later in the month. It will depend on Government guidelines at the time of our gathering, how many people can be accommodated. Therefore, it will be necessary to take bookings on a first-come-first-served basis, though it may be possible for some of our more active members to be catered for at off-site B&B accommodation if necessary.

To give you an opportunity to consider and discuss attendance with friends, here is a rough outline itinerary of what the 2-day gathering might include:

Mon, 28 June: Arrivals 12.00 -12.30 pm for lunch at 1.30 pm: Service of Worship 2.30-3.15 pm: AGM; 4.00 pm, followed by F&GP meeting; Dinner 6.00 pm: Speaker in the evening (volunteers / suggestions welcome!): Short Epilogue 9.30 pm

Tues, 29 June: Breakfast 9.00 am followed by Country House visit (currently considering Kedleston Hall near Derby, a National Trust property, which has extensive grounds and parkland as well as shop and restaurant. It is envisaged that people will go home immediately after the visit. A coach will be hired for the return visit if necessary.

I will endeavour to get costing and booking forms distributed in good time and do hope we will get an enthusiastic response. Put the date in your diaries and look forward to a well-deserved change of scene and interaction with friends.

I have been out this morning with my camera to try and capture Spring! It has definitely sprung.

“Where flowers bloom, so does hope”: (Words spoken by Lady Bird Johnson, former First Lady and widow of President Lyndon B Johnson. She died aged 94 in the summer of 2007. Liz Carpenter, her Press Secretary at the White House described her as the gentle hand - softening hurts, mediating quarrels and winning over many political opponents). *Please see Joyce's picture on the inside cover.*

Yours in friendship as always

Joyce Ashworth, National President

News from Ainsworth

Ainsworth will open for its Easter Sunday service, on April 4th; the service will be conducted by Paul Hubbard, of Rochdale Unitarian Church and the Lancashire Collaborative Ministry. The service begins at 10.30 a.m.; and all will be very welcome to attend.

Anne Mills.

Spring Jamboree: a Lancashire Collaborative Ministry Service

The Lancashire Collaborative Ministry has invited us all to join them in a Spring Jamboree Service, to be held by zoom, on Saturday, April 17th, at 7p.m. The service will be light-hearted, consisting of favourite hymns, humorous poems and readings, and wonderful music. It will be conducted by Rev. Dr. Shannon Ledbetter; all are very welcome. The joining-details follow:

Meeting ID: 833 0046 4206
Passcode: 313995
Phone numbers: 0203 901 7895; 0131 460 1196.

Do you find this easier to read?

Almost everything we provide in print at church (including services, Calendars, letters, reports, and the minutes of most meetings) is available in a large-print format, and a recorded version of the Calendar is available on CD and on memory disk.

(We make these anyway, so it's easy to get them to you: just let Kate know).

Kate Brady McKenna

Church Calendars

A plea for Church Calendars to keep with our Covid Lockdown papers in BUC archive. Please I need Calendars for January 2020 and onwards to March 2021 so far. If you have any paper copies for these dates please let me have them.

Betty Kenyon

The deadline for entries for the May edition of the Calendar is Tuesday 27th April, at around teatime: It will be available that weekend, either in church, or through your door, or in the post.

As always, I am grateful for anything you would like to send into me: the more of us who contribute, the more the Calendar will become something which belongs to us all.

By-Gone Times (number 10): Chesham.

Chesham Unitarian Congregation and Sunday School

Chesham's original building was actually a bowls club!

The Sunday School was founded in October 1882.

The first evening service was held on 28th October 1883. When Bank Street members, led by their minister, Rev Douglas Walmsley, went from Bury Chapel to the building at Chesham for a service of worship. The congregation was so large that the younger children had to be sent home because of shortage of room.



16th May 1897 Sunday School Anniversary Service.

In the Calendar it says 'This is an occasion when Bank Street congregation can do much to draw closer the bonds which unite her to her own offspring.'

There were 3 services that day.

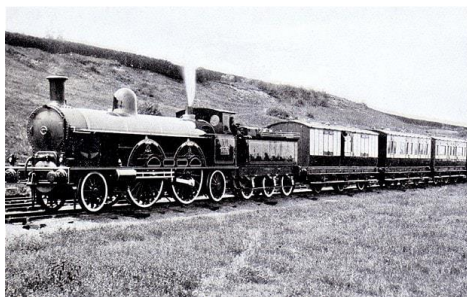
In June 1889 services were abandoned due to lack of finance, however the Sunday School continued and evening services were resumed on 4th October 1896 starting with a Harvest Festival.

In December 1898, Bury, was asked to support their comrades at Chesham by donating to the fund to purchase the Chesham building, £1000 was required. Chesham had already raised £600. This was a tidy sum in 1898.

It's unbelievable to think that £1 in 1898 is equivalent to £130 now. Eventually the idea of a chapel building had to be abandoned. Subsequently, during the week the school building was used as a Bury Council day school and some income came from this source.

24th December 1908 Christmas Eve Party

The January Calendar stated that the Christmas Eve social was a very successful party. It is hoped that in future the social will not result in a lessened attendance to the joint Christmas morning service at Bank Street, as it did this time!



16th June 1911 Choir Trip to London

Leaving Bury station by steam train on Friday night at 11.55pm to arrive back in Bury on Sunday morning between 7.00am and 8.00am. (Approximately 32 hours later!) Saturday sightseeing and then later to Crystal Palace to take part in a concert given by Lancashire Choirs.



Chesham names on the War Memorial in our church gardens formerly graveyard.



Can you name these ladies?

Betty Kenyon

Puzzles for you (from Betty Kenyon)

1th July 1910 Chesham Sunday School Sermons held at Bank Street Chapel in the morning and Chesham in the evening.

Morning collection recorded as 390 coins made up of

1 sovereign,
5 half crowns,
3 florins,
36 shillings,
79 sixpences,
128 threepenny pieces,
111 pennies,
27 halfpennies.

How much is this in £-s-d?

Evening collection as 497 coins made up of:

1 sovereign,
4 half sovereigns,
2 crowns,
8 half crowns,
15 florins,
40 shillings,
114 sixpences,
163 threepenny pieces,
122 pennies,
28 half pennies

How much is this in £-s-d?

Things you find on Facebook

This picture was shared on the 'Bury Olden Days' Facebook page recently. It shows the 34th Bury (Unitarian) Brownies, and was in the Bury Times on Tuesday 25th May 1971.

Second from left is Lesley Ainsworth (now Riley) and peeping proudly over her shoulder is our very own Brenda Ainsworth (who was the pack's Tawny Owl). And Peter Whewell ought to recognise one of the other little girls.



Hymn-pondering.

This month, I've chosen one of my favourite hymns; it's number 167, in the purple hymnbook, set to the tune, "Flying Free", with words and music by Don Besig, and a David Dawson arrangement of that music.

*There is a place I call my own, where I can stand by the sea,
and look beyond the things I've known, and dream that I might be free.*

*Like a bird above the trees, gliding gently on the breeze,
I wish that all my life I'd be without a care and flying free.*

*But life is not a distant sky, without a cloud, without rain,
and I can never hope that I can travel on without pain.*

*Time goes swiftly on its way; all too soon we've lost today;
I cannot wait for skies of blue, or dream so long that life is through.*

*So life's a song that I must sing, a gift of love I must share;
and, when I see the joy it brings, my spirit soars through the air.*

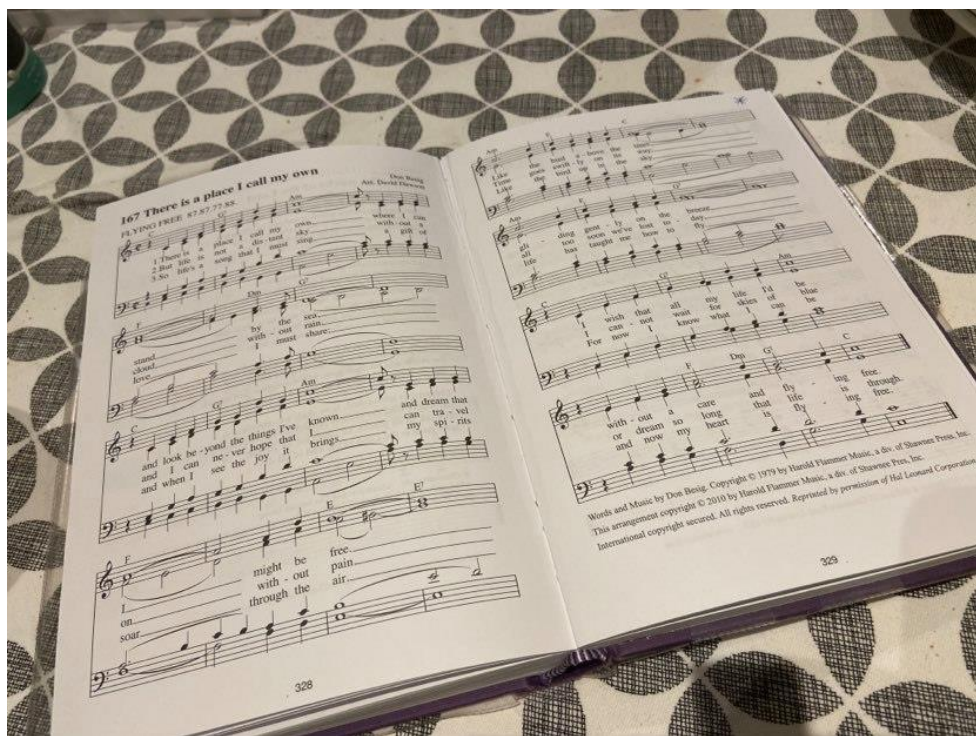
*Like the bird up in the sky, life has taught me how to fly.
For now I know what I can be, and now my heart is flying free."*

Proof of how often I look at this hymn is that the book automatically falls open at the page! For me, it combines words and music to perfection, and I love singing it; in fact, I've chosen it for our Annual Meetings, on April 24th, when I shall be conducting the Closing Devotions. Just typing out the words for this piece has inspired and cheered me! As I write, the sun is shining, and all feels well with the world! The first verse depicts an idyllic lifestyle, plus dreams of freedom---which I have sorely missed, during the last year.

The images of birds flying, gliding or soaring in the breeze, conjure up a life free from effort and problems, but verse two brings a sharp reminder that we must be practical by accepting its reality and disadvantages, too; we must adapt to whatever circumstances demand of us and not waste opportunities. The final verse, however, reverts to the positives that we have, or should strive after: love, joy, and happiness.

Over to you, now: will you spend five minutes reading these beautiful words, which promise so much in the way of contentment, and decide whether they inspire you, too?

Anne Mills



To a Butterfly

by William Wordsworth (for those of you who have had enough of "wandering lonely as a cloud"!)

I've watched you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And, little Butterfly! Indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless! not frozen seas

More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Has found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we are young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

Submitted by Anne Mills.

The Music We Are: *Rumi*

This was the reading on Sunday 21st March, and I forgot to include it in the mailing that week: several people asked for a copy of it.

Did you hear that winter's over?

The basil and the carnations cannot control their laughter.

The nightingale, back from his wandering, has been made singing master over the birds.

The trees reach out their congratulations. The soul goes dancing through the king's doorway. Anemones blush because they have seen the rose naked.

Spring, the only fair judge, walks in the courtroom, and several December thieves steal away,

Last year's miracles will soon be forgotten.

New creatures whirl in from non-existence, galaxies scattered around their feet.

Have you met them?

Do you hear the bud of Jesus crooning in the cradle?

A single narcissus flower has been appointed *Inspector of Kingdoms*.

A feast is set.

Listen: the wind is pouring wine!

Love used to hide inside images: no more!

The orchard hangs out its lanterns.

The dead come stumbling by in shrouds.

Nothing can stay bound or be imprisoned.

You say, "End this poem here, and wait for what's next."

I will.

Poems are rough notations for the music *we are*.



Surprise Blossoms!





**This photo accompanies the
Women's League letter
from Joyce Ashworth**