

BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH



"Here comes the sun, after a long cold winter!"

February 2024

Letter from the Minister

Dear all,

Welcome to our first Calendar of 2024!

By the time this comes out the year will be nearly a month old, and I hope that it has started by bringing you more good than bad. I do know that some of us have found it a difficult start to the year, with sad news of loved ones and ill-health of our own, so I hope that things improve for you: we are lucky to be part of a church community which genuinely cares about each other's pain and grief, and I hope that you all know that not only I, as your minister, but also everyone else in the congregation, wants to share their strength and their time with those who need it.

This year is a big year in the history of Bury Unitarian Church: we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of worshiping, working, socialising, and basing our community in this glorious building of ours. The congregation, of course, is much older (I mean as a congregation, though I think it's also fair to say that most of the congregation, as individuals, are older than fifty!), but this bricks-and-mortar home is now half a century old. I'm sure that we will hear more about the history of the building as the year progresses, but I do want to start the year by celebrating how glorious it is and how wonderful it is that we have it. I was going to say "how lucky we are to have it" but I realised that it's not luck, in any way. The fact that we have this gorgeous building is down to the congregation, just over fifty years ago (many of whom are still active members of the church) and their courage in letting go of the old and their foresight in envisioning the new. We definitely do owe them a great debt of gratitude.

We will, of course, be celebrating the birthday with two events during March, and I hope that many of you will be able to join us for those. Further

details are later on in the Calendar.

And while marking the fiftieth anniversary with the joy that demands, we will, of course, be carrying on with all the 'usual' things we do together. We will continue to work, worship, socialise, eat, drink, chat, and grow together.

And I think that's what life should be like: a mix of the big and exciting, and the tiny and familiar. We need the big events – the fiftieth anniversaries, Easter, Harvest, Christmas, and the solstices and equinoxes, and we just as much need our chats over a coffee on an 'ordinary' Sunday morning. Sometimes it's those tiny moments that mean the most. I know that what I missed most during the lockdowns of a few years ago was the small things. It wasn't so much that I wanted us to get back together as a community so we could have the big events: it was more that I just wanted to drink tea in the lounge after a service, and to sing the Lord's Prayer together after such a long time. It still sometimes catches me unawares when we get to that point in the service – it's a glorious thing to be able to do together.

And the weather, because I have to mention the weather and the seasons. It's certainly been varied since the last Calendar: for a while it didn't seem like we'd ever have a dry day again (I can't describe how muddy Holebottom has been!); then we had a short but bitter snap, and as I write, the second of two big storms is just about blowing itself out. Who knows what the weather is going to fling at us in the next few weeks, but whatever the weather does, nature is still doing what it does best: there are buds all over the place, and we think we might have seen the very first spring flowers starting to poke through the ground at Holebottom.

Whatever comes, I wish you joy from it.

As ever, I send you my love.

Kate.

News of our community

Philip Peters

We were sorry to hear of the death of Philip Peters, who died on 15th December. Philip had been a member of the church for many years, although his health had prevented him from joining us for some time.

We send our love to Marc as he comes to terms with the loss of his father.

Mrs Joan Smith (1944 - 2024)

From Shirley Horrocks, Ainsworth Chapel.

We were very sorry to hear that Joan, undergoing treatment for breast cancer, had passed away on 1st January and her funeral was held at Radcliffe Crematorium on 16th January.

Joan was a valued member of Ainsworth Chapel for over 20 years, always cheerful and positive. She will be sadly missed by us all.

Our deepest sympathy goes to her husband, Fred, and daughter Clare.

Norah Hickton

Norah moved from Fairfield hospital into a nursing home just before Christmas, and unfortunately then had a fall, breaking her hip and sustaining an injury to her head. Surgery on her hip was successful, and she is recovering in Fairfield Hospital. She is physically well and she seems happy and comfortable where she is.

Howard Maden

Howard underwent heart surgery shortly before Christmas, and returned home on Christmas Day to continue his recovery there.

Connie Diggle

Connie has moved to a new nursing home, nearer to her home address in Bolton. I haven't seen her there yet, but I hope to as soon as I can.

Molly Ratcliffe

Molly's daughter, Lis, tells me that Molly had a very happy Christmas with her family, but has recently had a fall and she, too, has broken her hip. She is in hospital in Carlisle, and the family hope that she can soon move to a community hospital to continue her recovery.

Margaret Miller

Margaret was in hospital with pneumonia over Christmas, and is now recovering at home with support from her family.

Nancy Chadwick

We send our congratulations to Nancy, who turns 103 on Sunday 28th January.

We send our love to all those who are struggling with loss, or who are dealing with illness, whether that's their own or that of someone close to them.

Minister's schedule, February 2024

Other than normal days off (including Thursdays, which she tries to take as a sabbath) Kate has no planned periods of leave or any courses booked during February.

Vestry Days: most Fridays, and one Saturday a month

Kate plans to be in the vestry on **Fridays 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd February**, and on **Saturday 10th**. If these plans change she will let you know: if you're coming into town specially to see her, it's probably worth checking first!

The heating and the kettle will be on on all those days, and I'd love to see you if you fancy popping in. You're also welcome to pop in if you don't particularly need to see me but either just want somewhere to warm up, or want to use the worship area for quiet prayer and reflection.

It's worth bearing in mind that people are often in and out on a Friday (which is the point of the vestry days), so if you want a more in-depth or confidential and uninterrupted chat, it would be better to arrange this on a different day.

Regular Social Events

Book Club

The February meeting of the Book Club will take place on **Wednesday 28th February, at 2pm**, in the church lounge. The book to be discussed is *The Shout* by Stephen Leather. Tea and coffee will be available. Parking will only be available in case of a real need, so please check beforehand.

Everyone is welcome: you don't even need to have read the book!

Camera Club

The Camera Club will continue to meet during February, at 7pm on two Monday evenings, on Zoom. Please listen out for details in church notices and in the weekly email.

Social Gatherings

The next gathering will take place on **Saturday 24th February**: you are really welcome to join us, whether you'd like to get involved with collating the next edition of the Calendar, or just fancy joining us for a cup of tea, coffee, or hot chocolate and some friendly companionship.

Second Sunday lunches

Kate will be going to the Art Picture House for her lunch on **Sunday 11th February**, and would love you to join her. We generally have a really chatty and happy little gathering, and you're welcome to join us whether you want your lunch (or dinner – call it what you will!), just a coffee, or a drink.

We normally each pay for whatever we're having, but please don't let money be a reason not to come: have a quiet word with Kate and we'll sort it out.

March 2024 Calendar:

The deadline for entries for the March edition of the Calendar will be teatime on **Tuesday 20th February**, and we'll collate it on **Saturday 24th**.

Copies of services

If you're on our email list, you get a copy of the service every week, and a list of the week's notices.

If you don't use email and would like to see a service that you've missed (or that you particularly enjoyed) please let Kate know and she'll make sure you get a paper copy either next time you're in church or by post.

Fiftieth birthday party

On 9th March 2024 we will celebrate 50 years since the opening of our current church building. We intend to celebrate with a tea party at church on **Saturday 9th March**, 2024, from 2.30 until 4.00pm, to which you are invited. We hope to show some film clips of a year in the life of the church.

Please sign the list on the church notice board if you wish to attend, or send an email to

buryunitarianchurch@gmail.com

or leave a message on the church phone:

0161 761 3785.

There will also be a special celebratory service on **Sunday 10th March**, at our usual time of 11.15am, in the presence of the Mayor of Bury and her consort.

Further details of both these events will be with you soon.

Notes from the building.

When I am working around the building, I'm often asked the most important question that anyone can ask me, which is, why? Why are we doing this thing? Why perform that task in that way? Why are we proposing that this thing should happen? 'Why', is the most important question anyone in the congregation can ask me, because it shows an interest and investment in the building which is our shared and sacred space.

It is also a common question, and it should be. This is because domestic property and commercial property are two completely different things. Why shouldn't you ask about something that would be a strange thing for you to do in your own home?

Some of the things we do for the building honestly make no sense for a domestic building. While you probably should install a fire alarm at home and have a fire extinguisher too, you probably needn't do a Fire Safety Risk Assessment, which is necessary for a commercial building. Checking the cables and plugs on your home electrical items is something you can do, but Portable Appliance Testing? I certainly don't do that at home and unless you are an electrician, you probably don't either.

There is a long list of such things that need to be done to protect any commercial building and to make it safe for the people who share it. In our case, it's not just any shared space; it's a sacred one.

So if you're wondering why, then please ask. You won't be the first and you certainly won't be the last. It's a good question. In fact, I would argue that in relation to the work done on the building, why... is actually the most important question of all.

Ade Brady

Stewards for Sunday services, February 2024

Sunday 4 th February	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 11 th February	Ewen Sim and Ade Brady
Sunday 18 th February	Beryl Bowden and Marian Price
Sunday 25 th February	Betty Kenyon and Neville Kenyon
Sunday 3 rd March	Faye Casey and Susan Mitchell

Tea and coffee rota, February 2024

Sunday 4 th February	Howard Maden and Jean Maden
Sunday 11 th February	Lois Williams and Pam Gilbert
Sunday 18 th February	Marian Price and Susan Holt
Sunday 25 th February	Rita Boardall and Susan Mitchell
Sunday 3 rd March	Faye Casey and Janet Thatcher

There is a vacancy on the stewarding rota if you'd like to be part of the team: have a word with either Betty or Kate. Stewarding is a really good way to get to chat to everyone as they come in to church, and fulfils a really important role, particularly when we have visitors.

If you don't want to be on the rota but are happy to help out occasionally, that would also be great!

Members' name and address directory

Those of you who opted to be included in the name and address directory should receive your copy with this Calendar. If there are any mistakes, they were made by Kate, so please let her know!

Church iPad

We now own an iPad, which we needed to buy in order to make full use of the new sound system in the worship area.

If you've been thinking of starting to use a tablet, then you might like to 'have a go' on this one before committing: Ade (or Kate, if Ade's not around) will be really happy to show you how to use it. This might be particularly useful to those of you who want to use things like video calling to contact family members or friends. Just have a word with Kate or Ade.

Communion: a very slight change

At the moment, we have a short inclusive communion service on the last Sunday of each month, after the main worship service. From this year this will change very slightly, and take place on the fourth Sunday, rather than the last Sunday (so when there are five Sundays in the month, it won't be on the last one). This won't affect many months, and is because of something I'm hoping to start doing on fifth Sundays: more will be revealed in the March Calendar!

News from around the district and the denomination

News and greetings from Ainsworth

10.30 am Sunday 4th February Mr Vince McCully (Rivington Chapel).
Vince is this year's President of the General Assembly and we look forward to welcoming him to Ainsworth Chapel.

Rochdale Film Night, Saturday 10th February



FILM NIGHT



Whisky Galore! tells the story of the inhabitants of the isolated Scottish island of Today, in the Outer Hebrides, where gloom sets in as their wartime rationing of whisky runs out. When cargo ship the SS Cabinet Minister runs aground the shrewd islanders run rings around the buffoonish English Home Guard commander Captain Waggett and conspire to hide away cases of the precious amber nectar.

Saturday 10th February 2024

7pm prompt Supper £7.00

Rochdale Unitarian Church, Clover Street
Rochdale OL12 6TP

RSVP - It is essential for catering purposes that you add your name to the notice board list or email helen@illingworth.org.uk



General Assembly Meetings, April 2024

Bookings are now open for the General Assembly meetings, which take place at Staverton Park Hotel in Northamptonshire, from **Thursday 4th to Saturday 6th April**. The meetings are a great way to meet hundreds of Unitarians, attend workshops, take part in worship, and attend the denomination's business meetings. If you'd like to know more about the meetings, speak to Kate. We will be looking for two delegates to attend to represent the congregation, but you can also attend independently.

Unitarian Summer School, August 2024

Bookings are also open for the Unitarian Summer School at Great Hucklow from **19th – 26th August** (Monday to Monday). This year's theme is '*Sustainable Living: Changing Our Ways and Saving Our World*', and although Kate is no longer involved in the organisation of Summer School, she can happily point you in the direction of more information.

District worship service

Plans are being made for a District Worship Service, to be held some time in the spring: the service will be an opportunity for all the churches to join together in worship, something that is perhaps rare, when we are all so involved within our own congregations.

I think we can all appreciate that there is no better uplift, than the felt connection when we come together - I wonder what potential we might be able to harness from that, as the earth also comes into its rebirth?

Watch this space for further details and a date and time.

Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie, Rochdale Unitarians

**The Dorothy Archer hymn-writing competition:
congratulations to Anne Mills.**

Congratulations to Anne, who has (for the second year running) been awarded the Dorothy Archer prize for hymn writing. Her hymn is below, and we will be singing it in church one day very soon.

Words: Worship; Tune: Ellers; Metre: 10.10.10.10. (Iambic)*

Sweet harmonies surround our worship-joy;
Truths strengthen words that we should all employ.
Joining in song, we sense the rafters ring;
Beauty combines with pleasure---thus we sing.

Deep is our rev'rence, as we bow in prayer;
Minds respond fully; we awake---aware!
Freely, but silently, our thoughts we weigh;
Hearts' inmost, private, wishes---thus we pray.

This truly matters, as we link with life:
Treat others with affection; forbid strife
To rule within this land; allow the dove
Of peace and mercy's advent---thus we love.

Justice and freedom, too, will play their part.
These are our values, which affect the heart.
We sing with love and light; we pray to give
Our hearts and souls with vigour---thus we live.

Anne Mills: November, 2023.

(The hymn can be sung to several other tunes, of which Anne has a list).

The Bridegroom: Bill Drayton.

Arising from earthly slumber
To be prepared as an adorned bride
For her heavenly King,
Who radiates more brightly than
Thousands of suns over a waking landscape,

And the tent of meeting extends from east to west,
Billowing in the desert breezes,
Like a victorious ship in full sail
Riding the waves of a tumultuous ocean.

The Father stands at the entrance,
Persistently patient for his beloved son
From distant, hard-won travelling
To walk gracefully down the golden tracks of New Jerusalem.

The gates of splendour open in ecstatic welcome
With the incense-outpouring of angelic praise
To the Lamb, lying down with the Lion.

In all my times there is none to match
The inexorable presence of eternal beauty
That can never fade like brittle autumn leaves.

I slake my thirst at the bubbling
Effervescence of perpetual love,
Emanating out of the fertile soil
Of Eden's Garden,

Reborn
After long wintry days of despair,
Spent at desolate crossroads
In arid regions of outer darkness.

Now is the moment when gentle hands join
Together in a melting kiss
And a strange world slinks back
Into shameful oblivion
Before the advent of truth in majesty
And all is well in the kingdom of joy.

Thanks to Bill for sending this poem in. I'm happy to publish people's work, even if it doesn't fit with what we might normally think of as Unitarian theology!

Last year's hymns:

During Kate's services in 2023, we sang:

- Seventy hymns once each, of which nine were new (eight of the new hymns were from the green book, and one from the purple book)
- Twenty-nine hymns twice each.
- And two hymns ('Each Seeking Faith' and 'We Light the Flame') three times each .

This doesn't include Christmas Carols, hymns which aren't in the hymn books, or hymns we sang at Hannah's services of services led by other people.

By-Gone Times by Betty Kenyon. Number 43: Rev John Ogden

Rev John Odgers was born in Plymouth . His father, Rev William James Odgers, was minister at Treville Street Chapel, Plymouth. He had two brothers; one a Minister and the other a Bencher of the Middle Temple at the Inns of Court. His mother was a near relative of Admiral Blake.

Rev John Odgers was educated at Bath Grammar School and then in 1864 to Manchester New College London. He came to Bury as assistant minister between 1872 and 1873 to Rev John Wright. (By Gone Times no. 38)

Following this he ministered at Leeds, Evesham, Dean Row and Styal, Kentish Town London, Bury again in 1895-1903. Finally, Ullet Road, Liverpool until 1917 and thence retirement.

While at Bury he was engaged in much public work: he was a member of the Non-Conformist Council of Bury. He took his turn at Bury Infirmary Sunday afternoon services, also the Working Men's Sunday afternoon Lecture Society and the week night's Lecture Society. He was also a member of the Infirmary Board as well as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Mrs Odgers was helpful with the Queen's Nurses where she was secretary. She took a great interest in the Girls' Club.

During Mr Odgers ministry the Great Bazaar was organised to help clear the debt of £1,500. The Bazaar raised over £2000.

It was during Mr Odgers ministry that the minister was provided with a manse, the gift of Mrs John Grundy of Summerseat. The address being West Royd, Manchester Road.



West Royd a semi-detached residence. This is the rear view that comes on to Manchester Road. The front overlooks Bury Sports Club grounds.

Bury Unitarian Church fourth building

The fourth Bury Unitarian Church was designed and constructed by local architect James T Ratcliffe. The church was opened in 1974, with a service of dedication on Saturday, 9 March. The total cost, including furnishings, was £85,000. The Churchwarden and Chairman of Trustees, at that time, was Bernard Haughton, he served the Church for the next 25 years.



At the start of the project Rev. Jim McClelland was the minister. However, in 1972, ill-health caused him to resign. In 1973, the Rev. John Allerton was appointed, staying for 34 years.

The "People Praising", is a 12foot high original sculpture at the front of our worship area which represents the family of the church. It was created by Elizabeth Mulchinock.



Over time, additions to the building have been made, the installation of an improved heating-system, a new sound system, a staircase to the top storey and a lift to the first floor.

Our social groups include the Book Club, the Camera Club, Saturday morning Calendar collating and occasional lunch outings. Social activities and Quiz Night are organised by ad-hoc groups.

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.

Accessibility

We want our church and our community to be as accessible to everyone as it possibly can be. As well as providing everything in large print, we have a hearing loop, wheelchair access at the back of the building, and an accessible toilet.

Our services and other events are fidget-friendly!

We have also recently taken possession of a new lightweight, easily collapsible, sturdy wheelchair. The wheelchair lives in the cupboard under the front stairs, and you are free to use it at any time it would be useful in church.

If you have a short-term need at home and would like to borrow it, please speak to one of the church officers.

We know that there will be needs we haven't accounted for: if there is anything which would make it easier for you to engage with what we do, please please do tell us!

Regular Events (all social events are subject to change)

Sundays:

11.15am: Worship in person at Bury

First Sunday of most months:

10.30am: Worship in person at Ainsworth

Second Sunday of each month:

12.30 (approx.): Second Sunday Lunch. Please join Kate at a local pub for lunch, a coffee, or a drink. (If the cost would be a problem please have a quiet word with Kate).

Fourth Sunday of each month:

12.30pm: Inclusive Communion Service at Bury

Second and fourth Mondays of most months:

7pm: Camera club (normally online)

Last Wednesday of each month:

2pm (Sept-May): Book club

Most Fridays:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Day

Second Saturday of each month:

10am-3pm (approx.): Minister's Vestry Saturday

Last Saturday of each month:

11am-1pm (approx.): Saturday Social Gathering

What's on: February 2024

Friday 2nd February 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Sunday 4th February

10.30am Ainsworth: Morning service, led by Vince McCully,
President of the GA.

11.15am Bury: Morning Service

Monday 5th February 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

Friday 9th February 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Saturday 10th February 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Saturday

7pm: Rochdale Film night

Sunday 11th February

11.15am Bury Morning service

12.30 approx Second Sunday lunch

Monday 12th February 9.30 – 2.30: *British Red Cross booking (entire building)*

Wednesday 14th February 11-1: *Hall booking (Bury VCFA)*

Friday 16th February 10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Sunday 18th February

11.15am Bury:

Morning service

Monday 19th February*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)***Tuesday 20th February**

Teatime: deadline for entries for the March Calendar

Friday 23rd February

10-3 at least: Minister's Vestry Day

Sat 24th February

11am onwards: Saturday Social Gathering and Calendar Collation party.

Sunday 25th February

11.15am Bury:

Morning service

12.30 approx:

Inclusive communion

Monday 26th February*9.30 – 2.30: British Red Cross booking (entire building)***Tuesday 27th February**

7pm: Church Council meeting

Wednesday 28th February2pm: Book club meeting to discuss *The Shout*, by Stephen Leather. All are welcome: parking is by prior arrangement only.**Looking ahead to March****Sunday 3rd March**

1pm: Trustees' AGM and meeting

Saturday 9th March

Church fiftieth birthday party

Sunday 10th March

Anniversary service.

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: Neville Kenyon 01204 887222

Chair of church council: Jean Maden

Church secretary: Karen Hampson 0161 766 2283

Chair of congregation: Betty Kenyon 01204 887222

Church treasurer: Lynda Arthur

Contact for room bookings and building maintenance

Property Manager Adrian Brady 07736 107143

Charity reg no: 107857



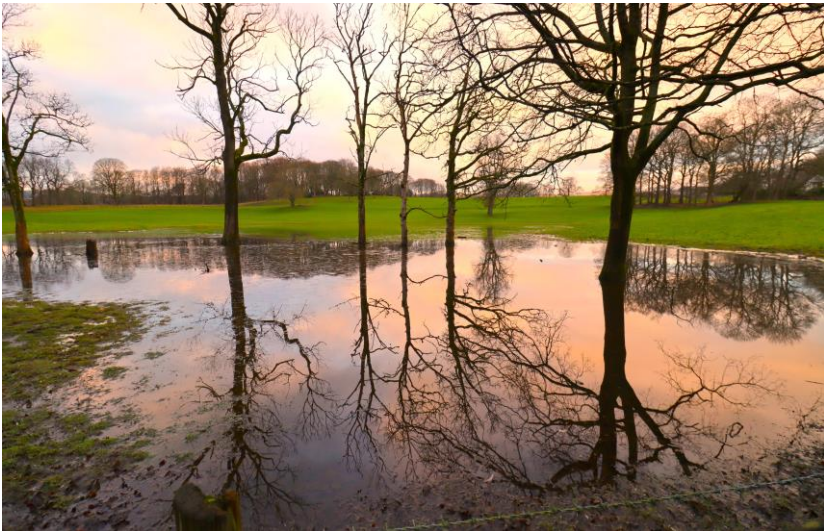
Heron at Burrs -playing the waiting game!



Wintry Walmersley



Sudden January white-out!



***“Water, water everywhere**!”*



Welcome to the Northern Lights