

Bury Unitarian Church



Calendar for June 2020

Welcome!

Welcome to this third edition of the 'lockdown' Calendar for Bury Unitarian Church. It looks as though it won't be the last, either: you will know by now that we have decided to keep the church building closed until *at least* the end of July.

You will have received a letter with this calendar, about our slow move back to reopening: please take some time to read it.

This edition also contains a lot of material sent in by members, including a very lovely prayer written by one of our Junior Church members, and I'm really grateful for all of it: please continue to send me stuff, whether it's your own writing, or something which has caught your attention. And you can, of course, always use the Calendar to send greetings to your church friends.

One day our Calendar will be full of upcoming events, reports of past events, details of meetings and rotas again. We all look forward to that day, but in the meantime we can use it for what we need just now: a way to remain in touch with each other and to remind ourselves that even though we are apart, some things are constant, and that we truly are a community.

If you submitted something and it didn't appear in the Calendar, this will not have been because I decided against using it, but because I missed it: I apologise if that happened, and if you remind me I will put it in next time. I really want the Calendar to belong to everyone, so I won't just choose to leave something out, and I certainly wouldn't leave something out without discussing it with you. Omissions are mistakes, not choices!

The cover picture is by Janet Thatcher, and was provided by the camera club: thanks to them, and thank you also to Roger Mills for creating such a lovely cover.

Kate Brady McKenna

Letter from the Minister:

Dear all,

What a strange, strange world we're living in!

I hear from most of you very regularly, and I can say, without exaggeration, that I am so proud of how you are all managing this situation. I don't think I've had a phone call yet in which the person on the other end of the phone hasn't asked about how everyone else is doing, or in which the person hasn't had a story of kindness to tell.

Of course, those phone calls (and the emails and text messages) sometimes include conversation about our fears and our sadness and the things we are missing: and I am very glad when you feel able to share those things with me. As a minister it is part of my role to hear and bear witness to the things which are on people's minds, and it is also a huge privilege. Please do not feel that you shouldn't bother me with your concerns (I am here to be bothered with your concerns), or that you should try to put a brave face on. I promise I will try to help you carry your difficulties.

But I also hear stories of great creativity in how we are all finding a route through this strange world. The situation, the advice, and the rules are constantly changing at the moment, and I look on with awe as people adjust to them. When this all first started we didn't have any idea how long it would go on for (and we still don't), and I think we've all seen that the way in which we approach it has changed.

I am constantly impressed by how much we've adapted to the world we're in: it speaks volumes for the flexibility of humans as a whole, and of our community in particular.

I am grateful that I am the Minister to this particular congregation: you are all working hard with grace and strength to make a strange and difficult time as easy as it can be for the congregation and for everyone within it, and believe me when I say that that makes my ministry much easier and smoother than it might otherwise be!

We are still acting as a church, even when we're not gathering in a church building, and we should be very proud of that.

My work has changed enormously in the past three months, and continues to change, and you have all been extremely supportive of the constant shifting of timetables and priorities. I wish I could say that the routine we are now in is how it will be until the world opens up again, but I think we know that would be a false promise. I know that we will all continue to adapt and change as we need to.

Some of the changes, of course, are positive ones, and there is a lot that is happening at the moment that we'd do well to try to hang on to when all of this is over. I enjoy the way we're all a bit more considerate of each other. I enjoy having more time to think and pray and read. I enjoy everything being quieter. This isn't a situation we'd have asked for, of course, but there is a great deal of good to be found within it.

A lot of people are using this time to learn new skills, and whilst I fully admire that, I freely admit that I haven't done so. But I have learned something: because we now deliver the weekly services in person rather than relying on the increasingly struggling Royal Mail, I am becoming far more familiar with the layout of Bury and how everything connects to everything else. Things that were previously just words to me are now real places, and I had a proud moment last week when Ade and I used an online tool to plan the best route to use to deliver services to each of the homes we go to, and realised that it was more or less exactly what we'd been doing anyway!

By the time of the next calendar, we will have passed the solstice and be fully into summer. Watching this spring unfold within the strange peacefulness of the lockdown has been a soothing part of this time, and whilst I look forward to being together, I hope to find the same fascination as summer deepens.

As always, I send you my love.

Kate.

A prayer by Rebecca, a member of our Junior Church:

Dear God,

I am so lucky not to be in hospital with Covid-19. Thank you for nurses, doctors, surgeons and paramedic workers who save our lives every day.

Thank you for all the people who make our medicines.

Thank you for all the key workers who are helping to keep us going at this stressful and difficult time.

My Ganpa Richard lives in a care home. Thank you to all the carers who looked after him a long time and still do.

Thank you for my education. My teachers are great and help me learn how to be a great citizen.

Thank you for providing plants, trees and animals, which make me feel happy.

I am lucky that I am safe at home and I can Skype my friends when I want to.

I know other people are in danger at this time. Some people are in danger at this time as they are ill or they may have lost their jobs and be worried about not having enough money to afford food and a home.

I know you love all your people and we all love you.

Amen.

Presidential Matters:

Last month, I mentioned the suggestion made by Celia Cartwright, Sue Woolley, and me, that there should be a Presidential Team for the next year; the three of us will carry out such duties as are required, between us. I'm pleased to be able to tell you all that this scheme has now been approved by Elizabeth Slade, the Chief Officer, and by the Executive Committee, and there will shortly be announcements about this arrangement in *The Inquirer*, in *UniNews*, and on the Unitarians website.

The less good news is that, constitutionally, the GA President can only be installed at the Annual Meetings, the next of which will be held in April, 2021, at the earliest. For the time being, Celia and I remain as President and Vice-President, respectively, and Sue becomes the Vice-President-elect. At present, whilst our churches stay closed, there is little to do, as regards conducting services and conveying official greetings, so we will have to wait and see what the future brings---in very many directions.

At the end of April, I devised a service for Sheffield Fulwood and Underbank Unitarians; although this was originally designed to be a read at home, after I had sent it to Rev. Maud Robinson, she contacted me to suggest that it might be broadcast via Zoom; I agreed to this, Maud delivered it, and it was very well-received; Roger and I joined the Zoom meeting, and shared worship, as well as the following chat-session---all most enjoyable. I have just completed another service-at-home, this time for Chowbent Unitarians, on June 7th, when they celebrate their Chapel Anniversary. Other than that, it seems that our churches will remain closed for a while yet; we have decided not to open before the end of July, at least, and this means, inevitably, that more cancellations of official duties will follow. Kendal's 300th Anniversary Service, on May 31st, will be transmitted by Zoom, and Roger and I will join the service then, but not, sadly, in person.

For the time being, I keep busy with work for our church, trying to keep in regular contact with as many of the congregation as possible; I have duties

connected with the Lancashire Collaborative Ministry; and Celia, Sue and I will be keeping in touch with one another, and with Liz Slade and Marion Baker, so that we can liaise with the EC, once a month. Much of our contact will involve Zoom; as it turns out, my computer-equipment is only just adequate for meetings, but I do my best, learning as I go along, and experimenting by a great deal of button-pressing! It has been interesting to sample Zoom services presented by other Unitarian churches---a chance to hear a variety of styles and material, without moving from home!

Once again, thanks are due to Kate, who continues to provide high-quality services, which are both meaningful, and relevant to our current circumstances. Once her services are ready, she has the task of distributing them around the congregation---no mean feat, when the Royal Mail is not functioning properly. I think we must now be on Plan E, at least, but it will be right, eventually, I'm sure. Thanks to Ade for helping with deliveries, too. Kate has now set up weekly Zoom meetings, at 11 a.m; on Saturdays, so that those online can enjoy Coffee and Chat sessions; we now have a BUC WhatsApp Group, too; if you haven't yet joined, and would like to do so, contact Kate, who will make the necessary arrangements. Thank you, Kate, for these innovations, as well as for providing a listening ear for anyone who needs it, whenever it's requested.

Anne Mills.

Bury United Reformed Church:

Because of our continued closure until at least the end of July, it will not be possible for us to make our usual exchange-visits to our friends at Bury URC, and this has been postponed, indefinitely. In all likelihood, Bury URC will not be open during July, either, so please do not try to visit, on July 5th. Anne has discussed the situation at length with their Pulpit-Secretary, and, if at all possible, we will try to re-arrange the exchanges, but agreeing dates could be difficult, and much will depend on circumstances, later in the year. Please watch for announcements.

Notes from the church building:

In bloom. The country is in bloom but we can only see it in snapshots, in our own gardens, in our memories and in photographs. Maybe we are graced with the occasional walk, maybe we can see our neighbours' gardens from our windows, maybe there is something, even something small, we can see from a constitutional walk, when we're able to take one. That however is largely the limit of our experience for now; that is as much of the season we can give ourselves, and that's a worthy thing to be sad about, because the country is in bloom and it seems unfair we can't have a wider enjoyment of that.

At the church, the grass is green, and it's a beautiful shade of green, it's been recently cut and I've used some of my time there on a litter picking mission so that our beautiful green can be seen by anyone who passes us by, because the grass looks amazing, and that amazing space may just be the extended limit of someone else's world right now. It should look as good as it can.

Before the pandemic closed our church's doors, the welcome we, as Bury Unitarians would offer was absolute, and we should all be very proud of that. There must always be exceptions to a rule however, and we did have unwelcome visitors recently. When I returned from Dorset, I found our balcony had very recently been used as a landing spot for some large detritus that I can only presume was put in place for someone to lever themselves up on to the roof; presumably to look for lead; which fortunately for us, isn't there. I don't expect to see them back, partially because I have had the detritus removed and temporarily increased the number of security checks at the church, and because they must now know that we have no lead to steal!

In more welcome news, we've carried out some work on the roof, and I am talking with our contractors again to try and work out the best times for them to do our essential maintenance work. Hopefully when we return to our beautiful building, all of this work will be complete and it will be even easier to appreciate everything about our wonderful, safe and secure place of worship and, of course, the beautiful green outside.

Ade Brady

Traidcraft:

Just a quick update on the situation at present. Our prolonged closure has meant that very little stock has been sold recently; however, most items have good dates on them, so I'm confident that little will go out-of-date. For the moment, I shall only order a minimum amount of new stock. If there are items anyone would like, please let me know, and I will do my best to deliver them. Don't forget that we still have stocks of Kilombero rice remaining, as part of Bury Fair Trade Group's Rice Challenge, if anyone wishes to continue to support this.

Anne Mills.

Camera club:

During our closure, our Camera-enthusiasts have transferred to Zoom and are getting together, on most Monday evenings, at 7 p.m; to discuss photographic-matters and admire each others' pictures (and their own). Janet Thatcher is currently hosting these sessions, so, if you are interested in joining in, please contact her for details.

Roger Mills.

Face masks:

Current government advice is that we all wear face coverings in public enclosed spaces, and it is quite likely that when church first opens we will need to do this in order to limit our exposure to the virus. I have found a very easy pattern online, and Ade and I have set up a small mask-making production line on the dining table in the manse (modelled below, and yes, we're available for all your fashion shows, but we don't come cheap). We hope to create a small stash of masks so that if we do decide we should be wearing them in church, we can have some available for visitors. If anyone else would like to see the pattern and add to the stash (or even just to make masks for friends and family) Kate would be more than delighted: it is likely we will need a large number over the coming months. If you're not into sewing but have any suitable fabric (lightish cotton) looking for a home, please let me know.

Kate Brady McKenna



Are you running short of things to read?

Many of you are regular users of the book stall in the lounge at church, and just at the moment we have more time to read than we usually do.

If you're running out of reading material and would like something "new", Ade and I would be very happy to leave two or three books from the bookcase at a time on your doorstep when we deliver the services-at-home or the Calendar, and then pick them up when you're done.

We can't guarantee specific titles (or even that you might not get the same book twice, frankly!) , but if you tell us what sort of thing you like (romance, or crime, or even just be brave and say "I'll have the seventh book on the middle shelf, please") we'll do what we can.

If you'd like to make a contribution for the books, you're very welcome to pop a donation in the money pot on the bookshelves once we get back to church.

If you've got books you've finished with, we can take those as well: though if we get overwhelmed we might start saying no!

Give Kate a call or drop her an email and we'll try very hard to make this work!

Alf Howson

Alf Howson's funeral took place on Wednesday 6th May, and although the current restrictions meant that no one from church could be present, I know that many of you held him in your thoughts during that time.

I was in the worship area, and at the time the funeral was happening I lit a candle for Alf, spoke some words into the quiet, sang two hymns (The Day Thou Gavest and Abide With Me) and said the Lord's Prayer.

When we can gather again we will remember Alf together.

Connie Diggle's press fame.

Congratulations to Connie on this magnificent project, and on this press coverage from the Bolton News:

A grandmother is helping to sew scrub bags for the NHS, dusting off a sewing machine bought nearly 75 years ago.

Connie Diggle, 92, who has lived in Bolton most of her life, has been using her machine — bought for just £1 — to make scrub bags from scratch for the group, The Scrubs Hub.

Since last Tuesday, Connie has made 35 bags using the vintage sewing machine from different materials found around her home.

Connie has been isolating at home for over eight weeks, but says she was “delighted” when she was asked if she could help.

The sewing machine was bought in 1947 for £1 after Connie saw it advertised in the Bolton Evening News. She shared it with her mother-in-law until 1991 when she passed away.

The machine was also used to make Connie's wedding dress from scratch in 1949, using materials bought at Bolton Market, with Connie having sewn since she was a little girl.

Connie has lived in Bolton all of her life, excluding 12 years when she lived in Brazil with her husband, Wilf, where she carried on sewing for children's charities.

As a very old fashioned sewing machine everything is having to be made completely from scratch with Connie having to fix every intricate part together with lots of stitching and tape.

Connie said that she was asked if she could help out by sewing these scrubs by a family friend, who is a doctor.

She said: "One of our friends son's is a doctor and they asked if I would like to join a sewing group making these scrubs."

"I was delighted that they asked me. I can't tell you how pleased I was to be asked to help."

She has been helping to sew for Scrubs Hub Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, and surrounding areas, who are a network of volunteers sewing much needed scrubs for the local NHS.

Connie has also been sharing her advice of living through the Second World War to help others with the lockdown.

She said: "I was 10 when the war started and we had to learn to do things. "We had to have two uses for everything and that's when I was making all my own clothes."

After nearly eight weeks in isolation she was "delighted" that she could help the effort in any way.

She added: "This is the best way I can help, I'm very busy now.

"I'm doing it because I can, nothing more than that.

"I'm still very good for my age."



Greetings from our friends at church:

We hope that everyone continues to keep healthy and happy; until we can meet together again, we send our love and very best wishes.

Anne and Roger.

Greetings to everyone. Keep safe and well and hopefully we'll all be able to meet again soon.

Margaret Miller.

I am very much looking forward to seeing you all at church, hopefully in the not too distant future. Hoping that you all keep well and that you are managing to keep your spirits up.

With best wishes from Janet.

I send my love and caring thoughts and ask that they think of the carpets of bluebells that we have missed and i have seen a fawn on my path and that released a beautiful memory of holiday in Scotland made me think of something nice and it rubbed off on me Keep safe yourselves

Connie

An update on Ade's parents:

Most of you know that Ade's parents, Marguerite and Terry, have both been unwell over the last few weeks and that Ade spent some time in Dorset with them. Ade and I are very moved by all the concern the congregation has shown to them and us, and I know that they are very touched and feel very supported.

They are both currently at home and managing reasonably well with care. Ade may need to visit them again in the coming weeks, but hopefully it will be a short visit.

Thank you for proving, once again, what a loving community we are!

An illustrated message from Betty Kenyon:

Dear all,



Well so far so good, the squirrels are evicted from the roof space.

The birds are happy, the robins friendly.

But it has got me thinking of past occurrences of infiltration.



We've had rooks falling down the chimney (more than once) and flying round the lounge (what a job to catch!); an active wasp' next in the attic (I took it to school when I was teaching (very useful!)) a frog swimming in the downstairs loo basin (how on earth it got there is anybody's guess?); frogs in the cellar; a squirrel nesting in the potting shed on the lounge cushions.

Once when Neville was away and I hadn't been in the dining room for 2 days I found a strange cat in the dining room! Luckily no mess was made!

Wishing you all the best of health, keep going and stay safe.

Love Betty xx

Church flowers:

One of the things I know we all miss about being in church is our glorious floral displays. The flowers on the 7th June would have been sponsored by Susan Holt in memory of Jack Crabtree, and on 21st June by Susan Mitchell in memory of Fred Mitchell. We send our love to Susan and Susan.

Hymn books:

I'm not sure why it took so long for me to think of this, but if any of you would like to borrow a green or purple hymn book so that you can follow the music as well as the words during the service-at-home on a Sunday morning (or so that you can just have a sing-song at home), Ade and I would be happy to drop them round when we next deliver the services. If you don't live in Bury you might have a longer wait, of course!

Thanks:

There are a lot of people working really hard to keep church going when we can't be in church, and I really hope that you all know your work is appreciated and noticed! All the church officers are still making sure that church business is kept going, and I know that the trustees are still making important decisions. Although my work as minister is the most visible of all the work, it most certainly isn't the only work. Without the backup of so many different people, there is much that would either not be done, or that would be done less well or in more of a panic!

This month, though, I want to express particular thanks to Adrian, who, entirely separately from his work as property manager is a huge support to me in my ministry: specifically, he has been very cheerful and amenable about helping deliver the services-at-home each week, despite this involving three hours stuck in a car with his wife, and despite him being the one to pull a face covering on and run up and down everyone's paths.

Welcoming the General Assembly's Presidential Team:

Anne has already talked about the new presidential arrangements, but here is the statement (slightly abbreviated) from the General Assembly:

The Executive Committee are delighted to welcome the formation of a new Presidential Team for this coming year. Rev Celia Cartwright, Anne Mills, and Rev Sue Woolley came up with the proposal to work collaboratively as a team for this year, due to the uncertain and difficult time of pandemic.

We are grateful for the leadership shown by the Presidential Team, and the way they are choosing to collaborate in offering their gifts to the Movement.

Here is a special message from Anne, Celia and Sue:

"The new plan is that, until April, 2021, the three of us will form a Presidential Team, carrying out, between us, certain duties, and offering as much support and encouragement as we can to all our congregations, both during this difficult time, and as they emerge from lockdown-restrictions and begin to take stock of their various situations. Our Constitution states that Celia must remain as President, until the next Annual Meetings; Anne, therefore, stays as Vice-President, and Sue becomes the Vice-President-Elect.

During this difficult year, as we face the COVID 19 virus pandemic, nothing is 'normal'. The ordinary lives of all of us have been curtailed as we self-isolate at home, alone or with partners and family; or serving on the front line, whether we are Doctor, Practitioner, Nurse, or one the many other health-care practitioners who are putting their lives at risk to help us save ours, including the oft-overlooked janitors, porters, cleaners, and those who create meals for patients in hospital. In amongst this, the closure of our churches and the cancelling of the 2020 General Assembly meetings can seem almost peripheral. But it is a large part of our sense of wholeness and connection. Dealing with this is writing a new rule-book on the hoof, for we

have never had a situation like this before. One of the minutiae of this new rule-book is the role of President, Vice President and the out-going President, and, as you can imagine, these have been close to the hearts of Celia Cartwright, Anne Mills and Sue Woolley.

In order to serve our denomination at this time, we have proposed that this strange year is seen as a fallow year, during which we have a Presidential Team. We realise that, during this current time, and when life begins to 'get back to normal', there will be a need for contact, communication, and help, from a wide variety of people and places, and we hope to be able to act for and with the great Assembly of Unitarians and Free Christians in the UK and in Ireland.

We cannot see into the future; we have no idea precisely what will be required of us, but the role we see opening for us is one of responsible communicating with, and finding out how, our congregations are faring during this time, and in the time to come. We see our role as being in contact with ministers and lay-leaders to support them: passing information, when necessary, to the offices of the GA, and to the EC, keeping us all in contact, being aware, and helping in whatever way we can. And next year, we sincerely hope we can all pick up the reins and begin again, afresh, anew, at our General Assembly Meetings. The rule-book will have been written, and amended, and it will be left for any future time, if a situation like this should ever emerge again.

Wherever the assistance of the Presidential Team is required, it will be available, so we would ask everyone to let us know what they feel they most need; we aim to send out supportive, compassionate messages, regularly, and to communicate by all possible methods; we can offer worship, pastoral care, and visits---or whatever feels most appropriate. We would like to ensure that every single Unitarian feels held and heard; we will be responsive.

David Dawson: obituary

It has been announced, with great regret, that David Dawson's death occurred, on May 9th. He had been in hospital for treatment, but then contracted Coronavirus.

David had a long and active association with Unitarianism, at all levels, and was a member of Bradford Unitarian Church. He served as G. A. President, from 2006-7, and was later elected an Honorary Member of the General Assembly---the highest accolade that can be bestowed. David was a talented musician; not only that, but he was generous with his time and his talent. I remember attending two sessions, at Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, when more than 100 people met together to record some of the hymns from the new (purple) hymnbook, "Sing Your Faith"; David rehearsed us, divided us into parts, conducted, and played the piano-accompaniments, showing no less energy at the end of the day than he had at the beginning; the same could not be said of the singers! Many of the tunes had been arranged or composed by David, and one of these---"Olicana"---was the name of David's house, too; the name is thought to have been the Roman word for the hill-fort of Ilkley.

David was a gentle, unassuming man, and unstinting in his efforts to promote the Unitarian faith. His funeral took place on May 21st---a private family cremation, because of Coronavirus restrictions---but a Memorial Service will be arranged at a later date, whenever this becomes possible. He was much-respected, and will be greatly missed; our sympathies are with his wife, Christine, and his family.

Anne Mills

Sad news from our Rochdale Church.

Fred Schofield, husband to Elaine and father to Katherine died on Thursday 21st May. Many of you will know Fred from shared social events, he always enjoyed a bit of fun! His cremation service will take place at Rochdale on Tuesday 2nd June at 10.30am.

Please remember his family at this time and hold them in your thoughts and prayers.

Abi Elliott-McGuffie

Outside support available:

Although we are a loving and supportive community and you have friends in the congregation and a minister who is around to help, you may sometimes wish to talk to someone else, and there are several organisations which can help you, including those listed below.

Please don't try and bear things alone: talking is incredibly valuable.

Bury Community Hubs: Help offered by Age UK

If you are 70+ with health-conditions, live in Bury, and need support with the Coronavirus lockdown, ring 0161 253 5353.

The national Age UK Advice Line is 0800 678 1602, and this is open from
8 am to 7pm, every day of the year.

If you would just like to have a friendly natter, call Silverline at any time of the day or night, on 0800 470 8090.

You can also contact the Samaritans on 116 123.

Message from Joyce Ashworth, Women's League National President.

My very warmest greetings to all you wonderful ladies out there.

It has seemed so strange simply to assume the role of President instead of being formally installed, with the handing over of the badge of office at the GA Meetings as intended. A big thank you to Anne Gemmill for all her work as she held the fort for a two-year stint because I was unable to be President last year as I was moving house. I am now settled in a lovely house situated in the heart of a village approx 2.5 miles from Rochdale Unitarian Church and Rochdale town centre. The village retains a village atmosphere and has local shops, bakery, post office, pubs, bowling green, memorial gardens and good walking country. What more could I ask for.

Enough of me! How are you all coping with this bizarre new world of pandemic and lockdown which is measuring up to be the strangest time ever? Whilst we struggle with the effects of this virus, I hope, like me, you have been able to take short walks for exercise, sit in your garden, at your door or at least view the world from your window.

We have undoubtedly been seriously challenged and had to adapt to a new way of life, but perhaps it has not all been bad. It has given us the opportunity to stand still and take stock. The isolation caused by Covid-19 has given us the gift of time.

So what can I report regarding League matters? The Finance & General purposes Committee Meeting, scheduled for 18th June has been cancelled. Looking ahead to the Triennial gathering planned for October at Whalley Abbey, it is presently a waiting game to see how easing of restrictions proceeds.

Our Treasurer, Susan Holt, reports that the 2019/20 project raised a total of £7,960 for Smile Train UK. I would like to extend a hearty thanks to all League members for their solid effort in raising this magnificent sum in support of such a worthwhile charity.

I was pleased to send, on your behalf, a congratulatory card to Marion Davies of SE Wales branch for her 100th birthday. Messages of condolence were sent to the families of Rev Daphne Roberts, a past Women's League President and Mavis Duerden of our Nelum branch, both had passed their 90th birthdays and had lived loyal, active and useful lives, contributing greatly to their communities.

May you all keep well and safe in the weeks ahead.

Joyce Ashworth,
Women's League National President

Uni-News, and The Inquirer.

Rory Castle-Jones is sending out regular information-bulletins, which aim to keep us all informed about Unitarian events, in the near future. If you do not already receive UniNews and would like to do so, please email Rory, whose email-address is: rorycastlejones@unitarian.org.uk and put in a request; his working-days are Monday and Wednesday.

If you do not receive "The Inquirer", regularly, but would like to dip into it occasionally, it is available online, for the time being. The latest issue, at the time of writing, is the May 16th issue; to access it, visit the website www.inquirer.org.uk and click on "Samples".

Anne.

A message from Rev Lynne Readett, Executive Committee Link.

Dear all

Firstly I must explain, I usually attend NELUM districts meetings and give updates and information at that point. However things are very different and until the COVID virus is controlled we are unable to meet as usual.

As a movement we are now relying upon email and media contacts to keep us all connected.

Uni-News is the most regular update and to receive this please contact Rory on rcastlejones@unitarian.org.uk or Andrew on amason@unitarian.org.uk please let everyone you know have this information, keeping in touch is really important for the future of Unitarianism.

If anyone needs help we have arranged, for a limited time, a free service, this is Netserve Limited email theteam@netserve.support or 0203 728 8415

With reference to safeguarding, if anyone has the printed version this is out of date. We have brought in an independent safeguarding charity called 31.8 who can be contacted via Essex Hall, Audrey Longhurst is taking calls from home. Or details on Uni-News dated 6/5/20

Again please circulate this information to all within your chapel/church, lets keep in touch, but don't touch!

Love and blessings

Lynne

Thanks to Marian Price for suggesting this poem for the Calendar. It's attributed to Pam Ayres, but is apparently by Jan Beaumont.

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex 'n drugs and rock 'n
roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this bloody virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

We are not all in the same boat, by Damian Barr

Submitted by Anne Mills.

I heard that we are in the same boat.

But it's not that.

We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.

Your ship can be shipwrecked, and mine might not be.

Or vice versa.

For some, quarantine is optimal: a moment of reflection, or reconnection.

Easy, in flip flops, with a whisky or tea. For others, this is a desperate crisis. For others, it is facing loneliness.

For some, peace, rest time, vacation.

Yet for others, Torture: How am I going to pay my bills?

Some were concerned about a brand of chocolate for Easter (this year there were no rich chocolates).

Others were concerned about the bread for the weekend, or if the noodles would last for a few more days.

Some were in their "home office".

Others are looking through trash to survive.

Some want to go back to work because they are running out of money.

Others want to kill those who break the quarantine.

Some need to break the quarantine to stand in line at the banks.

Others to escape.

Others criticize the government for the lines.

Some have experienced the near-death of the virus, some have already lost someone from it, and some believe they are infallible and will be blown away, if or when this hits someone they know.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during 2020.

Others say the worst is yet to come.

So, friends, we are not in the same boat.

We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different. And each one will emerge, in his own way, from that storm.

It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking-more than looking: seeing.

See beyond the political party, beyond biases, beyond the nose on your face. Do not judge the good life of the other, do not condemn the bad life of the other. Don't be a judge.

Let us not judge the one who lacks, as well as the one who exceeds him.

We are on different ships looking to survive.

Let everyone navigate their route with respect, empathy and responsibility.

Ride this Storm, by Harriet Blackbury, from *'Love and Life and Loss'*

Submitted by Jean Brookhouse, who was friends with the poet's parents.

Published with permission.

Ride this storm and calm will come
After rain, there's always sun
Don't let your efforts go to waste
Think things through, there is no haste

What an empire we have made
Don't let our love now start to fade
Life is full of peaks and troughs
Many a hiccup and plenty of coughs

Love each other, please be strong
And soon we will be back on song.

From our history:

Thanks to Betty Kenyon for sending this fascinating article from the October 1889 Bury Unitarian Sunday School Calendar, and a hymn from the same period.

There is beauty all around,
When there's love at home;
There is joy in every sound,
When there's love at home;

Roses blossom at our feet,
All the earth's a garden sweet
Making life a bliss complete,
When there's love at home.

Peace and plenty there abide,
Smiling fair on every side;
Time does softly, sweetly glide,
When there's love at home.

Kindly heaven smiles above,
When there's love at home;
All the earth is filled with love
When there's love at home.

In the cottage there is joy,
When there's love at home;
Hate and envy ne'er annoy
When there's love at home;

Sweeter sings the brooklet by,
Brighter beams the azure sky,
There is One who smiles on high,
When there's love at home.

Our first intention, in the publication of a School Calendar, is to bring each month's arrangements more prominently before the minds of our friends; but we desire also to make the Calendar a record of any special matters of interest and importance in our school life. The good work which engages us Sunday by Sunday, however earnest and however useful we make it, needs supplementing, as we have always recognised, by opportunities of instruction and of friendly intercourse and relaxation on other days throughout the week; and just as the winters work commences, we call the attention of all our friends to the arrangements we have been able to make, and offer a hearty welcome to any who care to come and take advantage of them.

The following events took place every week:

Teachers' Preparation Class Wednesday 8.30pm – 9.15pm

Temperance Society Meeting Saturday 7.30pm

Drawing Class Monday 7.30pm – 9pm

Freehand, Model and Machine Drawing Monday 7.30pm – 9pm

Fancy Work Class Tuesday 7.30pm – 9pm

Elocution Class Tuesday 8pm – 9pm

Writing Class Wednesday 7.15pm – 8.30pm

Lecture on: The Humours of Examinations 8pm – 9 pm. Rev. D. Walmsley, B.A.

Cotton Manufacture Class Friday 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Friendly Society Meeting Saturday 6.30pm – 8pm

Dorcas Society Meeting Thursday 3pm

Second week Lecture was: Beggars and Begging. Rev D. Agate, B.A.

Third week Lecture: The Good Old Times—A Delusion. Rev. J.J. Wright

Fourth week Lecture: Hugh Latimer. Rev. R.T. Herford, B.A.

Sunday 27 October 1889 Annual Choir Sermons: Rev. C. Hargrove, M.A. of Leeds

From time to time other events took place: Parents' Party, Meeting of the Home Reading Circle, Boys' Reading Room, Social Meeting of Teachers and Elder Scholars,

Girls' Social Club, Football Club 2 teams, Ambulance Classes, Glee Club.

Smiling is infectious

attributed to Spike Milligan, and offered by Pam Oxley.

Smiling is infectious:

You catch it like the flu

When someone smiled at me
today

I started smiling too!

I passed around the corner,

And someone saw me grin

And when he smiled, I realised

I'd passed it on to him. I thought
about my smile,

And realised its worth:

A single smile like mine

Could travel round the earth.

So if you feel a smile begin,

Don't leave it undetected,

Let's start an epidemic quick

And get the world infected!

Church Information:

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Charity reg no: 1078570

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Facebook: Bury Unitarian Church.

Church Officers:

Chair of trustees: Susan Holt (07876 716573)

Chair of church council: Betty Kenyon (01204 887222)

Chair of congregation: Anne Mills (5, Arley Avenue, Bury, BL9 5HD, 0161 762 0943)

Church secretary: Anne Mills

Church treasurer: John Fitzpatrick (0161 764 6374)