

BURY UNITARIAN CHURCH
CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2015

CHURCH SERVICES

- 6 March 11.15am Mothering Sunday
- 13 March 11.15am The Minister – **service**
followed at 12.30pm by the Annual General Meeting of
the Congregation
- 20 March 11.15am The Minister
- 27 March 11.15am The Minister

CHURCH STEWARDS

- 6 March Marian Price and Di Scaife
- 13 March Beryl Bowden and Janet Thatcher
- 20 March Sue McMullen and Marc Peters
- 27 March Alf Howson and Roger Mills

If you are unable to fulfil your duties on the given date, please re-arrange with another steward(s). Thank you.

CHURCH FLOWERS

- 6 March George Scaife – Spring flowers
- 13 March Mr & Mrs Derek Worthington
- 20 March In memory of Barbara Ashworth – Vera
- 27 March Mrs Susan Mitchell – In memory of her parents,
Catherine & Sydney Poole

Distributors: Norah Hickton & Peter Whewell

SATURDAY MORNING COFFEE ROTA

- 5 March Jean Maden & Margaret Pollard
- 12 March Betty Kenyon & Molly Ratcliffe
- 19 March June Clarke, Marc & Philip Peters
- 26 March Brenda Ainsworth & Jean Taylor

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE ROTA

- 6 March Anne Mills (M), Beryl Bowden, Rene Hollos
- 13 March Norah Hickton (M), Peter Whewell, John Allerton
- 20 March Margaret Fitzpatrick (M), Lois Williams, Di Scaife
- 27 March Marian Price (M), Jean Taylor, Susan Mitchell

LUNCH CIRCLE

This will be held on 15 March at 12.30pm. when Anne & Roger will act as hosts. The list to sign will appear on the notice board shortly. New members are always welcome – just come along and join in.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

Thursday 3 March at 7.30p

AN ILLUSTRATED TALK ABOUT TRAINS by ROGER MILLS

COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN MARCH

Monday 7 March	7pm	Social and Fund-raising
Wednesday 9 March	7pm	Worship, Junior Church and Communications

CALENDAR DEADLINE

The last day to hand in items to be included in the **April edition of the Calendar** will be Sunday 20 March.

BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will meet on Monday 28 March at 7pm. The book to be discussed is: *Red Dust Road* by Jackie Kay

New recruits are always most welcome.

TRAI DCRAFT

The stall will be open on March 6th and 27th, this month, all being well; because of other arrangements that have had to be made, this has been a difficult month to organise, and there may yet have to be further changes. If you need items and the stall is not open, please speak to Anne Mills or Jean Brookhouse.

CHRIS THOMPSON

We were all saddened by the untimely death, on January 31st, of Chris, one of our regular organists; a minute's silence, in his memory, was observed at Church Council, in February. Chris was a man of many talents---enthusiastic, passionate in his interests, easy to talk to, and so relaxed that he seemed, as Beryl often commented, almost horizontal! He was determined to continue playing for us for as long as he possibly could, but, in fact, Remembrance Sunday 2015 was the last occasion that he was fit enough to do so. We remember him with affection and will miss his music and his talent; our sympathies go to his widow, Di, and his family; at his funeral, on February 15th, our church was represented by Beryl and John, Anne and Roger, and George and Di.

ASPECTS OF LOVE

A special service on Valentine's Day proved "lovely", in every sense of the word. Excellent readings, from a goodly variety of readers, encompassed different loving relationships: budding love and adulation, and more mature love; the love which exists between friends; love of animals; love of nature; love of God, and true

devotion. What a delight of sentiments and beautiful language! Many thanks to Beryl for her choice of words and her inspiration.

Lunch after the service was likewise a delight--yet another occasion for us to share conversation and pleasant company over a meal; Beryl's menu proved delicious, and yet more thanks are due to her for her efforts and those of her helpers. Two superb occasions, in one day!

WOMEN'S LEAGUE

On February 13th, we entertained 35 members from our Manchester District; lunch was served first and declared very tasty, and thanks were expressed to Susan, Margaret, and their team of helpers, for providing this. The service was conducted by National Women's League President, Joy Foster, who took as her theme the idea of de-cluttering our lives, thus enabling ourselves to live truly in the present. The AGM followed; events for the next year were outlined, and participation encouraged; however, we were reminded that a new District Treasurer was urgently needed, and informed that the Dukinfield branch has reluctantly decided to close. There is much to value in our League branches, as meetings such as this one show; let us hope that a successful year lies ahead.

CONGREGATIONAL AGM

Notice is hereby given that the 47th Annual General Meeting of the Congregation will be held in the worship-area, on Sunday, March 13th, 2016, commencing at 12.30 p.m. During the last few months, a certain amount of work has been carried out to amend the church-rules, and we hope that sufficient members (at least 25) will attend

the AGM for it to be quorate, so that necessary changes may be accepted. The meeting should not last for more than an hour, and coffee and biscuits will be served beforehand, at the end of a slightly shorter service.

Nomination-sheets for the election of officers and Council-members will be posted on the lounge notice-board, in advance of the meeting; we need a full set of officers to serve for one year, and four Council-members to serve for three years.

Any items for the agenda relevant to an AGM should be notified to Anne Mills, in writing, no later than Sunday, February 28th.

Retiring Council-members, this year, are Norah Hickton, Rene Hollos, Sue McMullen and Molly Ratcliffe; they are not now eligible to serve for a year. Currently on Council, with a further year to serve are Barbara Bamford, Val Chamberlain, Susan Mitchell, Peter Whewell and Lois Williams; Jean Maden, Di Scaife and Janet Thatcher have two years left to serve.

Please give thought to nominating people to serve as officers or council-members; if everyone will volunteer to contribute a small amount, we can continue to operate successfully. Thank you.

Anne Mills, Church Secretary.

MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS GROUP

The group met on February 18th. Anne had contacted the Principals of Unitarian College, Manchester, and Harris Manchester, Oxford, about our ministerial vacancy and had received assurances from both of them that our details would be passed to their students; both wished us well and felt that, as a church, we had a great deal to offer. A residential weekend will be held, at the end of May, at Luther King House, for anyone who may be considering entry to the ministry; details will be posted on the board. A session on Pastoral Care will be included in the course that Beryl and John are proposing to run during April; at the end of Beryl's ministry, a visiting-group of approximately 4 people will be formed, and Beryl and John have offered to perform rites of passage, whenever necessary.

The advertisement for The Inquirer is almost ready and will be sent in shortly; this advert will also appear on our website, which, on account of the information it contains, shows our strengths extremely well. Pulpit-supply has been set up, from June, this year, and many Sundays have already been filled; information about the organist on duty, each Sunday, will be sent to service-leaders, so that necessary arrangements can be made.

It is disappointing not have had any interest shown in our vacancy; however, various plans are in place, from June onwards, and we have the resources to cope with a period of change. Please feel free to speak to any member of this group, at any time, if you have comments or suggestions to make. We meet again on April 7th.

QUIZ EVENING

Yet again, the Quiz on February 20th was a great success; more than 80 people were present, and the sum of £620.00 was raised for

charity; this will be divided between Streetwise (a Bury organisation which helps teenagers with mental health needs) and Christians Against Poverty (the Radcliffe branch, where free debt counselling, and much more besides, is offered to anyone in need of help). Doug and Enid proved, once more, that they were excellent quizmasters, the pies were delicious, and John and Beryl's team won for the second consecutive year---no comment! The Charity Committee were amply rewarded for their hard work, and will now be taking a well-deserved rest. Thank you to all who contributed to such a pleasant and worthwhile occasion.

MINISTER'S MONTH

I don't often read magazines about technology so I must have been either very bored or desperate the other day when I opened a Techno supplement. But I found it full of the weird and the wonderful. One thing that caught my eye was a new product call an 'oombrella', you may have heard of it or even own one. It looks very like a normal umbrella except that it has hidden applications. It can tell you when there is to be rain so that you know when to carry it and if you should happen to leave it behind it sounds an alarm to alert you to the fact. Mind you, at a price close to two thousand pounds, you would not want to leave it on the bus. I found it interesting because over the last few weeks you would have got plenty of use out

of your 'oombrella'. Hopefully spring and some sunshine are not too far away.

It was very sad to hear of the death of our organist Chris Thompson. He has been with us for some time and his friendly, laid back, personality endeared him to us all. I found him a joy to work with, totally unflappable and smiling even when I made last-minute changes to the service. A really lovely man and we will miss him.

John and I were with friends a few days ago and we were talking about church and the lunch following the 'love' service and the quiz with pie and peas when they remarked that we seem to have a lot of events that include eating and drinking. There was also a lunch circle as well making three meals in one week. Yes, we do quite a lot of eating together. As someone remarked this is real communion, not the symbolic kind, but coming together and sharing food, and giving thanks for friends and food both.

In late January 'Notability' the small local choir who have sung for us on a number of occasions borrowed the church for a singing 'masterclass' with a musical director. I stewarded for the day and had the pleasure of listening to the singing. It was amazing how, with the help of the expert they had engaged, their performance changed over the day

getting better and better. In exchange for the use of the church they are giving a concert for us in May, come along and listen you will not be disappointed.

This year the Charity Committee decided to hold just one event and this was to be the Quiz Night. And what a night it was, the upstairs room was packed to capacity. There were worries about not having enough seats, enough pies, enough peas, even enough energy but it all worked out and was an extremely busy and enjoyable event. Not only were there lots of smiling faces but with a full house and a well-supported raffle over six hundred pounds was raised for two nominated local charities. And of course there were worthy winners but modesty prevents me from naming them.

On a personal front I have been trying to get to a Tai Chi class on Monday morning - not the best time for exercise - and I usually manage about every other week. It is something I previously did for a number of years and found it both physically and mentally good. The class is crowded and if due care is not taken a black eye could be an unlooked for extra. The teacher is actually a Tai Chi master with a high reputation (he is Chinese) and I think he believes us capable of more than we actually are, thus we are left waving and drowning in his wake. **Beryl**

FUNERAL

On Monday 15 February the funeral of Chris Thompson took place at St Thomas's Church, Rochdale. Six members from Bury attended the service.

We will remember Chris for his music and his friendship. To Di and his family we send sincere condolences.

Window on the World

Our church website (www.bury-unitarian-church.org.uk) consists of about 20 pages of information about our own spiritual and social life, as well as that of the wider Unitarian movement. It contains a great number of links to other sources of information and stores an archive of historical information, including 5 years of back-copies of our calendar. It also provides links to a growing library of photographs from our many events and activities.

It was viewed by 487 people, between the 8th of January and the 18th of February, this year. Although, as usual, most of our readers are based in the UK, 19 were from the USA, 8 from Australia, and 7 from mainland Europe; we even had one reader in China and another in Russia!! Most people just read the front page, but 66 of our readers looked at the History pages, and the Book Club page is now growing in popularity, with 39 visitors. The new video-clip, showing the refreshments after the Candlelit Carol Service, was viewed 46 times; I think this is a feature worth developing.

Although, in the nature of "browsing", most visits to our website were quite short, 75 visitors, last month, spent more than 20 minutes, and 55 more than an hour, reading various pages!

It is interesting to look at the popular "downloads" from the site. Last month alone, the Congregational photographs from various years were copied 21 times. During the last year, over 300 copies of the various photos were made! Our regular pictures taken at church events are now uploaded to a Google-server to which we link from our own website. Since we started to do this in 2014, our pictures have received nearly 44,000 viewings!

Our church website sits alongside the calendar as our principal form of communication to church-members, occasional visitors, and the wider community. It is, in many ways, our window on the world. If you have any ideas or contributions which you feel could further improve our visibility, please let me know. I would be more than happy to include additional material. As we are currently using only about a tenth of our available capacity, we certainly need not be constrained by lack of space!!

Roger

**TRIP TO HARROGATE SPRING FLOWER SHOW
THURSDAY 21 APRIL**

**Please put your name on the list in the lounge if you are
interested by SUNDAY 5 March.**