

THE UNITARIAN

Unitariansmda.org.uk

JULY/AUGUST 2019



WELCOME

We would like to wish you all a very warm welcome, and thank you for your patience in this transition period.

As you are all aware, The Unitarian magazine has taken a change of direction. In order for us to survive, we need your assistance. In the past, we have struggled with the lack of content being sent to us, and we would like to invite you all to contribute as little or as much as you would like, or see fit and able.

If you fancy yourself as the new Sandi Toksvig, Giles Coran, or Monty Don, and you would like to have a feature column or page each month, we would be only too delighted. If you are a Minister or Lay preacher, and you would also like to share a compacted sermon, or prayers, then a monthly column or page is ready and waiting for you. The magazine can be as big as you like, so please do send any funny stories, handy tips, reflections, photographs, events etc. .

We would also like to hear from you about what you would like or not like to see featured each month. Please feel free to be as open and honest as you like, as without your feedback and input, we are unable to grow. Would you like a more interactive online magazine? We have lots of ideas, but we would love to hear yours.

Email: infotheunitarian@gmail.com

we need

you

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF

Hello all from myself and my office dog, George.

As you can see, The Unitarian has gone through some changes. I have taken on board the feedback from yourselves, on what you would like to see more of. As this is all new to me, I would really value your feedback on content, so that I can produce a magazine that works for you.

For those of you who don't already know me, I am Natasha Stanley, and I am the MDA Administrator & Development Officer, and also the Authorised person for Norcliffe Chapel in Styall. George is my 15 month old partner in crime, and is also going through the process of being registered as a medical detection dog.

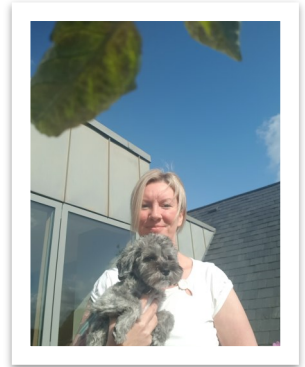
The last 12 months have thrown up many a challenge, and with it, periods of uncertainty. We finally moved into our dream home in January this year, but the build up looked less than peachy. Having hotel hopped for over 8 weeks from our previous house move, it looked like we were facing the same again.

January also brought with it some uncertainty in relation to my health. I had been feeling unwell for a few months, but I put it down to the stress and build up of the move. My wonderful dog on the other hand, knew that something wasn't right. I was aware of a change in his behaviour, but again I put it down to things being unsettled. Eventually I decided to take medical advice, and to cut a long story short, I discovered that I'd had a stroke.....at 43 years of age! I am now well into my recovery, although there are symptoms that still remain, but the stroke neurologist and physio are hopeful, that everything will return to normal in around 12 months time.

Life can sometimes take an unexpected turn. All too often we take it for granted, and waste our time worrying about the things we can do nothing about. This was me a year ago. I was all consumed over the house move, instead of just taking a back seat. I knew that there was nothing that we could do to change the outcome, but the stress it put on us as a family took its toll. I remained positive that everything would work out in the end, and it did.

Forward on a year, and I am grateful for everyone and everything in my life. I am one of the lucky ones. Yes I have had a stroke, but the lasting damage is liveable. I have a wonderful and loving family, a crazy but loveable dog, great work colleagues and friends and a roof over my head. My mum always said to me "Natasha, life is too short to sweat the small stuff", this used to make me laugh, but do you know what, my mum was right.

Life is for living, enjoying, exploring and embracing every single second. I am due to start yoga classes in September, and I have re kindled my love of meditation.....what a difference a year makes.



BLOG

THE WRITE STUFF By Janet Kelly



I am never really sure why I became a journalist, as I always wanted to be a vet. The fact that I didn't like the sight of blood and thought poodles should all be drowned at birth probably put paid to that - and the fact that I couldn't hack physics. Working for a newspaper seemed the only option, or at least it was when it was the only job offer that came through after college.

The thing about journalism is that everyone thinks it's interesting. In some cases it can be more than that, as it is positively dangerous - but for the majority it is little more than routine.

Forget investigating high-profile crimes or unveiling the latest piece of showbiz scandal, the majority of journalists have to start as junior reporters, and as such are plagued by delights like parish council meetings, obituaries and golden weddings.

Everyone has to start on the newspaper ladder cutting their teeth on debates - as I did - on who would pay to put up the local bus shelter, the price of sausages for the village fayre, or the lives and loves of some geriatric who once came up with an idea to re-shape the road system round an entire town to make it a nicer shape from the sky.

For all these strange and wonderful stories, which may also have taken in weekend trips to judge the nicest form of turnip or best cauliflower wine at an allotment society show, the best had to be the golden weddings.

The very feat of having made it successfully to such a celebration was often enough to bring me to tears - and I have to admit to having very fond memories of one couple, when asked about their recipe for a happy marriage. "Oh, we don't like foreign food," they chanted as one voice - and then, when the wife went to make a cup of tea, the husband admitted in a whisper that he might once have liked to have tried a Chinese meal but didn't think he should.

Having evoked such a sage response to my quest for the perfect state of coupledness, I would often ask this question again - with varying responses. Other favourites include: "Actually, we don't like each other but I was up the duff," to "After a few years you don't really notice who you're with."

There were a few who offered much better advice, often revolving around ignoring faults and trying not to argue, but invading the special moments of people's lives has certainly been something of a lesson in life.

All I know is that should my (second) marriage last 50 years - in which case I shall have unearthed the secret of an incredibly long life - I won't answer the door to any reporters, other than to tell them to mind their own business and get a proper job!

Janet Kelly's novel, *Dear Beneficiary*, will be published by Cutting Edge Press on March 19th 2015.

LIFESTYLE

Find your way around your mind

Mind mapping is one of the simplest, yet most powerful tools a person can have in their creativity toolbox. It is a non-linear way of organising information and a technique that allows you to capture the natural flow of your ideas.

A mind map is essentially a multi-coloured and image-centred radial diagram that represents connections between portions of learned material. It is extremely helpful for a range of tasks such as writing memos, preparing a meeting agenda or trying to get a bird's eye view of a complex project.

The maps can be drawn by hand either as 'rough notes' - for example, during a lecture or meeting - or they can be more sophisticated in quality. There are also a number of software packages available for producing mind maps.

Graphic organisers similar to the mind map have been in use for centuries, mainly for learning, brainstorming, memory, visual thinking, and problem solving by educators, engineers, psychologists and people in general.

However, the claim to the origin of the mind map has been made by a British psychology author, Tony Buzan. He claimed the idea started forming as he wrote *An encyclopaedia of the Brain and its Use* in 1971. He argues that 'traditional' articles rely on the reader to scan left to right and top to bottom, whilst what actually happens is that the brain will scan the entire page in a non-linear fashion. He also uses popular assumptions about the cerebral hemispheres in order to promote the exclusive use of mind mapping over other forms of note making.

Radiant Thinking is at the very heart of mind mapping. It means "to spread or move in directions from a given centre" and refers to our associative thought processes. It is the natural and automatic way which all human beings have functioned.

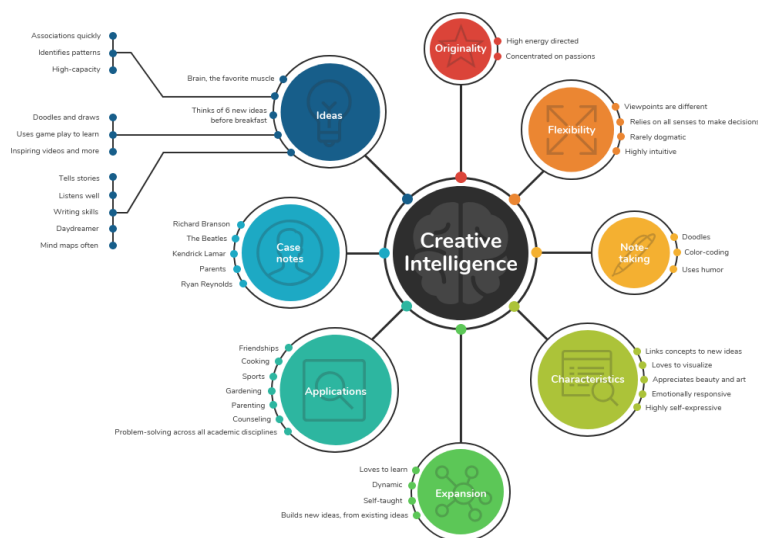
Mind mapping is really a tool to capture and develop our natural thought process. Though drawn on a two dimensional page, mind mapping represents a multidimensional reality that encompasses space, time and colour. They may be enhanced and enriched with colour, pictures, codes and dimension to add interest, beauty and individuality. These in turn aid creativity, memory and specifically the recall of information.

The maps help you to make a distinction between your mental storage capacity and efficiency. Storing data efficiently multiplies your mind's capacity. It is like the difference between a library with or without an organised system of retrieval.

Continued on next page.....

Tony Buzan claims that mind mapping has many applications in personal, family, educational, and business situations, including note-taking (a modified variant of brainstorming) summarising, revising and general clarifying of thoughts.

For example, one could listen to a lecture and take down notes using mind maps for the most important points or keywords. One can also use mind maps as a mnemonic technique or to sort out a complicated idea.



Claims have also been made - including in some advertising for mind mapping software and literature - that managers and students find mind mapping to be useful, because the techniques have made them better able to retain information and ideas.

There have also been more outlandish claims that mind mapping can help a person find the perfect lover, combat bullying, persuade clients, develop intuitive powers, create global harmony, and tap the deeper levels of consciousness by using mind mapping techniques.

Here are some guidelines for making the perfect mind map.

Start in the centre with an image of the topic, using at least three colours. Use images, symbols, codes and dimensions throughout your mind map. Select key words and print using upper or lower case letters. Each word/image must be alone and sitting on its own line. The lines must be connected, starting from the central image. The central lines are thicker, organic and flowing, becoming thinner as they radiate out from the centre. Make the lines the same length as the word/image. Use colours - your own code - throughout the mind map. Develop your own personal style of mind mapping. Use emphasis and show associations in your mind map. Keep the mind map clear by using radiant hierarchy, numerical order or outlines to embrace your branches. So the next time you're taking notes or preparing that huge presentation for work, try using mind maps to increase your stimulation and unleash a never-ending torrent of memory-boosting ideas. Why don't you try and create your own? <https://www.canva.com/graphs/mind-maps/>

REFLECTIONS

ALEX BRADLEY

Stirrings – a week of devotion (2018)



For my weekly reflections, I use a motif that has been central to my life, long before I became a minister: the role of the church. Even in circumstances where I am unable to attend worship in person, I seek (and sometimes succeed in feeling) the sense of community and communion that gives my life form and meaning.

What does a church stand for?

When I go into a church or chapel or sometimes a sanctuary of another faith, I usually feel a sense of peace and security. It acts, or acted in the past, as a focus of worship and devotion. Admittedly, it is harder to feel this sense of the spiritual in certain buildings; a plain space with a dual purpose as a meeting room or hall may not speak easily, if at all, to the spiritual seeker.

Yet I do not think it is all about beauty and proportion. Most of our Presbyterian/Unitarian or General Baptist chapels were purposefully plain and yet they exude beauty, light and peace in their simplicity. Conversely, I have in my mind's eye one particular 18th century church which I love. It was designed by Nicholas Revett in the Grecian style. It was built to replace the medieval church which the Squire wanted demolished, seemingly because he wished to replace it with a church that would give him an elegant building in view from his house. It is a beautiful place and it is still used for Christian worship but I feel a certain coldness when going inside. Perhaps the history of its origins may account in part for some of my feelings.

The lack of beauty in some buildings or the dubious motives of the builders of some others need not detract from their essential purpose. They serve, or have served, for the utilitarian purpose of providing a space for worship. However, far more importantly, they stand both literally and figuratively as symbols of the faith that built them and used them. They stand for the human spirit in all ages that seeks to create and make all things beautiful.



Day One Reflection. On this Sabbath, this Sunday, this sacred day, this time set apart, I set apart part of my life for the contemplation of the divine and a chance to experience the closeness of the presence of God. Whether in a church building or in a room at home I approach it with anticipation of meeting the divine and being in community.

Day Two Reflection. A day can seem overwhelming in its pressures and demands. How can we cope when, to quote the old phrase, 'things seem to be getting on top' of us? Making a list is one way of dealing with these situations. The priorities start to fall into place. In the words from Mark's Gospel, we are called to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves. These are the 'headings' which can start to focus our thoughts. St Francis de Sales is said to have remarked that if one is busy, one should pray for an hour: if very busy, one should pray for two hours. I find it hard to do this (and quite often do not succeed) but the effort, even if it only be for ten minutes, is still worth the result in terms of peace of mind and spirit.

Day Three Reflection.

When I go to a place of beauty, I often feel a sense of connection and peace. There is a lovely hymn by an American Unitarian minister and scholar, Andrews Norton, that for me sums up well the relationship between church and nature: The hymn begins:

Where ancient forests widely spread,

Where bends the cataract's ocean-fall;

On the lone mountain's silent head,

There are thy temples, God of all!

In the third verse, we sing:

All space is holy, for all space

Is filled by thee: but human thought

Burns clearer in some chosen place

Where thy own words of love are taught.

Both the church and the natural world play their part in manifesting the glory of God. Both are precious. However, the church is vital for our connection to each other.

Day Four Reflection. In the times when many more people regularly attended public worship, hymn tunes and words of hymns were common currency. In today's secular society, they are more likely to hum a tune or sing a line or two from a pop song. Even so, the impulse is similar. Music and song can unite us and give us a sense of purpose. In that sense, I think it is deeply spiritual. Whether for protest or praise, a love song or a lament, song can express our deepest feelings. Why else do we remember tracks from the 70's, 80's, 90's, noughties, (or whatever your 'golden' decade may be)?

Day Five Reflection. As we get older, our joints start to become less supple. We find more difficulty in kneeling, stretching, or even walking. Movement and posture is a part of the natural order and it can also reflect our spiritual life. Some people kneel in prayer; others bow down in modesty and humility; or look up in adoration. We can process in or out of a particular place (just as a winning team may have a triumphal procession). The church or temple is a sacred space of movement. Our lives should be seen as sacred movement, where every step is taken in honour of the divine.



Day Six Reflection. Depending on the layout of a church interior, pillars or arches can sometimes obscure our vision of the preacher, or the acoustics may hinder our hearing of the message being given. So the church is an image of our daily life where sometimes things important and valuable in themselves (an arch helps hold up the church roof!) can nonetheless get in the way of more important matters. In a church, we would seek to move our place (if there is room) to see or hear the speaker more clearly. In the same way in life, we need the flexibility to move place to see the things that matter.

Day Seven Reflection. The 'day off' whether it be a Saturday or another day is something that is greatly desired but sometimes fails to help us truly relax. Perhaps this is because we expect too much of it and do not fully appreciate that we need to put something into it, in terms of effort, either mental or physical, or both. An hour or two spent working in the garden or tidying the house, or going for a walk or visiting a museum can give us a sense of well-being and renewal. So it is with church. The physical effort of getting there and the mental effort of concentrating on the message can give us new energy and vitality. Our lives are renewed in the spirit.

Reflection taken from Stirrings 2018—please contact me direct if you would like to purchase a full copy for £5 plus postage. Well worth a read.

JUST FOR FUN

1. Which of the Beatles was walking barefoot over the zebra crossing on The Beatles' *Abbey Road* album cover?
2. How many members were in the Monty Python team?
3. Which famous ship was named after the nickname of the witch Nannie Dee in the Robert Burns's 1791 poem *Tam o' Shanter*?
4. Henry VIII had two of his wives executed, Anne Boleyn was one, can you name the other?
5. Which animal can deliver a kick capable of killing a lion and also attacked singer Johnny Cash leaving him addicted to painkillers?

Answers on page 20

INTERESTING FACTS

1. In 1956 typist Bette Nesmith Graham invented the first correction fluid (liquid paper). She is the mother of musician Michael Nesmith of The Monkees.
2. Actress Pamela Anderson's first press coverage came right after her birth. She was Canada's 'Centennial Baby', having been the first baby born on July 1, 1967, the 100th anniversary of Canada's official founding
3. The earliest recorded use of the word 'baseball' in an English novel is in *Northanger Abbey*, written by Jane Austen in 1798-1799. Jane Austen was also the first writer to use the phrase 'dinner party' (in *Mansfield Park*, Chapter 41).
4. Actor Jason Statham competed for England at the 1990 Commonwealth Games. He was a member of Britain's National Diving Squad for twelve years.
5. If Yorkshire had been an independent country in the 2012 Summer Olympics it would have finished twelfth in the medal table. Athletes from Yorkshire won seven gold medals, two silver and three bronzes.

CARTOON



EVENTS

PADIHAM UNITARIAN

	<p><i>Saturday 28th September 2019</i></p> <p>THE RANTING LADS</p>	<p>HAVE A RANT WITH WITH THESE FOOT-TAPPING LADS OF GREAT TALENT</p>
	<p><i>Saturday 9th November 2019</i></p> <p>THE SECOND ROSSENDALE SCOUT GROUP BAND</p>	<p>BACK BY POPULAR REQUEST A STIRRING EVENING OF NEW AND OLD MELODIES TO SUIT ALL TASTES</p>
	<p><i>Saturday 14th March 2020</i></p> <p>THE ORIGINAL ROCK AND ROLL BAND</p>	<p>ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK WITH SONGS FROM JERRY LEE LEWIS TO ELVIS BRILLIANTLY PERFORMED</p>
	<p><i>Saturday 16th May 2020</i></p> <p>THE CONONLEY SINGERS</p>	<p>A 'FEEL GOOD' SELECTION OF SONGS TO CATER FOR ALL TASTES AND A FIRST TIME IN PADIHAM</p>

For more information
Contact Barry Brown on
01282 773336 or
Chapel [answer phone] on
01282 773184
Leave your name and number

Email:
barrybrown@gmail.com

All concerts start at 7.30pm
Admission by ticket or pay
at the door
All concerts £8 **BUT**
light refreshments are included
Why not buy a set of 4 tickets
for £25 and SAVE £7!!

All proceeds to
NW Air Ambulance, Children's Heart
Surgery Fund and Church Funds

There is limited parking
on a first come, first served basis!
Additional parking is
available at Padiham F.C.
Well Street [SEE MAP]

For Manchester district events—please visit our website - mdaunitarians.org.uk

EVENTS

Rivington

Saturday 14th September: Late Summer Fair/Heritage Open Day

Saturday 28th September: Triennial Pilgrimage. Booking is essential. The closing date for bookings is Friday 8 September 2019. Please contact for further details

Dean Row

Saturday 31st August 7.00pm: Annual quiz and fish and chip supper

Dunham Road

Thursday 5th September 7.30pm: Living the questions. Does the end justify the means?:

We very much want The Unitarian to publicise events outside of our district. One idea is that we could enhance our current website, to include a pdf of your newsletters for people to download. This will benefit your congregations, by getting your news out to more people. I know that many hours are spent by yourselves producing some extremely fantastic newsletters, and we would like to help you in getting as many people as possible, knowing what is happening in your area. In addition to this, I would also like you to send me any articles etc, that you would like to include in The Unitarian itself. We have explored many options on how we can improve what we already have, but we need your assistance. Have you thought about individual district administrators, who can gather the information and send it to us?

MANCHESTER PRIDE
@ CROSS STREET CHAPEL
MCR CITY CENTRE, M2 1NL



#UNITARIAN
PRIDEMCR

SAT 24 AUG ~ Unitarians March in Pride
SUN 25 AUG, 10.45am ~ Pride Service
Guest Speaker: Carl Austin-Behan
~former Lord Mayor of Manchester & current LGBT adviser
to the Mayor of Greater Manchester. All are welcome.

Charity no.
1080836

LGBT@CrossStChapel.org.uk
0161 834 0019 | #CrossStChapel

We are excited to continue our tradition of participating in Manchester Pride's annual march! This year we are hoping we can garner the biggest crowd of Unitarians yet, and spread our message of love, respect and celebration far and wide!

As is customary, people are encouraged to meet at chapel before we head over to Castlefield

Our timeline is as follows:

9:30 Chapel open for teas/coffees/setting up
10:30 Depart for Castlefield
11:00 Arrive at Castlefield
12:00 Parade kicks off!

Afterwards we will be holding our customary bring-and-share meal, as well as a talent show!

But that's not all!!

The next day - Sunday the 25th - we welcome Carl Austin-Behan, former Lord Mayor of Manchester. Carl will be talking about his work as LGBT Advisor to Mayor Andy Burnham. Service starts at 10:45. All are welcome, please encourage everyone to attend!

SERMON

Following the talk at the GA, Happiness at Work by Lord Mark Price, I took as my theme for my service at Shrewsbury Chapel, Happiness. In my address I examined religious, philosophical and scientific psychological contributions to defining and establishing happiness. I finished by using the Cantril ladder question to assess the happiness of the congregation. It was on an anonymous basis. The Cantril ladder question asks respondents to value their lives today on a 0 to 10 scale, with the worst possible life as a 0 and the best possible life as a 10. (I also asked what the expectation was in five years time).

This question has been used by the Gallup Organisation and the World Happiness Report ("a landmark survey of the state of global happiness that ranks 156 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be. This year's (2019) World Happiness Report focuses on happiness and the community: how happiness has evolved over the past dozen years, with a focus on the technologies, social norms, conflicts and government policies that have driven those changes.") In this report it is interesting that the UK is ranked 15th with an average score of 7.05. Top is Finland with 7.8. The USA is 19th (6.89), Russia 68th (5.65), China 93rd (5.19) and India 140th (4.015). Bottom is South Sudan (2.85).

Some Unitarians were unhappy that Lord Price had been invited to address the GA as he was a Conservative Peer. I think the Rev Dr Ralph Catts got it right when he said that we should be open to all views (apart from those inciting hate etc). I for one found Price's talk to be interesting. It originated from his work at Waitrose, where he rose to be CEO.

Now the burning question. Are UK Unitarians happier than the average of people in the UK?

- ♦ Cantril, H. (1965). The pattern of human concerns. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- ♦ Understanding How Gallup Uses the Cantril Scale Development of the "Thriving, Struggling, Suffering" categories (from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/122453/understanding-gallup-uses-cantril-scale.aspx>)
- ♦ World Happiness Report 2019 MARCH 20, 2019 (<https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2019/>)

Geoff Levermore

Emeritus Professor

MACE

The University of Manchester

POEM

Bruised

Every year there are too many
This year perhaps more than any
The bitter tears
Of previous years.

Bruised we are
Or bruised we have been
Yet there is the angel
In everything.

Bruised we are facing
Holding embracing
Bruised colours and feelings
Revealing the true colours
Of loving living.

Next year there can be less
Next year the time to address
The warming tears
For future years

Bruised be blessed
May you forever caress
And be caressed.

Blessings

Mark

I have completed the Ration Challenge, raising money and awareness for refugees in Jordan.
Please sponsor me here:

<https://my.rationchallenge.org.uk/markhutchinson>

Reverend Mark Hutchinson
Minister Cotswold Group of Unitarians

extinction rebellion

Extinction Rebellion in Evesham

Tell the Truth

This is the first demand of Extinction Rebellion (XR) , demanding that the government tell the truth.

The truth is that the current system is committing ecocide (the destruction of the environment especially when it is deliberate) on a routine basis . Moreover, this destruction is having disproportionate effects on, broadly speaking , the global south and the global less materially well off. Jesus the rebel was very clear in the need to tell the truth to the people of power, as well as inviting them to tell the truth.

It is possible to see Extinction Rebellion simply in terms of the big publicity protests such as April in London and July in various cities . Yet the need to raise awareness has led to multiple groups around the country, including now Evesham, gathering fortnightly to work together on a series of endeavours to protect our planet and thus humanity .

How does an Extinction Rebellion Meeting work ?

Typically 90 minutes there is always a check in process to allow each individual to be present with whatever is going on for them at that time . This is particularly important for the intense feelings that the whole process of the climate crisis can generate in most people .

The Evesham group have started a monthly stall on the high street , and so updates and rosters are discussed and planned . This is aimed at a general awareness raising to inform people of why we are doing what we are doing.

We have then an open forum on local actions we think the group might take . Our emphasis is on how our actions can add to the already great work done by many local people . Also, how can we add pressure to local politicians of all varieties to declare a climate emergency and implement appropriate responses .

Reflection is a really important part of the DNA of XR and a regular slot will allow all voices to express opinions on current or foreseen action . There is a difficult balance to draw between action and disruption , causing delays in sometimes critical circumstances . At the time of writing there has been intense discussion around activities that blocked the M32 in Bristol . XR are always mindful and sad at the disruption that is caused , but also clear that the disruption to our planet is something that can only be addressed in time with these forms of direct action . The last thirty years of other protests and politics have failed . Martin Luther King and Gandhi understood this too. The potential unequal collapse of world order due to climate change has to be a crisis to protest about .

A Faith based response

Every call to respond to injustice in the world requires reflection from those of faith . The climate crisis is no exception . Perhaps , in fact , it is the exception. It is one issue that unites all those of faith and no faith : the need to protect that which was Universe or God given, depending on your perspective . Whatever your perspective.

MAIN ARTICLE

In August 1819 dozens of peaceful protestors were killed and hundreds injured at what became known as the Peterloo Massacre. Ruth Mather examines the origins, response and aftermath of this key early 19th century political event.

On 16 August 1819, a meeting of peaceful campaigners for parliamentary reform was broken up by the Manchester Yeomanry, a local force of volunteer soldiers. Between 10 and 20 people were killed and hundreds more injured in what quickly became known as the Peterloo Massacre.

Although different sources give different estimates of both the numbers attending the meeting and the numbers killed and injured, it seems likely that around 100,000 people attended the meeting at St Peter's Fields in Manchester on a sunny August day.^[1] Men, women and children came not only from the local area but from towns and villages across the North West, some walking nearly 30 miles to attend. Although several members of the crowd attended from mere curiosity, most were supporters of parliamentary reform and had come especially to see the main speaker, Henry Hunt, known as 'Orator' Hunt because of his talent for public speaking.

Why were people protesting?

Since the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, increasing numbers of working people in industrialising yet disenfranchised areas like Manchester had become involved in the movement for reform. Under the influence of men like Henry Hunt and the journalist William Cobbett, they began to campaign for universal suffrage. They argued that extending the vote to working men would lead to better use of public money, fairer taxes and an end to restrictions on trade which damaged industry and caused unemployment. Only a minority campaigned for women to have the vote, but women were nevertheless active in the movement. In 1819, women in and around Manchester had begun to form their own reform societies campaigning on behalf of their male relatives and vowing to bring up their children as good reformers. Many of the Female Reformers appeared at the meeting at St Peter's Fields dressed distinctively in white as a symbol of their virtue.

Suppressing the protesters

Despite the seriousness of the cause, there was a party atmosphere as groups of men, women and children, dressed in their best Sunday clothes, marched towards Manchester. The procession was accompanied by bands playing music and people dancing alongside. In many towns, the march was practised on local moors in the weeks before the meeting to ensure that everybody could arrive in an organised manner.

According to local magistrates, however, the crowd was not peaceful but had violent, revolutionary intentions. To them, the organised marching, banners and music were more like those of a military regiment, and the practices on local moors like those of an army drilling its recruits. They therefore planned to arrest Henry Hunt and the other speakers at the meeting, and decided to send in armed forces – the only way they felt they could safely get through the large crowd.

People who were already cramped, tired and hot panicked as the soldiers rode in, and several were crushed as they tried to escape. Soldiers deliberately slashed at both men and women, especially those who had banners. It was later found that their sabres had been sharpened just before the meeting, suggesting that the massacre had been premeditated.

The names of many of the hundreds injured were printed, along with details of their wounds, so that sympathisers could put money towards a charity to support them – remember there was no sickness benefit or free healthcare available at the time. These lists, however, probably underestimate the numbers killed and injured, as many people were afraid to admit they had been at the meeting and thereby risk further reprisals from the local authorities.

The response to the massacre

There was considerable public sympathy for the plight of the protesters. *The Times* newspaper printed a shocking account of the day, causing widespread outrage which briefly united advocates of a more limited reform with the radical supporters of universal suffrage. A huge petition with 20 pages of signatures was raised, stating the petitioners' belief that, whatever their opinions on the cause of reform, the meeting on 16 August had been peaceful until the arrival of the soldiers.

From government came an official sanction of the magistrates' and yeomanry's actions, and the passing of the Six Acts, a paranoid legal crackdown on the freedoms of the public and press. Among this new legislation was the requirement for any public meeting on church or state matters of more than 50 people to obtain the permission of a sheriff or magistrate, and the toughening of the laws that punished authors of blasphemous or seditious material. Many braved the oppressive Six Acts, however, to express their anger in print. Percy Bysshe Shelley, on hearing news of the massacre while in Italy, called for an immediate response. His poem 'The Masque of Anarchy', encourages reformers to 'Rise like lions after slumber, in unvanquishable number' (stanza 38). He sent the poem to Leigh Hunt in London, who cautiously refrained from publishing it. The satirist William Hone had no such qualms. His *Political House That Jack Built* (1819), illustrated by caricaturist Cruikshank, neatly sums up the reformers' grievances in his typically irreverent manner. The piece was wildly popular, reflecting both the extent of anger over Peterloo and the cleverness of using a well-known nursery rhyme to make a serious message widely accessible. Radical propaganda often veered between respectability and audacious humour, the latter, of course, being much harder to prosecute in court for fear of provoking hilarity.

Ironically, the attempt to silence government critics only encouraged journalists to develop inventive new ways of conveying the message of reform, while the outrage of conservative newspapers only inspired further satires.

As well as political prints and poems, everyday items such as cookware and handkerchiefs immortalised and commemorated Peterloo. Such items proclaimed the owner's allegiance to the reform cause, and sustained the memories of its martyrs.

Legacy

Peterloo remains a key moment in the history of the suffrage movement, less for the initial success of the meeting than for the way it allowed the reformers to gain the moral high ground. It was increasingly obvious that the government could only counter dissent with repression, while the chorus of angry voices only rose following outrages such as Peterloo.

Due to the large numbers assembled, and the varying motives for exaggerating or downplaying attendance, it is difficult to obtain an accurate estimate. Robert Poole and Joyce Marlowe, scholarly authorities on Peterloo, use the fairly low attendance figure of 60,000, a number also given by the contemporary spectator John Benjamin Smith in his memoirs. *The Times* reported 80,000 in attendance, while the *Manchester Observer* carefully worked out the possible numbers per square yard and concluded that 153,000 people were present. Henry Hunt gave the number as 180,000 – 200,000 in his memoirs, while Richard Carlile, who was also on the hustings, gave the unusually high attendance figure of 300,000 people in Sherwin's *Political Register*.

Written by Ruth Mather

Ruth Mather is a PhD student at Queen Mary, University of London. Her research is focussed on the links between working-class political identities and the home in the late 18th and early 19th centuries

MINISTER/LAY PERSON OF THE MONTH

Dean Row Wilmslow & Hale Barns

Rev Jeff Gould

Rev Jeff Gould, is a native of Massachusetts in the United States of America, though he has lived in the United Kingdom since 1985. He holds both American and British nationalities. Initially, Jeff trained for a career in the performing arts, and then began his training for ministry in his undergraduate years. He then read towards a degree in Religious Studies from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Thereafter, Jeff lived and worked in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he was involved in the life of the First Unitarian Church of San Francisco. Furthermore, Jeff served on the staff of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (an Anglican theological college). Additionally, he lead chaplaincies in the San Francisco County Jail and San Francisco General Hospital.

Jeff trained for the ministry of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches at Manchester College, Oxford. Subsequently, he took a degree in Theology from the University of Oxford. He served student pastorates in London, Northern Ireland as well as Taunton, Somerset. Jeff has held a variety of offices within the General Assembly at the district and national levels, and has also served congregations in Liverpool, Cheshire and Lancashire.

Jeff has recently returned to the joint ministry of Hale Chapel, Hale Barns as well as Dean Row Chapel, Wilmslow, where he previously served from January 1999 until February 2007. His main contribution is currently made through his role as the Events Officer of the Unitarian Christian Association. Rambling, swimming, and weight-lifting keep Jeff physically active, while Jeff devotes a good deal of his time to ecumenical and inter-faith efforts. Finally, Jeff has a passion for learning languages, and uses leisure time in improving his French, German and Italian.



If you would like to feature next month, please send in a photo and some interesting background information about yourself. Or if you would like to nominate someone for this feature, please let me know at infotheunitarian@gmail.com

QUIZZ ANSWERS

1. Paul McCartney
2. Six (Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin)
3. Cutty-sark
4. Catherine Howard
5. An ostrich (Cash was kicked and wounded by an ostrich he kept on his farm)

INFORMATION

- ♦ By the end of 2019, it looks like there are going to be changes in how the paperwork is processed for all marriages. Please keep an eye on the links below for any updates.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0124/en/18124en.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-for-authorised-persons>

- ♦ What3words is a fantastic app to download for your mobile phone. Have you ever found yourself broken down in the middle of no-where, and desperately looking for a sign or building to use as a landmark to direct roadside assistance? Have you ever got lost at a festival and had no idea where you were, or how to get back to your friends? This is the app for you. Please read for more details.

<https://what3words.com/our-story>