



NEWSLETTER FOR MARCH/APRIL 2020

**Brook Street Chapel, Knutsford - The Temple of the Free Spirit
WHO ARE WE?**

We have our origins in a group of Dissenters who were ejected from the state church in 1662. Our beautiful chapel was completed and licensed for worship c. 1694, shortly after the date of the Act of Toleration. We believe that Christianity, properly understood, is a way of life rather than a creed or a system of doctrine. We believe there are many different ways to God. Our congregation is run by our members, believing we are all equal, that in the words from the Bible, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I (God) am in the midst of them. We are a spiritual community: in words from the Bible, 'God is spirit and those who worship, must worship in spirit and truth'. In fidelity to the truth and in the loving spirit of Jesus Christ, we unite for the worship of God and the service of humanity. We warmly invite you to worship with us and share in our spiritual fellowship.

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CONTACT DETAILS

MINISTER	Rev Alex Bradley	(01565) 754465
CHAIR	Mr Graham Birks	(01606) 558424
SECRETARY	Rev Jean Bradley	(01565) 754465
TREASURER	Mr Alan Eastwood	(01565) 634992
HERITAGE	Mrs Beulah Cornes	(01565) 632673

**BROOK STREET CHAPEL
NEWSLETTER**

MARCH / APRIL 2020



**FUN AT THE WOMEN'S LEAGUE MEETING
DURING A PANTO REHEARSAL!**

**THIS CHAPEL WARMLY WELCOMES
YOU, WHETHER YOU BE AN OLD
FRIEND, A NEWCOMER,
OR A SEEKER!**

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" – Isaiah 41:10

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SPECIAL DATES

Sunday 1st March, Family service prize giving 11am. The town Mayor will attend and possibly the Mayor's cadet.

Tuesday 3rd March and 7th April - The Poetry Group
We gather in the hall, sharing our favourite poems, between 10.30am and 12 noon

Wednesday 4th March - Jean and Alex 'AT HOME DAY. Support this annual fund raising event, bring cakes, raffle prizes, and especially yourselves.

Friday 6th March 1.30pm WORLD DAY OF PRAYER.
OUR CHAPEL WILL BE HOSTING THIS INTERNATIONAL EVENT. THE WOMEN OF ZIMBABWE HAVE WRITEN THE WORSHIP SERVICE WHICH WILL BE CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD ON THE SAME DAY.

We wish to decorate our chapel in honour of those women and ask for loans of brightly coloured covers, shawls etc. We also need help setting up the chapel and arranging light refreshments for our guests.

OPEN DAYS Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th April. See flyer enclosed

COMMITTE MEETING DATES

Wednesday March 18th Tuesday April 14th at 9.30

WHAT WE DO FOR OTHERS

Please remember to give none perishable food and stamps, electrical items, jewellery and currency to our two collection boxes. They are in the kitchen area in the hall.

WOMEN'S LEAGUE REPORT
JANUARY AND FEBRUARY MEETINGS

January's meeting was filled with laughter as Vanessa gave the members a pantomime script to read through and later act out with appropriate props including hats and plastic swords (See the photograph on the front page.) Great fun was had by all. Many thanks to Vanessa and Peter Pain and Windy!
(That was the pantomime's title!)

February was a more sedate meeting with members bringing their favourite love poems and their personal romantic stories, A pleasant and moving afternoon. Thanks to all who took part.

18th MARCH Annual General Meeting
15th APRIL Speaker - David Russell

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A VERY HAPPY OCCASION

The occasion was the celebration of Rev David Westhead's ten years as monthly preacher at our Chapel. The service held on 19th January was conducted by our Minister in which David took part, followed by a 'ploughman's lunch' in the hall. This was a great success, due in no small part to our wonderful congregation who contributed so generously, not only with mouth watering food, but with their time. For all the tables and chairs had to be set up, the food, crockery, cutlery and glasses laid out in good time for David to find a feast in his honour.

The task was completed in ample time, for there were no 'chiefs', just plenty of 'Indians' working together efficiently and in harmony. It was a perfect example of teamwork and joy to be part of.
Thank you to you all.

Ann Clayton

From our Minister

Dear Chapel Members and Friends,

One of the joys of chapel life is the way in which we work together, and elsewhere in this newsletter, Ann has mentioned the great teamwork that went towards making our celebration of Rev David Westhead's ten years with us such a happy and successful occasion. Rather like the cogs and wheels on an old-fashioned analogue watch, we all worked with, and in time, with one another. It was the result of hard work and great communication.

Outsiders have often said how impressed they have been by the way in which we greet visitors: this is also a vital part of our communication. It is not just what we say, but the way in which we say it, that can express the warmth of our Unitarian and Free Christian community – or as the distinguished Unitarian minister, Rev L.P. Jacks, put it, to regain “the lost radiance of the Christian religion”.

On the subject of communication, I'm always grateful to those of you who let me know if someone is ill, or wants a visit, a phone call or contact of some kind. I now have a new mobile phone but the number is the same – 07518 842 635. I may be in a meeting or taking a service, or driving, so please leave a message on the voicemail or a text if necessary. I can also be reached by leaving a message on my email address: it is silvanspring@gmail.com

Education and further study are important parts of our freethinking ethos. To this end, I have started a very small library in the minister's vestry with some books donated by me, which I hope will be borrowed by chapel members or friends. Some are about Unitarianism, while others are on more general religious topics. This is not a 'heritage collection' but intended for use! I was greatly helped when I first encountered Unitarianism, by people who lent or gave me books explaining more about what it was and what it involved. A book only becomes truly valuable if it is opened and the author's message is communicated to others.

Our new poetry group is another kind of 'communication' and this is starting to really take off. And on Easter Sunday (12th April) the service will include a short and simple ceremony of communion. It is no accident that the words 'communication' and 'communication' come from the same Latin root. It is all part of our continuing effort to communicate the joys of being part of our caring spiritual family. Every blessing, Rev Alex.

From our Chairperson

Dear friends,

I can scarcely believe that I am already writing my newsletter notes for March/April 2020. Where do the weeks and months go! Perhaps there is some truth in the old saying that the older you get the quicker the time goes! To bring you up to date on a variety of matters, I can tell you that the vestry end project has now been “signed off” as completed. We are currently awaiting work to commence on the chapel gutters, firstly temporary repairs, whilst we assess the long term need, which may be complete replacement. We are also awaiting a survey report from our architect on the chapel and associated buildings, so we will be able to assess any likely maintenance demands and costs over the next 5 years.

Away from structural matters, we are currently planning for a Chapel Open Day, provisionally scheduled for 18th/19th April. I believe that elsewhere in these notes there is a call for volunteers to help us “staff” the day, so that we are able to offer a warm welcome to those who may visit us. Important to understand that the day will be about introducing visitors to Unitarianism, and to what the chapel can offer on a spiritual and fellowship level, rather than the heritage aspect. Clearly the history of the building and our movement will no doubt come in to conversations, as indeed no doubt will our Gaskell connection, but I do stress the reason for this initiative. Our hope is that visitors will be looking for a spiritual home, and will have questions about our beliefs, ethos, worship and practices, and will be encouraged to want to find out more, possibly by attending a Sunday service. We also plan to take the opportunity of advertising our Spirituality Course, for want of a better name, which has been written by Jean, and hopefully delivered in spring or summer. A further Open Day is planned for September.

I also wish to advise you that we will not be sending a representative to this year's General Assembly, which will take place in April. The reason is that we are not aware of any contentious motions being put forward which would affect us in any way, and that Alex and the committee feel that the money could be better spent on update and continuing development conferences for Alex to attend later this year.

Our AGM will take place on 17th May of this year, following a shortened Sunday service. It is a little later in the year than normal, to allow for the attendance of key individuals to the proceedings.

Best wishes, Graham Birks

SUNDAY 1st MARCH

Anniversary & Family Service Rev Jean Bradley
organist Jonathan Rimmer
Flowers donated by the Strachan family in memory of Bill and Mair Strachan
Refreshments Andy and Rose Horn
Door Stewards Morgan Read and Jenny Whelan

SUNDAY 8th MARCH

Worship Service Morgan Read
Organist Jonathan Rimmer
Flowers donated by Jan Elstub
Refreshments Joan Eastwood and Jane Butler
Door Stewards Joan Eastwood and Jane Butler

SUNDAY 15th MARCH

Worship Service Rev Alex Bradley
Organist Alan Gough
Flowers donated by Rev Jean Bradley in memory of her mother
Refreshments Maureen Fraser and Barbara Mottershead
Door Stewards Maureen Frazer and Barbara Mottershead

SUNDAY 22nd MARCH

Worship Service Rev Alex Bradley
Organist Aya Pitcher
Flowers donated by Jenny Whelan, in memory of Katie
Refreshments Volunteers needed
Door Stewards Ann Clayton and Morgan Read

SUNDAY 29th MARCH

Worship Service Rev David Westhead
Organist Alan Gough
Flowers donated by Ann Clayton, in memory of her mum Amy, a very special lady
Refreshments Vanessa McCluney and Barbara Bayley
Door Stewards Joan Eastwood and Alan Eastwood

IF YOU SEE A VACANCY, PLEASE OFFER TO HELP

SUNDAY 5th APRIL

Family Service Rev Jean Bradley
Organist Jonathan Rimmer
Flowers donated by Tara and Mel Roden-King in celebration of their wonderful nephews Jack and Theo.
Refreshments Shirley Artis and Maureen Fraser
Door Stewards Morgan Read and Pam Griffith

SUNDAY 12th APRIL

Easter Sunday Service and Communion Rev Alex Bradley
Organist Jonathan Rimmer
Flowers donated by Maureen Fraser
Refreshments Maureen and Ken Fraser
Door Stewards Rose and Andy Horne

SUNDAY 19th APRIL

Worship Service Rev Alex Bradley
Organist Alan Gough
Flowers donated by Sue and John Hutcheson
Refreshments Maureen Fraser and Ann Clayton
Door Stewards Ann Clayton and Maureen Frazer

SUNDAY 26th APRIL

Worship Service Rev Alex Bradley
Organist Aya Pitcher
Flowers donated by Sarah and Tren Fisher in memory of Edward
Refreshments Barbara Mottershead and Jean Littler
Door Stewards Barbara Mottershead and Ann Clayton

NO ACT OF KINDNESS, NO MATTER HOW
SMALL
IS EVER WASTED - AESOP

Please send interesting words of humour or wisdom to:- The Editor -
chattyministerjean@gmailcom

We need to let people know what a wonderful Chapel we have and what lovely people are connected to it. We want to spread the word, so, we will have two

OPEN DAYS

SATURDAY 18th AND SUNDAY 19th APRIL

We need volunteers to be in the Chapel and the Hall, offering a friendly welcome to any visitors who might call in, and to offer a cup of coffee and a smile.

We need to let people know that we are a chapel of an open heart and open mind. That we welcome all people regardless of their faith, culture, sexuality or nationality.

We can give them a leaflet on our history, but we really want to let them know that we Unitarians and free Christians are worth getting to know and that we hold a liberal faith fit for the twenty first century.

If you can spare some time on either or both of these days, please let one of the committee or Alex know so we can plan a rota.

LET US PLANT THE SEEDS FOR GROWTH