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|  **FEBRUARY 2021** **Services online at present****ALL ARE WELCOME** **WITHIN THE CIRCLE OF LOVE** |
| Unitarians are a religious denomination that believe in a united world community, justice, peace and compassion. |

**MINISTER’S LETTER**

Dear friends

Just a short message this month – I’ve been saying a lot of what I feel I need to say in my services recently, and sometimes find myself wondering what to say in the newsletter!

But I guess my focus at the moment is self-care. It’s something I’m sure I’ve preached about a number of times. It’s not something I’m that good at doing myself. Do as I say, not as I do, and all that! I’m still learning about how to set boundaries between work and home, about how to nurture myself as much as I try to nurture this community, about how, even, to say that terrifying word, No!

But we all need to take care of ourselves at the moment, and I guess I’m learning I’m no exception to that, much as I may want just to keep giving and giving. So I’m very grateful to the church committee for making sure that I take some time this February to look after me – particularly as I know it means that their workload goes up a bit as a result.

I hope that you are in a place where you are able to look after you, too. I know that some of you are key workers, and your lives are relentless right now – teachers, NHS staff, postal workers, food or medicine retailers. And I know that you must be so tired. Please know that everything you do is so appreciated – and that you need to take every opportunity you can to look after you – and let others look after you – even though I know that will be extra hard right now. And I know that others of you are feeling so frustrated because you aren’t able to work, to help, to get out and do something, because your health or your age, or that of someone you care for, means you are being told to stay home – please know your health and safety does indeed matter very much, and that no-one begrudges your need to stay in.

We all need some TLC right now – that highly abused acronym – but think what it really means. Tender – gentle, warm, soft. Loving – non-judgmental, non-demanding, totally accepting. Care – consideration, compassion, cherishing. You need it – you deserve it. Accept it from those around you who are able to offer it. And more importantly accept it from yourself. You are a precious human being – you make the world a better place by being in it – we need you to be well.

So take care, my loves. And I’ll see you soon. With love and blessings, Rev Anna

**MINISTER ON A BREAK**

Rev Anna is taking some time off, from 1st Feb to 1st March. She will not be contactable in any form.

During this time the committee members will be sharing pastoral care responsibilities, and Rev Charles Vandenbroeder will also be available – his number is 0161 793 8271. If you need any personal support at this time, please do not hesitate to contact Charles.

If you have a church business or admin query, please contact Michael Couser, our Treasurer, whose phone number is 0161 969 2124. Or you can contact him by email on couser@ntlworld.com.

Services are being covered by Rev Charles, Pam Ward, Dave Speers and Alan Perks – for which very grateful thanks! And Pam will also continue to host the Wednesday night zoom chats.

Thank you so much for respecting Anna’s need for a break, and she’s looking forward to being back with you in March!

**CHURCH SERVICES**

With the continued lockdown and concern over case levels, the church building will be staying closed at least until the end of February. But this doesn’t mean that worship has stopped!

A recorded version of all our services can be accessed via Monton Unitarian Church YouTube channel, with the newest one being published on our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels.

An email also goes out giving not only the details of the YouTube link, and a copy of the word document for those who wish to read it, but also a Zoom link for anyone who wishes to join us live on Sunday morning at 10.45am. Everyone is welcome.

The aim is for this to mostly carry on as normal during February while Rev Anna is off work, though there may be the odd technical hiccup. Please do be understanding if this happens!

**FEBRUARY FLOWERS**

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| 7th | Mr & Mrs P Coomber in memory of both families |
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|  | Mrs S Johnson - Birthday memories of her Husband George |
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| 14th | Mr & Mrs N Brown in memory of both Families |
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| 21st | in memory of late Church members |
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| 28th | In memory of late church members |

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| As explained in the previous newsletter, we no longer have regular fresh flowers in the church, and are therefore not taking payments from families for the mentions as above. But for now we still mention them so that the rest of us can hold them in prayers. |  |

**TELLING OUR STORIES**

Well, this is an edit – more like a reminder – this was in last month’s newsletter, and we have received… Nada! Nix! Zilch! Come on guys, have a dig in those photo albums, or on your phone, and send in your stories! Whether it’s a church story, or a personal story – we’d love to hear it!

So here’s the reminder!

Some of you may have noticed that the calendar recently has been a little bit on the thin side! Well, here’s your chance to do something about that!

We’re asking you to get involved! And we have two options for you.

One is to dig out any old photos of events in the church, whether personal e.g. weddings, or even baptisms, or social (old Christmas fayres, or a garden party), and write a short article to go with it, telling us what the event was, who was there, what you remember about it. These will feature in the newsletter, and also head over into our new website that is being built. So, for example, who could forget our dear stand-in winter-minister, proudly occupying the pulpit during last year’s Christmas Tree Festival!

The second is to send us a photo of yourself, and write a “Getting to know me” article – while folk who have been coming to church for a long time may know each other, there are plenty of newer folk coming who don’t have those backstories, and it would be lovely to share some of our stories to help people get to know each other better. So, a little bit of history, where you come from, maybe a bit about jobs, or travelling that you’ve done, and most importantly how you came to Monton Unitarian Church, and what’s kept you with us.

So please! Take the opportunity over the Christmas break to have a root around in your photo albums, and tell us some stories about Monton Church past and present – and tell us about yourselves! Send them to Debbie (her telephone number is at the back to ask for her post or email address), or send them to me on minister@montonunitarianchurch.comand I can forward them to her.

And then look forward to seeing your story in print!

**MONTON UNITARIAN CHURCH ON THE INTERNET**

Website: [www.ukunitarian.org.uk/monton](http://www.ukunitarian.org.uk/monton)

Twitter: @montonunitarian

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/montonunitarians](http://www.instagram.com/montonunitarians)

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/montonunitarians/>

YouTube: Monton Unitarian Church – for all our ‘lockdown’ services.

**GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

And yes, this is a reminder too – I’ve had a few in – but when we do the maths, less than 10% of you have responded! A firm but friendly reminder – if I don’t have these forms by end of March you will have to be taken off the mailing list! For those of you who have sent them in, well done and thank you!

Yes, it’s that’s again. We are reviewing our data protection again, and tightening it up, as we have been a bit lax in recent years.

Many of you receive this newsletter because you have come to us for a wedding or a baptism, and will have been asked at the time if you wished to receive the newsletter. With the regulations being what they are now, we need to have written evidence of that agreement stored and accessible at the church.

So I have attached with this newsletter a data protection form, and would ask you please, if you wish to continue to receive the newsletter, and notifications about social events, or fundraising activities, or other news, please complete the form and return it to me, either by email, or by post. If you do not wish to keep getting the newsletter, please do also let me know, either by email, or just drop me a text asking to be removed from the mailing list. Obviously, we hope you’ll all stay with us, but understand that situations change!

It is, however, very important that you send the form back if you do wish to continue, as if I have not received the form back by 31st March 2021 I shall be obliged to take you off the list regardless! You would always be welcome to ask to come back on, of course!

To send the form back by post, send it to:

Monton Unitarian Church

Monton Green

Monton

M30 8AP

Or by email to minister@montonunitarianchurch.com.

The forms shall only be seen by myself, acted upon, and then stored securely in our safe.

Thank you for your help in keeping us GDPR compliant!

**MAGAZINE**

If anyone would like to contribute any articles for the magazine, please send them to the editor by the second weekend of the month by post or by email. Please contact me by phone for email address. Thank you. Debbie.

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| **MINISTER** | Rev Anna Jarvis | 07769 038 773 |
| **CHAIR** | Mavis Sumner | 0161 281 0614 |
| **SECRETARY** | Rennie McFarlane | 07846 634361 |
| **TREASURER** | Michael Couser | 0161 969 2124 |
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| **LETTINGS** OFFICER | Rev Anna Jarvis | 07769 038 773 |
| **MAGAZINE** **EDITOR** | Debbie Hulme | 0161 707 1921 |
| **WEDDINGS &****BAPTISMS** | All enquiries | 07769 038 773 |
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MONTON CHURCH is open to all who wish to worship with an open mind, in a spirit of freedom, reason and tolerance. No doctrinal tests are imposed on anyone. Rather, each person is encouraged to develop his or her own faith. Our Congregation is affiliated to the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches.