

Connections

*The Newsletter of Belper, Derby and Charnwood
Unitarians*



Nov/Dec 2008



Welcoming Congregations.



KEN'S QUIZ

(In memory of Ken Pollard, originator of the Quiz)

The answers to clues (a) and (b) are two words of similar sound but which may be spelt differently, for instance, 'reign' and 'rain'.

- 1 (a) Not straight.
(b) A natural inclination of the mind.
- 2 (a) A pleasure excursion.
b) Fall by catching the foot on something.
- 3 (a) This food usually goes with onions.
b) Claptrap.
- 4 (a) A tin container.
(b) Able to - to be a possibility.
- 5 (a) To make whole and healthy.
(b) A part of the foot.
- 6 (a) Belonging to me.
(b) Place from which coal is dug.
- 7 (a) A small rodent often found in houses.
(b) Device linked to a computer for moving cursor.
- 8 (a) A U-shaped wire used to fasten sheets of paper together.
(b) A main material or commodity.
- 9 (a) To vomit.
(b) A fine woollen cloth.
- 10 (a) Swedish pop singing group.
(b) Father (applied to God).

Answers, please, to George Cope, 22 Laburnum Crescent, Allestree, Derby DE22 2GQ. A small prize is offered to the first correct set of answers received. One reply received - from Mrs. Sheila Barwick who will shortly be receiving a prize.

Answers to the last Quiz: 1(a) Bubo, (b) Bubo; 2(a) Yen, (b) Yen;
3(a) Daltonism, (b) Daltonism; 4(a) Links, (b) Lynx; 5(a) Cob, (b) Cob;
6(a) Serpentine, (b) Serpentine; 7(a) Silky, (b) Silkie (Silky); 8(a) Literal,
(b) Littoral; 9(a) Cricket, (b) Cricket; 10(a) Maya, (b) Maya.

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2008

Belper Unitarian Chapel

Sunday 7th	Rev Chris Goacher	11am
Sunday 21st	Carol Service	3 pm

Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship

Tuesday 2nd	Fellowship Meeting Christmas Celebration	7.30 pm
-------------	---	---------

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby

Sunday 7th	Mindfulness Sangha A Gathering An Alternative way of being Together	3pm 6pm
------------	---	------------

Sunday 14th	Derby Unitarian Progressive Christian Group “Living The Questions” Carol Service with the Derwent Singers	3.30pm 6.30pm
-------------	---	------------------

Sunday 21st	Reading Group	3pm
	Mindfulness Sangha	6pm
Sunday 28th	Service	3pm

To all who lead our services of Worship, we express our appreciation and thanks.

Where to Find us.

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel
Stafford Street
Derby DE1 1JG



Minister's Musings

I spent last Friday evening at the Hindu Temple in Derby celebrating Diwali and watching the Mayor of Derby switching on the Diwali Lights that bring an early festive feel to the Normanton Area of the city.

As the darkness increases so we bring light into our lives.

Already, I am having to turn my thinking towards Christmas as this will be the last magazine before the festive season. It will be a very busy time for us all, but I hope you will be able to share time with us at our celebrations.

Along with Ebenezer Scrooge, we too are haunted by the ghosts of Christmases past, present and future. We long for those Christmases we remember as a child; we worry, perhaps, how many Christmases we have left to enjoy; we feel alienated by Christmases present by the separation we feel from our loved ones, through death, through family disagreements, by the sheer distance over land and sea.

As with Ebenezer Scrooge we need to learn the lessons of Dickens's tale. That today is the day to make a difference; that this Christmas can be the Christmas that we idealise, if only we make it so. Christmas, like life, is to be lived, experienced and shared.

So too the birth of the Christ Child, not just a reputed historical event, but the birth of the Christ-Child spirit in our hearts now, today. For only when we all create peace on earth and live a life of goodwill toward all people, can we truly sing the words of T.T.Lynch;

And we are glad, and we will sing,
As in the days of yore!
Come all, and hearts made ready bring
To welcome back once more
The day when first on wintry earth
A summer change began,
And dawning in a lowly birth
Uprose the Light of man.

May I be the first to wish you all the compliments of the Season.
Yours in fellowship and peace
Chris

Bits and Pieces

On Monday 3rd November a talk will be given in Belper Chapel, as part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Discovery Days, by the Managing Director of Smith's, the Clockmakers of Derby, Bob Betts. The topic will be the links between Smith's and the World Heritage Site. The talk commences at 7pm and should finish by 8.30pm.

Belper Unitarian Chapel is now, after much struggle and work on behalf of many people, an official part of Beth's Poetry Trail. The trail was established as a permanent memorial to Beth Fender who both loved poetry and was a founder of the two Poetry groups in Belper. The Plaque, affixed to the boundary railings, displays a poem 'To Nature' by Samuel Taylor Coleridge who had many Unitarian links.

To Nature

It may indeed be phantasy, when I
 Essay to draw from all created things
 Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely clings ;
 And trace in leaves and flowers that round me lie
 Lessons of love and earnest piety.
 So let it be ; and if the wide world rings
 In mock of this belief, it brings
 Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.
 So will I build my altar in the fields,
 And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be,
 And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower yields
 Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,
 Thee only God ! and thou shalt not despise
 Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

The Plaque will be dedicated following the service on Nov 16th.

Membership. The call in the last edition of 'Connections,' for those interested, to consider becoming members should also have contained a reminder to those already in membership, who pay by yearly subscription, that subscriptions are now due for 2008-09.

continued

The Harvest Festival was celebrated at Both Belper and Derby Chapels with the produce or funds from its sale being given to the Belper Branch of the Red Cross and The Padley Centre respectively. Both Chapels were decorated and looked beautiful bedecked with the fruits (and vegetables and tinned produce) of the season. Well done everyone!

It is hoped that along with the funds raised during our open days, the money raised for Belper Branch of the British Red Cross will be presented to a representative of the organisation at our Carol Service at 3pm on the 21st December.

East Midland Unitarians Christmas Lunch will be held at Great Hucklow on Thursday 11th December (12.30pm sitting); at the time of writing the cost is believed to be £15.50 per person. If you intend to go or would like further details please contact Ruth Archer on 01572 621399. Final numbers are required by Nov 16th. It is tradition that following lunch we all gather around the fire in the lounge to sing Carols!

Belper Chapel is holding its Christmas Social from 7pm-9pm on Saturday 13th December; all welcome, please bring your talents and food to share.

The next Quarterly Meeting of East Midland Unitarians will be held at Nottingham High Pavement Chapel on Saturday 6th December at 2.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

The Annual General Meeting of the Trustees of Belper Unitarian Chapel will take place at the Chapel on Tuesday 11th November at 2pm.

Reading Group

At Friar Gate Chapel a new Reading Group will meet for the first time on Sunday 16th Nov at 3pm. The book chosen for this first meeting is "Is it Okay to Call God "Mother"? Considering the feminine face of God' by Paul Smith.

Further details from Janet or Chris Granger on 01538 308860.

Christmas Resources

Come Christmas!

No one is ever really ready for Christmas.

If we were really all prepared:

If every gift we had contemplated had been obtained;

If every present was beautifully beribboned;

If all the goodies our friends deserve were baked and cooled, and stored just so;

If each and every person we love was gathered for our celebration;

If we never snapped at someone we care about, nor stopped short of being all that we could be;

If our minds were 100 per cent loving and our hearts were 100 per cent generous;

They truly would be ready

---and truly we would not need Christmas quite so much.

So come, Christmas, most needed of seasons.

Come with the reminder that love does not depend on

Perfection but on willingness to risk connection.

Come into the unready manger of our hearts

That we may feel the warmth of new life

And give flesh to the promise of hope

That cries to bring healing into our world.

Come Christmas!

Come, Love,

Come, Hope.

Be born in our unready hearts

On this silent and holy night.



M. Maureen Killoran

A Christmas Prayer

Loving Father, help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds and the wisdom of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings,
and teach us to be merry with clean hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be Thy children
and the Christmas evening bring us to our beds with
grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894)

Christmas Resources

Toy Escape

Late Christmas Eve, when all was still,
 And the room was dark as night,
 The Christmas tree lit magically;
 It was a fantastic sight!
 Then from around the tree trunk now,
 There came a funny sound,
 As gifts began to unwrap themselves,
 And toys jumped out all around.
 The music box began to play,
 And in a crazy trance,
 The candy canes jumped off the tree
 To do a silly dance.

The big stuffed bear leaped to his feet,
 To see what he could see;
 He rode a shiny, bright red bike
 Around the Christmas tree.
 The new toy kitchen started to cook,
 And before you could blink an eye,
 The oven door opened, and from inside
 Came a tiny pizza pie.
 A squirt gun squirted everything;
 It knew what it was for;
 By the time that it was finished,
 A big puddle lay on the floor.

A beautiful doll with golden hair
 Was searching for a friend;
 A toy soldier marched up and took her hand;
 They were a perfect blend.
 In the bedroom were a boy and girl;
 Asleep in Christmas dreams;
 The soldier saluted; the doll gave a kiss;
 At least that's the way it seems.
 Now everything began to tire;
 The toys went back in place.

But when mother woke in the morning,
 You should have seen her face.
 The tree was fine; the gifts were there,
 Yet mother gave a roar;
 She looked at her wet shoes and yelled,
 "What's this puddle on my floor?"

By Joanna Fuchs



A Book of Uncommon Prayer

‘A Book of Uncommon Prayer’ edited by Theo Dorgan
Published by Penguin, 2007. £8.99. ISBN: 978 1 844 88101 7

Reviewed by Janet Granger from the Derby congregation

This small paperback of just under 200 pages is a gem – it is edited by Theo Dorgan, an Irishman who was brought up as a Catholic, but who, at the age of 14, decided that he no longer believed in God. In the introduction to this book, he states that he is still interested in prayer, though, ‘because prayer is language under pressure intended to lodge in memory, and I have a lively interest in that.’

As a child, Dorgan learnt both English and Irish. This is reflected somewhat in his choice of prayers for this volume. This appealed to me, as I enjoy Irish / Celtic literature. The prayers that Dorgan tends to choose for this book are ones that honour the Earth, people and the mystery of existence, rather than ones which describe the superiority of one tribe over another, or which make pleas to an omnipotent, anthropocentric God who sits on a cloud passing judgment. With his personal starting point being someone who does not believe in God, he states at the end of the introduction that he hopes the book will satisfy not only those of a fairly ‘traditional’ religious persuasion (albeit liberal), but also those of ‘no faith’. It was this approach which originally led me to buy this book, as I like prayers if they are poetically written, but the overly dogmatic ones put me off. This book contains prayers from many faith traditions (including Islam, Native American, Pagan and Inca), as well as some atheistic/agnostic ones, too. The book is arranged into themed chapters, such as ‘Speaking to God’, ‘Gratitude’, ‘Spells, Charms and Oracles’, and ‘Mother, Virgin, Goddess’. You certainly don’t get chapter headings like those last two in books of ‘common’ prayer!

Each of the prayers has a very short introduction, giving details of the author, if known, any necessary background information, and sometimes Dorgan’s reason for including this particular prayer. I found these short introductions very enlightening. Many of the ‘prayers’ are selected parts of poems, or prose, or even letters. Only a very few had I heard of before. The range of sources that Dorgan collected these prayers from is very wide – for instance, he includes texts from Hildegard of Bingen and Julian of Norwich, poems from historically renowned authors such as Robert Louis Stevenson and John Donne (plus a beautiful poem by

contemporary Irish poet Ni Dhomhnaill about the Welsh triple goddess), and several from Classical sources.

With some books of prayers, if I read them when I am not really ‘in the mood’, they can seem unemotional and irrelevant. I sometimes flit from one prayer to the next, looking for one which grabs my attention with language with strong imagery. This book has plenty of good prayers in it – ones that are powerfully written, with unusual themes, and exciting ideas. If, like me, you are one of those BAD people who turn down the corner of the page when you reach a good bit, then this book will look very tatty very quickly – there are so many ‘good’ prayers in it. The variety of perspectives keeps your attention, and grouping them by theme is helpful.

I have many ‘favourites’ from this book, but I will mention just two. The first one is called ‘God Speaks to Man’, and is a translation of part of the Essene ‘Gospel of Peace’ (the manuscript of which, in its original Aramaic, is held in the Secret Archives of the Vatican). Twenty-six short phrases are stated, such as ‘I spoke to you when you were born’, ‘I speak to you through the waves of the sea’ and ‘I will speak to you at the end of time’, each followed by the phrase ‘Be still, Know I am God’. It is a very peaceful prayer, building in a powerful way to its conclusion.

The other prayer which I love is an African one translated by A C Dorgan. Dorgan suggests the text may be referring to the opening lines of Genesis:

In the Beginning

In the beginning was God,
 Today is God,
 Tomorrow will be God,
 Who can make an image of God?
 He has no body.
 He is the word which comes out of your
 mouth.
 That word! It is no more,
 It is the past, and still it lives!
 So is God.



Unitarian Peace Fellowship Donates £1,000

Campaigning for Women's Rights:

**The Amnesty International UK
afternoon at Golders Green Chapel**



amnesty.org.uk

Campaigns for women's human rights provided the focus for a double event at Golders Green Chapel on 26 July. General Assembly President Joyce Ashworth led a service in which she observed that 'Discrimination against women drastically limits their life chances, and creates a natural barrier to development in the world's low-income countries'. Joyce pointed out that two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults are women and that, of the estimated 1.5 billion poor people in the world, 60-70% are women. She quoted the 2005 report of Tony Blair's Commission for Africa which asserted that 'Women's emancipation is their right – it is also a prerequisite to development and growth' and suggested that the three most pressing issues facing the world today – world poverty, international development, and women's human rights – are closely linked.

Following the service, Heather Harvey, the manager for Amnesty International UK's Stop Violence against Women campaign, set out some of the abuses women face not only elsewhere in the world but in the United Kingdom, too. These include both domestic violence (sexual abuse of female children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, and female genital mutilation), and violence in the wider community (rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work or in educational institutions, sex trafficking, and forced prostitution).

Amnesty's Stop Violence against Women campaign is tackling these problems on five fronts, Heather explained. It is urging the UK Government to sign and ratify, to the highest standards, the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. It also urges the Government to implement an integrated strategy to tackle violence against women as recommended by the United Nations. More broadly, it is challenging attitudes that tolerate and normalise violence against women and, in particular, using a range of media, it is trying to engage men in preventing violence.



The Logo of The Unitarian Peace Fellowship

At the end of the afternoon, Joyce Ashworth presented Heather with a cheque for £1,000 which had been raised by the Unitarian and Free Christian Peace Fellowship's Annual Appeal.

TWO NEW GROUPS AT BELPER UNITARIAN CHAPEL:

STARTING MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER
8pm-9.30pm
(and continuing 2nd Monday of each month)

Life Support

*Struggling to make sense of life? Full of questions and feelings?
Looking to change? Don't want dogma or doctrine?
Wanting to connect? Looking for others in the same boat?*

Mutual support (discussion and sharing) for attempting to live a spiritual life

For more details contact Andy Phillips on 01773 823160, or email andyphillips@dsl.pipex.com, – or just show up on the night!

STARTING MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER
8pm-9.30pm
(and continuing 4th Monday of each month)

Exploring Meditation

*For anyone who would like to explore different types of (mainly silent) meditation and discuss experiences and technique with others doing the same.
Beginners very welcome.*

(a co-exploration not a class!)

For more details contact Andy Phillips on 01773 823160, or email andyphillips@dsl.pipex.com, – or just show up on the night!



Derby Unitarians Progressive Christian
Group

Living the Questions will run as a
Monthly meeting on the 2nd Sun-
day of the month. At the new
time of 5pm

+++++

Just because

Be joyful, just because you can. Spread genuine joy to others, just because it feels so grand.

Generously give of yourself just because it's your own special way to make a difference.

Smile, just because it is so easy and pleasant to do.

Follow your dreams just because they call so vividly and persistently to you.

Live your deepest purpose just because it feels so very right.

Always speak the truth just because you understand its far-reaching power. Act with integrity just because it keeps you on the path to true fulfilment.

Offer a kind word just because it can have such a positive impact.

Lift up

those around you just because you feel connected to all that is.

Life can be quite complex, but it doesn't have to be complicated.

Live each

moment richly and fully, just because you are.

Ralph Marston

The above reading was found by Janet Granger on the following web site <http://greatday.com/>, there is a different inspirational texts each day. Give it a try!

Contact Details

Minister.

Revd Chris Goacher B.A.
24 Arlington Drive
Derby DE24 0AU
Tel: 01332 732171
chris.goacher@ntlworld.com

Belper Chapel Directory

Belper Unitarian Chapel, Field Row, off Green Lane, Belper. DE56 1DH
www.belperunitarians.org.uk

Chairman: Councillor David Burton, 4 Wheatley Lane, Two Dales, Matlock. DE4 2FF Tel: 01629 734072

Secretary: Mrs Jackie Woodward, 8 Beaurepaire Cres, Belper. DE5 1HR Tel: 01773 827184

Treasurer: Mr Tony Waldron. 5 Manor Road, Belper. DE56 1NT
Tel: 01773 827060

Organist: Mrs Jean Hemming, 144 Far Laund, Belper. DE56 1FP
Tel: 01773 827869

Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship

Contact; Rev Chris Goacher 01332 732171
www.unitarian.org.uk/emu/Charnwood

Derby Chapel Directory

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Stafford Street, Derby. DE1 1JG
www.derbyunitarians.org.uk

Chairman: Mr George Cope, 22 Laburnum Crescent, Allestree, Derby. DE 22 2GQ. Tel: 01332 553774

Secretary. Mrs Elaine Howes. 73 Spinney Hill. Melbourne. DE73 1LX. Tel: 01332 864727.

Treasurer: Mr Richard McLachlan, 6 Weirfield Rd, Darley Abbey, Derby. DE 22 1DH. Tel: 01332 558629

There are neighbouring Unitarian Congregations in Chesterfield, Mansfield, Nottingham, and Leicester.

Congregations are in membership of The General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches.

Mindfulness Sangha at Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel

1st Sunday at 3pm --- 3rd Sunday at 6 pm

What is Mindfulness Meditation?

Mindfulness is concentrated awareness of one's thoughts, actions and motivations.

Mindfulness is the practice of living in the Present Moment and experiencing things without judgement. It is part of the Noble Eightfold Path that Buddhists practice to work toward Enlightenment. The Mindfulness Sangha at Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel follow the practice as taught by Thich Nhat Hanh.

When, Where, and How Much?

The Mindfulness Sangha at Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel meets on the 1st Sunday of the Month at 3pm, and on the 3rd at 6pm. Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel is found on Stafford St (part of Roman House), Derby and at the weekend there is usually plenty of parking available. In line with Buddhist principles there is no stated charge but donations are welcomed to off-set costs.

What is involved?

Mindful Meditation involves both sitting and walking meditation. However the form is relaxed - for example one doesn't need to sit in the full-Lotus, or any other prescribed position. A typical session might include 20 mins Sitting then 10 mins walking followed by 20 mins of further sitting. There may then be a Dharma Discussion or other activity.

