

Winter 2024 / 2025

The Fulwood Messenger



The Magazine of Fulwood Old Chapel
(Unitarian)

Whiteley Lane, Sheffield S10 4GL



Message from the Chair

Dear all,

The summer holidays fade in to my memory, in September we drove through France which we haven't done for many years. I had forgotten how quiet the roads are and how big and beautiful the country is. I was pleased to find the croissants and pastries and wine of course as good as ever. Also the French language is so melodic and gorgeous, I had forgotten about that too.



The nights draw in and we get ready to hunker down . Fortunately as I am writing this there are still many Autumn colours which, as every year, look spectacular, not all the leaves are gone and there is much to admire and look at outside.

The summer garden comes to an end, we tidy up for the Winter, clearing the annuals and giving the beds a rest. This summer has not been the best for sitting out and our vegetables have struggled too, but the garden needs a fallow time. I always like to see the empty fields, the non migrating birds, also the Peak District looks magnificent whatever the season. We just need to get the Winter boots out. Let's hope it is not quite as wet as last year.

As you get this no doubt it will feel as if Christmas is just around the corner, but it's not here yet and we can enjoy getting used to the dark nights. I must say, however, I love it when all the houses light up and that seems to get earlier each year. There are certain streets which seem to go overboard with their decorations, we have one near us and my brother in law also where he lives in Nottingham. These streets seem to want to outdo each other each year.

We are pleased to see the congregation with steady numbers, sometimes more than others, but generally a good number. More and more different people are taking part in the service which is fantastic, A varied input is very enriching. Everyone has a different take on the same theme, which makes us all think.

Hopefully our space is a welcoming one and everyone feels supported and cared for. It is easier to overcome difficulties with help and compassion from others.

Wishing you all good health and happiness in the coming months.

Jane

Emily Brontë

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.
I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.

“Autumn leaves shower
like gold, like rainbows
as the winds of change
begin to blow”

Dan Millman



A lightweight appeal

I've heard from Sarah Hopkins that Sue and Jon Clennell are downsizing soon and are looking for cardboard boxes of different sizes (not too big) for packing. I should think that it will be fine to bring them to chapel if need be.



Fulwood Old Chapel

Whiteley Lane, Sheffield, S10 4GL

Saturday **9th** November 2024, 7:30 PM

Alma Guitar Duo



Hannah Woollacott

Jonnie Cumming

Featuring music for two guitars from across the globe from Spain, Italy, South America and more. Graduates of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Hannah and Jonnie will be performing a concert of two halves, with refreshments served at the interval.

Tickets: £12, under 10's £6

Limited numbers available. Buy tickets online: **eventbrite**

Phone: **0330 999 0107** or email: **rod@rjmspro.com**

(Evenings and weekends Tel: **07814 679 895**)

eventbrite



This was sent to me by our friend, Ed Fordham

Just one single day (The surprise birthday)

I stood there, excited within, and knocked calmly.
The door opened, unexpected blankness opened it.
I wasn't supposed to be there, unrecognised, at the door,
Out of place, out of context, outside her front door.

And the realisation dawned that it was me and I was there.
The squawk, the delight, that hug... that hug indeed
Of joy, of friendship, of reunion and the tears of love.
The surprise had worked and now the excitement was out...

For the rest of day, we just did just 'being together'.
Chatting, laughing, reconstructing the delight of surprise
And despite disliking surprises, this was a successful one,
For it was no fuss, no crowd, no noise, it really was

Together, recalling the years, retelling the stories,
And making a new tale to tell, here and now
Of how long we had delighted in those past tales.
The letters, cards, visits and yes, the missed moments.

And today, all those chips and knocks of the long years,
They now shaped this day - just one single day, today.
For I had, in excited madness, traversed from England to Ireland
One single day, for one single birthday, on one single day.

This one single surprised day of this single birthday year
Will now last us ahead a lovingly long time indeed .
It would be the one we will return to each and every day:
The birthday that drew the years in, this one single day.

continued...

Just one single day.
One silly early morning.
To arrive and laugh.
To raise a glass.
The smiles and laughs.
Those tears of affection.
Happy birthday cousin.
Just one single day.

Written this day 30th August, 2024, when I travelled from Chesterfield to Birmingham to fly to Dublin to travel to Mullingar for one single day, for no purpose than to say Happy 90th Birthday to my Dad's eldest cousin. We can do a lot on one single day, and today, I did. It was nothing, it was a lot, it was just one single day.

Sad News

At the beginning of September we got the shocking news that Kelly, Sarah Tinker's daughter, had died suddenly at the age of 39. She left a son. Zac, aged 20, who shared his Mum's home.

We can only imagine the effect that this tragic event had on all those who loved Kelly. The following Sunday, Peter Rowson led a congregational service with its focus on empathy and compassion. Comprised of contributions from members of the congregation, with very little preparation time, it turned out to be a beautiful expression of love and support for Sarah, Kelly, Zac and their family.

One of the contributions struck at my heart, and I asked Ariane Lawson, whose contribution it was, if I could use it in The Messenger.

On Empathy and Compassion

The passing of Sarah (Tinker)'s daughter shocked and saddened all of us... Personally, I have always felt awkward and useless when confronted with someone's grief...I have been feeling a particularly deep empathy this week with Sarah and this feeling helpless led me to search on line a way to both clarify and

help myself around the values of Empathy and Compassion. I tried to organise the ideas I came across to help us reflect on these, the most basic and essential feelings.

Empathy we understand as seeing with the eyes of another, hearing with the ears of another and feeling with the heart of another. To alleviate someone's grief, Empathy is the gateway, Compassion is the way, the desiring and the finding the ways to help.

This is where I always feel uncomfortable and have on occasions been quite wrong. How to move from the gateway, the pain you feel from someone, to what you do to help.... how to lead that desire to provide assistance to deliver comforting gestures, acts of kindness, maybe help with changes in an appropriate, sensitive and efficient way?

For a Unitarian like me who doesn't believe in 'God- up -there ' granting us what we ask for, it appears that praying for someone is a way to the Gateway, Empathy; But showing compassion to a grieving person is not a given virtue, but a commitment, something we choose to practice, and therefore, like with all skills, the more you practise, the better you get at it!

Compassion literally means to feel with, to suffer with. Everyone - except maybe some really damaged people- is capable of feeling empathy. It also seems clear that, to make a difference in someone's life, you don't have to be super anything, you just have to care -

However, it does take courage to act with compassion because it is uncomfortable. This is why we may try to avoid it. It also seems clear that avoiding compassion produces psychic numbing, resistance to feeling pain for the world and other beings.

John Pavloviz says: Compassion isn't supposed to be a liability to us, it is supposed to be the default setting of our heart. The Dalai Lama says 'If you want others to be happy, practice compassion, if you want to be happy, practice compassion.' This reflects the Buddhist belief that everything in the world is

connected, all of us and our actions are linked and control over them is therefore very limited; this is our karma, our fate.... Loving kindness is the way to smooth all these connections, to repair the broken links of the chain or web...

To bring compassion and loving kindness to a grieving person is often just listening – Compassionate listening is to understand, not to respond.

Compassion is also to just be there, just be a companion; Sometimes it is possible then to provide comfort and support if not directly to the grieving one, to those around the principal sufferer... with NO advice, with NO judgement, with No self-indulgence and NO toxic positivism.... Simply be there to acknowledge and share sorrow, in the same way that, in turn, we share joy and happiness... Life is bitter sweet for each and all of us—BUT we are not alone.

Ariane Lawson





In October we had our Harvest Festival service, led by Jane Moore. The chapel was decorated for the occasion – not nearly as lavishly as it used to be done, of course. I distinctly remember having a water feature and live goldfish one year! In the days when Norah Hague was in charge there was a certain pattern to the decoration and each of the ladies who had their own section knew what it was! Mrs Weston was responsible for the Sunday school chairs – 6 of them. Which stood on the platform, draped in blue cloths, and festooned with vegetables, as I recall, The crossed leeks were a striking feature! Norah Hague was on all the high shelves and the pulpit – which always had a fine bunch of green grapes hanging down the pulpit fall.

The little nail which was used for suspending the grapes is still there, and let me tell you that even after Norah was no longer with us, it took a more determined character than mine finally to discontinue the grapes. And the crossed leeks. Mrs Durrant and Mrs Rees were on ledges, tasked with putting the greenery and red apples, oranges and tomatoes around the chapel: Mrs Spurry was on vases and keeping us all amused (which she did very well!).



The porch was piled high with ferns and spare greenery, and as I recall, this was a job entrusted to any spare gentlemen around as it was generally felt that they could probably manage that. After Norah Hague was finally convinced that perhaps she ought to stop balancing precariously on chairs and stools, my father (Philip Cooper), who was by then part of the team, with my mother and me on flowers, was allowed to do the high ledges under Norah's instruction. There was an exact order for the arranging of fruit and he did as he was told. I can still remember the order in which it was done, and still feel twinges of guilt that I no longer do them! (I missed an opportunity this year now I think of it – With Andrew there at my beck and call I could have gone to town on the high ledges again!)



Eventually the decorating teams foundered and were gradually replaced, Esme was there, and Sheila Ellis amongst others, and one of my happiest memories was of my father playing Hungarian gypsy waltzes on the piano and Sheila and Norah dancing bust to bust in between the rolled up carpets and the groundsheets full of greenery.

Harvest Lunch



This year we opted for home-made soup and bread followed by homemade cake. Despite the photo of Nigel standing behind the soup looking proprietorial, he was not the chef! Jane and 'young' Sarah (as opposed to only slightly middle-aged Sarah) were responsible for all the food, which was delicious.

I speak as one of those who had extra helpings and there were many of us. Andrew and Anne had put up the tables and chairs on Saturday night, having cleaned up after the very messy worker doing the decorations, and Sarah Hopkins dressed the tables on Sunday morning. They looked lovely: we even had candles!

After the lunch, we had our regular 3rd Sunday music appreciation session. This time it was Ariane's choice. Some of her pieces were songs in other languages, which she kindly translated for us, and one of her non-vocal pieces was played so very well by her husband Peter on the chapel piano. Another was a recording of their daughter, then aged 16, playing with a prestigious orchestra.

Every one of these sessions has been tremendously enjoyable and each very different from the last. They are planned to continue and new members will be made welcome. They usually start after coffee, so around 1pm and finish about an hour later.



Nigel, on kitchen duty.

Sheila Ellis

We were all sad to hear that Sheila Ellis had passed away, just too late for us to put a notice in the last Messenger. The family gave Sheila a lovely send-off at her funeral, full of things she would have loved, Anne brought with her some of Sheila's beautiful needlework which was just exquisite. Those who were around at the time of the Ladies' Concerts will recall Sheila's soaring soprano as she did her best to crack the glass in the windows It isn't so long since we saw Sheila at chapel, and the memories of her freely distributed Mint Imperials will linger on.



Sheila and Malcolm

Here are words sent by Sheila's daughter, Anne.

Mum, was born on 26th July 1931, a second daughter for Nora and Lionel Stokes and a sister for Pat. Nether Edge hospital was a short walk from her parents' home on Brincliffe Edge and she had a close family all living in the local area.

When war was declared the men in the family went off to fight and the women moved in together. The women in the family all sewed, knitted and crocheted and mum was very skilled at picking up ladders in their silk stockings, we still have the tiny hook that she used.

The family was musical on both sides and they had musical evenings on Sundays. Mum had singing lessons and as a young woman she sang with Ellesmere Operatic Society and Croft House. Her involvement with Unity Church at Crookesmoor began when she met her husband Bob who was a member there.

They were married in 1953 with a very Coronation-themed wedding. I was born in 1954 and then Christine completed the family in 1964. Mum and Dad were very pleased to become grandparents and eventually Mum was also a doting great grandmother.

Mum continued to sing and her last show was the Arcadians; that is until she was recruited into the Ladies Concert at Fulwood Old Chapel by one Sue Toulson. Bob sadly died in December 1982 but the show went on with mum saying we are still having Christmas, we have little children in the family. Mum loved babies, if anyone came to chapel with one you could guarantee that before the coffee was served mum had the baby in her arms.

Although mum led a full life we were all very pleased when a mutual friend introduced her to Malcolm. She married Malcolm in 1993 and her life was much nicer with someone to share things with. They were able to have a few holidays abroad and to visit her sister Pat in Canada. Malcolm's best holiday destination was still Blackpool and mum dutifully accompanied him there on a regular basis.

Malcolm also had a daughter and so mum found herself with more grandchildren and great grandchildren. She knitted for everyone, of course.

Malcolm joined mum at Fulwood Old Chapel and they attended for many years. Malcolm was always involved with the service on Remembrance Sunday. They were very happy to move to John Eaton Amshouses in 2003 and here they readily joined in the social events.

Mum had a good life and was never happier than when surrounded by family and friends. She came to the last dinner at Fulwood and was very pleased to have seen people one last time.

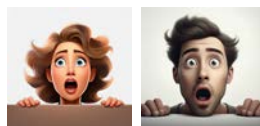


Submissions for the next edition of *The Messenger*

Thank you to all who contribute to The Messenger.

Please do send your articles to me by

13th January 2025, latest. Sue.



A funny little snippet sent to me by Philippa Shewry.

In a recent survey, parents were asked to explain why their children were late for school. Among the answers were the following:

The queue for Greggs was just too long

Before she leaves the house, my daughter has to hug and kiss every one of her soft toys. She says they are all suffering from separation anxiety.

(and my favourite)

It was Nan's fault. She was supposed to be taking them, but she dropped them off at the wrong school.....

How times have changed!

Business

(I should have put this into the Spring Messenger and didn't find it in time. Then I should have put it in the summer edition, and I've feeling that I didn't do that either, so, just in case, here it is again!)

Constitutional Matters

At its AGM on 3 December, the Congregation agreed that Chapel should apply to the Charities Commission to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The application was successful and we are a CIO as from 28 March 2024. (Registered charity number 1207656). Fulwood Old Chapel (Unitarian), our official name, was previously an "excepted" charity under the umbrella of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, which meant that it did not need to be registered with either Companies House or the Charity Commission. From 2031, excepted status will no longer be available and congregations with that status need to register independently.

The CIO structure has been newly created for charities, especially small ones. One of the benefits is that a CIO offers a separate legal personality, which means

it has the ability to conduct business in its own name, along with limited liability so that members and trustees do not have to contribute in the event of financial loss or debts. However, unlike registered charities, CIOs do not need to register with Companies House and a CIO is generally considered a more cost-effective and simpler structure than a company limited by guarantee.

Many Unitarian congregations have now registered as CIOs. The Ronksley Trust, which owns the Chapel land and buildings, is at present a registered charity and does not need to convert to CIO status, but has decided that it is in its interest to do so.

We are registered as an Association CIO, which means that we will have a voting membership, mainly members of the congregation. The new constitution, which was approved at the last AGM (and is available from me), provides for the election of 12 trustees (more than we currently have) for fixed terms from among the membership of the congregation. These trustees will then elect, from among their number, the chair, secretary, treasurer and any other officers they deem appropriate. This is different from our current arrangements whereby the officers are elected directly by the membership.

After discussion the AGM agreed that the trustees from 2022/23 should continue in office into 2023/24 and should be nominated as the 'first trustees' of the CIO when this is constituted, to be replaced in due course by a newly elected committee of trustees.

Consequently, the elected trustees for 2023/24 are:

Chair - Jane Moore

Vice-Chair - Robert Ince

Treasurer - Peter Rowson

Secretary - Tim Simkins

Warden - Anne Rayner

Safeguarding Officer - Peter Rowson

Communications Officer - vacant

Committee Members - Marie Fitzpatrick (2022-24), Janet Rowson (2022-24), Nigel Hopkins (2023-25), Rod Cumming (2023-25)

Tim Simkins, Secretary



Chapel Briefing

The Chapel Briefing is produced periodically to update congregational members on committee decisions and progress on Chapel projects. We invite members to ask the Chair or Secretary any questions from the briefing and comment on matters that they think the Committee should consider.

August 2024 Committee meeting

The Committee reports:

Chapel finances continue to be healthy. Collections have generated £350 each for Assist and the Salvation Army.

Various minor repairs and improvements continue to be made in the Chapel. Plans are in hand for new radiators, additional LED lighting, roof insulation and work on the Chapel floor. It is hoped the first three of these will be funded by a low carbon community grant.

There was discussion of on-going concerns in relation to sound quality in the Chapel and the proposal to improve the quality of the Zoom experience. In relation to these it was agreed to progress the purchase of a new camera and the installation of a new socket at the rear of the chapel and to seek the advice of a sound engineer concerning the sound system (NB. It is hoped to involve someone with hearing difficulties in the latter discussion).

Bookings for the Chapel remain strong. It was agreed in principle to hold another Macmillan coffee morning in September.

Service leaders are now finalised to the end of November but obtaining enough service leaders remains challenging. The following were suggested:

- (i) more congregational services (the recent one was felt to have been very successful);
- (ii) approach the College to see whether there were students who might be interested in leading services here;
- (iii) we should purchase a set of books as resources for those willing to lead services. It was also proposed to continue the occasional practice of visiting other Chapels (Belper and Worksop were suggested).

The following monthly collections were provisionally agreed: October/November S6 Foodbank; December/January St Lukes Hospice; February/March Cavendish Cancer Care; April/May Bluebell Children's Hospice; June/July Sheffield Women's Aid; August/September Samaritans.

It was agreed that this year's AGM would take place on Sunday 24 November after the .

The next Chapel committee meeting will be on Tuesday 22 October 2024. Please advise the Secretary if there is anything you wish to have discussed.

Tim Simkins, Chapel Committee Secretary.
email: t.j.simkins@btinternet.com

“ Individual commitment to a group effort - that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilisation work. ”

“ Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision ”

Andrew Carnegie

Wintering Well

I recently read an article in the Guardian on beating the seasonal blues:

www.theguardian.com/science/2024/oct/19/psychologist-kari-leibowitz-how-to-winter

It struck a chord with me and I'm now determined to 'winter well' and practice this mindset.

It's easy to feel blue when winter comes and people use words like dark, cold, gloomy, dull, I could go on. But I'm not going to use these words this year. They are banned from my vocabulary. Instead I'm going to use words/phrases like; snug, cosy, bright sunshine, crisp leaves underfoot, steaming hot drinks, chunky knits, dried fruit (I love mince pies/Christmas cake!).

I am going to embrace the winter and all the delights it offers and I hope you do too.

Sarah



from Jane



Sarah is conducting a couple of services about things that bring you delight . I read a short piece in my service , to get people thinking . Mine is in the form of a prose/poem , the format of which Marie introduced me to in writing group . It was fun to have a go at .

Bath 2

Autumn is here with early darkness falling , a curtain pulled suddenly. The familiar sound of radiators gurgling and clicking, boilers the workhorse of Winter. And my joy and solace; the bath.

The Bathroom is too big and the bath itself a monster, but I am used to its cavernous feel and have learnt to wait patiently for it to fill. Bath salts perfume the air, I slip under the steaming water, white toes warming, back muscles easing. Heat relaxes, the cheese plant acting like a giant rainforest tree, breathing in the steam. The lights are bright against the black windows, this is nature locked out, wind and rain battering to get in, but the bath is a serene space , an island of luxury , cleaning , spalike, warming, a bolthole for the cold blooded.

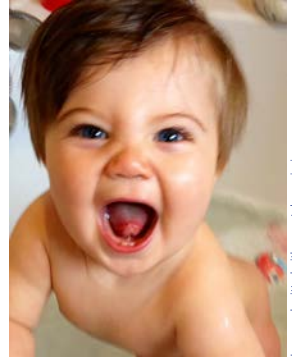


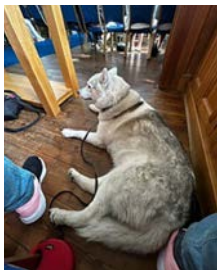
Image submitted with parental permission.

Sarah Tinker asked us, if we could, to bring with us our thoughts on 'small delights' – the little things that bring us joy- to her next services.

The District Service - August 25th

The District Service this year was held at Fulwood Old Chapel. It was well attended, especially by our friends from Underbank who are always such good supporters of joint events here. Thank you to Ed Fordham for the photographs.

The service was led by the GA President 2024-2025, Prof. Geoff Levermore. He gave us a wonderful address (in my opinion): I was very impressed that he appeared to be speaking with few, if any, notes the result of his university lecturing career I suppose. After the service we had (of course!) a buffet lunch, and a jolly good chat.



November Notable Dates



All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day

In Roman Catholic Church tradition, All Saints' Day is celebrated on November 1st to remember all saints and martyrs during Christian history. It is followed by All Souls' Day on November 2nd to commemorate those who have passed within the faith.

Together with All Saints' Day, All Souls' Day serves as the annual commemoration of the deceased in many Catholic churches. Since the Middle Ages, candles and lanterns have been placed on many Catholic cemeteries in early November. On All Souls' Day, many families visit the graves of their loved ones to remember them.

In Mexico at the same time is celebrated Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, acknowledging the symbiotic relationship of life and death. It's a huge event!

Mischief Night

If you remember this you're definitely getting on a bit – especially if you aren't originally from the north. The exact origins of Mischief Night are a bit of a mystery, but it's thought to date back to the 1700s, when customs of "Lawless Hours" or "Lawless Days" allowed communities to blow off steam by temporarily suspending the usual social rules. These were times when pranks were more or less expected – from throwing cabbage stalks at passers-by to swapping signs on shops.

By the mid-20th century, Mischief Night had become a firm tradition, particularly in the North of England. Yet, in recent decades, it's lost some steam in many parts of the country, giving way to the now-far-more-popular American import of trick-or-treating. I remember doing extremely wicked tricks like knocking on doors and running away or tapping something sharply on a window to sound as if the window had cracked. I don't suppose it actually did. We didn't hang around for treats, of course. It would more likely have been a crack around the ear.

Bonfire Night

On 5 November 1605, guards caught a man, who called himself John Johnson, attempting to light 36 barrels of gunpowder under the Palace of Westminster in London, now more commonly known as the Houses of Parliament.

After several days of torture, Johnson confessed. Along with several other plotters, he had hoped to protest against the persecution of Catholics in England by blowing up the parliament building and the people inside, which included King James VI & I. Also, his name wasn't really John Johnson; it was Guy Fawkes.



The date became a time for 'celebrating' this event (not in Roman Catholic homes!) and in the past 'penny for the Guy' was a familiar cry as youngsters sat on street corners with their 'guy' made of old clothes stuffed with straw or newspapers, or sometimes a little brother or sister coerced into donning the clothes and a mask and saving the family entrepreneur the trouble of making the effigy. The money collected was spent on the innocuous fireworks we had those days, and the guy, providing it wasn't the little brother, burned on the bonfire. I didn't like that bit. These days, the 'guys' have disappeared and the sparklers and roman candles seem to have been replaced by what sound like weapons of mass destruction!

Remembrance

In mid-November we have Armistice and Remembrance Sunday. Our service – at 10.50 to allow for the 2 minute silence at 11.00 – will be led by Janet on Sunday Nov 10th.

Remembrance honours those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life. As a nation, we unite across faiths, cultures and backgrounds to remember the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community from United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. We will remember them.

We pay tribute to the special contribution of families and of the emergency services. We acknowledge innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict and acts of terrorism.

In my opinion Remembrance does not glorify war and its symbol, the red poppy, is a sign of both Remembrance and hope for a peaceful future. Wearing a poppy is never compulsory but is greatly appreciated by those who it is intended to support.

When and how we choose to wear a poppy is a reflection of our individual experiences and personal memories.

Last year, on Nov 11th, Armistice day, I was in Poland, visiting Auschwitz Camp on a cold, miserably grey day. A perfect setting for such a place. I was initially surprised not to see any poppies, but then remembered that it is a purely British and Commonwealth tradition, started after WW1.

THE SOLDIER

IF I SHOULD DIE, THINK ONLY THIS OF ME:
THAT THERE'S SOME CORNER OF A FOREIGN FIELD
THAT IS FOR EVER ENGLAND. THERE SHALL BE
IN THAT RICH EARTH A RICHER DUST CONCEALED;
A DUST WHOM ENGLAND BORE, SHAPED, MADE AWARE,
GAVE, ONCE, HER FLOWERS TO LOVE, HER WAYS TO ROAM,
A BODY OF ENGLAND'S, BREATHING ENGLISH AIR,
WASHED BY THE RIVERS, BLEST BY SUNS OF HOME.

AND THINK, THIS HEART, ALL EVIL SHED AWAY,
A PULSE IN THE ETERNAL MIND, NO LESS
GIVES SOMEWHERE BACK THE THOUGHTS BY ENGLAND GIVEN;
HER SIGHTS AND SOUNDS; DREAMS HAPPY AS HER DAY;
AND LAUGHTER, LEARNT OF FRIENDS; AND GENTLENESS,
IN HEARTS AT PEACE, UNDER AN ENGLISH HEAVEN.

RUPERT BROOKE (1915)



December / January

Hmmm, now what happens in December and then the beginning of January? Well, lots of things, really. In Belgium, the fun starts early on Dec 5th and 6th with the arrival of Sinterklaas (on St Nicholas Eve), and children receive gifts. In Spain the children have to wait until January 6th, the festival of the Kings, for their gifts. I've been there on Christmas day and have to say that there are an awful lot of new scooters, bicycles, and toys being paraded in the streets for children who have to wait until January 6th!

If you're in Spain on New Year's Eve, you really have to congregate in one of the city squares with your eye on the clock tower so that you can eat one grape with each chime of midnight. Now you'd expect that to be easy, wouldn't you? Especially with the little seedless grapes packed in jaunty little bags for the occasion? Well, I'm here to say that it's surprisingly difficult to do. I've tried. I secretly suspect that they speed up the gongs for the occasion.

We'll be having our traditional Christmas Day service at Fulwood, this year led by Ed Fordham (if it snows he'll be fine getting here – he's got his own husky). The tree will be up, we'll have sung our carols both inside and out. We are fortunate in that we will all have something to put on our table and in our stomachs, and somewhere to go out of the cold. Not everyone likes a big celebration, some people are happy to spend Christmas alone. Some enjoy time with their families – some wish they hadn't! I know I'm going to be well-fed: I'm invited to my eldest grandson's and he cooks a MEAN roast dinner!

Not everyone is as fortunate as we, even in a supposedly developed country like ours, but at least the charities will be trying to fill the gaps. In Sheffield the ongoing work of the wonderful Archer Project is taken over by Homeless and Rootless at Christmas, who provide food, warmth, personal care and companionship for the rough sleepers who can be persuaded to come inside.

Most of us will be aware of a gap at our Christmas table. I have three, big ones, and of course I remember the happy Christmas days we used to have, but by spending my Christmas days differently now, I've found that I can enjoy building new traditions and take it as it is. I hope that you will all find your joy in this special time.

***However you choose to spend your Christmas,
I hope that it will be a happy one.***

Now, I almost always print these two poems at this time of year – and will declaim them aloud when given the slightest opportunity, so watch it! – but I’m going to print them again. *Because I can.*

Christmas Bells

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
1807 –1882

**I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!**

**And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!**

**Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!**

**Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!**

**It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!**

**And in despair I bowed my head;
“There is no peace on earth,” I said;
“For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!”**

**Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men.”**



The fourth and fifth stanzas are often omitted in this country as they refer to the American Civil War, which is when the poem was written.





Ring out, wild bells

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

Contacts

For info on personalised Ceremonies
please contact Janet Rowson on 0114 236 5894
or email: janetpeterrowson@gmail.com

To hire the Chapel or the Old Schoolroom (with / without kitchen)
please contact Anne Rayner: bookings@fulwoodoldchapel.uk

To advertise or submit an article for the Messenger
please contact Sue Toulson at susantoulson@gmail.com
or on 07971 924 329

Chapel Officers and Committee Members

Chair

Jane Moore 07946 179 554 janewm58@yahoo.ca

Vice Chair

Robert Ince 07896 715 855 robert.ince@live.co.uk

Ceremonies Booking Secretary

Anne Rayner anne@arayner15.plus.com

Treasurer

Peter Rowson 0114 236 5894 janetpeterrowson@gmail.com

Secretary

Tim Simkins 0114 230 2656 t.j.simkins@btinternet.com

General Committee Members

Janet Rowson 0114 236 5894 janetpeterrowson@gmail.com

Nigel Hopkins 0114 230 6662 ncgh@btinternet.com

Rod Cumming 0114 230 2703 rod@irod.co.uk

Marie Fitzpatrick 0114 230 1162 m.c.fitzpatrick@hotmail.co.uk

Warden

Anne Rayner anne@arayner15.plus.com

Housekeepers

Janet Rowson 0114 236 5894 janetpeterrowson@gmail.com

Elizabeth Cumming 0114 230 2703 lizzi.cumming@gmail.com

Organist

Marie Fitzpatrick 0114 230 1162 m.c.fitzpatrick@hotmail.co.uk

Messenger Editor

Sue Toulson 07971 924 329 susantoulson@gmail.com

Website

Caroline Thorpe 0114 281 8337 carolinethorpe54@gmail.com

Safeguarding Officers

Caroline Thorpe 0114 281 8337 carolinethorpe54@gmail.com

and Peter Rowson 0114 236 5894 janetpeterrowson@gmail.com

Services and Service Leaders

All our Sunday services commence at 11.00 am, unless otherwise notified. Note that the Remembrance Sunday service begins at 10.50 am and the Christmas Day service at 10.30 am

Our services are led by several different celebrants, each of whom will bring something different to the worship. Most services contain hymns, readings of religious or secular content, prayers and/or meditation, and an address. Congregants are invited to take from the experience all that they feel is relevant or important to them. We do not take a collection.

Tea and coffee are served after each service, and everyone is encouraged to enjoy this social time. On the third Sunday of each month, after coffee, we have an hour of 'Music Appreciation' to which everyone is invited.

November 2024

- 3 Rev. Sarah Tinker
- 10 10.50am **Remembrance Sunday** Janet Rowson
- 17 Philippa Shewry
- 24 Rev. Maria Pap

December 2024

- 1 Robert Ince
- 8 Rev. Sarah Tinker
- 15 Jane Moore
- 22 **Carol Service.** Ed Fordham
- 25 10.30am **Christmas Day** Ed Fordham
- 29 **No Service**

January 2025

- 5 Peter Rowson
- 12 Philippa Shewry
- 19 Rev. Patrick Timperley
- 26 Rev. Maria Pap

February 2025

- 2 Sue Toulson
- 9 Ed Fordham
- 16 Peter Rowson
- 23 Rev. Maria Pap

***A Peaceful
New Year,
to You All***



**Fulwood Old Chapel
A Unitarian Meeting Place**
info@fulwoodoldchapel.uk
www.fulwoodoldchapel.uk