



The
Monthly
Messenger
for

May
2024

A Journal of the
Unitarian Church
Clover Street
Rochdale

Volume 138

Issue 1652



PASTORAL TEAM

Interfaith Minister Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie

Joyce Ashworth, Dorothy Jones, Helen Illingworth & Margaret Salt

CHURCH COUNCIL

Chairperson – Diane Bennett

Treasurer – John Illingworth

Church Admin Assistant – Paul Hubbard

Council Members -

Joyce Ashworth, Helen Illingworth, Dorothy Jones, John & Edna Wood, Helen Wilkinson

ENVELOPE SECRETARIES

Margaret Shore & John Illingworth

PULPIT AND LETTINGS

Paul Hubbard

FLOWER FUND SECRETARIES

Edna & John Wood
53 Links View, Rochdale OL11 4DD

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Co-ordinator - Helen Illingworth
Member - Abi Elliott-McGuffie

Messenger Notices

Joyce Ashworth & Helen Illingworth

Messenger Publication and Distribution

Paul Hubbard

Website Manager

Diane Bennett

CONTACT DETAILS

Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie

Email: reverendabi@gmail.com 07718 534 250

Paul Hubbard Tel 07884 123 169

Email: rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com

Joyce Ashworth Tel: 01706 659294

Email: joyce.ashworth9@gmail.com

Diane Bennett Tel: 01706 371518

Email: diane119@hotmail.com

Helen & John Illingworth Tel: 01706 649015

Email: helen@illingworth.org.uk

Email: john@illingworth.org.uk

Margaret Salt Tel: 01706 852575

Margaret Shore Tel: 01706 360883

John & Edna Wood Tel 01706 645252

Email: jonwud@tiscali.co.uk

CHURCH VOICEMAIL - 01706 648461



Flowers

Sunday 5th May 2024 Vacant
Sunday 12th May 2024 Lynn Holland In Memory of her Auntie Gladys, also loving thoughts to my friend Christine following the recent loss of her mother
Sunday 19th May 2024 Di Scaife To Celebrate George's Birthday
Sunday 26th May Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie To Celebrate her Wedding Anniversary
Flowers lovingly arranged by:- 5th Margaret Shore; 12th Joyce Ashworth; 19th Anne Dawson; 26th Dorothy Jones



Should you know of someone for whom Church flowers would be a source of comfort and solace please have a word with Helen or Joyce



100 CLUB WINNERS

APR 2024

1st	7	Judith Lord
2nd	34	Etta Illingworth
3rd	76	Kate Salt

Prizes- 1st £30 - 2nd £15 - 3rd £5

Hello Dear Readers, welcome to May's edition of The Messenger.

Our big event this month is the Film Night on Saturday 25th at 7.30pm, where we will be showing "One Life" (see pg 8 for details).

We also have a special two-page report from Rev Abi on highlights from this year's GA Meetings at Staverton. So go to pgs 10-11 for all the latest from the national movement.

Finally, a reminder on pg 9 of our 50th Anniversary celebrations at Clover Street to be held on the weekend of 6-7th July — don't miss out!



MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear friends,

As I look out of the window now, the sky is a patchwork of blue with white clouds and the sun is shining, while the wind disturbs fading daffodils readying themselves for their return to the earth. Not a few moments ago the same daffodils were being pelted with hail stones, no gentle transition for them!

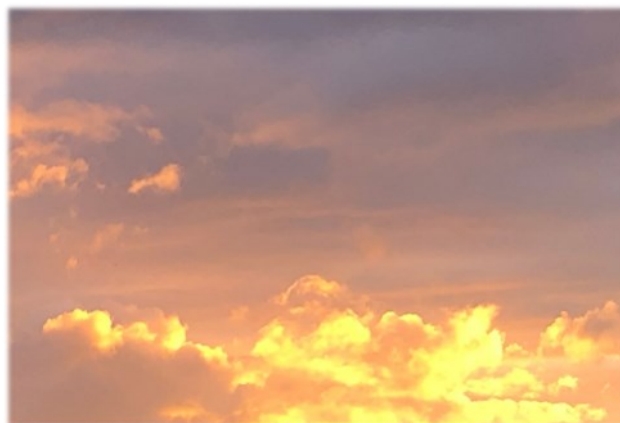
And as we move through spring with its usual unpredictability, I wonder what weather we encounter? Grey skies, sunshine, winds that disturb as they rush through, cloud bursts of intensity or calmness. It makes for interesting awareness, to pause for a moment in the midst of the routine or busyness of a day and to enquire of our internal weather. I'm only grateful that my weather is as changeable as that of our national obsession! However we find ourselves, we can be sure that everything will change, it always does.

Spring will happen through all sorts of weather and it will bring forth all the beauty we long to see. So perhaps if we could change a mindset that refers to 'good' and 'bad' weather and welcome it all, we'd also know ourselves to be passing through on the way to some new found beauty within.

To paraphrase Rumi (from This being human is a guesthouse) ... Anything that is not love is only a visitor, you are not anxious – stress is flowing through, you are not depressed – sadness is visiting, you are not lost – confusion is wandering within, you are not broken – pain is passing through.

In all your weather, may you find beauty and peace.

With my love
Abi xx



I Worried

Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers
flow in the right direction, will the earth turn
as it was taught, and if not how shall
I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven,
can I do better?

Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows
can do it and I am, well,
hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it,
am I going to get rheumatism,
lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing.
And gave it up. And took my old body
and went out into the morning,
and sang.

This piece is taken from a book of daily devotions edited by Unitarian Universalist Minister, John C Morgan and perhaps applies to each of us at certain points in our lives and is certainly worth reflecting upon:

"Whenever we wonder why there is something and not nothing: whenever we step outside our own needs to be with someone else in their pain; whenever we open our eyes to spend time observing one small flower; whenever in silence we feel at one with everything - in those brief moments the veil is lifted for us, and we can see out the windows of time, into the open spaces. In those moments we know what it is to be unafraid."

Every human being faces obstacles, adversity, difficult situations. Learning how to live is learning how to accept what cannot be changed, but it is also learning to change what must be changed.

Times of adversity often teach us about strengths we did not know we had. When life seems easy, we are not called to draw on the inner resources we require during hard times. And when we find those resources, we grow. We learn our capabilities; our fear of the unknown diminishes. We develop trust in a force larger than ourselves, that sometimes carries us into unknown territory and sees us safely through to the other side.

NEWS AND EVENTS CENTREFOLD

MAY

Thur	02	17.00	Monthly Afternoon Tea — Hostess: Dorothy Jone (see opposite)
		18.30	WL Meeting — Speaker: Mrs Diane Marsh “Making Jewellery”
Sun	07	10.30	W omen’s League Service led by National President, Sue Toulson
Sun	12	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie
Sun	19	10.30	W hit Sunday Service led by Joyce Ashworth Note: as part of our witness, there will be retiring collection for our Church Charity, Springhill Hospice
Mon	20	19.30	Book Circle at 5 Bagnall Close (Note change of date, pg 8)
Tues	21	19.30	General Council Meeting via Zoom
Sat	25	19.00	Film Night (see pg 8)
Sun	26	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie

WOMEN’S LEAGUE ON THURSDAY 2 MAY

- Afternoon Tea at 5.00 pm in Green Room
- Women’s League 6.30 pm, with speaker Mrs Diane Marsh
‘Making Jewellery’



The plaster cast has now been removed and I am getting back to full mobility.

Best Wishes
Charlotte Jones

Flowers lovingly arranged by

5th Margaret Shore;
12th Joyce Ashworth;
19th Anne Dawson;
26th Dorothy Jones



SUMMER LUNCH – 8TH JUNE

In no time at all we’ll be getting ready for our Summer Lunch. If you haven’t already done so, please make a note of the date in your diary. Tickets will be available at £12.00 by the middle of May.

WARDEN/COFFEE ROTA FOR 2024

Margaret Salt & Joyce Ashworth	07 Jan	11 Feb	17 Mar	21 Apr	26 May	30 Jun	4 Aug	8 Sep	13 Oct	17 Nov	22 Dec
John & Helen Illingworth	14 Jan	18 Feb	24 Mar	28 Apr	2 Jun	7 Jul	11 Aug	15 Sep	20 Oct	24 Nov	25 Dec
Margaret Shore & Dorothy Jones	21 Jan	25 Feb	31 Mar	5 May	9 Jun	14 Jul	18 Aug	22 Sep	27 Oct	1 Dec	29 Dec
Helen Illingworth & Margaret Salt	28 Jan	3 Mar	7 Apr	12 May	16 Jun	21 Jul	25 Aug	29 Sep	3 Nov	8 Dec	
Dorothy Jones & Margaret Shore	4 Feb	10 Mar	14 Apr	19 May	23 Jun	28 Jul	1 Sep	6 Oct	10 Nov	15 Dec	

Important - should you be unable to attend please arrange for a stand-in, it is difficult for one person to cover both functions.

BOOK CIRCLE



Following a super read last month, The Tenth Muse by Catherine Chung, we will be discussing *The Milliner's Secret* by Natalie Meg Evans. It's 1937 London. A talented young woman travels to Paris with a stranger. The promise of an exciting career as a milliner beckons, but she is about to fall in love with the enemy. Faced with the cruel reality of war and love, Coralie must make a difficult choice—protect herself or find the courage to fight for her friends, her freedom and everything she believes in.



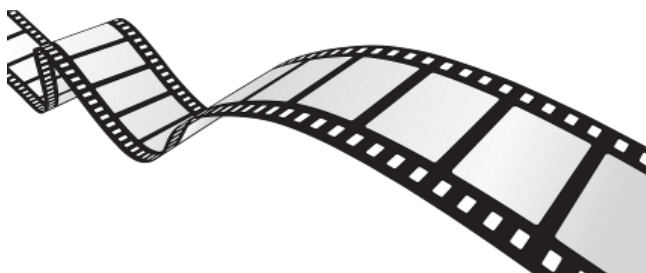
Please note the change of date to the third Monday 20th May.

FILM NIGHT— SAT 25TH @7.30PM



For our next Film Night we are showing *One Life*, the true story of Sir Nicholas Winton, who was responsible for evacuating over 600 children from Czechoslovakia, which was on the verge of Nazi invasion.

If you would like to join us, please add your name to the list on the notice board with your menu choice. Ice creams will be served at the interval and homemade cake, tea and coffee after the pie and peas. All this for a donation of £7.00 for our Church Charity Springhill Hospice.



50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS - INVITATIONS COMING OUT SOON!



For Saturday 6th July: High Tea for the Congregation and Trustees followed by an evening of music by Undercover 2.

Tickets will be available for the evening celebrations with Undercover 2, to which everyone who has a connection to the Church or has supported you as a member, are invited. So please request the tickets for those you want to invite.

For Sunday 7th July - Anniversary Service followed by Afternoon Tea.



Invitees for the service include past members and supporters, local churches and Unitarian churches in the district. We are pleased to report that the Mayor and Consort have already accepted our invitation. We also hope that representatives from the Co-op and our lettings will join us too.

There will be NO charge for any of these events as we want the weekend to be a celebration for everyone, a celebration of our being here in this building for the last 50 years, and a presence of Unitarian witness in the community.

The Unitarian Earth Spirit Network



Hucklow House Party Weekend 6th - 8th September 2024

'Preparing for the Equinox'

Relaxation, craft, meditations, visits, outdoor programme

Cost: £85 per night full board (plus £5 single occupancy)

Book with Deposit of £30

Unitarian Earth Spirit Network

A/c 00337991. Sort Code. 30:14:40

Or use the PayPal button www.earthspiritnetwork

- Name.
- Contact details.
- Dietary requirement.
- Mobility requirement.
- Single occupancy.

Or send cheque to: Tony McNeile, 102 Turton Rd Bolton BL2 3DY
E mail: tony.mcneile@virgin.net

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY - 95TH MEETING — by Rev Abi

Firstly, thank you, for the honour of representing clover street UNITARIANS as your delegate at this year's meetings, joining in the procession of banners at the opening service truly was a privileged. Thank you too, to Diane, for guiding me through the plenaries and for generally helping me not to get too overwhelmed.



The overall theme of the meeting was 'Change', with many ideas being put forward on how the movement might navigate the inescapable shift in the religious landscape of our times. Acknowledging our founding ancestors for the freedom they bequeathed to us, it was also recognised that the responsibility was now in our hands, to carry that freedom forwards. No one can own that for us, only we can step forward in response to our understanding of that which we might call God or Life, or any other name, holding the Unitarian banner aloft for the future generations. The generations that follow may have a different idea of what our movement will look like, and equally, they may not be interested. Whatever is ahead, while we see a place for Unitarianism in our society, if we believe in who we are and what we're about, then perhaps now is the time to think Big and to think Long Term.

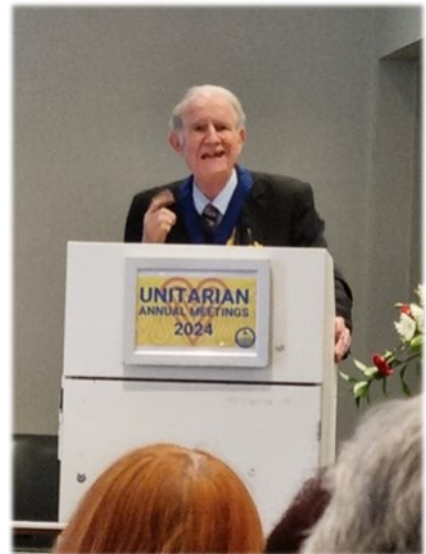
The latter, in essence was what the keynote speaker Roman Krznaric was advocating, alongside posing the question 'How can we become good ancestors?'. His enthusiastic and inspiring talk, prompting us to consider that while we think only of our lives and those of our children our vision remains fairly short sighted. If however, we think further ahead than that (perhaps seven generations ahead), we open ourselves to long term thinking, and to making much more transformative steps. That said, we can't get away from reality, and the reality is that many congregations are older and fewer in numbers, and it isn't easy. The intention of the General Assembly is to offer that support with initiatives and tools to help support congregations, so that we are empowered to free our imaginations. Everything is exploratory, not everything will 'work' and not everything will work within all congregations.

With an emphasis on coming together and collaborating, if nothing else will aid to raise our spirits in our shared endeavour – our standing together for that which we cherish.

The business of the meetings presented some fairly lively discussion. An amended motion for a ceasefire in Gaza was presented and passionately discussed, eventually being voted through. The motions for understanding Artificial Intelligence and supporting the campaign for No More Deaths were voted through unanimously.

The motion in support of Unlimited Motions for future meetings although voted through, was a fairly split vote.

Prof, Geoff Levermore took up his position as GA President for 2024- 2025, and Rev Jeffrey Bowes was elected as Vice President. Three new ministers (Rev Lynda Kane, Rev Arek Malecki and Rev Jennifer Sanders) were received onto the General Assembly roll of ministers.



Honour membership of the General Assembly was given to Dot Hewardine and Celia and John Midgley.

The meetings were a full and rich experience and if there's a take away thought, I'd say that its linked to what I witnessed; the past honoured and the new being embraced, old ways blended with new ways of doing ... A rope is made of many entwined strands, if one strand should weaken or indeed break, the rope still has strength. May our future know a similar strength.



EVENT DATES 2024

Date	EVENT
16 Mar	Spring Lunch
23 Mar	Unitarian District Service
26 Apr	Music Night — Stacksteads Brass Band
25 May	Film Night
8 June	Summer Lunch
6 & 7 July	Clover Street 50th Anniversary
28 Sept	Women's League Project Lunch
11 Oct	Music Night — Simeon Wood
16 Nov	Film Night
7 Dec	Christmas Lunch

Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship Safeguarding

Safeguarding Team

1. Mrs. Helen Illingworth (co-ordinator)
2. Rev. Abi Elliott-McGuffie



Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship (also known as Rochdale Unitarian Church) recognises its responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, online, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children. Our church believes in the upholding and support of the rights and personal dignity of every adult and child, and will work to ensure that our policies and procedures reflect this, including in any such appointment and selection of persons who work on the Church's behalf. Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship is committed to ensure that every adult and child feels valued, safe and happy and will work to make sure that all feel empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm. We will report any abuse we discover or suspect.

Interested in learning more?



<http://www.rochdaleunitarians.org.uk>

<http://www.unitarian.org.uk/>



Rochdale Unitarian Church
Clover Street
ROCHDALE OL12 6TP
 01706 648461 (voicemail)

June 2024 EDITION
 COPY DEADLINE - 26 MAY
 ISSUE DATE - 2 JUNE