

Connections

*The Newsletter of Belper, Derby and Charnwood
Unitarians*



1st day at School!

Sept/Oct 2009



Welcoming Congregations.



Mother's Day

***Your Children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you.
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.
Kahlil Gibran—The Prophet***

Though my child belongs not to me, she is my child and always will be.

I watched her running up the driveway on that second day of school, bouncing along in white ankle socks and Stride Rite sandals and a summer dress hand-sewn by an English grandma.

I watched her at eight and nine, two yellow braids and a Cookie Monster lunch box. I dropped what I was doing and ran out to meet the bus, in those days when she was little enough to be swept up in my arms and embraced by my affection.

I watched her carrying a trombone case and a school bag that just gets heavier, trudging up that driveway on cold winter mornings in junior high when no one wore a winter jacket or socks, no matter how much snow covered the yard. I watched her just last week when her boy friend came to meet her in his car, and they walked out together arm in arm, he carrying the trombone case.

Then, when I watched her asking questions of the admissions officer at a liberal arts college, I knew that I could count the number of days I have left to watch her from my window.

Spirit of life, watch my child when I cannot. Encircle her with love, protect her from a world which has become cynical. Knowing that I cannot stop time, not even for a moment, and freeze the picture from my window, let me hold her gently in my memory.

Let all those children she once was remain joyful spirits encircling my reminiscences.

Spirit of life, watch all our children. Keep them safe as they adventure toward adulthood, and let them turn and wave to us as they step out of our care and into the world of their making.

Rev Elizabeth Tarbox

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2009

Belper Unitarian Chapel

Sunday 4th	Family Service Harvest Festival	11am
Sunday 18th	Cllr Kevin Stone	3 pm

Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship

Tuesday 13th	Fellowship Meeting	7.30 pm
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Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby

Sunday 4th	Mindfulness Sangha	3.30pm
	A Gathering An Alternative way of being Together	6pm
Sunday 11th	Progressive Christian Group	
	Discussing the 8 Points of Progressive Christianity.	3.30 pm
	Service Rev Chris Goacher	6pm
Sunday 18th	Mindfulness Sangha	6pm
Sunday 25th	Service: Rev Chris Goacher	6pm

Where to Find us.

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel
Stafford Street
Derby DE1 1JG



Belper News

It was a delight to have a good mention of our Chapel in the July edition of "Derbyshire Life" magazine. That edition carried a special feature on Belper, and thankfully included our Unitarian Chapel with a photograph taken on the Open Day in May showing three of our members around the pulpit with "Jedediah Strutt" looking on!

The current series of "Open Day", which comes to a close on National Heritage Saturday 13th September (10.30 a.m. to 1 pm.) has again proved to be most successful, attracting many visitors not only to look around our building but also to enquire about we Unitarians. Indeed with the level of support from our own members there seems to be every possibility that we shall continue the monthly "Open Day" beyond September!!

Most of us feel that the restoration of all the Memorial Tablets has visually improved the interior of the chapel. It is also good now to be able to read much of the information contained on the tablets. We record our sincere thanks to Belper Masonic Benevolent Association for a most generous donation of £500 towards the cost of this restoration work, particularly we appreciate the support of Peter Smedley in helping us to obtain this donation.

Further work and improvements to the Chapel fabric have been arranged by David Burton, Chairman of our Trustees, and will be carried out towards the end of September. This will include the painting of the chapel's interior windows, with some minor repairs. Also the small entrance will undergo full restoration, with the re-felting of the interior swing doors.

It was uplifting to have so many people present, and speaking so well of Sylvia Frances, at her Memorial Service, conducted in the chapel by the Rev. Chris. Goacher, on Sunday, 2nd August.

Our thanks go to Andy Phillips for keeping our Notice Board on Green Lane up to date, with much good and interesting information about us and our activities.

Alas, our Treasurer, Muriel Bolshaw, did inform us at our well attended Annual General Meeting that our financial situation does cause her some concern, so if any of our members or friends can raise their giving to the chapel it would be very much appreciated.

Now we look forward to our Harvest Celebration at 11 a.m. on Sunday, 4th October. Gifts of fruit and vegetables and flowers will be most welcome, and after the service will be auctioned in aid of an agreed charity.

Rev Derek Smith

Are You a Member?

"Beings have gathered for centuries seeking a higher purpose and deeper life than they could find alone. We are grateful that you have found your way here, and that you have decided to make a commitment to this faith community. We hope that you will allow yourselves to know and to be known, to minister to and to be ministered unto, to love and to be loved, by this community."

—Rev. Victoria Weinstein, adapted

Membership: More Than a Numbers Game

When we think of membership, we tend to think of numbers. Yet membership in a Unitarian congregation is as much about quality as it is about quantity.

Unitarian congregations exist because of the free choice of their members to be "gathered" into covenantal relationship with one another.

In Unitarianism no higher authority creates a congregation; in fact, a congregation is formed only if people are willing to constitute one. Membership, then, is the heart of our Unitarian congregational life.

Membership is a dynamic process rather than a single act. It begins when one makes the conscious choice to formally enter into membership of a particular congregation—yet that decision marks the beginning of the membership journey rather than its end.

(UUA—Journey into membership -Adopted)

Membership is the lifeblood of any organisation, it is a commitment to the values for which we stand and to the future of the community.

If you are not yet a member we invite you to give membership your consideration.

For further information speak with any committee member or Rev Chris Goacher.

Mr Jim Davenport

It is with sadness that we record the passing of Mr Jim Davenport of Higham Hall. Jim was an active member of the Greta meeting Unitarian Chapel at Hinckley and a past president of our District Association.

A celebration of his Life took place at Great Meeting conducted by Rev Peter Hewis. Rev Chris Goacher attended in his capacity as President of EMU and Cllr David Burton represented Belper Unitarian Chapel.

EAST MIDLAND UNITARIANS

Quarterly Meeting of the General Committee
To be held at Friar gate Chapel, Derby,
At 2.30pm on Saturday 5th September 2009.

E.M.U. Together Again!

An invitation from Ray Young of Lincoln.

We were together again on a lovely Summer weekend at Hucklow in June. It was good to be amongst friends surrounded by the comforts of the Nightingale Centre and the Derbyshire Hills.

There was a core programme of activities but everyone did as they pleased—we are Unitarians!

Peter Crisp is the EMU Domino Champion!

Others excelled in their own way at origami, circle dancing, hill walking, football, visiting local Well-dressings or relaxing with friends.

Rev Chris Goacher took the service in the Old Chapel—the Theme—Being Positive.

Please follow this advice by reserving the weekend 19th – 20th June 2010 for YOUR chance to be together with us at Great Hucklow.

Minister's Musings

Imagine, if you will, the underground during rush-hour; a train pulls in; a well-dressed woman gets off. Before the doors close, the woman realizes that she is holding only one of her leather gloves. She looks back into the train and spots the matching one on the seat. It is obviously too late to dash back in to retrieve it, so with a shrug of acceptance, she flings her arm out and, as the doors close, tosses her glove onto the seat alongside its mate. The doors shut, and the train pulls away.

What a great image. One could use it, I suppose, as a metaphor for many things, the metaphor that comes to mind is the one of "letting go."

During this month of September there will be many scenes of 'letting go' played out at school gates; parents struggling with their emotions as they see their little ones marching off into the brave new world of education, learning new skills, building friendships, gradually peeling off the layers of dependence to reveal a capable individual that will ultimately lead a life that we cannot imagine or in many ways be a part of.

The poem 'Mother's Day' by Elizabeth Tarbox portrays the feelings that many parents will have during this time through adolescence and into adult life. Parenthood is a life-long process of letting go.

Life is a journey that requires us to let go of many things, our loved ones, our 'brave faces', our masks, our falsehoods, our ego, those places where we hide our real selves. Spiritual practice helps in the unveiling of our true selves; we are not the many roles we have in life, our true selves lie beneath; we are not defined by what we do, but who we are.

We shall all one day have to let go of life itself; let us do so with gratitude for the life we had and the loves we shared, and the new life we have guided on its way.

Love and Peace

Chris

***To live in this world
you must be able
to do three things:***

***To love what is mortal;
to hold it against you bones
knowing your own life depends on it;***

***And, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.***

Mary Oliver

Small Group Ministry at Belper

Life Support

[2nd Monday of each month]

Exploring Meditation

[4th Monday of each month]

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

Both groups are open and warmly welcome newcomers!

THE LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS (Saving our Children from Nature-deficit Disorder)

This book, by Richard Louv (a recipient of the 2008 Audubon Medal) who is greatly involved in many organisations with the theme of children and Nature, abounds in accounts of the author's own experiences and those of others, as well as describing the efforts of many to bring children closer to Nature. The author grew up in America but the experiences of other countries are recorded, too.

The book gives some alarming figures for anti-depressant prescriptions. Between 1998 and 2003 the rate at which American children were prescribed such drugs had doubled, the steepest increase being 66% for pre-school children. Pharmacological companies are not interested in promoting Nature cure, yet Nature can, in many cases, provide the greatest healing balm. Some instances are re-counted: One girl liked to go to the woods, appreciating the peacefulness and solitude as an antidote to the pressures upon her. A boy uncomfortably explained that when they cut the woods down it was as though they had cut down a part of him. Another girl was overwhelmed, when camping, to see the stars so clearly for the first time. Nature has the remarkable quality of benefiting our physical and emotional health. Some recent studies indicate that exposure to Nature may reduce the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Also unstructured play in reasonably safe areas can encourage imagination and resourcefulness,

Of course, there can be dangers in wild uncultivated areas and Nature herself can turn nasty. Land development reduces the area left to Nature. Also, attitudes have changed. In the current 'compensation' culture, accidents will be the signal to call in the law. There is a greater concern nowadays with paedophilia resulting in many people who have contact with children having to now undergo the indignity of vetting. There are more regulations and lots of outdoor play is banned. In one area, 137 schools' had 'No Running' notices; merry-go-rounds and swings were out for fear of injuries followed by lawsuits. To achieve that commonsense balance between protecting the child and avoiding excessive legislation is a difficult task for legislators. The book makes a plea for bad law to be rewritten.

All these developments head the child in the direction of the TV, computers and other electronic forms of play. Then, surprise, surprise, it is noticed that there is a growth in the numbers of children who are obese!

The author makes use of the thesis of the great American historian, Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932) about the frontier as being of significance in the development of the individualism, energy, self-reliance, etc., of the American character.

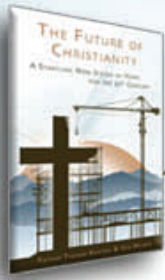
The First frontier, continually advancing Westwards to the Pacific, closed when all the "free" land was taken up, in 1890. The dwindling of the farm population in the latter part of the next hundred years brought an end to the government's annual survey of farm residents and so to the closure of the Second frontier in 1990. The present generation are shaping the Third frontier. Some of its features are: lack of awareness of how food is produced; a more intellectual approach to understanding animals rather than direct experience of them; the invasion of cities by wild animals; the development of shopping malls, etc., which offer fewer outlets for natural play.

For the Fourth frontier, the author engages in some- ' futuristic thinking based on trends and developments that are already appearing as possible solutions to current problems of how to order our affairs in ways beneficial to children, wildlife and the environment. One solution is the "zoopolis" (rhymes with "metropolis") where there is room for wildlife in the cities and where there are not only parks and preserves, but natural corridors of wildlife extending into urban settings. Green architecture is getting more popular. In Ohio, the Oberlin building with its rooftop voltaics and other green features replicates the functioning of a tree. Also the many advantages of rooftop gardens are listed. In this area, the city of Chicago is amongst the leaders. Challenges and opportunities are presented by demographic change - some large areas of the U.S.A. have lost population due to the emergence of mega-farms and to small-farmer bankruptcies. So there is a lot going on, but a lot of it is piecemeal rather than coming from central government.

The book has no illustrations but is quite an easy read even though it does contain some American expressions unfamiliar to me. In places the writing is quite descriptive and beautiful. At the end of the book there is a section suggesting "100 Actions We Can Take", also a section of "Discussion Points".

George Cope

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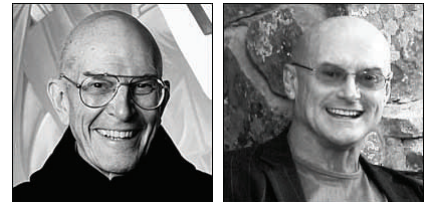
THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY

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Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel Progressive Christianity Group present this inspiring DVD presentation followed by Discussion.

**Saturday 3rd October
10.30 for 11am start
Please bring lunch to share
aim to finish around 3pm.**

**All Welcome
Venue Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Stafford Street,
Derby**

Bishop Jack Spong UK Tour October 2009

- **Date:** Tuesday 20th October, 2009 – Monday 26th October, 2009
- **Time:** 7:30 PM
- **Location:** Colchester, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Exeter, London
- **Contact:** Jill Sandham, Secretary
- **Email:** jill.sandham@pcnbritain.org.uk
- **Keynote:** Bishop Jack Spong
- **Cost:** Weeknights £12 (£10 for PCN and CRC members); Saturday £18 (£12 for PCN and CRC members)
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Eternal Life: A New Vision

Bishop Jack Spong, leading communicator of a new Christianity for a new age, speaks across Britain to the themes of his long-awaited book in October 2009.

Eternal Life: A New Vision

On week nights in October 2009 at 7.30 pm, in Colchester (20th), Sheffield (21st), Edinburgh (22nd) and Exeter (26th)

A day conference in London on Saturday 24th October, at 10.45 am.

Booking information:

To book, download the form(www.pcnbritain.org.uk) or contact Jill Sandham, PCN Britain, St Faith's Vicarage, 62 Red Post Hill, London SE24 9JQ.

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, e.g., 'reign' and 'rain'.

- 1 (a) To totter or progress unsteadily.
(b) A leafless, twining, pale parasitic plant.
- 2 (a) A large stone rounded by the action of water.
(b) Former name of the 'Hoover' Dam.
- 3 (a) A chain of rocks near the surface of the water.
(b) Portion of a sail that may be rolled up.
- 4 (a) A female governor.
(b) A bird's long tail feather, used in steering.
- 5 (a) An agreeing to, or acquiescence.
(b) A going up.
- 6 (a) Cornmeal, boiled in water or milk until thick.
(b) To travel on foot with dogs over snow.
- 7 (a) A method of signaling by dashes and dots.
(b) The walrus.
- 8 (a) A kind of tree.
(b) To languish with longing.
- 9 (a) The CGS unit of work.
(b) A Saharan area of shifting sand.
- 10 (a) A kind of fence for support.
(b) A bird (genus *Rallus*); the corncrake.

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. Three replies received this time - thank you for your attempts! The winner this time are Mr. & Mrs. Songsmith. who will shortly be receiving a small prize.

Answers to the last Quiz: 1(a) Settle, (b) Settle; 2(a) Circular, (b) Circular; 3(a) Chat, (b) Chat; 4(a) Generation, (b) Generation; 5(a) Cete, (b) Seat; 6(a) Host, (b) Host; 7(a) Seem, (b) Seam, 8(a) Gum, (b) Gum; 9(a) Present, (b) Present; 10(a) Pink, (b) Pink.

Contact Details

Minister.

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Belper Chapel Directory

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www.belperunitarians.org.uk

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

Treasurer: Mrs Muriel Bolshaw. Tel: 01773 825041

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.

As Unitarians we believe:

In the Freedom of Conscience in Matters of Religion;

Therefore we require no statement of faith or acceptance of particular doctrines to be acceptable in our churches/chapels and fellowships.

We believe in a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.

In the Inherent Worth and Dignity of all People;

Therefore we welcome all regardless of creed, colour, sex, or sexuality; and in the acceptance of one another the encouragement to spiritual growth

In the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all people, and respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.

Therefore we support the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.

The living tradition from which we draw strength;

- *The words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love.*
- *Wisdom from the world's religions which inspire us in our ethical and spiritual life.*
- *Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbour as ourselves.*
- *Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us of the idolatries of mind and spirit.*
- *Spiritual teachings of the Earth-centred traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.*

(adapted from the Principle and Purposes of the Unitarian Universalist Association)