

Connections

*The Newsletter of Belper, Derby and Charnwood
Unitarians*



***Members of Belper Poetry Groups gather for the
Dedication of the latest addition to Beth's Poetry Trail at
Belper Unitarian Chapel.***

Jan/Feb 2009



Welcoming Congregations.



An Appeal

1st January 2009

Dear Belper Members and Friends,

These days our Unitarian Chapel, set in its grounds, is in a better state of health and order than it has been for more than forty years. This is the outcome of many years of restoration and improvements - a complete new roof, an indoor toilet with wheelchair access, central heating, new lighting and decoration, grounds in good order, and more recently two new notice boards.

One of the few remaining improvements that still need our attention is the cleaning of the seven Wall Plaque Memorials inside the chapel. For this to be carried out professionally would cost a total of £1,400. While this work is not urgent it is readily agreed that it would be heartening if we could carry it out in the spring of this new year of 2009.

We are applying for grant aid. Also we have already received one personal donation to this end, and if you feel able to send us a contribution, however small, it would be greatly appreciated. Please send to me at 14 Garnon Street, Mansfield, Notts, NG 18 5QT. Cheques should be made payable to "Belper Unitarian Chapel".

It is not easy to put into words the uplift of spirit that we experience these days in being able to gather for worship and fellowship in such a splendid building and setting.

The warmest of greetings to you.

Rev Derek Smith

CALENDAR

JAN 2009

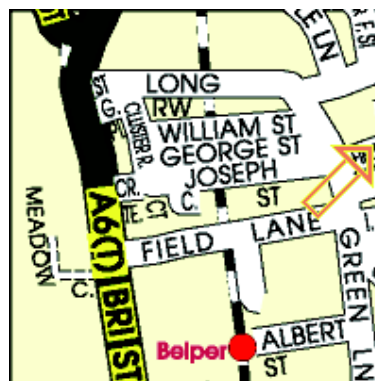
Belper Unitarian Chapel.

Sunday 4th **Rev Chris Goacher** 11 am

Family Service

“New Beginnings”

Sunday 18th **Rev Chris Goacher** 3 pm



Charnwood Fellowship

Tuesday 6th **Fellowship Meeting** 7.30 pm

Elizabeth Gaskell Evening

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby.

Sunday 4th **Mindfulness Sangha** 3pm

A Gathering 6pm

An Alternative way of Being Together

Sunday 11th **Service: Rev Chris Goacher** 3pm

Progressive Christianity Group

“Living The Questions” 5pm

Sunday 18th

Mindfulness Sangha 6pm

Sunday 25th **Service: Rev Chris Goacher** 3pm

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2009

Belper Unitarian Chapel

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|-------------|---|------|
| Sunday 1st | Rev Chris Goacher Family Service | 11am |
| Sunday 15th | Service: Rev Chris Goacher | 3 pm |

Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship

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|-------------|---|---------|
| Tuesday 3rd | Fellowship Meeting 'Evolution' | 7.30 pm |
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Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby

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| Sunday 1st | Mindfulness Sangha A Gathering An Alternative way of being Together | 3pm 6pm |
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| Sunday 8th | Service—Rev Chris Goacher | 3 pm |
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Derby Unitarian Progressive Christian Group

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| | "Living The Questions" | 5 pm |
| Sunday 15th | Reading Group Mindfulness Sangha | 3pm 6pm |
| Sunday 22nd | Service: Rev Chris Goacher | 3pm |

Where to Find us.

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel
Stafford Street
Derby DE1 1JG



Minister's Musings

There is a children's story by Emilie Poulsson entitled 'The Fairy's New Year Gift.'

Two little boys were at play one day when a Fairy suddenly appeared before them and gave them New Year presents consisting of two beautiful books, with pages as pure and white as the snow when it first falls.

Many months later the Fairy came again to the boys to exchange the books for new ones.

The boys wished to look at their books one last time, and were amazed to find some pages were blotched and scratched and others remained beautiful; and some pages were a combination of the two.

The boys looked in wonder. Could it be that these were the same fair books she had given them a year ago?

The Fairy explained that the blotches represented times when they did something wrong or cruel and the beautiful pages when they had done something good or kind.

The boys pleaded to keep the books, so that they could change what was on the pages for the better.

"That cannot be," said the Fairy. "See! they are dated for this year, and they must now go back into Father Time's bookcase, but I have brought you each a new one. Perhaps you can make these more beautiful than the others."

So saying, she vanished, and the boys were left alone, but each held in his hand a new book open at the first page. And on the back of this book was written in letters of gold, "For the New Year."

A simple story but one that reminds us that we cannot change what has been, only hope or resolve to do better in the future.

May 2009 be a year of spiritual growth for us all; May we find peace and love, do what we can to make the world a better place; and when in twelve months time we look back at the pages of our lives, find more beauty than blotches, more good deeds than bad, more happiness than otherwise.

Happy New Year

Chris

Bits and Pieces

The **Mindfulness Sangha at Friar Gate Chapel** has successfully launched with two well attended meetings. A Sangha is the Buddhist word for fellowship or group, and is defined as a gathering of practitioners who support each other in their practice. Rather similar to the words of Unitarian James Luther Adams who wrote; "*Church is a place where you get to practice what it means to be human.*"

The Sangha meets at 3pm on the 1st Sunday of the month and at 6pm on the 3rd. All are welcome.

The **Trustees of Belper Chapel** would also like to acknowledge and express their appreciation to Trustee **Dougie Brown** for his generous donation of £60 to open the Appeal for the restoration of the memorial Tablets and to **Belper Chapel Cottage Trust** for their donation of £2000 which will enable the next phase of work in the restoration of the pews.

Our thanks also go to **Doreen Goacher** for the restoration of the cloth that covers the Chapel table at Belper.

The next Congregational meeting at **Belper Chapel** has been scheduled for the evening of Monday 19th January at 7pm.

As part of their Social Justice practice members of **Friar Gate Chapel** now sponsor 10% of the medicines of the St Mary's Dispensary in Tanzania via an East Midland Charity named Intercare; and sponsor a young 6 year old boy India.

The next Committee meeting will take place at **Friar Gate Chapel** on Tuesday 3rd Feb at 6.30pm.

Friar Gate Chapel was pleased to welcome the Derwent Singers on Sunday evening, Dec 14th, to support our Carol Service. The Derwent Singers rehearse each week in our chapel and for a number of years have joined us for this service, for which we are deeply appreciative.

In Memoriam, [Ring out, wild bells] by Lord Alfred 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.

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) An amphibious rodent (Castor), or its fur.
(b) In medieval armour, a covering for the lower part of the face.
- 2 (a) Holy, proceeding from God.
(b) To guess or make out.
- 3 (a) A frame or pad to make a skirt stand out from the hips.
(b) To busy oneself noisily or fussily.
- 4 (a) A treble brass valve instrument.
(b) A wafer cone of ice-cream.
- 5 (a) A boat or sailing ship.
(b) The short sound of a dog.
- 6 (a) Animal similar to a mouse.
(b) To do this on someone is to inform on that person.
- 7 (a) To consume by fire.
(b) (Scot.) A small stream or brook.
- 8 (a) A scroll.
(b) To move, esp. downhill, like a ball.
- 9 (a) An accidental success.
(b) A parasitic worm, esp. in sheep.
- 10 (a) A spring that periodically spouts hot water or steam into the air.
(b) An old man (slang).

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. To the last quiz Mrs. E. Cooper, will be receiving a small prize in the New Year. Thank you, Eileen!

Answers to the last Quiz: 1(a) Bent, (b) Bent; 2(a) Trip, (b) Trip; 3(a) Tripe, (b) Tripe; 4(a) Can, (b) Can; 5(a) Heal, (b) Heel; 6(a) Mine, (b) Mine; 7(a) Mouse, (b) Mouse; 8(a) Staple, (b) Staple; 9(a) Puke, (b) Puke; 10(a) Abba, (b) Abba.

‘Music of the Mind’

A review by George Cope

This book is sub-titled 'An Adventure into Consciousness'. It's author, Dr. Darryl Reaney, had a distinguished career as a molecular biologist. He died of leukaemia shortly after completing the book. A major theme of the book is death and the possibility of an afterlife. It covers the latest findings of science, quotations from the poetry of well-known poets as well as of lesser known, and gems of wisdom from great thinkers and from the religions.

Early in the book the author discusses the 'paradox'. Each half of the paradox seems to contradict the other half, for instance, 'He who loses his life shall find it'. On the contrary, the author sees each half as complementing the other half. The paradox seen in this light can give a deeper level of understanding. He feels that the universe makes most sense when viewed as a work of art.

He presents us with accepted scientific theories as well as ideas of his own which, he admits, would not necessarily be accepted by fellow scientists.

Nevertheless, he blends all these theories and ideas together into a pretty compelling case for the view he is propounding, a view which, while possibly bringing comfort to believers, is built upon pushing the boundaries of established science to the point of the apparently unbelievable. Yet has not modern science got a quality of strangeness, of the unbelievable about it?

We are told that atoms are 99.99 per cent empty space. With the advent of quantum mechanics, we are told that it is impossible to determine the position and the momentum of an electron at the same time; that an electron unobserved (as I understand this, when a detector is switched off -G.C.) appears to be a very ethereal wave, but when observed appears to be a particle - another case of paradox!

Vision and consciousness is discussed as well as 'time' which is now better understood as 'space-time'. The author sees our thoughts as having a wave-like nature (we are familiar with brainwaves!). Music, drumming, rhythm, and the old wisdom of the Australian aborigines and their concept of 'song-line' is included.

Thus, drawing upon the ideas of science, religion, literature, etc., he gives a lyrical exposition of his ideas about creation (the Big Bang), evolution, the emergence of consciousness, the Self, the Ego, (and the difference between them) and the possibilities of life after death. The amazing thing is that all the many features of the world and the universe that we recognise today evolved from the primordial hydrogen atom at the time of the Big Bang.

Continued-

The author sees any act of creation as being at the same time an act of separation. Using paradox, metaphor and allegory, he weaves a wonderful and coherent account of the nature of the cosmos where at the Big Bang there exists for an in-finitesimally short time a singularity. A singularity is an in-finitesimally small point (beyond the ability of our known laws of physics to explain) which comprises within it all the known matter of the universe - a potentiality.

At creation, the singularity, the One, breaks up into the Many, evolving into the universe we know today. This act of creation, involving separation, contains within it the momentum for re-union again. This striving for reunion is interpreted as 'desire' which exists in time but when the Many becomes One (outside time) the One is seen as Love. Thus the author seems to see ultimate being as Love while leaving the reader to decide whether to call this Love 'God'.

The author is much impressed by accounts of near-death experiences from which, and from his theorizing, he concludes that there is life after death. He even speculates what this might be like. He does not believe that there is a God who will judge us, rather that the quality of our afterlife will be determined by the way we feel about the type of life we have lived on earth.

Though science and cosmology feature largely in this book, it is an easy read and as uplifting as a beautiful poem.

ISBN 0 285 63288 4

(My Copy published in 1995)

G.Cope

Music fills the infinite between two souls. This has
been muffled by the mist of our daily habits.

Rabindranath Tagore

The Catacomb at Belper Chapel

The Catacomb, Belper

(The family of Jedediah Strutt, cotton yarn manufacturer and benefactor, lie in a vault beneath the Unitarian Chapel that he built in 1788.)

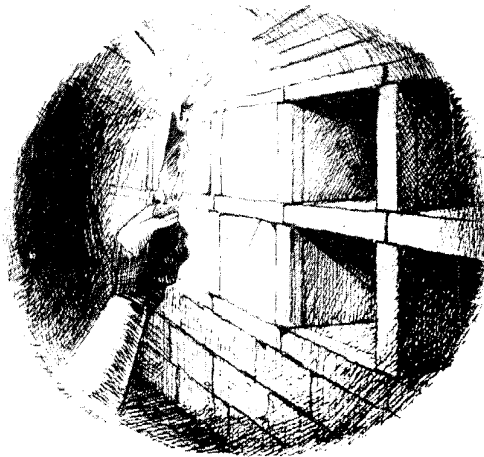
The deep, proprietorial dark
of Jedediah's catacomb
yields to the flickering candle.

Beneath his plain chapel,
In chambers, simpler yet,
Six brick-lined tombs
sealed with trowel and faith,
defy earthly time and turbulence.

Within these lime-washed walls
in clean, sepulchral order,
that non-Conformist zeal
that held, yet gave so much,
is rendered here in one conformity.

John Fineran

Previously published in the anthology: 'Belper in Poetry, Past and Present,' Joseph Cox 1997; Belper Writers' Group anthology: 'Ten out of Ten,' 1994 And East Midlands 1995 by Poetry Now 1995.



TWO NEW GROUPS AT BELPER UNITARIAN CHAPEL

Both groups are open and warmly welcome newcomers!

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

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

2nd Monday of each month
8pm-9.30pm

12 January 2009 (including consideration of: “Accept your reality
(including yourself) as it currently is. Say “Yes!” to the Universe.”)
9 February 2009 (including consideration of: “Acknowledge your contribu-
tion to your current life situation. Consider where you have failed to live up
to your own standards.”)

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!)

4th Monday of each month
8pm-9.30pm

26 January 2009
23 February 2009

Derby Unitarians Progressive Christian Group
Living the Questions will run as a Monthly meeting
on the 2nd Sunday of the month.

At the new time of 5pm

Jan 11th Session 8: a kingdom without walls

Feb 8th Session 9: lives of Jesus

Progressive Christianity Network

PCN Britain Day Conference

Date: Saturday 21st March, 2009

Time: 11:00 AM

Email: info@pcnbritain.org.uk

Keynote: Jim Mein and Ian Lawton

The venue is hoped to be in Birmingham, further details to follow.

www.pcnbritain.org

*An Introduction to Christian Meditation
In the tradition of John Main and
The World Community of Christian meditation.*

Saturday January 17th

1pm—4pm

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel

Our journey is, then, one to our own hearts. Because all of us are invited to enter this temple and receive this newness of life, we have to recognize this time as a moment to put off everything that prevents us from embracing the mystery of our own creation and entering into the fullness of life we receive as pure gift in the father's eternal act of creation. John Main

Contact Details

Minister.

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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.

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)