

Connections

*The Newsletter of Belper, Derby and Charnwood
Unitarians*



'Ne'er cast a clout till May be out'

May/June 2009



Welcoming Congregations.



Dates for the Diary

**Belper Chapel Open Days
In aid of Belper Red Cross
Sat May 9th
Sat June 13th
10-30—1pm
All Welcome**

**Sunday 7th June @ 4pm
East Midland Unitarians Annual Service
At Lincoln Unitarian Chapel**

Preacher; Rev Patrick Timperley

**East Midland Unitarians
District Weekend at The Nightingale Centre,
Great Hucklow.**

**Fri June 19th, 20th, 21st.
Come for the weekend or just the day!
Book directly with the Nightingale Centre
Tel: 01298 871218
E-mail; info@great-hucklow.org.uk**

**Induction of Rev Patrick Timperley to the Ministry of The
Old Meeting House, Mansfield
Saturday 13th June 2.45 pm.**

All Welcome

CALENDAR

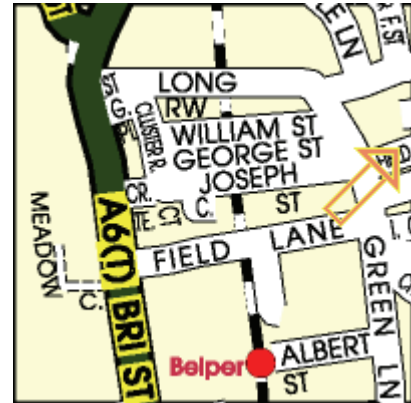
MAY 2009

Belper Unitarian Chapel.

Sunday 3rd **Rev Chris Goacher** 11 am

Family Service

Sunday 17th **Mr Neil Fisher** 3 pm



Charnwood Fellowship

Tuesday 5th **Fellowship Meeting** 7.30 pm

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby.

Sunday 3rd **Mindfulness Sangha** 3.30pm

A Gathering 6pm

An Alternative way of Being Together

Sunday 10 th **Progressive Christianity Group**
“Living The Questions” 3.30pm

Service: Rev Chris Goacher 6 pm

Sunday 17th **Mindfulness Sangha** 6pm

Sunday 24th **Service: Rev Chris Goacher** 6pm

Sunday 31st **Derby 5th Sunday** 6pm

A Multi-Faith Service

CALENDAR

JUNE 2009

Belper Unitarian Chapel

Sunday 7th	Mrs Sue Macfarlane Family Service	11am
Sunday 21st	Dr Andy Philips	3 pm

Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship

Tuesday 2nd	Fellowship Meeting	7.30 pm
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Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel, Derby

Sunday 7th	Mindfulness Sangha (No meeting)	
	A Gathering An Alternative way of being Together	6pm
Sunday 14th	Derby Unitarian Progressive Christian Group "Living The Questions"	3.30 pm
	Service—Rev Chris Goacher	6pm
Sunday 21st	Mindfulness Sangha	6pm
Sunday 28th	Service: Rev Chris Goacher	6pm

Where to Find us.

Friar Gate Unitarian Chapel
Stafford Street
Derby DE1 1JG



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) Having a Smoother, more even surface.
(b) Insincerely to praise in order to gain some advantage.
- 2 (a) Prepared by infusion, as tea or beer.
(b) The number hatched or cared for at the Same time.
- 3 (a) Some birds move in these small jumps.
(b) Plants used to give a bitter flavour to beer.
- 4 (a) The Lord's Prayer.
(b) A large bead in a rosary.
- 5 (a) Not to be cast until May is out.
(b) A blow with the hand.
- 6 (a) To torment oneself with anxiety or worry.
(b) A wooden or metal ridge on the neck of a guitar.
- 7 (a) To confer a knighthood on with the flat of a sword.
(b) To give a film a new soundtrack in a different language.
- 8 (a) The man to whom a warren is married.
(b) To conserve or manage with economy.
- 9 (a) A Violin.
(b) To falsify records and swindle.
- 10 (a) The end of a sleeve near the wrist.
(b) A light blow with the open hand.

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. Only one reply this time, from Rowan and Willow Songsmith who will shortly be receiving a small prize. Thank you for your attempt!

Answers to the last Quiz: 1(a) Clou, (b) Clue; 2(a) Fawcett, (b) Faucet; 3(a) Quail, (b) Quail; 4(a) Sleight, (b) Slight; 5(a) Conger, (b) Conger; 6(a) Sound, (b) Sound; 7(a) Main, (b) Main; 8(a) Tocsin, (b) Toxin; 9(a) Drill, (b) Drill; 10(a) Spot, (b) Spot.

Book Review

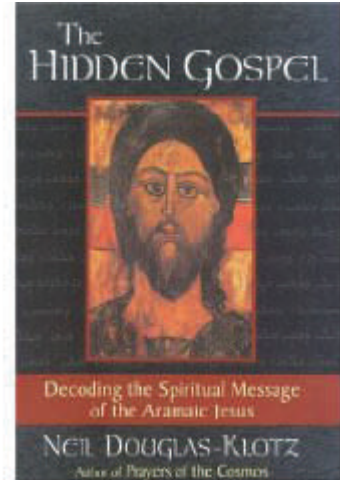
‘The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the spiritual message of the Aramaic Jesus’, by Neil Douglas-Klotz

Published by Quest Books, 1999. Paperback £11.99 new, about £6 second-hand on amazon.co.uk. ISBN: 0 8356 0795 Z

Reviewed by Janet Granger from the Derby congregation

I have had this book on my ‘Amazon Wish List’ for over two years, but only got around to buying a copy a few weeks ago – now I wish I’d bought it earlier, as it’s a life-changing read.

Neil Douglas-Klotz has a very readable style, and manages to make what could be a dry subject become something not only interesting, but relevant. He is a practising Sufi, and has lectured and written books on the theme of the basic unifying principles of the Abrahamic faiths for the past twenty years.



His rationale for studying Jesus’ words in the Aramaic language is that this is the language that would have been spoken in Palestine at the time, and that those words have power of their own (both in the original language, and in translation). Aramaic translations emphasise the spirituality of Jesus’ teachings (NDK has little interest in doctrinal issues). This is where the idea of the ‘hidden gospel’ of the title comes from – listening to words from the Bible in this format is like finding a ‘new’ gospel, because the ideas seem so refreshingly different when presented in this way.

This book takes ten main themes, and arranges them into ‘Key Insights’, which are then illustrated with phrases that Jesus is quoted as saying in the Bible. As NDK works straight from the Peshitta (the Aramaic version of the Bible, as used by Christians from the area around Syria), his direct translations are more accurate than the more familiar translations that have come down to us through the ‘traditional’ route in the West – that is, Greek to Latin to German to English. This is the reason why his translations offer so much more – they are able to highlight the many shades of meaning that have been lost over the years through either mistranslation or deliberate alteration. He is a poet and musician, so his translations are beautifully expressed and very meaningful.

For me, this book has cleared up many a ‘meaningless’ phrase from the Bible. I suspect many people have struggled to find meaning in the Bible, due to poor/misleading translations. This book can help to explain those phrases in new, poetic ways. For instance, the passage from John 3:16, in the KJV, says

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever be-

lieveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

NDK explains that in Aramaic, ‘begotten’ can also mean single, solitary or united in all aspects of being. ‘Believe’ can mean a sense of confidence or trust. ‘Perish’ can mean decay, fade away or lose. So, another way of expressing the passage could be:

“For Unity so loved Diversity,
all the worlds of form,
that it brought you a child of Unity,
fulfilled in all aspects of self,
so that whoever would have
the same confidence in their own fulfilment,
like the earth underneath supporting all,
would not fade with their form,
but continue, from world to world,
with and in the ever-living Life.”

At the end of each section, he offers a meditation or a body prayer (nineteen altogether), so that the reader can incorporate the deeper meanings into their daily life. He puts great emphasis on the breath – most meditations start with calming the mind and focussing attention on the breath, then an Aramaic word or phrase is either spoken or ‘breathed’, or sometimes intoned on one note, or sung. Then there is an idea to contemplate for a few minutes, such as the idea that all our breaths link us together all over the world as part of Sacred Unity.

As well as this book, there is an accompanying CD/digital download, available from www.soundstrue.com for around 17 US dollars. This audio version is great too, because it is not just a spoken version of the text from the book. It lasts three hours, and has NDK explaining the key insights, sometimes with examples that are different from the book. The best part, though, is that the CD contains many chants and body prayers. These make for compulsive listening.

For Unitarians, I feel that the ideas contained in this book will not come as such a surprise as they might to ‘mainstream’ Christians. Unitarians are more likely to be open to considering ‘new’ ways of relating to the figure of Jesus and his teachings, and to welcome this different approach. If you are at all interested in meditation and contemplative prayer from a progressive Christian standpoint, you will find this book and CD great additions to your collection.

For further information on the work, books and CDs of NDK, his website is www.abwoon.com .

News

East Midland Unitarians are holding their next Quarterly meeting at Belper Chapel on Saturday 6th June. All are welcome to attend and offers of help to assist in the provision of refreshments would be appreciated, as to offers of food, sandwiches, cakes etc. Please Contact David Burton.

Congregational AGM's abound at this time of the year. **Belper Chapel will hold theirs on wed 27th May at 7pm.** It is hoped all members and supporters will attend.

Derby Unitarians will hold their AGM at 4pm on Sunday 31st May.

Although Business meetings are not the reason why we attend our Churches and Chapels they are an integral part of our ability to function as an organisation. If you wish to offer to serve your community in any capacity please do not be shy, your energy and ideas will be welcome.

The Herbert Strutt Charity: At a recent meeting of the Herbert Strutt Charity Trustees our Chapel at Belper was kindly awarded a grant of £150 towards restoring the main central Strutt Tablet in the Chapel.

We record our sincere thanks to the Trustees for this generous grant which will enable the work to proceed in early May.

Other work recently undertaken at Belper include lighting installed in the front porch area; cleaning of the windows, the stone staircase and the slabs to the rear of the building.

We extend our thanks to Mr Vic Carlisle for the excellent state of the Chapel grounds; Probably the best it has ever looked—providing a beautiful and colourful welcome to our Chapel.

It should also be noted that, since the erection of our new Notice Board, Andy Philips has kept the content fresh and interesting for those passers-by who stop to read of our community and activities. Our thanks go to Andy for that.

At Derby, new free-standing lights have been purchased which should allow for a new variety of 'mood' lighting for the various activities that now take place in the Sanctuary.

News

It is with sadness and regret that we announce the death of Mrs Ethel Macara at the age of 95. Ethel has attended Belper Unitarian Chapel since the age of 12, and celebrated all of her life's transitions within its walls; her marriage to George in 1936 and the arrival of her two daughters Maureen and Jeanette among the highlights of her life. We extend our condolences to Ethel's family at this sad time.

Ethel will be welcomed, once again, into her Chapel on Friday 1st May (11.30am) for a Celebration of her life, prior to interment at Belper Cemetery.

Due to the increase in activities at Friar Gate Chapel, Derby, it has been decided to try and rationalise the timings of such. And so, from May all afternoon activities and Services will commence at 3.30pm and evenings at 6pm. It is hoped that this will lead to less confusion.

Belper Chapel Appeal Update.

We received a total of sixteen donations totalling £782 in response to our appeal for funding to help us have the Wall Memorial Plaques in the chapel professionally cleaned.

On Tuesday 5th May the Charnwood Unitarian Fellowship is to be visited by representatives of the New Dishley Society who will talk about Robert Bakewell an 18thC pioneer of Stock breeding but also a Unitarian who attended Loughborough Unitarian Chapel. All who might be interested are invited to attend at 10 Shirley Close, Castle Donington. Tel Joan Wilkinson 01332 814043

Minister's Musings

"Ne'er cast a clout till May be out' is an old English proverb; the earliest rendition possible being from the poem of Doctor Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia* 1732. *"Leave not off a clout Till May be out.*

By doing a search, you will find that its origin is somewhat obscure and as to its meaning, there are those who say it refers to not taking off warm clothing until the month of May is ended; and those who argue, just as vociferously, that May is a reference to the Hawthorne which blossoms in May and is known as the May Tree and its blossom as May.

As with all things 'yer pays yer money and you takes your choice.'

I know which I prefer, especially when I see a beautiful tree such as the one pictured on the front of our magazine.

It can be read merely as a piece of advice as to the efficacy of dressing with appropriateness to the prevailing weather conditions—something to which young people of our day seem to take little heed. Or is it a gentle reminder of something more deep; that of living in the present moment.

In rushing headlong into the future we can find ourselves ill-prepared for what lies ahead. The present moment is the only moment in which we live; we can squander this gift if we spend it yearning for the future; or in regret of the past.

Eckhart Tolle, in his book, 'A New Earth; Awakening to your Life's Purpose' says of people who are dependent on what happens for their happiness.;

"They look upon the present moment as either marred by something that has happened and shouldn't have, or deficient because of something that has not happened and should have. And so they miss the deeper perfection that is inherent in life itself, a perfection that is always already there, that lies beyond what is happening or not happening."

So too, Jesus, in Matthew's gospel version of the 'Consider the lilies of the Field' discourse, ends with the words;

"So do not be anxious about tomorrow; tomorrow will look after itself. Each day has troubles enough of its own. (Matthew 6:34)

So enjoy the Spring, but be aware that ill winds may still blow.
Enjoy this day, this moment, for what it is—life itself.
Regret little, live mightily, love much, and tomorrow?
I'll let you know when I get there!

Love and Peace.

Chris

Look to this day!
For it is life, the very life of life.
In its brief course lie all the verities and
Realities of your existence:
The bliss of growth,
The glory of action,
The splendor of beauty;
For yesterday is but a dream,
And tomorrow is only a vision;
But today, well lived, makes every yesterday
A dream of happiness
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day.

Attributed to the Kalidasa.

GROUPS AT BELPER UNITARIAN CHAPEL

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 Stream of Life

The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and death, in ebb and flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment.

Rabindranath Tagore



Drumming Circle at Friar Gate Chapel

Wednesday 6th May 7 pm for 7.30 start; All welcome, no experience necessary. Please bring own drum, but some will be available to borrow.

May 20th—**Social Policy and Religion. Dr Graham Bowpitt.**

Religion works within the context of a wider society. But how has religion shaped social policy historically, and how do these two domains talk to each other in the future? Dr Bowpitt works in the School of Social Science at Nottingham Trent University.

June 3rd—**Genesis and Geology. Professor Hugh Rollinson.**

Hugh Rollinson is Professor of Earth Sciences at the University of Derby and a practicing Christian. In this Lecture he will explain how, at a time when views in this area tend to be strongly polarised, he reconciles his scientific understanding with his biblical faith.

Both lectures are part of the ‘Big Questions, Science and Faith Season’ at the Multifaith Centre at the University of Derby and start with tea/coffee at 6.30pm with the talks running from 7 –9pm. All events include a short talk by the speaker, a buffet supper and round-table discussion of the topic.

A £3 donation is asked to cover the buffet. Details 01332 591285

Proposed dates for the next East Midlands Mindfulness Sangha ‘**Days of Mindfulness**’ are;

Saturday May 16th Normanton-on-Soar Village Hall

Saturday June 27th Rushcliffe Country Park
(Details see Chris)

Training day for Lay people

The Joined up Education Panel

under the auspices of the Education and Training Commission

invites you to a training day for Lay People.

“What’s going on here?”

“Dynamics of worship explored”

With Rev Dr Vernon Marshall and Rev Dr Ann Peart

Saturday, 11th July 2009

at Luther King House, Rusholme, Manchester.

10.30am - Arrivals and Coffee

11.00am - Ann Peart ‘The Dynamics of the Service’

1.00pm - Lunch,

2.00pm - Vernon Marshall ‘The Dynamics of the Sermon’

4.00pm - Close

Cost of the day is £5 plus lunch

(Bring your own or book in advance)

Tea/coffee will be provided.

Bookings and further information from Liz Shaw...

Email: lizzy.shaw50@btinternet.com Tel: 01433 630541

Contact Details

Minister.

Revd Chris Goacher B.A.

24 Arlington Drive

Derby DE24 0AU

Tel: 01332 732171

chris.goacher@ntlworld.com

Belper Chapel Directory

Belper Unitarian Chapel, Field Row, off Green Lane, Belper. DE56 1DH

www.belperunitarians.org.uk

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

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

Treasurer: 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)