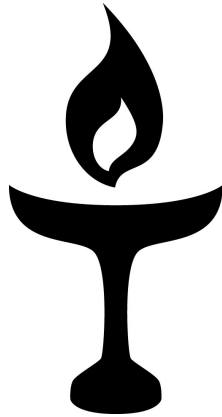


MU NOW



THE MAGAZINE OF
THE MIDLAND UNITARIAN
ASSOCIATION

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AUTUMN 2017

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From the Editor

Welcome to the Autumn 2017 issue of *MU Now*. This slim issue contains some very interesting contributions.

When I was speaking to Rev. Penny Johnson at the MOSA conference at Oxford in 2016, she shared some of her memories of being a minister to no less than ten congregations in the District. I implored her to write them down, and she has very kindly done so. The first of two articles containing her reminiscences appears on page 9. The second will be published in the Winter 2016/17 issue.

Two of our ministers have contributed pieces on the theme 'Living in an era of change', for which I thank them. And the Puppet Service at Cheltenham sounded great fun, as did the visit of Kinver Historical Society to Stourbridge Chapel.

Submissions to *MU Now*

We are particularly looking for stories on local activities, or with a local interest, in addition to articles on the theme. Please send your contributions to me at revsuewoolley@gmail.com or to 5, Martins Road, Piddington, Northampton NN7 2DN. THANK YOU!

The theme for the next issue is "What I want for Christmas and the New Year" and the deadline for submissions will be Friday 12th January 2018.

Sue Woolley

President's Piece



Hello, and welcome to this edition of *MU Now* – with thanks to Rev. Sue Woolley for her break in her sabbatical to collate this edition. I am looking forward to the results of Sue's survey on Unitarian beliefs, and other outcomes of her time away from us.

In my first piece for you as President of the MUA in the last issue, I spoke of being a May Queen Attendant in the early 1960s. I, along with my family, attended Pendleton Unitarian Church on Cross Lane in Salford. As promised I've now found the photograph recording this event and here I am with my sister Jennifer in outfits created by my nana Violet Rutter – they were a lovely shade of mint green. Needless to say, whilst my sister remained spotless and intact, I would return home from May Queen events a little grubby and the white gloves and shoes always needed a wash and a polish. And, oh, the poor tassel on my reticule, the indignities it suffered!

I'm a fan of the Radio 2 *Pause for Thought* during the morning breakfast show and recently for the first time came across the Lenard Cohen song 'Anthem' during a piece by writer Abdul Rehman Malik. The refrain includes the following lines "Forget your perfect offering," intoned the late sage Leonard Cohen. "There is a crack, a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

The photograph got me thinking about my childhood – my mother made most of our clothes and she always kept a quarter

yard of the fabric she made our dresses with, as she knew she would have to repair anything I wore! Following my sister Jenny was sometimes hard as she seemed so good, was always neat and clean. My teachers used to say 'You're not like your sister, are you!'

I wish I'd known this line of the song earlier in life, it might have saved me much anguish. I'm not perfect, and the cracks in my life have let light in to illuminate, or bring knowledge, where needed. My Uncle Arthur Barlow, father of the late Rev. Simon John Barlow, always taught us to learn something from everything we did, heard, or saw. He encouraged us to try everything we wanted to have a go at. Even if it was to say 'that's not for me'.

Having spent much of my working life in education my year begins in September, and I always think of this time of year as a new beginning. This was reinforced later in life as I learnt that the Jewish New Year is in the autumn, and I found myself interested in some of the traditions that go with it – such as emptying your pockets, or casting pebbles into running water to symbolise leaving behind that which weighs you down. So, if you've been thinking of doing something – maybe now's the time have a go. It doesn't matter that it won't be perfect, you will accumulate knowledge of some variety or another. Light will have got in. And it may of benefit to yourself or others. You could maybe try a Unitarian society or event to begin with. My 'New Thing' this year is to try a Watchnight service on New Year's Eve. Looking through old Unitarian hymn books, it seems to have been a tradition at one time in the denomination's life. I've never been particularly fond of New Year parties but I like the idea of welcoming in the New Year with a celebration of worship. We intend to have a bit of a gathering and a service that starts at

11.30pm. I would be very interested to know if anyone in the MUA has ever experienced such a service.

I leave you with another of Uncle Arthur's nuggets. 'There's no such thing as good taste or bad taste, only different tastes'. I still find that one difficult. . .

Yours in friendship, Diane.

PS For those who found it difficult I'm the one on the left, cheeky grin in place!

Diane Rutter Tel: 0787-1215-920 e-mail:dianerutter2004@yahoo.co.uk



MUA District Minister: Summer Update

Hello again. Here's a summary of what I've been doing, around the Midland Unitarian Association, and elsewhere.

I am now three-quarters through my sixth year as **Minister of the Banbury Unitarian Fellowship**. We are ticking along nicely, in spite of the poor health of many of our members.

Leading worship around the Midland Unitarian Association: My diary for **2017** is now full - I am leading worship somewhere near you practically every Sunday between now and the end of this year, and am currently in the process of sorting out my preaching engagements for **2018**. I look forward to seeing you in your churches and chapels as and when.

The **Autumn Training Day**, on the important topic of *Safeguarding* is coming up soon. This is a Local Leadership Strategy Group training day, led by Rev. John Harley and Liz Hills, and it would be good to have someone from EVERY MUA congregation present. It is on Saturday 4th November, at Unitarian New Meeting Church in Birmingham, from 12 noon. A flyer for this event has gone out with the September issue of Bits & Pieces. So far, I have only had bookings from two congregations ... please make the effort to send somebody to this – it's really important.

The national **Rites of Passage Course** went really well, and ended in early July, and five new celebrants have now received their certificates. My thanks to Revs. Martin Whitell and Ant Howe for their wonderful teaching.

I am now a fully qualified **spiritual director**. I have started to offer direction sessions, on a one-to-one basis. Please contact me if you are interested.

Finally, my **sabbatical** has gone very well. The book is now in its final stages of 'tweaking', before I send it to the Lindsey Press for consideration in mid-September. I have been awed and humbled by the time and trouble the 257 respondents took to complete the survey.

Sue Woolley, District Minister, Midland Unitarian Association

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## MUA Executive Committee Key Messages

The Key Messages below, from our May and July meetings, have already been shared in the relevant issues of *Bits & Pieces*, the monthly news-sheet sent to all congregations. Only the messages which have not been overtaken by events are here:

1. MUA Lunch: This will be taking place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October, at Kingswood. Guest speaker will be Rev. Feargus O'Connor, minister of Golders Green & St. Albans. Letters have gone out to congregational Secretaries with details.
2. Safeguarding Training: This will be taking place on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November, at Unitarian New Meeting Birmingham, from 12 noon. It will be led by Rev. John Harley and Liz Hills. It is important that someone from every congregation is present.
3. MUA President: Our new President, Ms. Diane Rutter, is hoping to visit all the MUA congregations during her two years in office. If you have a special event coming up, please get in touch. She is also available to lead worship.

4. Welcome to new EC Link: Rev. Matthew Smith, minister of Bury St. Edmunds and Framlingham, is our new link from the National Executive Committee, and we were pleased to welcome him to the July meeting.

Diane Rutter: tel: 0787-1215-920; Sue Woolley: tel: 01604-870746;  
e-mails: dianerutter2004@yahoo.co.uk; revsuewoolley@gmail.com

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West Midland Group of Unitarian Churches Part One by Rev. Penny Johnson

I was the second Minister in the West Midland Group of Churches from 1976 to 1981, following Rev. Austin Fitzpatrick. The Group consisted of Wolverhampton, Walsall, West Bromwich, Dudley, Coseley, Oldbury, Kidderminster, Stourbridge, Cradley and Lye. Rev. John Mather had been the sole Minister for a number of years, living in Dudley and when I joined him I lived at the Parsonage in Lye near Stourbridge. For day to day pastoral care John looked after Walsall, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Oldbury and Coseley and I had responsibility for Kidderminster, Lye, Cradley (otherwise known as Netherend) and Stourbridge. Philip Spencer, a most able and respected Lay person, cared for the West Bromwich congregation, and some years later became a Minister. John and I took three services each Sunday visiting all the Churches in the Group. In 1978 John and his wife, Frances, went to join their family in Canada, so I was left with his Churches also, and greatly valued the help of Lay Preachers who conducted services, and also the Rev. Dudley Richards, Vice Principal of Manchester College Oxford, who took a considerable number of services in the Group.

These are a few of my memories....

Coseley

One organist had more letters after his name than any other organist I knew, yet his playing was less than musical and inferior to most of the others. His playing was heavy. The organ was in the balcony opposite the pulpit, and more than once he publicly argued with me about the hymn numbers, which I had given him, calling across to me during the service. I followed him down the road as he lunged from one side of the pavement to another, having had a little more alcohol than he should, which did not help with playing the hymns.

The caretaker, with a shopping bag, dressed in an old coat or mac and a cigarette hanging out of the side of her mouth, puffing away, appeared outside the Chapel to greet funeral cars. I found a way of getting her out of view quickly as the cars were drawing up at the front by asking her to do something else.

Before I became a Minister, I conducted a Sunday School Anniversary. In the past the children had ranged from about six to twelve years old, and no one had told me that on this particular occasion things had dramatically changed, until five minutes before we were due to start, and the Secretary, Jack Aston, came into the vestry with the cheery words, "Oh, by the way, we haven't got any children now, but the local Methodist Youth Group have come along to help us out." Without time to prepare, I made my way into the church and faced the strapping sixteen-year-old boys, who would not have appreciated the stories I had prepared to tell the little ones, and used every hymn to think quickly how to change my material. It was exhausting, and just about possible as a lay preacher without adequate training. It was a learning curve on how to think on one's feet. The church had chosen to continue to hold the Anniversary because there was a large congregation, and therefore a larger than usual offertory.

Early on in my ministry I was asked to conduct a churching service for one member of the congregation who had given birth to a daughter. She and I sat together and I simply expressed thanks to God for safe delivery of the baby (which is not what I was asked to do) but what in all good conscience I was able to do.

Just before an evening service I was told that one of our members was very ill, so during the service I offered a prayer for her and her family. Right at that moment she died, but her family were all aware of the spiritual support that we were giving. It encouraged me to believe, if, I doubted, that prayer is answered, not always as we expect.

Cradley – Park Lane, Netherend

This was a congregation of people who were very down to earth. They wanted down-to earth-services. The Chairman, said when I preached about the spiritual life, “Oh, not God again.” At the beginning of the service he came to the front of the church, picked up his copy of *The Inquirer*, chinked his money into the bowl for payment, and went back to his seat and read it throughout the service. I admired him for the way he cared for his sick wife.

Another organist played the organ with a heavy touch and played “in between the cracks”. He was a stubborn man, and at his funeral service, I said that if he had a view on something, “wild horses wouldn’t change his mind.” He and a woman in the congregation had a big row over a leaflet which she had failed to give him, and they didn’t speak to each other. I felt at the time that a course in teaching primary children would have been a good idea.

There was a rota for opening up the Chapel for services. This particular woman and her husband were due to open the church,

but failed to arrive on time and the organist was sitting outside the church but although he had a key, would not open up because it was not his turn!

At a wedding of a sailor from Portsmouth the bride and her father were very late. Her father was inebriated. We got started after I had made sure that father was seated. When we were signing the registers in the vestry I was conscious that the organist was not playing. So afterwards I asked about this. “I was separating the guests who were having a fight” he told me.

Both the funeral services for this organist and, later, his wife started with their coffins remaining open in the front room for mourners to walk round before being closed and taken to the church. This was the custom in Cradley, so I joined them.

The grandson of one of our members was killed in a car accident. The car skidded off the road and landed in a ditch. This was my first funeral service for a child as it was for the funeral director, so we supported each other. The child’s mother held his hand in the hall, and we had a job to part mother and son in order to go to the church for the service.

Alderman Cliff Willetts was personally known to the congregation (and to the whole community), and offered to give at least two tributes at funeral services which I conducted early in my Ministry, for which I was grateful. He wrote three little books, *When I was a Boy* and when I met him in his own home, a semi-detached council house, and knocked on the door, he shouted, “Come round the back, we ain’t posh”. He seemed to know everything that was to be known about Netherend. Even the local school master went to see Cliff for information, who said “he belonged to the University of Life”. He sat in his room wearing a cap and muffler. At his funeral service, conducted by a lay

preacher at Two Gates Ragged School, where Cliff seemed to do everything from taking services to running the Sunday School, there were hundreds of people standing outside, the service being relayed to them. Cliff often took services at our church. The visiting lay preachers to Park Lane Chapel were local from a variety of neighbouring churches and chapels.

The Committee Meetings resembled those in *The Vicar of Dibley*. The Committee members had long discussions about what colour to paint the drainpipes and whether to buy a lawn mower manually or electrically-driven. The level of debate was fairly basic!

Before I became minister, I took services as a Lay Preacher, and on one occasion I received a phone call from a member of the church telling me that two other members (a husband and wife) would not be attending the service I was about to take because the last time I had been there I had not spoken to the wife who had been arranging flowers with a friend, although apparently I had spoken to the friend. I had no memory of this, and so, after the service I went round to see these people and apologised for my oversight. As he opened the front door, I heard him say to his wife, "She's here" and I was invited in. After a little time, apology accepted, they got out the sherry and poured me a glass. No hard feelings!

It was at this Church, after a burial in the grave yard that I told the funeral director that I felt it would be a good idea to have the burial first. The funeral director felt that this would not work, that mourners would not stay for the service. That was in about 1976.

Dudley

My main memory of this church was that the lavatory was in another building a long way up a very dark and rickety unlit staircase, and I would not use it from choice. Health and Safety was not even a vision of what was yet to be!

Kidderminster

Kidderminster congregation was the largest of the ten churches with many good leaders. It had a good relationship with Baxter United Reformed Church, literally round the corner from it, with Minister, Rev. John Hamblin, who was delightful. Our church was not the easiest to find. On a previous occasion when the Unitarian Young Peoples League had conducted the service two of us had enlisted the help of police officers to lead us there, so some members of the congregation, much to their consternation, had seen us arrive, quite separately with two police cars.

During the years of my ministry we had an excellent arrangement with Churches Together. I took Rev. Dudley Richards to a meeting, and the Secretary welcomed him as "Rev. Dudley Richards assisting Penelope Laws." Afterwards I said to Dudley (who was Vice Principal of Manchester College Oxford), "I'm sorry about that introduction, Dudley" and he replied, "Penny, that is exactly what I am doing and proud to be doing so".

The organist played the hymns more slowly for weddings than for funerals, and sang the hymns at the same time. Each year we had "Candlelight" services at Christmas with the children involved as Angels, Kings, Shepherds, Mary and Joseph. I distinctly remember a shepherd saying, "I'm a shepherd, I am lonely (instead of lowly) and a King, "I'm a King, I'm exhausted" (instead of exalted). The congregation loved these mistakes.

John Mellor, one of our members, was an artist, and he gave me two beautiful water colours, one of Kinver Edge and the other a view looking towards Henbury.

Before my ministry began there, I was told about two sisters, Jane and Caroline Badland, born in the 1850s and daughters of a former Minister. Caroline (Carrie) was a live-wire. She was the church organist and choir mistress and left a lot of music in a specially-made cupboard, which is still there. Her sister Jane, the quieter one, was Sunday School Superintendent for many years. They both lived to be a hundred and had a celebration that was noted with a photograph in *The Shuttle* and in our own Unitarian Press. Asked about the reason for their longevity, they said they owed it to vegetarianism and a simple faith.

I conducted services at St. John's, St. Georges and St. Mary's. The Vicar of St. Mary's said I would always be welcome there, the Vicar of St. Georges did not want me to return, since I was preaching something very different from what they were used to, and the Vicar of St. John's said "it was a bit of grit in the oyster." I learned all this at a Ministers Meeting which I was asked to attend. At St. Mary's the organist, to my surprise, was Tim Lees. We had studied music together at the Wolverhampton Technical College, and I had not known what had happened to him, and he said, "When I had heard your name read out in the notices last week, I thought it must be you."

We also kept up a tradition of holding services quite separately from the Sunday Services, ("The Guild of the Good Shepherd services").

[Part Two will appear in our Winter 2016/17 issue]

Rites of Passage Course

The final two sessions of the Rites of Passage course went very well. Rev. Ant Howe led a sensitive day on the conduct of funerals at the beginning of June, which included pastoral care of the bereaved, and on 1st July, the trainee celebrants each conducted their own rite of passage, to demonstrate what they had learned. One participant commented: "Thank you. I would never have considered it possible that I would feel able to do weddings and baby namings with such brief training, but I think I feel I could now. So thank you." The course leaders have learned much from running this course, and will be incorporating what we have learned into the content and structure of this national course.

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## District Round-up

### Special service at UNM

From 13th-14th October, Carrs Lane Church, URC, holds their annual lectures. This year their guest lecturer, Rev Greta Vosper, will lead worship at UNM, on Sunday, 15th October, putting into practice what she will speak about at the lectures on Friday and Saturday.

There are usually many people from all over the UK and abroad in attendance at these lectures, and the hope is they will wish to stay the weekend and attend the worship, to experience Rev Greta Vosper as worship leader. It usually is a 3-day event. As such, we are hopeful that the Sunday will be well attended, and our church filled. Posters and invitations will be well circulated via the Carrs Lane publicity.



So, please put the date in your diary! Commit to be there. Share with your friends.

I hope you can attend, and be available to have great conversations about our Unitarian perspective with our visitors, as we mingle over refreshments of tea and cakes!

**Rev Winnie Gordon, Birmingham.**

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Stourbridge Chapel

On 5th July 25 members of Kinver Historical Society visited Stourbridge Chapel as part of their annual fieldtrips to historical buildings. David Mearman gave them a history of the chapel, which goes back to 1788 and religious dissent in the town which goes back to the 1690s. Nina Caddick from Kingswood chapel was on hand to give details of the Rev. Emma Lee and her family.



Kinver Historical Society outside the Chapel (photo by David Taylor)

The Lee family donated the magnificent organ at Stourbridge Chapel and are better known in the area for donating land in Kinver which is now managed by the National Trust. Among the visitors from Kinver Historical Society was Sue Wright, niece of Rev. Emma Lee. She remembers as a child coming to one of her services in Stourbridge.

The evening was finished off with an organ recital by David Mearman while visitors had refreshments and chatted about the history of the chapel and Unitarianism.

This was a very successful evening.

David Taylor, Stourbridge

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**Cheltenham & Gloucester Unitarians, Bayshill, Cheltenham**

### **Puppet Service**

On Sunday 20th August we had lots of fun as Colin Bailey treated us to a Puppet Service, ably assisted by Cressida Pryor. The theme of "*Is there too much noise in your life to hear the bells?*" (or in other words, to hear your inner inspiration) was illustrated with a shortened performance of "Dick Whittington". We heard a recording of Bow Bells, and Mark and Lisa's two little girls, Lauren and Clara, helped out by ringing some small bells, and the rest of us played our part by booing King Rat and cheering Dick and his cat and the fairy! Afterwards Colin brought some of the puppets out for us to have a closer look, so it was a thoroughly enjoyable morning.

**Penny Quest** (who also took the photos)



## Living in an era of change

At our recent AGM, there were quite a few changes! Our Chairman Peter stepped down from the role, after giving years of splendid service. Fortunately, he will continue as our fantastic organist. Our long-serving Secretary retired, as did 2 Committee Members.

It's been a number of years since we had a change in Officers at Kingswood and changes on the Committee have been somewhat rare.

So, it was somewhat unsettling when we realised the challenge of filling these vital roles.

Yet, changes - whether welcome or not - will happen.

In our case - thankfully - people have offered their gifts and talents and we were able to elect new Officers and a full Committee at the AGM.

The new Committee has met, agreed how we will be and work together, and has commenced its work with a positive start.

Meetings will be different. Not better, just different.

The worship and work our church remains - which is the most important thing.

The style of worship may change slightly over the years - but the aim remains the same: 'to the end that all souls shall grow into harmony with the Divine'. We say those words every week at the close of our Service.

Change will come. It can be feared, resisted.....or it can be embraced as a new opportunity.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that if we have stopped changing then we may have stopped living!

What changes are you facing right now?  
How do you live with change in your congregation?

### **Rev Ant Howe, Kingswood**

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Living in the 21st century is a complicated business. Never before have we been bombarded with so much information, or had so many possibilities as to how we spend our leisure time. We carry around in our pockets and handbags gadgets which can take photos, show films, play games and access millions of websites from around the world, all at the touch of a button (or, more likely, a screen, these days!). I do sometimes wonder whether we have lost anything among all this bounty. And whether we might not actually be better off without some of it.

And the pace of change has accelerated too, particularly in the last thirty or so years. My life as a child in the sixties was not enormously different to that of my parents in the thirties. OK, there were more cars, and we had a television, but my childhood activities and pleasures were much the same as theirs had been: exploring the neighbourhood (I was lucky enough to be brought up in the country); reading; playing board games; doing jigsaw puzzles; building lego; swimming lessons; music lessons. My children's lives (they were born in the 1990s) are radically different.

I think that things perhaps started to spiral out of control with the advent of the first PCs – personal computers – in the early 1980s.

For the first time, this amazing technology could be owned and used by ordinary people. My first computer was an Amstrad PCW, with green letters on a black screen, and 256K of memory. And I thought it was brilliant. Then Bill Gates introduced Windows, and Unitarian Tim Berners-Lee invented the Internet, and the whole computer world took a giant leap forward. On the entertainment front, first videos, then CDs and DVDs and MP3 players and satellite television changed the way we experience music and films. Today, hundreds of every-day objects have little computers inside them to make them work. Mobile phones are everywhere, and the latest smart phones are mini-computers all by themselves. Then of course there are tablets and notebooks, small computers that you can carry around with you, which nevertheless have huge capabilities in terms of what they can do. It really is amazing.

The sad thing about all this progress is that it is all taken so much for granted, especially by young people, who have grown up with it. My children are in their twenties, and simply cannot imagine a world without computers and mobile phones and satellite TV. ... I wonder whether it has all gone too far. Most people in the West already have absolutely everything they need. And yet, we seem to have this hunger for more and more, the newest, the brightest, the glitziest gadgets we can lay our hands on. Last year's gadgets are discarded as "so yesterday" so we have to work yet harder and longer to "keep up with the technological Jones's".

But need it be this way? As Brighton Unitarian John Naish so wisely writes: "We have to learn to live 'post-more' ... Enoughness is a path to contentment." Perhaps one way to live in an era of change is to appreciate all the wonderful things we have.

Sue Woolley

Half Day Conference on Christian Meditation & Healing

Saturday 7th October 2017

2pm - 5pm

Christ Church Hall (*behind the church*), Avenue Road, Malvern
WR14 3AY

(*close to - Great Malvern train station*) Free Car Park

Tickets:

£10 payable on the day (*incl. refreshments*)

Speakers

Christian Meditation with Sally Walters

National Co-ordinator for Mental Health and Meditation for the
World Community of Christian Meditation.

Quaker Healing with Stephen Feltham

Membership Secretary for the Friends Fellowship for Healing.

*Home cooked cakes and tea, coffee and cold drinks will be available during
the interval at no extra cost. A bookstall will also be available on the day.*

Further details from:

David & Carolyn Taylor - 07505 323443 /
editorusps@yahoo.co.uk

Organised by:

Churches Fellowship for Psychical & Spiritual Studies -
Midlands Branch
www.churchesfellowship.co.uk

Everyone welcome!

District Events

**Local Leadership Strategy Group
Autumn Training Day**

SAFEGUARDING

Workshop Leaders: Rev. John Harley and Liz Hills.

Where: Unitarian New Meeting Church, Ryland Street,
Birmingham B15 8BL

When: Saturday 4th November 2017

Times: 12.00 noon – 5.30 pm (coffee/tea from 11.30 am)

Cost: FREE

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### **MUA Annual Lunch**

**Guest Speaker:** Rev. Feargus O'Connor  
Minister of Golder's Green & St. Albans

**Where:** Kingswood Meeting House, Packhorse Lane,  
Hollywood, Worcs B47 5DQ

**When:** Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Times:** 10.30 for 11.00 am - c.4.00 pm

**Cost:** £10.00 a head (to be confirmed)

(A letter was sent out in early September about this)

## MUA Congregations: Times of Services

### Every Sunday:

|                         |                              |          |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Birmingham              | Unitarian New Meeting Church | 11.00 am |
| Cheltenham & Gloucester | Bayshill Unitarian Church    | 11.00 am |
| Evesham                 | Oat Street Chapel            | 11.00 am |
| Kidderminster           | New Meeting House            | 11.00 am |
| Kingswood               | Meeting House                | 11.00 am |
| Shrewsbury              | Unitarian Church             | 10.30 am |
| Warwick                 | High Street Chapel           | 4.30 pm  |

### First Sunday of the Month:

|               |                         |          |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Dudley        | Old Meeting House       | 3.00 pm  |
| Northampton   | Unitarian Meeting House | 10.30 am |
| Oldbury       | at Dudley               | 3.00 pm  |
| Wolverhampton | at Dudley               | 3.00 pm  |

### Second Sunday of the Month:

|             |                                   |         |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| Coventry    | Gt Meeting House Unitarian Church | 11 am   |
| Cradley     | Park Lane Unitarian Chapel        | 6.30 pm |
| Stourbridge | Presbyterian (Unitarian) Chapel   | 3.00 pm |

### Third Sunday of the Month:

|               |                         |          |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------|
| Dudley        | Old Meeting House       | 3.00 pm  |
| Northampton   | Unitarian Meeting House | 10.30 am |
| Oldbury       | at Dudley               | 3.00 pm  |
| Wolverhampton | at Dudley               | 3.00 pm  |

### Fourth Sunday of the Month:

|             |                                   |          |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Coventry    | Gt Meeting House Unitarian Church | 11 am    |
| Stourbridge | Presbyterian (Unitarian) Chapel   | 11.00 am |

### Last Sunday of the Month:

|         |                      |          |
|---------|----------------------|----------|
| Banbury | Unitarian Fellowship | 11.00 am |
|---------|----------------------|----------|

## MUA Congregations: Contact Details

| Name                    | Contact               | Details                                          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Banbury                 | Michaela Heppingstall | heppingstall@googlemail.com                      |
| Birmingham              |                       | info@birminghamnewmeeting.org.uk                 |
| Cheltenham & Gloucester | Alison Thursfield     | 01242 254825<br>ajthursfield@tiscali.co.uk       |
| Coventry                | Francesca Rogers      | 02476 605055                                     |
| Cradley                 | Sheila Powell         | 01384 838729                                     |
| Dudley                  | Barbara Russell       | 01902 650168<br>barbara-russell@blueyonder.co.uk |
| Evesham                 | Lesley Harris         | 01242 573927<br>agonoid@gmail.com                |
| Herefordshire           | Isabel Pebody         | 01989 565804<br>isabel@pebody.net                |
| Kidderminster           | Margo Zglinski        | 01384 257302<br>mjzglinski@hotmail.com           |
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Spirit of Life and Love,

Let us take a moment to appreciate all the good things in our lives:  
our comfortable homes, our many possessions, which make our lives easy and secure.

But more importantly,  
the blessings that money cannot buy:  
the love of our families;  
the companionship of our friends;  
this beloved community of freedom and trust;  
the beauties of nature;  
our bodies - those complex systems that work in such mysterious ways  
the very air that we breathe.

Help us to realise how rich we are already, and help us to ask the question 'do I need this?' rather than 'do I want this?' in relation to everything.

Help us to realise that true happiness lies in wanting (and appreciating) what you have. Amen

**Sue Woolley**



**The Winter 2017/2018 issue will be published in January.**

**Please may we have your contributions on local matters,  
& on the theme of "What I want for Christmas and the New  
Year"**

**by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

*Thank you!*