

Bits and Pieces . . . and please keep them coming in!

Here is your 10th Midland Union Bits & Pieces. If you want any news from your congregation included here, please send it to me (details below)

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**BIRMINGHAM DISTRICT WOMEN'S LEAGUE AGM**

**When:** Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2009

**Where:** Unitarian New Meeting Church, Ryland St, Birmingham

**Time:** 11.30 am – 4.00 pm

Rev. Penny Johnson, National President of the Women's League will be their guest. Further details from Miss Ann Hughes 0121-525-1123 e-mail: [annhughes999@aol.com](mailto:annhughes999@aol.com)

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SHREWSBURY HELPS CELEBRATE DARWIN BICENTENARY

Many of you will know that Charles Darwin attended Shrewsbury Unitarian Church as a child, and also attended the Unitarian minister Rev. Case's school. As part of Shrewsbury's Darwin 200 celebrations, the Church will be open on Darwin's birthday, 12th February, when there will be a giant birthday cake in the Square, and a guided Darwin walk around the town. They are also hosting a lecture on 17th February, at 7.30 pm, entitled *Darwin and the Dinosaurs*, to be delivered by Professor Michael Benton of Bristol University.

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**GIFT AID**

Some of our congregations already have a Gift Aid scheme in place. This enables the church / chapel to reclaim the basic rate of tax paid in members' subscriptions from the Government. It is one of the things that I, as District Facilitator, would be able to help any congregations considering setting up such a scheme. Please get in touch if you are interested. (contact details at bottom of page)

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General Assembly Annual Meetings 2009

These are being held at Chester University from 15th to 18th April. All congregations should have received a mailing from the GA, inviting delegates to return their forms. The deadline is February 13th. After that, you have to pay extra.

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**MIDLAND UNION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**When:** Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2009

**Where:** The Great Meeting House Unitarian Church, Coventry

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

**Guest Speaker:** Rev. John Harley, GA Youth Coordinator

Last year no less than 54 of you attended the MU AGM. Let's see if we can break that record in 2009!

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President Barack Obama knows about Unitarians!

Thanks to the Oxford Newsletter for this quotation from US President Barack Obama's book *Dreams From My Father*: "In his only skirmish with organized religion, my grandfather enrolled the family in the local Unitarian Universalist congregation. He liked the idea that Unitarians drew on the scriptures of all the great religions. 'It's like you get five religions in one', he would say."

If you have any contributions for the next *Bits & Pieces*, please send them to me at 5, Martins Road, Piddington, Northampton NN7 2DN or via e-mail to sue.woollev@virgin.net Thank you!