

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

Here is your second 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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**Unitarian Women's League**

The Central Committee held their AGM at Birmingham UNM on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008. This month, UWL President Rev. Penny Johnson will be preaching at Oxford on 8<sup>th</sup> June as part of the UWL centenary celebrations.

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May 14 2008 Asparagus Lunch at Oat Street Chapel, Evesham

Nearly 40 Unitarians from across the Midlands met at Evesham's Oat Street Chapel at the invitation of the Warwickshire and Neighbouring Counties Monthly Meeting of Protestant Dissenting Ministers (known to its friends as the Ministers' Meeting) to join with them in the annual Asparagus Lunch. Following a thought-provoking service by Rev. Don Phillips about differing strands of Unitarian belief and the need for fellowship in diversity, we adjourned to the Gate House, where we were served a delicious three-course meal, including (of course) asparagus.

The guest speaker this year was GA President Mrs. Joyce Ashworth, who spoke with great feeling about the sadly continuing need to protect civil and religious liberty, citing repression and abuses of human rights from many countries. She concluded by proposing the traditional toast "To civil and religious liberty the world over."

She was thanked by Rev. Ann Latham, who was followed by Rev. Peter Godfrey, who thanked Don Phillips for his excellent service. Midland Union Treasurer Mr. Sandy Ellis then proposed a toast to the Ministers' Meeting, and Rev. Keith Hill thanked the congregation at Oat Street Chapel for their splendid hospitality.

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**May 18 2008 Tercentenary Service at Kingswood Meeting House**

Over 100 members and guests crowded into Kingswood Meeting House on 18th May, to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Unitarian witness in Kingswood. After a splendid celebration service led by Rev. Ant Howe, which included greetings from the General Assembly and the Midland Union, an exchange of gifts with sister chapel Warwick, a reading from former minister Rev. Keith Hill, a piece from the newly re-formed choir and organ prelude and postlude from organist Peter Flowers, we all adjourned to the School Room, where a lavish buffet was laid out. The fine weather allowed the party to spread into the Meeting House grounds, and proceedings were concluded with the cutting of a special cake, which all present sampled before heading for home. As Ant said in his address, may Kingswood flourish for another 300 years!

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NOTICE BOARD GRANTS

Did you know that there is **up to £250** available from the GA to renew or replace your notice board? But time is limited, so **you need to act now**. Contact me for details of how to apply.

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**Further Ahead:**

**Summer Weekend at Great Hucklow**

*We have been invited to share a weekend at Great Hucklow with the East Midland Unitarians:*

**Friday June 27<sup>th</sup> to Sunday June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

*Contact me for further information and a Booking Form*

**Unitarian Experience Week at Great Hucklow**

*The theme for this year is "To everything there is a season"*

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> July to Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August**

*Full details from Kathy Beckett on (02380) 273 420*

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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.woolley@virgin.net. Thank you!