

BITS AND PIECES . . . AND PLEASE KEEP THEM COMING IN!

Here is your 131st Midland Unitarian Association Bits & Pieces for June 2019. If you want any news from your congregation included here, please send it to me (details below)

MIDLAND UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION OF LAY PREACHERS & SERVICE LEADERS SPRING TRAINING DAY ON MUSIC IN WORSHIP

This year's Spring Training Day, on 11th May at Unitarian New Meeting in Birmingham, was on the theme 'Music in Worship'. Rev Ant Howe, minister at Kingswood and Ministry Tutor of Unitarian College, led most of it.

We started with a general session on music in worship, which included singing several hymns. We were lucky that there were several strong singers among the twelve participants. Then Ant led us in a Taizé style service, which was wonderful.

After lunch, Rev Danny Crosby and Sue Blackshaw came and gave us the experience of a fabulous Singing Meditation, accompanied by hand-drums. The day finished with a 'putting it all together' session, and yes, we sang again.

It was a wonderfully rich and enjoyable day, and we are most grateful to Ant, Danny and Sue for leading it for us.

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### **KEY MESSAGES FROM THE MUA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MAY 2019**

1. The Charity Commission is introducing a new Declaration of Eligibility for Trustees, which all trustees of registered charities will be required to complete. MUA Treasurer, Mr Sandy Ellis, will be circulating a document about this in the near future.

2. From this meeting on, grants to the two Unitarian ministerial training colleges will be paid pro rata, according to the number of students attending in that academic year.

3. Rev Cliff Reed, author of *Unitarian? What's That?*, will be our Guest Speaker at the MUA Annual Lunch, which will be taking place at Kingswood Meeting House on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October. Please put the date in your diaries now.

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Over the Hills and Far Away: The Life of Beatrix Potter by Matthew Dennison (Pub. Head of Zeus)

In this account of Beatrix Potter's life, Dennison explores how her upbringing, her lonely childhood and young womanhood helped her evolve into a cultivated, benevolent and charitable woman. Both of Beatrix's parents were from very strong Unitarian families... 'as Unitarians the Potters readily assimilated Darwinism and its body blow to the doctrine of creationism'. As a young girl Beatrix made detailed studies of fungi, fossils and mosses. She kept animals and painted them. The 'Little Books' that are so cherished today began as she illustrated a letter to her former governesses' young son. In her forties, she moved to the Lake District which she loved with a passion. Beatrix Potter set about buying old farmsteads and thousands of acres of farmland which eventually she bequeathed to the National Trust. 'This act of philanthropy worthy of her inherited traditions of Unitarianism and Victorian public-mindedness'. All in all, a very good read! (from Shrewsbury Unitarians Newsletter)

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 revsuewoolley@gmail.com Thank you!