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Group Management Committee Officers

Chairman:	Mr. S. Pim	'Newholme' 40a Bretforton Road, Badsey, Evesham, WR11 5UQ	01386 834019
Vice-Chair:	Mr. T. Brewer	50 Rowanfield Road, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 8AG	01242 691438
Minutes Secretary:	Mr. J. Green	1 Holloway Drive, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 1JK	01386 553948
Treasurer:	Mrs. J. Buckland	Banchory, Pearcroft Road, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2JY	01453 825733
Secretary:	Mr. G. Lowthian	109d Tewkesbury Road, Longford, Glos. GL2 9BN	01452 730227

Congregational Committee Officers

Cheltenham Bayshill Unitarian Church - Services held 1st and 3rd Sundays at 3pm. Founded 1832

Chair:	Mr. T. Brewer	50 Rowanfield Road, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 8AG	01242 691438
Treasurer:	Mrs. J. Buckland	Banchory, Pearcroft Road, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2JY	01453 825733
Acting Secretary:	Mrs. J. Buckland	Banchory, Pearcroft Road, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2JY	01453 825733
Hall Lettings:	Mrs. J. Buckland	Banchory, Pearcroft Road, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2JY	01453 825733

Evesham Oat Street Chapel, Oat Street - Services held every Sunday at 11am. Founded 1696
Web-site: <http://welcome.to/OatSt.Chapel>

Chair:	Mrs. S. Slocombe	54 Laburnum Drive, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 6XW	01386 48261
Secretary:	Mrs. R. Beatson	44 Hoskyns Avenue, Worcester, WR4 0LL	01905 25991
Treasurer:	Mrs. D. Wright	5 Blackberry Way, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 6AH	01386 443123
Lettings Secretary:	Mrs. D. Wright	5 Blackberry Way, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 6AH	01386 443123
Organist:	Mr. David Barnett	7 Hylton Road, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 6QB	01386 47510

Gloucester Friends Meeting House, Greyfriars - Services held 2nd & 4th Sundays at 3pm. Founded 1662

Chair:	Mr. G. Lowthian	109d Tewkesbury Road, Longford, Glos. GL2 9BN	01452 730227
Vice-Chair:	Mr. W. Hawkins	6 Sorrel Close, Robinswood, Gloucester, GL4 9UU	01452 536038
Treasurer:	Mr. G. Lowthian	109d Tewkesbury Road, Longford, Glos. GL2 9BN	01452 730227
Minutes Secretary:	Mrs. H. Parsons	Field Cottage, Marle Hill, Chalford, Stroud, Glos. GL6 8IQ	01453 884034
Secretary:	Mr. G. Webb	Fairview, Valley Lane, Upton-St-Leonards, Glos. GL4 8DR	01452 372903

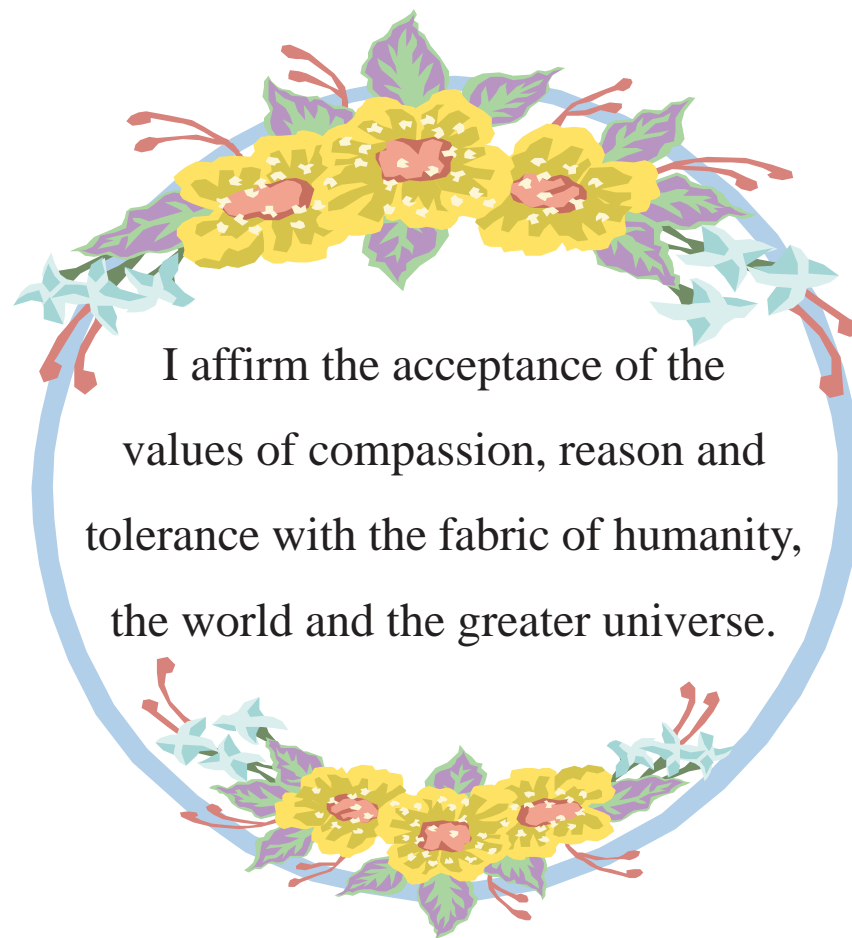
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Subscriptions: £7.50 per year payable to the Treasurer of your nearest Cotswold Group Congregation. Friends must please pay this subscription to continue receiving the newsletter. Members are encouraged to cover the cost of receiving the newsletter in their annual membership subscription or donations to their church.



Cotswold Group of Unitarian & Free Christian Congregations

Newsletter & Calendar June 2001



Religion - What's it For?

One evening a Christian Bishop, a Jewish mother, and a Unitarian doctor got together ... it sounds a bit like a joke, but it was certainly taken seriously by the people who filled the Bayshill Hall to hear them. Yes, our public event on May 2nd was so well supported that we had to drag some very odd chairs out of some rather strange places to seat everyone!

In total there were around 70 people who gathered to consider the question 'Is there a place for Religion at all these days?', and I wanted to share a couple of comments I have since heard about the event.

One person - a member of the Cotswold Group - felt that, even with the presentations given by the speakers, 'still no-one has given me a convincing explanation of what the point of religion is'. It is interesting to note that all three speakers were asked in advance for a one-sentence response to this question:- 'Why would it matter if your religious tradition simply disappeared?' - and not one of them came up with an answer. I wonder what your reply would be?

The other comment which has stayed with me is something which several people have said - that in fact some of the best points and arguments were put not by the speakers, but by members of the audience.

At first I felt this meant that the speakers had not been very good, but then I began to realise it is actually a vindication of the event as a whole. The point of the evening, as had been the point with the G.A.'s 'Roadshow' in March was to stimulate thinking and discussion between people in the community - the expression and exchange of ideas.

The aim was to provide a forum for speaking and listening, and it is obvious that such a forum is welcome - perhaps needed. It reminds us that this is one of the key contributions we can make to our society; offering a neutral space in which people are safe, in which we all feel valued and emboldened, in which our varied perceptions of the spiritual odyssey we all share can be compared in trust and respect.

Michael

Native American Prayer Submitted by Mrs. Betty Goodrich

*Oh Great Spirit
whose voice I hear in the winds
and whose breath gives life to all the world
Hear me.
I come before you, one of your many children,
I am small and weak,
I need your strength and wisdom.
Make my eyes ever behold the beauty
of the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have
made, my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may know the
things you have taught my people.
Make me learn the lessons hidden
beneath every leaf and rock.
Give me strength not to be superior to my
brothers, but to fight my greatest enemy - myself.
May I come to you with clean hands
and straight eyes.
That in the fading sunset of my life
I shall come to you without shame...*

Amen

Yellow Lark - 1887

On Doing Without God

There seems to have been a misunderstanding regarding the book by John Macdonald Smith. The remarks recently made in the newsletter referred only to the introduction printed in the April newsletter. The book is no doubt a most interesting one.

Thought for Today

Be still, remember,
he that is placed on the lowest spoke of life's wheel,
Is equally entitled to our respect and regard,
For the time will surely come, and best and wise know not
how soon.
When all distinction, save that of goodness and virtue shall
cease,
When death, the grand leveller of all human greatness,
Shall reduce us all to the same estate.

Sam Pim

Newsletter Submissions

Please let Doreen Wright have any items for inclusion, poems, prayers, amusing anecdotes etc. by the **third** weekend of each month. This is your newsletter, and we would like everyone to have a voice.

Please type your submissions, or alternatively, send them
by e-mail to: pdwright@talk21.com

Services for June

<i>June 3rd</i>	11.00am 3.00pm	<i>Evesham</i> <i>Cheltenham</i>
<i>June 10th</i>	11.00am 3.00pm	<i>Evesham</i> <i>Gloucester</i>
<i>June 17th</i>	11.00am 3.00pm	<i>Evesham</i> <i>Cheltenham</i>
<i>June 24th</i>	11.00am 3.00pm	<i>Evesham</i> <i>Gloucester</i>

Tom Marriott is taking the service on June 17th at Evesham and Cheltenham

Calendar

<i>Monday June 11th</i>	Quiz Night in the Gatehouse, 7.00pm for 7.30pm £1 entrance, Cash prize, and a Raffle
<i>Sunday June 24th</i>	The preacher will be Hans Le Grand, a Ministry Student visiting Harris Manchester College, Oxford
<i>Saturday July 28th</i>	A Recital in the Chapel, given by David Barnett ... and Friends
<i>Saturday June 30th</i>	Group Review & Renewal Day, Bayshill Meeting Hall, 10am-4pm
<i>Saturday July 21st</i>	Gordon Lowthian's Wedding to Maggie 2pm at Oat Street Chapel, Evesham

Working Towards the Future Group Day on June 30th

I would like to congratulate the Gloucester congregation on their purposeful approach to the future of their congregational life. The members who were available have recently taken part in the Small Congregations Consultancy (offered and funded by the General Assembly), and have been given a range of suggestions and resources with which to move ahead.

Quite a lot of the suggestions are good ones for the whole Group to consider, and we are all going to be able to benefit from the assistance being offered when we hold our Group Day of Review and Renewal on June 30th.

On that day we shall be joined by four people with particular skills to offer us in shaping our Unitarian life together

- Sarah Tinker - the national Youth and R.E. Officer - will help us to think about our education plans;
- Matthew Smith - the national Publicity Officer - will help us to make sure we are making the best use of publicity possibilities;
- Tony Rees - Chair of the Southern Unitarian Area - will help us to look carefully and thoroughly at how we co-ordinate the different aspects of our congregational and Group life;
- Beverley Littlepage - past President of the G.A. - will help you and me to review the work we have done over this first year together.

Towards the end of the day, each congregation will take some time to look forward and agree on a few definite priorities for the year ahead. These will then be drawn up as a Statement of Intent, or covenant, which will become the focus for the celebration of our 'anniversary' at the end of July ... and this whole process can become the pattern for our marking and monitoring of the passing years. This, then, is an important day in the life of our Group, and I hope you will make every effort to attend.

There will, sadly, be folks who are unable to come to this day; and to those people I will say please put down on paper any comments and ideas you have regarding the work we have been doing, and the work you feel we ought to be doing in the coming year. If you let me have those comments, they will be included in the discussion and decision-making on June 30th .

(cont'd)

Singing Bowls

We have a friend who has a singing dog; but the event evening on Monday 14th May brought a new experience - singing bowls!

Despite a wet dark evening, those present enjoyed the charisma of Sarah Cohen's talk on Spiritual Healing, demonstration of the Quartz Singing Bowls and her fascinating 'story'.

Participation by some, in operating the singing bowls, was much enjoyed. Altogether, an unusual and 'New Learning' evening.

Sylvia Slocombe
Chairperson

Quote

The best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless unremembered acts of kindness and love - William Wordsworth

Submitted by Des Slocombe

To Have Succeeded

To laugh often and love much, to win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children; to earn the approbation of honest critics and to endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give oneself; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, this is to have succeeded.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Submitted by Sylvia Slocombe

**This months "InQuirer's Prayer"
written by a Cotswold Unitarian**

*Oh God, my heart reaches out toward you
and toward all humanity;
Yet even as I reach,
A deeper knowing tells me that we are all one.
Heal the illusion of separateness
in me and in all the world;
May we awaken from the dream,
To live and walk in oneness
With you and with each other.
Amen.*

A poem written by Allis Mar
Interpreted by Liz Foxbrook

*Round black ball
in the red currant bush in
the morning.
Sleeping
in puffed up feather coat.
My meeting through the window.
An eye opening - blinks,
beak opening for a yawn.
Body stretching out.
Beak snatching a berry
and another.
Satisfaction is yours - and mine!*

Love from Liz - see you in August!
(I will be staying with the Eileen and John from 11 - 14 August)

The day will run from 10am to 4pm, to make the most out of our visitors, and you will need to bring a packed lunch with you. I suggest that cars be shared as much as possible, and that you plan to use the Park & Ride on the A40 coming in from Junction M11 of the MS. (I can give further details to drivers - please ask).

Please do not hesitate to ask me for any further information and idea about the day - see you there!

Michael

Oat Street Chapel Quiz Night

Will be held on Monday 11th June 2001 - 7.00pm for 7.30pm
Please bring pens and pencils with you.
There will be a raffle - £1 per ticket
Admission £1
For further details please contact Bill Taylor

Hymns for Professionals

Dentists:-	<i>Crown Him with many Crowns</i>
Contractors:-	<i>The Church's One Foundation</i>
Obstetricians:-	<i>Go, labour on</i>
Golfers:-	<i>There is a green hill far away</i>
Politicians:-	<i>Standing on the promises</i>
Librarians:-	<i>Let all mortal flesh keep silence</i>
Lawyers:-	<i>In the hour of trial</i>
Dry Cleaners:-	<i>O for a faith that will not shrink</i>
Credit Card users:-	<i>A charge to keep I have</i>
Census Takers:-	<i>All people that on earth do dwell</i>
Taxation Officers:-	<i>We give thee but thine own</i>
Traffic Engineers:-	<i>Where cross the crowded ways of life</i>

Garden Party

Tim & Elizabeth Smith invite you and your friends
to a Garden Party at
Swanbrook House, Pirton, Worcester
on Saturday 14th July at 3pm

Tea, Games, Raffle, Bric-brac and swimming.
Children welcome.

For directions please phone 01905 820650

Murphy's Law

- Celibacy is not hereditary.
- Beauty is only skin deep, Ugly goes to the bone.
- If everything seems to be going well, you obviously don't know what the hell is going on.
- Never argue with a fool, people might not know the difference.
- Friends come and go, enemies accumulate.
- The other queue always moves faster.
- The Repairman will never have seen a model quite like yours before.
- Anything good in life is either illegal, immoral or fattening.
- No matter how long you shop for an item, once you have bought it, it will be on sale somewhere else cheaper.
- In order to get a loan you must first prove you don't need it.

Murphy was an Optimist!

Temptation

Buy one get one free,
It says on the soup
Labelled Lentil and Pea,
That must be a bargain,
I'll take two or three.

And goodness, look here!
Some extra large beer,
My hubby who's at home
Will enjoy that, no fear.

Here's biscuits on offer,
And a pound off the price,
Of this curry and rice.

My trolley I've filled,
And now wait to be billed,
"How much did you say?
Is the total to pay?"

I'm flabbergasted,
I'm almost in pain,
For I only came in,
To escape from the rain!

Ode to a Pill

Little pill here in my hand,
I wonder how you understand,
Just what to do and where to go,
To stop the ache that hurts me so.

Within your covering lies relief,
You work alone in unbelief,
You sink in regions there below,
As down my throat - you quickly go.

But what I wonder, little pill,
How do you know where I am ill?
And just how really do you know,
Exactly where you have to go?

I've got a headache - that is true,
My broken ribs need attention too,
So how can anything so small,
End my aches in no time at all?

Do you work alone or hire a crew,
To do the good things that you do?
I'm counting on you mighty strong,
To get in there, where you belong.

Don't let me down and please don't shirk,
To do your undercover work,
So down my throat - Be on your way,
And end my aches for another day.