

Contact Addresses

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Minister

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Group Management Committee Officers

Chairman:	Mr. S. Pim	'Newholme' 40a Bretforton Road, Badsey, Evesham, WR11 7XQ	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 1XW	01386 48261
Secretary:	Mrs. R. Beatson	44 Hoskyns Avenue, Worcester, WR4 0LL	01905 25991
Treasurer:	Mrs. D. Wright	5 Blackberry Way, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 2AH	01386 443123
Lettings Secretary:	Mrs. D. Wright	5 Blackberry Way, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 2AH	01386 443123
Organist:	Mr. David Barnett	7 Hylton Road, Evesham, Worcs. WR11 2OB	01386 47510

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

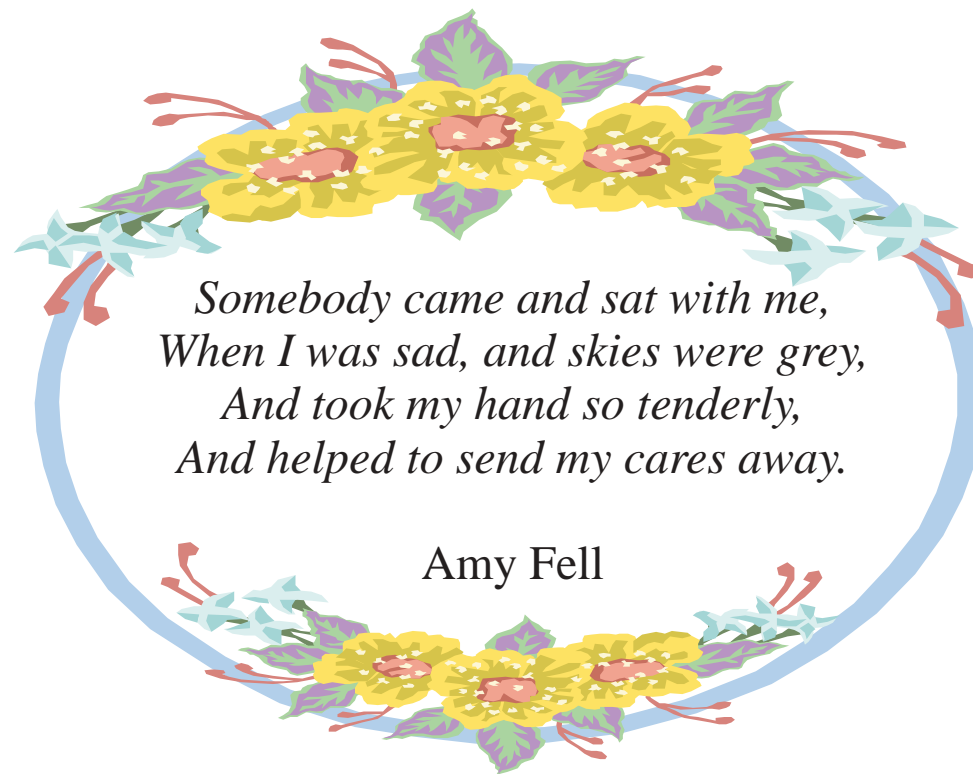
Chair:	Mr. G. Lowthian	109d Tewkesbury Road, Longford, Glos. GL2 9BN	01452 730227
Vice-Chair:	Mr. W. Hawkins	6 Sorrel Close, Robinswood, Gloucester, GL4 9UU	01452 536038
Treasurer:	Mr. G. Lowthian	109d Tewkesbury Road, Longford, Glos. GL2 9BN	01452 730227
Minutes Secretary:	Mrs. H. Parsons	Field Cottage,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

The Cotswold Group Newsletter & Calendar is published monthly.
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 October 2001



"Humanity rich and deep"

Dag Hammarskjold was Secretary-General of the U.N. from 1953 until his death in 1961, and only then was the manuscript made public of his book 'Markings'. He described it as the record of "my negotiations with myself and with God". and in it we find this reflection on people and morality:-

"Jesus was accused of lacking moral principles; he sat at meal with publicans and sinners, he consorted with harlots. Did he do this to obtain their votes? Or did he think that perhaps he could convert them by such 'appeasement'.?"

Or was his humanity rich and deep enough to make contact, even in them, with that in human nature which is common to all people - indestructible - and upon which the future has to be built?"

This prompts us to think about the daily choices we make as to our very basic manner and behaviour; the simplicity or complexity of the way in which we give expression to our humanity, the ease with which we uncover within ourselves that "upon which the future has to be built".

You know when you meet a good person, an honest and balanced human being - one whose simple human nature shines out unhampered and unimpeded. Such a person lives and moves with an open heart and an open countenance, in a sheer and unfettered humanness which has the power to reach through and over any barrier, whether of age or language, colour or creed.

Testimony to this power, lurking in our very ordinariness, comes in these words from the Baha'u'llah:- "The fight of a good character surpasses the light of the sun"

We have this week mourned the passing of such a man in Des Slocombe, on whose birthday this is written. May we all be touched by the way in which he was able to surprise with joy and love just about anyone he met, and may each of us take one more step towards being our true and open selves in the way we live - being more the person we know deep down we're supposed to be!

Michael - September 13th 2001

InQuirers Prayer written by a Cotswold Unitarian

Lord of all Creation,
Instil in us the awareness of the Holy Spirit;
Thereby our spirit of life is in balance with
thy providence.
Grant us sustenance of the body and wisdom
of the mind,
So that we may forgive
and, in that forgiveness,
be forgiven.
Show us O Lord the vision of light
That stems from thy universal love;
So that we are secure from the darkness
Wherein dwells evil and despair.
Thus, through all eternity,
We shall dwell within the blessed friendship
of thy being - O Lord of all.

My Friend Des

Sometimes it is hard to find the right words when writing about a special friend who is no longer with us in this earthly life, but Des was different. Yes I shall miss him greatly, but I am sure that my memories of him will remain vivid for all time.

Sunday mornings, he greeted us at the door, and gave out the hymn books, and took his turn with the collecting bag. Before all this, he had set out the table in the vestry with cups and saucers ready for coffee after the service. Then he assisted with the washing up afterwards, and was usually one of the last to leave the premises, making sure everything was left nice and tidy.

Des was one of those special people who always had a cheery word, a smile, always willing to lend a hand, never grumbled when - through illness - life's burden was great, and always to my knowledge looked for the good in people.

A number of years ago when Oat Street Chapel's regular cleaning lady gave up the job, and our lovely Chapel was beginning to look a bit dowdy, I issued a challenge to the members of our Congregation I said that if anyone would care to help me I would be willing to head a small team, to get the Chapel looking nice once again.

Des immediately came forward!

We worked together for sometime, and eventually we were joined by Danny Williamson, who, incidentally still comes all the way from Tewkesbury to help.

The three of us - A trinity of cleaners you might say - had many good times together, lots of fun shared, good conversation, and did other work, such as restoring the gatehouse card tables.

Des, although incapacitated through illhealth, never let his disabilities get the better of him. He did much at home for his wife Sylvia, whom he loved greatly, and whenever one visited his home the kettle usually came into play. Des was generous both in body and in spirit, and is sadly missed.

I am proud to have known and worked along side you, God bless you Des.

Peter Wright

October Services

October 7th	11.00am 3.00pm	Evesham Cheltenham
October 14th	11.00am 3.00pm	Evesham Gloucester
October 21st	11.00am 3.00pm	Evesham Cheltenham
October 28th	11.00am 3.00pm	Evesham Gloucester

Please note: Sunday 14th October
The Services at both Evesham, and at Gloucester will be
conducted by David Wright.

Notices

October 4th	Cheltenham "Learning the Lessons of Life"
October 8th	Oat Street Chapel Harvest Supper 7.00pm for 7.30pm
October 10th	Coffee Morning at the home of Anne & Barrie Wheeler
December 23rd	Gloucester Carol Service 3.00pm

Harvest Supper

October 8th
at Oat Street Chapel in the Gatehouse
7.00pm for 7.30pm

Buffet and Raffle

Tickets £3.50

Entertainment

“Learning the Lessons of Life”

Cheltenham Inquirer monthly meetings starting Thursday 4th October 2.30pm.
The title of this meeting is Learning the Lessons of Life.
For further details please contact Michael.

Coffee Morning

On October 10th at the home of Anne & Barrie Wheeler
Abbotsway Merstow Place Evesham between 10.00am & 2.00pm.
Proceeds in aid of Unitarian Animal Welfare Society.

Christmas at Hucklow - in August!

A Nativity Play on the 24th of the month does not seem too strange an idea, presuming the month is December, but when it is the 24th of August it's clear that something unusual is afoot!

What was afoot was the annual R.E. Summer School at Great Hucklow - a week-long event open to any Unitarians who relish the chance to get their teeth more deeply into aspects of their chosen religious path. People came from all over the UK, but also from Sweden, America, and even New Zealand, to take part - and this wide range of experience helped to make it a very rich, and enriching, week for all.

The focus for the Summer School this year was 'Celebration', and each morning was built around one of a series of lectures given by Simon John Barlow, looking at great length and depth into the story and the celebration of Christmas. Watch my sermons in December, folks!

There was a programme for young people - and it was a delight to be around a sizeable group of junior Unitarians!! - which gave rise to a lot of singing of carols, the manufacture of Christmas wrapping-paper, and the writing and presenting of that Nativity Play... an original and alternative piece, featuring

From “Facing the Storm” by Eddie Askew

Lord, life's a whirlpool.
So much to do.
I rush around, faster and faster,
intent on today,
this moment.
Never looking beyond the immediate.
My good intentions,
wet and waterlogged,
slide down the plug hole.
Gone.

Out there,
on the blurred edge of vision,
people stand, beckon, call.
So indistinct I can pretend
I don't see them,
except to myself
But I rush on.
No time.
Scattering, perhaps,
a little largesse on the way.
Greasing the palm of charity.
My once bright conscience dulled
with tarnished generosity.
Encrusted rust, self-damaging.
My own collecting boxes
full of good intentions,
never cashed.

And yet, Lord,
there are moments
when I hear your voice.
Soft, yet insistent.
Your voice, coming,
not from some cloudy heaven
above, beyond,
but somehow centred
in the people I ignore.
And when I take my courage in both
hands -
and doing that
means putting down my diary first -
and turn to them,
I find I've turned to you.
Among the lonely.
You are the neighbour I ignored.
The injured on the Jericho road.

And when I walk by,
on the other side,
I sidestep love,
and I'm the lonely one.
Self-exiled by my busyness.

Lord, help me try again.
Find time for others.
Find time for you.

Submitted by Carol Wilkerson

Derby Show Jumping TV 26th August.

What an analogy, what a joy and source of inspiration! The beauty and grace of the horses! The skill and poise of the riders!

What years of training, patience and control exhibited here!

The jumps may be too high, the impediments may not be cleared, the ground may be too slippery, the bank appear too steep and forbidding, but even those that “can’t make it” are rewarded by a gentle understanding pat which seems to say, “this is all part of the experience, perhaps next year the result may be nearer perfection, in any case “well done”, the faithful servant has done their best”.

Louisa Dereford

The Heartbeat of God

Monday Evening Event at Oat Street Chapel on September 10th. A small but appreciative audience enjoyed an evening with Julie Maull and friends who played drums and other instruments exploring rhythm as a way of conveying the presence of God.

John Green

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 clearly type your submissions, or preferably (to avoid re-typing) send them by e-mail to: pdwright@talk21.com

-for example - the wise men screaming on to the stage on their motorbikes!

I had been invited to go as a teacher, and I was fortunate to work with Lindy Latham (Minister for Boston and Lincoln) in running a workshop on 'Marking Time - Ritual in Our Lives'. This was a chance to take a theme and develop it with a group of highly motivated people over a Period of six days, and boy did it develop!

One of the strongest features of the week is the way that every day ends with an Epilogue, everyone walking in silent lantern-light over to the village Chapel for the nightly ... and very varied ... act of worship together. The rhythm of these Epilogues creates a spiritual framework, more like an embrace, for everyone and everything involved in the week.

The final Epilogue, on the Friday evening, was put together by the workshop group in which both Julie and Abigail took part - and it was a joy for your Minister to attend an act of worship partly led by his wife and daughter!

There is so much that could be said about any week at Hucklow, I'm sure, and the strengths of this Summer School were more numerous than I can put down here. As I have said to many people when they have asked me how it was:- 'I wish you had been there to experience it. It reminds you just what is so good about this movement of ours!'

It's not too soon to start thinking about booking for next year - August 17th to August 24th are the dates to put in your diary!

Heritage Open Day

On Saturday September 8th Oat Street Chapel was open to the public for the annual Heritage Open Days. The Chapel was open from 10.00am til 4.00pm. About 20 visitors came and showed much interest in the buildings.

Ruth Beatson

Can Anyone Help?

By the AGM 2002, I shall have been the Group Treasurer for 3 years, and I should prefer it if someone else was willing to take on the task. Ideally, there should be regular changes of officers to ensure new ideas and the involvement of different members in running the Churches.

The work of the Group Treasurer has become much simpler than when Janet Eldershaw was Treasurer. I can certainly understand why she resigned! The Group Treasurer is responsible for the payment of the Ministers stipend and all expenses incurred by the Minister on behalf of the Group. The payroll is calculated by the Finance department of the G.A. and the Treasurer just ensures that all the correct payments are made. Forms for the Inland Revenue are completed by the Treasurer

A record of all income and payments is kept and a balance sheet prepared at the end of the financial year. This can be typed by Gordon Lowthian, who audits the figures. A financial report is prepared for the AGM.

A budget is prepared for each financial year (Jan - Dec) and expenditure versus income monitored regularly so that each Church can be advised how much their contributions to the Group fund will be (each Church giving according to its means).

This is not a difficult or very time consuming job, but as there is no-one else who can be Treasurer at Bayshill at present it would be better if I did not have to do both jobs. If anyone feels they could do this work, and needs further information, please contact me.

Jenny Buckland

Organ Recital - Oat Street

An appreciative audience enjoyed the superb playing of the Oat Street Chapel organ by Carleton Etherington on the evening of Saturday September 8th. A retiring collection in aid of the Chapel organ fund realised £104.50.

John Green

Find Time

Find time to love your neighbour
as you walk the pilgrim way,
for a smile from you and a word
or two can brighten someone's day
The sad at heart need friendship,
and a kindly helping hand
is the sort of loving gesture
that the lonely understand.

The restless world goes rushing by
with undiminished speed,
and anyone with time to spare
is very rare indeed.
So be the kind of person
who refuses to be hurried,
who counts it merely foolish
to be overwrought and worried.

Take time to pause and meditate
upon eternal things...
see heaven in a wayside flower
and in the sweep of wings...
make time to watch a sunset
or a kindness to repay,
but most of all, and best of all
find time, sometime... to pray!

Submitted by Sylvia Slocombe