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waymark

unitarians in edinburgh



St Mark's Unitarian Church
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Search for 'Unitarians in Edinburgh' on

www.facebook.com



Our Minister, Rev Peter Fairbrother,
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Telephone Number: 0131 659 7600

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Lay Celebrant & Lay Preacher

(Available for rites of passage)

WHO'S WHO

Convenor: Mary McKenna

Secretary: Margery MacKay

Treasurer: Ali McDonald

Pulpit Secretary: Lesley Hartley

Social Secretary: Lynsey Bailey

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Ministry Team: Lesley Hartley

Children's Programme

Co-ordinator: Sara Robertson

stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com

Church Flowers: Mary McKenna

Venue Enquiries: venue@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk

Music: Ailsa Aikenhead

PASTORAL SUPPORT AND CONCERNS

If you know of anyone who has any pastoral concerns, and may like some support, please let us know. In the vestibule, there are paper slips on the table and a box on the ledge by the incoming mail, for such concerns. Alternatively please telephone or email us. Details are below.

Contact details: 0131 659 7600

minister@edinburgh-unitarians.org.uk

Waymark

Editor Jane Aaronson, for Unitarians in Edinburgh

Email ja@ednet.co.uk

Waymark is published ten times a year for members and friends of St Mark's. If you wish to receive Waymark by post, a suggested donation of around £15.00 per year towards the cost of publication will always be welcome. For more information please speak to our Treasurer, Ali McDonald or email: stmarksunitariantreasurer@gmail.com

We welcome contributions, though space is limited, therefore contributions will be published at the discretion of the editor. Email to ja@ednet.co.uk by the 7th of the month. If you cannot send copy electronically, please note that Audrey Simon will type and email material to the editor. Please contact Audrey at St Mark's.

Attendances

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| May 20 | 51 (adults) + 0 (children) = 51 |
| May 27 | 37 + 3 = 40 |
| June 3 | 39 + 4 = 43 |
| June 10 | 43 + 2 = 45 |
| June 17 | 54 + 4 = 58 |

SUNDAY DUTIES AT ST MARK'S

SUNDAY STEWARDS

July 1 Kirsty Murray 8 Margery MacKay 15 John Reid & Mary McKenna 22 Ann Sinclair 29 Jill & Tom Stamper

August 5 Hilary Anderson

PEACE CANDLE LIGHTING

July 1 David Wood 8 ICUU 15 Kirsty Murray 22 Tony Finlay 29 Liz Marshall **August** 5 Jean Lapsley

*International Council of Unitarians and Universalists

WELCOME

July 1 Ann Sinclair & Ross Harper 8 Anne Witcomb & Billy Lee 15 Ross Harper & Jane Aaronson 22 Kate Foggo & Rose McDonagh 29 Jane Aaronson & Lynsey Bailey **August** 5 Elizabeth Welsh & Heather Coates

COFFEE

July 1 Elizabeth Welsh & Rose McDonagh 8 Mary McKenna & John Reid 15 Richard Ross & Heather Coates 22 Billy Lee & Elizabeth Welsh 29 Brian Robertson & Richard Ross **August** 5 Rose McDonagh & Lynsey Bailey

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMME

July 1 Sara Robertson & TBA 8 Sara Robertson & Bláthnaid Quinn 15 Kirsty Murray & Tom Stamper 22 Sara Robertson & Rachael King 29 Amy & Ali McDonald **August** 5 TBA

Please email

stmarkschildrensprogramme@gmail.com

If you would like to volunteer to fill in any of the 'TBA' slots above.

FLOWERS

July 1 Anne Witcomb 8 DM 15 Kath Pittendrigh 22 Gabrielle Mackenzie 29 B Jones **August** 5 Phillida Sawbridge & Hilary Davies

Please email ja@ednet.co.uk if you would like to donate the Sunday flowers in August & September.

Roster of volunteers for St Catharine's Homeless Project



The project is closed
for its annual holiday

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF THIS WORTHWHILE INITIATIVE, PLEASE SPEAK TO ELAINE EDWARDS
email elaine.m.edwards@virginmedia.com**

Alter

Our minister, Rev Peter Fairbrother, shares his passion for altarcraft.

I have a passion for altars. This month I'd like to share with you pictures of some altars I've had the pleasure of creating. We can all create altars, and perhaps many of us already do in our own unique ways. This autumn I'll be holding a Sunday service to explore our understanding of the concept of 'altar', our relationship to creative expression, and honouring what we hold sacred.

It's often said that a picture can say a thousand words. In which case, a wee pictorial prelude.



Top left: Altars need not be grand, large scale, 'high church' affairs. The angel cards in the picture above were gifted to me prior to my ordination along with the beautiful red candle and the little heart peg. Altogether a simple yet beautiful focal point for meditation and prayer.

Top right: A small personal altar honouring love and loss. The composition comprises tealights, pink rose petals and fragile hearts.

Middle right: 'The worlds within us and the worlds between us', created for OneSpirit interfaith seminary session.. The altar-space: planet earth on many axes, earth in pieces.

Bottom centre: Honouring Islam, created for a OneSpirit interfaith seminary session. Note that the Qur'an is elevated from the floor in respect to the sacred text. (Photos supplied by Peter Fairbrother).

Rev Peter Fairbrother

On 18 May around twenty-five of us gathered at a bring and share supper to welcome our new minister, Rev Peter Fairbrother. Delicious food and great conversation contributed to a memorable evening. Although he had led worship at St Mark's several times before as a guest minister, on 20 May Peter did this for the first time as our minister. Both the bring and share supper and the Sunday service were joyous occasions and are recorded here. At the Sunday service James MacDonald Reid piped Peter in. Richard Ross provided thought-provoking words for the peace candle lighting and we print some of Peter's address, which will be published in full at a later date.



Rev Peter Fairbrother's theme on 20 May was on *endings and beginnings, and the constancy of passions that burn bright throughout, honouring the Christian festival of Pentecost and its message to the world. Come, light your fire!* Look out for Peter's address in a future Waymark. Meanwhile here are a few of the ideas that he expressed.

- The shared concepts of Pentecost and Shavuot as a sense of new beginnings.
- ...'The response from others what a minister should look like...'Broadly, the response I received was that a minister was someone dressed in ceremonial attire (I was asked if I would be wearing a cassock in my new role), that they stood on a podium, and preached in a church'....
- Peter's view of ministry 'The role of minister is not restricted to persons or persons considered suitably qualified, nor is ministry solely contained within church'....
- 'Ministry is challenging. It invites us to explore our assumptions, our prejudices, our defences, those things that make us feel uncomfortable, always encouraging us to ask the same, simple question... why? Why the assumptions, why prejudices, why defences, why the discomfort?'

Chalice lighting words contributed by Richard Ross

Last year I was on the island of Crete, a land with a turbulent history of conquest, occupation and internal strife. I visited the grave of an uncle of mine who had been killed during the Battle of Crete in 1941. He was one of hundreds of combatants, British, New Zealand, German and Italian who fought one another ferociously.

This year I was again on the Island of Crete and I visited the town of Xania in the extreme West of the island. Quite by chance in the maze of ancient streets, I came across a small synagogue which has recently been restored. I went in and sat down to listen to a young student from Vienna, relating the history of the Jewish people who had had a presence there over 2300 years.

The island was occupied by the German Army during the last war and in 1944 they rounded up the some 300 members of the Jewish community, loaded them on to a cargo ship bound for mainland Greece and then ultimately for Auschwitz. By a cruel twist of fate, the ship was torpedoed and sunk by a British submarine. All on board were drowned.

My thought was: these were innocent people, not combatants in any sense of the word, innocent people. In the many armed conflicts in our world today still there are innocent victims.

I light this candle for the innocents caught up in conflicts everywhere.

**artSpace@StMarks (Venue 125)
7 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2DP**

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme 2018

Edinburgh Festival Fringe – #leapintotheunknown

Tickets for all performances can be obtained via the Fringe Box Office or bought in person at our venue during the Festival Fringe. Entry is guaranteed with an advance ticket. In some cases, you can pay what you want (PWYW) at the venue immediately before the performance.

If you require more details about a performance than are given below, or for more information about discounts, especially family tickets, etc, please refer to the Official Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme.

All performance times are pm

Please keep these 2 pages for reference

Tuesday 7 August

6.30 *Beethoven & Grieg Violin Sonatas...* - Performed by Sheena Jardine (violin) and Stephen Doughty (piano) (1h 5m) £10 (£7)

Wednesday 8 August

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Thursday 9 August

12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)

6.30 *Arlen: Skylark*: Sultry blues & 60s grooves with guitar, voice and double bass (1h) £10 (£9)

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Friday 10 August

12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)

6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Saturday 11 August

12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)

6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

10.15 *Hitchcock's The Lodger (1927)* - Silent film with live music provided by Gladstone's Bag (1h 15m) £10 (£8)

Sunday 12 August

6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Monday 13 August

2.30 *Beethoven & Grieg Violin Sonatas* - ... Performed by Sheena Jardine (violin) and Stephen Doughty (piano) (1h 5m) £10 (£7)

6.30 *Brass Tracks Quintet* - A kaleidoscopic musical brass journey spanning the last 500 years (1h) £10 (£8)

8.30 *Music of the Great Highland Bagpipe* - The Royal Scottish Pipers' Society and friends (2h) £10

Tuesday 14 August

8.30 Edinburgh Renaissance Band: *Castle & Kirk* – All kinds of music played on early instruments (1h) £10 (£8)

Wednesday 15 August

6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Thursday 16 August

12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)

2.30 Edinburgh Renaissance Band: *Castle & Kirk* – All kinds of music played on early instruments (1h) £10 (£8)

6.30 *Fats Waller meets Dave Brubeck* – Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10) (£8 SUDC) PWYW

8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

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1982-2018*

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7 Castle Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2DP
Edinburgh Festival Fringe Programme 2018

Edinburgh Festival Fringe – #leapintotheunknown

*All performance times are pm
Please keep these 2 pages for reference*

Friday 17 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
2.30 Edinburgh Renaissance Band: *Castle & Kirk* – All kinds of music played on early instruments (1h) £10 (£8)
6.30 *Fats Waller meets Dave Brubeck* – Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10) (£8 SUDC) PWYW
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Saturday 18 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* – A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
2.30 Edinburgh Renaissance Band: *Castle & Kirk* – All kinds of music played on early instruments (1h) £10 (£8)
6.30 *Fats Waller meets Dave Brubeck* – Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10) (£8 SUDC) PWYW
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
10.15 *Hitchcock's The Lodger* (1927) - Silent film with live music provided by Gladstone's Bag (1h 15m) £10 (£8)

Sunday 19 August

- 4.30 *The Romantic Piano Two* - Alasdair Cameron plays Schubert and Liszt (1h) £12 (£10)
6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Monday 20 August

- 4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *Richard plays Richard Rodgers* - Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10)
8.30 *Music of the Great Highland Bagpipe* - The Royal Scottish Pipers' Society and friends (2h) £10

Tuesday 21 August

- 4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *Richard plays Richard Rodgers* - Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10)
8.30 *Bach, Brahms, Leighton & Danse Macabre* - Performed by Lawrence Dunn and Gilmour Macleod (1h) £8 (£6)

Wednesday 22 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h 10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *Richard plays Richard Rodgers* - Performed by pianist Richard Michael (1h 15m) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Thursday 23 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - a story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h 10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Friday 24 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h 10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Saturday 25 August

- 12.30 *Kono: Song Cycle of a New Town* - A story told through Maori music by the Warbricks (50m) £9 (£7)
2.30 *Capalbo & Falcone: Invisible Atlas* - Stefano Falcone (piano) & Ilaria Capalbo (double bass) premiere their own jazz (1h) £12 (£10)
4.30 *Violetta* - Contemporary adaptation of Verdi's *La Traviata* by Opera Allegra (1h 10m) £12 (£10)
6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

Sunday 26 August

- 6.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)
8.30 *The Gin Chronicles in New York* - Fast-paced, radio-style comedy from Interrupt the Routine (1h) £12 (£10)

*St Mark's Unitarian Church
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1982-2018*

Further Memories of this year's General Assembly Meetings

Seven Hours Door-To-Door from Edinburgh to Rugby by Train. Was it worth it? A Resounding Yes!
Jane Aaronson reports

I really enjoy going to our General Assembly Meetings, not only for the mix of interesting lectures and business meetings, but also to experience the wider community. It is a wonderful way to catch up with old friends and to make new ones.

I have been attending these meetings on and off for many years. I've seen how they have developed from being conferences held in University Halls of Residence to more sophisticated venues like the recent De Vere Staverton Estate which provided sophisticated and will provided spa facilities etc!

The thread that has always run through all the meetings is that of an extended family – beloved community – whatever you want to call it. And not least,... serendipity!

The opening ceremony this year staged by our younger members, aged 18 to 35, from the British and Irish Unitarian Young Adult Network (BUYAN). They acted out a fast-moving presentation about what might occur at one of their workshops. Both Kate Foggo and Ross Hartley took part in the very Interesting and fast moving presentation.

Next day, Christina Smith from Derby Unitarians, and an Executive Committee member, read some chalice lighting words, written in 2013 at a Unitarian Youth Workshop, by her daughter, Elizabeth, who was 15 at the time. This was serendipity, as I knew it would complement my contribution for Waymark. Thank you to Christina and Elizabeth for permission to use it here.

The chalice is home.

When I see a chalice I know that I will be welcomed into that space.

Wherever there is a chalice, there is also love.

I know who I am when I see itand

I know who I want to become.

The flame represents our unconditional love and respect for one another.

The conference always opens with the John Relly Beard lecture. This was delivered by Matt Carmichael, a school teacher, writer, and activist who spoke on 'Rekindling the Spirit of Community'. He said Community was a concept to which we should all aspire. Community is based on need. He felt that people needed encouragement on how to become an effective community and asked the question, 'What is real community?' He then attempted to answer his question by calling on examples of spiritual activists and the insights of writers from Plato to Kate Tempest.

Matt suggested, that being part of community was positive, although there were instances when it could be considered negative. He gave the example of the gun lobby community in America. He explained that he was more spiritual than religious. Because of this, he developed the Delta course for people interested in spirituality free of religious structures. Matt stated that he believed in 'environmental activism'.

Matt Carmichael's lecture brings to mind an illustration of our wider community, at the GA. We may think that we are a small community here in Edinburgh, far away from the main hub, and indeed all the Unitarian communities are self-governing. A number of people at the GA were already aware that we had appointed Peter Fairbrother as our minister. It was gratifying that members of our wider community were very pleased for us.

(continued on page 8)

Lesley Hartley reports on FUN at the GA

.... which stands for Findhorn Unitarian Network. Intrigued by the flyer for this workshop, Roger and I went along to find out more.

A circle of attendees discussed their experiences at Findhorn - an international experiential community based in an eco-village near Forres.

For new visitors to Findhorn an experience week is recommended.

Experience Week is a unique opportunity to participate in an ecovillage community that is addressing both the externals of sustainable living and the heart of sustainability – the inner life of human beings in their search for meaning and purpose.



During the FUN week activities provide an integrated and cumulative experiential learning process for each member of the Unitarian group. The aim is to enable Unitarians to draw on ideas that can be applied to leadership and renewal in chapels and the wider movement. An integral part of the course is four shifts where visitors share with Findhorn members in cooking, cleaning, maintenance or gardening, and hence turn love into action. Each day there are opportunities built into the programme to join in Taize singing and meditation.



During these seven days visitors become part of a multi-generational, intercultural group of fellow adventurers, getting to know yourself more deeply, learning about the community and each other. It is an opportunity to experience the values of this dynamic community, to take part in daily activities in a new way, to explore how you can become more mindful of the interconnectedness of life, and more empowered and sustainable in how you live.

Much of this information can be found from the Findhorn website but it was more interesting to hear feedback at the meeting. Previous visitors were going back to Findhorn for further weeks. The last visit, at the end of January, was not perhaps the warmest time to visit the north of Scotland but we learned that the next FUN will take place in May 2019 – now that sounded very attractive.

Previous visitors advised going with an open mind and to be prepared for new experiences. The FUN objectives:-

- to experience living in community with an ethos of daily spiritual practice
- to foster ideas for renewal and growth among Unitarians who participate
- to report to our chapels, districts and Unitarian societies on what we have learned from our experiences at Findhorn

(Continued on page 8)

Venue 125

In August, St Mark's once again becomes Edinburgh Festival Fringe venue 125 and ANN SINCLAIR is seeking volunteers to look after our box office.

During August, we expect to welcome around 3000 visitors to our church. They'll come to enjoy one or more of 61 performances of 14 different shows. We're very pleased to see the return of many artistes from previous years and also to be greeting new performers.

This year will be our 36th as a Festival Fringe venue. Our programme is one of our largest ever and includes a cornucopia of music: jazz, early music played on period instruments, opera, Maori, classical, music of the Highland bagpipe, blues, 20th century musicals, as well as a silent film accompanied by live music, plus the latest episode of the *Gin Chronicles* which this year goes across the pond to the Big Apple.

As you'll see from the complete list of performances enclosed with this Waymark, our first week is relatively quiet and our second and third weeks are pretty busy, often with four, or even five, performances a day. For the three weeks of the Festival, St Mark's will be an especially vibrant and joyous place, welcoming folk from around the world. Most are here to enjoy a show. Our building's acoustics are particularly praised. Often, we have tourists introducing themselves from other Unitarian congregations; others, seeing our open door, take the opportunity to have a look around our magnificent church or to ask what Unitarianism actually is.

It would be wonderful to have as many of St Mark's congregation as possible on site during August to welcome and care for our guests. For this reason, I'm now seeking volunteers to look after our box office or to be an usher.

(Jane Aaronson continued from page 7)

To quote Matt Carmichael, our GA John Relly Beard lecturer, 'Love rekindles the spirit of community'. I certainly felt blessed to have experienced this 'rekindling' with our wider Unitarian community at the General Assembly meetings, but I felt equally fortunate as I returned home to our smaller community of Unitarians in Edinburgh. I very much enjoyed the service on 8 April, where some of us shared our memories of the meetings with our congregation. This service was particularly significant as it was the first one led by our own Joan Cook, in her capacity as General Assembly President. I know we all want to congratulate her on becoming President of the General Assembly and we wish her well in her year of office.

Just one last thing to share with you, and that is the dates of the General Assembly Meetings in 2019. They are 16 - 18 April. The meetings will be returning to the Birmingham Hilton, which will be less complicated journey for us in Scotland. Please put the dates in your diaries and come and enjoy the experience of being part of a wider Unitarian community.

**Poetry & Prose Reading
for Pleasure**
on
Sunday 8 July at 13.00

Come and share some favourite
poems or prose.
Want to know more?

Please speak to Margery MacKay

Many of last year's volunteers have already said they want to help again, but I'd love even more of you to take up the opportunity of joining us. Shifts generally last for around 4 hours, with up to 3 per day, this year running from 11.00 to 22.00. You can do as many, or as few, shifts as you wish. You can do shifts alone or with a companion.

In return for volunteering, I'm pleased to announce you will receive two free tickets for any show (subject to availability) for every shift you work!

You will never be alone on a shift. At least one other member of staff, one experienced in running the church as an arts venue, will be in the building at all times. The work is never pressurised or physically strenuous. On the contrary, as a volunteer of many years standing, I can personally assure you that while staff must be professional, committed and courteous throughout, we always remember the bottom line, this is a festival! By being a St Mark's volunteer, we'll make sure you enjoy being part of the biggest arts festival on earth!

If you become a volunteer, you will:

- See the Fringe from a different perspective
- Represent our Unitarian community and beautiful city of Edinburgh to visitors
- Provide cover that might otherwise have to be paid for,
- thereby enhancing St Mark's income

Please do get in touch with me if you would like to discuss being a volunteer. It would be great to have you on the team! Email annsinclair530@btinternet.com

(Lesley Hartley continued from page 7)

- to support initiatives for renewal and growth that emerge from our experiences.

There were some folk who had misgivings – we're still wondering how we would approach the act of massaging kale as described by a visitor who attended in January. As members of a congregation within easy travelable distance we decided that this was an opportunity not to be missed so have registered an interest for next year's FUN week. So... watch this space!

(Photos on page 7, supplied by Louise Reeve from Newcastle Unitarians)

ST CATHARINE'S HOMELESS PROJECT

The good cause in September and October will be The St Catharine's Convent Homeless Project.



On 16 September, our 'Friendship Table' will receive our annual donation of consumable items for the St Catharine's Homeless Project. This year the Project would like us to collect tins of **Baked Beans**, **Corned Beef** and **Granulated Sugar**.

On Friday evenings, two people from St Mark's help serving the meals. If you would like to be a part of this worthwhile initiative, please speak to Elaine Edwards elaine.m.edwards@virginmedia.com

Unsung Unitarian Women

by Margery MacKay

After a delicious Edinburgh Interfaith Community Meal at the Well Care, Nicholson Square, on Monday 23 April, two speakers contributed to the 'Women of Faith' series. They were Ishrat Hussnain, speaking on 'Bint ul Huda' and St Mark's member, Margery Mackay, who spoke on the subject of 'Unsung Unitarian Women'. We are pleased to print Margery's talk in this month's edition of Waymark.

Introduction

I was looking for an ordinary woman, not perfect, not a saint, not necessarily a mover and shaker; but a woman inspired by her faith to do something for her community and make a difference. These are the real 'unsung' women but it is difficult to obtain information about them and often they prefer to remain 'Unsung'.

What I offer here are three short sketches of fairly modern Unitarian women who are comparatively, but not completely, unsung and who have inspired me. (*You may already have read an article about Ann Peart, by Joan Cook, in the June edition of Waymark.*)

June Bell (1918-2010)

(Note 1) June was a Unitarian Lay-Leader, born in Sussex and raised as an Anglican. She was educated at Girton College, Cambridge reading Biology and later studying Medicine. Becoming a Unitarian at Cambridge freed her up, but it also took courage to move away from her family's evangelical background. After she married, she moved to Edinburgh. From the 1960s onwards, June attended St Mark's Unitarian Church, my congregation, and became more and more involved. First, as Church Secretary, then leading worship, writing worship material, hymns, and publicity material poetry serious and poetry comic (some published nationally). She wrote, produced and acted in her plays (some about Unitarianism and at St Mark's we all had to perform to her strict requirements in the annual Christmas pantomime). She was also minutes secretary and led small groups. She was on various national Unitarian and Free Christian Churches Committees including the Ministry Committee and Interview Panel for ministerial students. She continued all these activities well into her 80s.

June was an innovator helping set up groups like the Unitarian Renewal Group coming up with resource registers and networking before it was the 'done thing'. Her personal outlook was rational, humanistic and down to earth. She called 'a spade a spade', but she also cared about people's spiritual and pastoral needs and personal development in order to enable them to reach their full potential, particularly young people. She offered her outstanding counseling skills over a period of about thirty years to a significant number of ministers during their training, their ministry and in times of difficulty.

June was the President of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches from 1980-1981. This is like being the Church of Scotland, Moderator. My Congregation, St Mark's, has produced seven General Assembly Presidents from its membership. Three of them were women. The current General Assembly President, Joan Cook is a member of St Mark's.

The General Secretary at the time, Roy Smith said of June 'I could hardly keep up with June's persistence and enthusiasm during her Vice-Presidential year. She was always alert, ever on the ball, never wasting words of wisdom'. He continued that 'over many years June Bell has been one of the most important and influential thinkers and voices of the Unitarian

Movement. She confronted the old order and goaded us on to shape a more democratic Unitarian movement.' Not quite unsung then.

June was frank and had strong views and expressed them. Some people were put off by this. I was a bit wary when I first met June but found that she had a much softer side. It was she who encouraged me to participate in a significant number of church activities, and I doubt I would have done this without her encouragement. As well as all this intellectual activity, June made lasting friendships in the Fellowship of Youth and later at the annual Unitarian Family Holiday Conference at Great Hucklow in Derbyshire. This event was a great love of June's where she relaxed and had fun. She invited me to attend in 1980. I was overwhelmed by the intellect of those attending, but also by the warmth of the welcome, acceptance and the fun. Subsequently, I attended many times travelling down with June in her car. I joined June on the Unitarian Holiday Planning Committee. Today, I help to run the Unitarian Discovery Holiday because of June. June's other interest was her garden and nurturing the Earth and she wrote a lovely hymn about it; *Wide Green World We Know and Love You*. She recycled, 'made do and mended', and was environmental friendly decades before it was 'the done thing'. June was small in stature with silver white hair since middle age and when you first saw her you would never have thought that she could have done all these things. June died age 91 in 2010.

(Annie) Margaret Barr-(1897-1973) (Note 2)

Margaret was unsung in her day. She was born in Yorkshire and became an educator in India. Margaret always protested vehemently that she was not a missionary. She was opposed to missionary tactics, and argued with anyone who called her a missionary, including the Indian Government. She was a Methodist and became a Unitarian when she was at Cambridge. She trained as a teacher and a minister, but after hearing a talk, her dream was to serve the people of Assam/Meghalaya.

Margaret's sister, Mary, worked with Gandhi. Margaret had studied Hindu Scriptures and said that 'Hinduism contains as much to attract thoughtful people as does Orthodox Christianity, perhaps more, as it combines tolerance as well as its other virtues. Tolerance being a virtue which can be lacking in Christianity and some other faiths'. On arrival in India in the 1930s, she spent some time with Gandhi. Not wanting to step on anyone's toes she asked him what he thought she should do. He said that she should find some work to do in the villages. This was her ultimate aim. First, though she taught in a Calcutta girls' school. Then she sought Unitarian funding to work in the Khasi Hills in N. E. India, but had been told that 'No committee would take the responsibility of sending a woman alone to such a post'; and later perhaps understandably that 'Unitarians never had, and never would do missionary work, therefore, under no circumstances would they fund her project.'

Margaret insisted that she was not remotely going to be like a missionary and would work with the existing Khasi Unitarian Movement set up by Hajom Kissor Singh in 1887. She would live and work with the people as an educator to improve

educational opportunities. Education would be available to everyone who wanted it. It was British Unitarian Women who finally supported her financially. Margaret set up schools and an orphanage in Kharang. Her excellent teaching skills produced good teachers and administrators for the future. Margaret got some midwifery training and saw to it that local people also received Midwifery training. She set up a Medical Centre and Rural Centre. Margaret died in 1973. Unitarian women still support the Schools and Centre today. That is her legacy.

Margaret Barr had also pioneered the teaching of Comparative Religion in Indian Schools as an experiment in the Calcutta girls' school from 1933 to 1936. She created her own course of studies, objectively considering the different religious traditions of India and comparing them with Christianity. The course was later produced as a text and a book *The Great Unity*, with information on various religions without upholding any one of them but viewing them all as components of 'The Great Unity'. (Note 3). I think we might have used the book in Sunday School in the 1950s, perhaps that is why I am interested in interfaith work, today.

Rev. Dr Ann Peart (Note 4)

Ann is a retired minister and academic, who is not completely 'unsung' having just been made an honorary member of the Unitarian General Assembly. She first started leading worship when she was eighteen after her Chapel had invited her to be May Queen. For the next twenty years, Ann became more involved in Unitarian life. Ann had read Geography at Cambridge, where she was President of the University Women's Boat club, and was twice in the winning boat in the boat race against Oxford; the only woman to be awarded a full rowing blue in her year! A first of many firsts! Ann had thought about becoming a minister at that time but dismissed the idea, as she felt she did not have sufficient 'life experience'. On graduation she trained as a teacher, taught and married. Much later when Ann was divorced, she became involved with second wave feminism and trained for the Ministry at Manchester College, Oxford. She undertook this training on a part-time basis and as such, Ann was the first person to qualify in this way. She served as a minister of various congregations in England for fourteen years and then became the Principal of Unitarian College Manchester; the first woman to do so. While she was Principal of Unitarian College, Ann would consider her greatest contribution was made in relation to education, especially ministry training, and developing and expanding the curriculum. She has also contributed, both within and outwith Unitarian circles, to social justice and LBTI issues, in being an out lesbian in leadership roles. It is not difficult to imagine how much courage this has required. Here she worked on issues of gender justice, including feminist theology and making Unitarian women more visible. Her PhD subject was Unitarian Scholarship; especially in raising awareness of the importance of women in our history.



Whilst minister at the Golders Green church, she helped set up a national Unitarian Women's Group, which continues to this day. Ann was a member of the 'Sexuality Orientation Equality Group, and was involved in the production of the Unitarian resource pack, *Celebrating Diversity* published in 2003. Ann has also been involved in making interfaith connections, and with the local *Hope not Hate* campaign. Ann is currently taking a sabbatical from some of her many commitments, as she is writing a book on Unitarian Women for the Lindsey Press.

Ann must have inspired and encouraged a great number of people over the years. I am very impressed with the young vibrant female ministers coming into the ministry today who are re-examining theology in their own way and presenting it in a thoughtful, accessible, life-enhancing, compassionate, innovative and, dare I say, 'feminine' way, sharing their ideas and spiritual practices, supporting their congregations and using new technology to network with one another. They are also reaching out to other similar groups supporting social justice campaigns and getting involved in joint projects with people of all faiths and none. One of them recently carried out a Survey of 21st Century Unitarian Beliefs and Spirituality. Another lay person helped set up the Charity *Simple Gifts* in response to the unrest in the Bethnal Green area of London in 2011. The programme - includes an After-School Club, New Neighbours/Old Neighbours Lunch, and English for Speakers of Other Language classes. Coincidentally, by chance, in the Edinburgh Congregation at present almost all the lay-leaders and group leaders are female. I hope they are not unsung.

Notes

- (1) Information on June Bell based on information given by Roy Smith and Celia Kerr in the *Unitarians in Edinburgh* publication *A Peal of Bells* celebrating June's 80th birthday and other background information based on June's Obituary by Rev. Andrew Hill, published in *The Inquirer* in 2010.
- (2) Information extracted from *A Dream Come True* by Margaret Barr, published by the Lindsey Press.
- (3) Information extracted from the book *A Larger View: Unitarians and World Religions* by Rev. Dr Vernon Marshall, Lindsey Press 2007.
- (4) An edited version of the nominating speech given by Joan Cook at the Annual General Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches in April 2018 when the Rev. Dr Ann Peart was made an Honorary Member of the Organisation.

Copyright Margery MacKay
given on 23 April 2018
after the EIFA community meal,
at the Methodist Church, Nicholson Square


Chalice Singers
Rehearsals


If you enjoy singing, do come and rehearse with us. You don't need to be able to read music

We will meet in the upper hall from 10.00-10.45 on the following Sundays

July
8
22

Please speak to Lesley Hartley to find out more

TODD SOUTAR

An Appreciation by Rev Andrew Hill and Jon Bagust

It was with great sadness that we announced in the June issue of Waymark that Todd Soutar had died on 9 May. Todd was our organist and pianist for nearly forty years from 1973 - 2012. On this page we print two articles of appreciation. One is by our former minister, Rev Andrew Hill, the other is by a longstanding member of St Mark's, Jon Bagust., who also supplied the photograph.

Andrew Hill writes:

Todd Soutar was already the St Mark's organist when I arrived at St Mark's in 1974 and he was still the organist thirty-three years later in 2007 when I retired. I used to telephone him, every Saturday evening – at 18.45 as regularly as clockwork - with the hymns numbers for the following morning. Both of us, arrived at the church early. Todd was usually first and if his car wasn't outside when I arrived I worried! Later, once I had sorted and arranged things, I would ascend into the gallery to check over the service details with him. Sometimes we would have extended conversations about the music he was playing or about current affairs. I seem to remember that he blamed the Queen Mother for Prince Charles's disastrous marriage; and on one occasion he was grumbling understandably about a certain organ stop which wouldn't function properly to which I re-joined 'Todd, do you really think that Bach never grumbled about the organs which he had to play on!'. He was stumped for an answer to that! Todd loved Bach and he would often played a single Bach arranged Chorale from the moment when I pressed the vestibule button to my arrival at the lectern. His great organ favourite was the chorale prelude on *Schmücke dich* but I usually avoided hymns set to German chorales and certain other tunes (the Old 100th for example) because- on the whole – Todd accompanied hymns rather too slowly for contemporary tastes! However, his loyalty was shown when – following the demise of the organ – he simply transferred to the piano at the front of the church. It was only then that many in the congregation saw him for the first time.



Jon Bagust writes:

Todd served St Mark's well. His tenure, first as organist and latterly as pianist, lasted a magnificent forty years.

For most of those years Todd sat alone, and unseen at the organ, upstairs in the gallery. Communication between minister and organist by means of light switches, not always a perfect science! Our minister for the greater part of Todd's tenure was Andrew Hill, who very occasionally when Todd missed the cue, and when all else failed, would shout up to the gallery, 'Todd it's now Hymn number 123'. A moment of light humour for the congregation!

Todd's organ repertoire was reasonably wide but often featured one of Bach's sacred choral preludes, music of great spiritual depth, which never fails to give me a feeling of peace and equanimity.

During the interregnum between Andrew Hill and Maud Robinson we had quite a number of different guest ministers, all with different and sometimes difficult musical requests. Todd dealt with this sometimes trying period with reasonable good humour.

Around fifteen years ago the organ began showing its age and after a brief period of resurrection, finally succumbed. Fortunately for us Todd made a smooth transition from organ to our new Weinbach grand piano and suddenly became visible to us! I recall that Todd regularly included, Schubert impromptu's, Chopin Nocturnes and remember my own introduction to Debussy's lovely, 'La Cathédrale Engloutie' (sunken cathedral).

Music is an integral part of our Sunday worship, and for forty years Todd played his part in our services. So, let's salute Todd for his many years of music making for us at St Mark's.

Mindfulness @ Lunchtime

meets at St Mark's at 12.15 on Tuesdays

Interbeing Buddhist Meditation

meets at St Mark's every Thursday, usually at 19.15

For further information speak to Jon Bagust

www.facebook.com/mindfulnessatlunchtime

ST MARK'S BOOKMARKS

This group is open to all

For more details, please contact Joan Cook
joancook@hotmail.co.uk

Hilary Davies tells us of an event,
Singing Freedom Songs

Nelson Mandela's 100th birthday bash, which will take place on Saturday, 21 July from 19.00, on Portobello Beach, near Dalriada. You are invited to bring a song, bring some wood for the fire and bring sustenance, whether food or drink. All welcome.

'Nelson Mandela would have turned 100 on 18 July 18. So we're having a gathering on Portobello beach to sing some of the songs sung during the South African struggle against Apartheid. There will be plenty of songs to join in with on the day, so don't worry if you don't know any of these songs, there are plenty of repeated phrases for easy learning and joining in'.

JULY IN ST MARK'S

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|---|
| Every Sunday | 11.00 | Church Service and Coffee |
| Every Tuesday | 12.15 | Mindfulness@Lunchtime |
| Saturday 7 | 11.00-3.00 | Bereavement & Support Group (see bottom right) For more details email ja@ednet.co.uk |
| Sunday 8 | 10.00-10.45 | Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 10) |
| Sunday 8 | 13.00-14.00 | Poetry Reading for Pleasure (see page 8) |
| Sunday 22 | 10.00-10.45 | Chalice Singers Group Rehearsal (see page 10) |
| Friday 27 | 11.00-12.30 | Waymark folding and mailing. Please email ja@ednet.co.uk if you are able to help |

ST MARK'S GOOD CAUSE IN JULY & AUGUST

Mary's Meals is a global movement providing life-changing meals to some of the world's poorest children every day that they attend school

Mary's Meals' vision is that 'every child receives one daily meal in their place of education. Working together, we believe that can be achieved in this world of plenty'.

Every contribution is equally valued, from cash donations that buy the food, to the time given to cook and serve the meals within impoverished communities.

For more information speak to B Jones or go to <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/>



a simple solution
to world hunger

We were very pleased to be able to welcome Eleanor Mayfield and Bob Pego (second and third from left) to Sunday service on 20 May. Eleanor and Bob were married, by Rev Andrew Hill, in St Marks, twenty nine years ago. At that time Eleanor convened our communications committee. Eleanor and Bob now live in USA.

An indication of how things have changed over that twenty-nine years is that the hotel where they had their wedding reception, is an apartment block. But there is still a St Mark's link because two of our members live in that block.



SUNDAYS IN JULY IN ST MARK'S

Services are at 11.00 in the church, with coffee and conversation in the upper hall afterwards. Children sit with their parents for the opening part of the service, and then follow their own programme.

The good cause in July and August is Mary's Meals (see bottom left)

Sunday 1 July Rev Peter Fairbrother

The Opposite of Addiction

Johann Hari, author of 'Chasing The Scream', sparked much interest with his Ted Talk 'Everything You Know About Addiction Is Wrong'. We will explore Hari's work; his understanding of addiction and healing, and what it means for each of us.

Sunday 8 July Marta Pacini

Let your light shine

'You may possess only a small light, but uncover it, let it shine' (John Murray). How do we uncover and let shine our inner light?

Marta Pacini is a member of New Unity, Newington Green

Sunday 15 July Lesley Hartley

Dedication to St. Mark's

The life and Unitarian times of Robert Blackley Drummond

Lesley Hartley is a member of St Mark's

Sunday 22 July Katie Brown

#thisdayinhistory

Flying machines, ice cream, Pied Pipers, the Warsaw Ghetto, yellow butterfly's and Gaza, and the children of our world. A provocation

Katie Brown is a member of St Mark's

Sunday 29 July Rev Peter Fairbrother

How does (y)our garden grow?

What can we learn from the world of plant life to support our own spiritual growth? As part of the (re)greening of St Mark's, you are invited to bring and donate a small pot plant, or a cutting of an indoor plant, as part of a refurbishment of our main indoor church window sills. We will honour the plants as part of the service.

Sunday 5 August Rev Dr Rob Whiteman

Forgiveness

Rob Whiteman will explore forgiveness through the lens of a number of traditions.

Rob Whiteman is minister of The Dundee Unitarian Church

The Bereavement Support Group

will meet at St Mark's
on 7 July at 11.00

The Bereavement Support Group offers support to anyone suffering a loss through bereavement, separation or estrangement.

More information via Jane Aaronson ja@ednet.co.uk