



Newcastle Unitarians The Calendar



October – November 2020

www.newcastleunitarians.org.uk

facebook.com/NewcastleuponTyneUnitarians

Contents

Page	Item
2	Church News and Updates
6	Obituary: Edna Anderson
10	Church Activities
12	Letter from Roger Tarbuck
17	Events Updates
19	Recent Service Highlights
22	Where Are We Going?
25	History of the Church: James Losh
32	Latest Management Committee Notes and updates
33	Sunday Services Details
34	Flower Dedications

**A member Congregation of the General Assembly of
Unitarian and Free Christian Churches
Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8XG**

Front cover: sun through the windows in our main church hall



Church News

Chairperson's Hello for October and November 2020

Well, this isn't quite the welcome I'd wanted to give! I had hoped to start with a celebration of our being back in our building. And indeed we have been for part of August and September, returning once more to our magnificent Church Hall. With social distancing measures in place, worship and refreshments afterwards were working well, but as we found ourselves back under local restrictions, we decided to move back to virtual worship.

This obviously isn't ideal, and it took a lot of discussion. The general feeling was that our worship would not feel like our worship if we were unable to socialise at all, which the local restrictions (no socialising indoors with anyone who is not part of your household or support bubble) would have prevented.

The Archbishop of Canterbury commented recently: "Worship is not a social occasion", and whilst there's an element of truth in that,

as we use our worship time to strengthen our spiritual connection with that which we hold to be divine, at Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians our own statement of what we value most about ourselves says: “Our fellowship gives us strength and encouragement in daily living”. Our connection with each other is a vital part of our community.

We’ll be doing our best to keep connected with everyone, online and offline, over the next few months. Even when local restrictions lift, we may not be able to return to the building for worship, as the temperature dropping is likely to make it impractical for now! However, as soon as it looks like a reasonable possibility, we’ll reconsider this as we know how much people value being able to gather in person.

I am sending letters with highlights from our Sunday services to anyone unable to (or who prefers not to) join us for virtual worship and socialising, which is currently taking place via Zoom. If you’d like to be sent one of these letters, please call on: 07506 255 731. If anyone needs support to go online, the national Unitarian movement has let us know that: “IT company Netserve Ltd. have

volunteered their time and provided a dedicated phoneline for Unitarians who need help to get online from a trusted partner. To access support you can ring: 0203 728 8415 or email them at: theteam@netserve.support".

As ever, my thoughts are with everyone and I hope that you and your families and loved ones are well – and if not, I hope you are finding the love and support you need. If Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians can help, you can contact us at:

info@newcastleunitarians.org.uk, ring: **07506 255 731**, or write to us at: **Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE1 8XG**. We are keeping an eye on the building and your letter will be collected.

The sale of our building is still proceeding. Our prospective purchasers, Tyneside Group Ltd., have agreed a 12-month extension of their exclusive option to purchase it (until October 2021), and are pressing ahead with the development of their business case for developing it into a multi-purpose for small businesses and arts organisations. As it was once a hive of activity for educational organisations, arts and drama societies, and

keep-fit classes along its spiritual purpose, in some ways this would be a return to its original role as an asset to the city, and we hope Tyneside Group Ltd are soon able to press ahead with their plans. Repairs to the roof and basement pump are now complete, and the dry rot has been removed!

As ever, I'd like to thank everyone who has worked very hard to keep things going over the past few months, some of the most challenging we will ever face. Many thanks to those who have donated – whether it be gifts of your time, gifts of your skill, gifts of your company, or gifts of funds to keep us going. We continue to have our weekly Sunday socials, Monday pub quiz and monthly reading group.

Finally, we are here for all our members and will support everyone as best we can! Please do let me know what works best for you.

Love and blessings,
Louise Reeve
Chairperson
Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians

Obituary - Edna Anderson 9th July 1932 - 22nd July 2020



Edna at Stockton
Unitarian Church
in 2005.

“It is with great sadness that we have to report the death, after a long period of illness, of Edna Anderson, at the age of 88. She was a lifelong member of Stockton Unitarian Church who contributed to the life of the church in so many ways, and to

the numerous other organisations with which she was associated, Unitarian and beyond.

Edna’s funeral, conducted by Margaret Robinson, opened with *Morning Has Broken*, included the poems *Do Not Weep for Me* and *She Is Gone*, closing with Cilla Black’s *Sing a Rainbow*.”

Edna’s brother, Jim Lees, has kindly contributed the following Obituary for Edna:

“Edna Constance Anderson, née Lees, was born on Saturday 9th July 1932. She was a fifth-generation Unitarian and a great nature lover. She worked at the Reay Brass Foundry and then the Gas Board as a wages clerk.

In 1949, on a works visit, she met Ronald Anderson and they married at the Unitarian Church on August 22nd 1953. They had two children - Christopher, born on 3rd June 1955 and Marian, born on 26th March 1959. They have four grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Edna started attending the church from a very early age, going with her Mam, Connie, and Dad, Stan. At 16 she became a Sunday School teacher and their pianist. She joined the church choir with her Mam, she was a member of the church's drama group, singing and dancing in plays and Youth Club Reviews, and she and Ron were both members of the church's Harmonica Band, which went to other churches and clubs giving concerts.

She was also deeply involved in the numerous fantastic socials and parties that were held regularly at the church. Memories of the fun and laughter of these events were always a great enjoyment to Edna in later life. When the Beatles came to Stockton, and the girls of the youth group wanted to queue all

night, Edna volunteered to sit with them to keep them safe.

Edna served on the Church Council for many years. She was Envelope Stewardess for many years, and she also became a 'visitor', visiting the sick in their homes, hospitals and nursing homes.

In 1988, as Church Chairperson and dressed in period costume, Edna led the church congregation from the site of the first meetings in 1688 at Thistle Green, through Stockton High Street to the church in Wellington Street to celebrate the Church's Tercentenary. She helped represent the church at Teesside Interfaith meetings, overcoming the prejudice from certain denominations who regarded Unitarians as non-Christian and tried to ban them from the meetings. She formed friendships with worship leaders through these meetings and began speaking at many women's meetings in Stockton. Edna also represented the church on the Women's World Day of Prayer Committee, usually giving a talk or reading at the actual service.

Edna served as National President of the Unitarian Lay Preachers and National President of the Unitarian Women's League. When Stockton church was without a minister Edna conducted many services including those for births, marriages and deaths.

Away from church life Edna was constantly busy, giving talks, being a member of the Women's Guild, singing in its choir, performing as part of its concert party for local groups and charities. In 1970 Edna joined the hospital League of Friends committee, becoming League Secretary for 45 years and organising North Tees Hospital coffee bar.

Edna received a long service award from North Tees Hospital for her service to the hospital, and in recognition of her voluntary work Edna was invited to attend one of the Queen's Royal Garden Parties at Buckingham Palace on 14th July 2005. When she died Edna had been a League of Friends volunteer for 50 years and was to be nominated for an O.B.E."

- Hazel Warhurst and
Jim Lees (shortened)

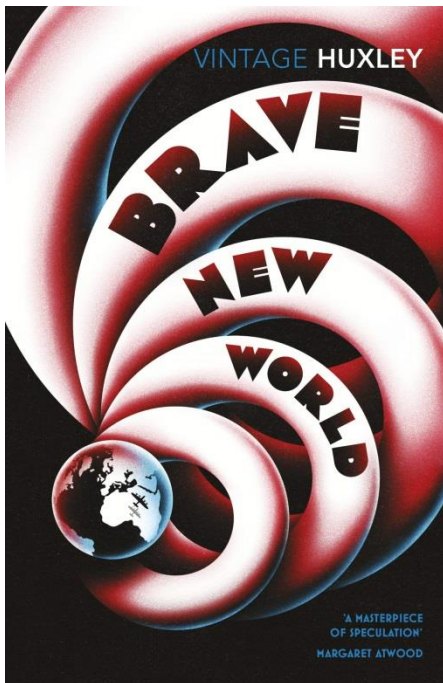
Updates:

Newcastle Church Online Activities:

We hold two weekly activities over Zoom:

Monday Quiz Night (7pm)

Sunday Social (12pm)



Monthly Reading Group:

We run a **virtual reading group** via Zoom once a month. In September we discussed Aldous Huxley's novel *Brave New World*, with so much to say we will be continuing in October.

National Unitarian Fellowship:

People might like to consider joining the National Unitarian Fellowship: "a nationwide Unitarian network, for the exchange of ideas, opinions and news, and a point of contact for all with similar ideas, whether they belong to a church or not". nufonline.org.uk

Joseph Cowen:

We continue to support the Joseph Cowen Centre. They are accepting donations of their usual items – tea, coffee, sugar, powdered milk, men's socks and underpants, and men's toiletries plus paper, pens, puzzle books and playing cards – by drop-off at the centre in Byker, if you are able to get there safely. (Ring the bell and a member of staff will open the door to enable you to leave the donation on a table in the entrance hallway).

Alternatively you can make a financial donation via their Local Giving account online: localgiving.org/charity/tynehousing or by cheque (payable to Tyne Housing Association

with a note on the back that it is for the Joseph Cowen Centre).

Post to: St Silas Church

Building, Clifford Street, Byker, NE6 1PG.



Letter from Roger Tarbuck

Dear Friends,

I had seen pictures of war graves many times before, but



War graves in Normandy.

nothing could equal the shock of walking into thousands of immaculate, white Crosses, standing line upon line in Normandy, with here and there a Star of David or a Muslim or Hindu symbol. It was impossible to take it all in. A simple human mind, fully open to such an ocean of suffering, would be too much to bear; I'd have broken down completely, had I not emotionally reined myself in. Among those symbols of young men – many of them little more than boys under twenty - I felt surrounded by their spirits: lads “in the morning of their day”, full of hope and energy, who, with the light of their courage - and their very lives - wiped out the

“dark age” that Churchill warned us about so vividly. The freedom bought with those sweet lives is precious and must be cherished deeply - but, dear Lord, at what price!

As I mentioned earlier, we had a school holiday on VE Day, 8th May 1945; it's in my mind as if it were yesterday. I also vividly remember the evening of VJ Day, on the 15th August and being with our family in the upstairs lounge of our grandma's house in Newton-le-willows. Suddenly, we heard voices in the street below. We went to the window and looked down to see the road full of people striding towards the centre of town. My aunt opened the window and called out, “What's happened?”. The answer still rings loud across seventy-five years: **“IT'S ALL OVER!”**

We went down and joined the crowd, which mingled with other streets, full of crazily happy people, all converging on the market square, where they laughed and talked until long after we left them.

VE Day in
Manchester, 8
May 1945.
Photo: UGC
Manchester
Evening News



Nothing else happened and I'll always remember how nearly the whole town instinctively went to the market square. It was so simple, yet magnificent. We

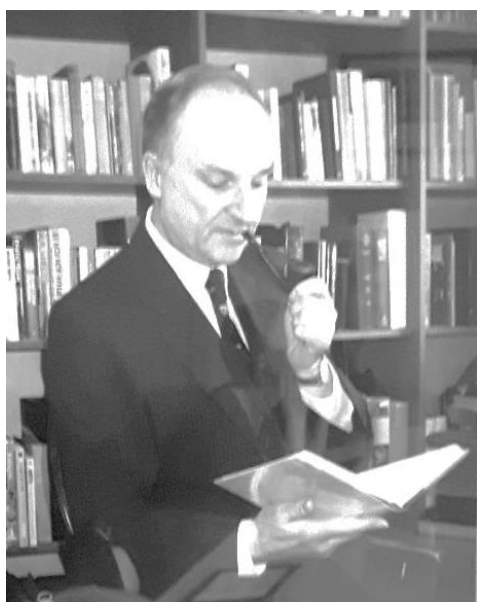
had the wireless, yes, but there was no television, few people had a telephone, and in order to take part in the great event, they sought each other's company in the only way possible. That was it, but it was enough for us for the moment. We met each other and were united in relief and joy, as we had been united in suffering, directly and indirectly, for six long years.

Here's something that I realised only recently. As young children, our history lessons projected little beyond the battle of Waterloo and the downfall of Napoleon. Good grief, in

1940 we still sang “Boney was a warrior” in school! The young children of today are taught about the 20th century, especially the two World Wars. But in real life, we were steeped in WWII, and our parents’ generation was involved in both wars, so between us, we were very much a part of the 20th century. We were up to date as history was made and the expression “total war” became stark reality. My knowledge of European geography is still grounded in the small, desperately important maps that appeared in the Daily Herald nearly every morning. Those times are engraved on our bones; even now they affect the way we think and act and pray, as we survey the world around us, with its dreadful weaponry - both “hard” and “soft” – and too many unfree nations: the cunning and unstable nature of their dictators keeps our own democratic leaders guessing too often and for too long, still haunted by memories, group and historic, of suffering and deaths by the million. Dear God, not again - never again. We need our faith and courage now as a comfort to

ourselves and as an example to others in a hard world. May the peace of God be with us all, as we remember so much and pray for so many.

Yours sincerely,
Roger Tarbuck



Rev. Roger Tarbuck was our minister at Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarian Church between September 1977 to 1994. He studied first at Unitarian College Manchester, then at Manchester College Oxford, and was appointed minister at Newcastle upon Tyne from September 1977, where he stayed until retiring in 1994. In 1996, Rev. Tarbuck came back as Pastor at Newcastle and stayed until 2004, when he retired. He is a Spanish speaker and learned to play the guitar, although modestly has never claimed any proficiency at it. His regular letters to the church are always much appreciated!

Events Updates

Uni-Sing! A group for online hymn singing:
Via Zoom at 3pm on Saturdays. They have a Facebook page, or you can email Louise Rogers to find out more:

louise.rogers256@gmail.com

Women's Group

The Unitarian Women's Group (UWG) are holding a virtual Conference on Zoom on 23 October 2020 in the evening, on 24 October in the afternoon and evening and on 25 October a morning service. The UWG Membership fee has been waived for the year October 2020 to September 2021. Also Membership is free for anyone new joining during this year. For further information, times and links contact Margaret Robinson:

margaretrobinson81@gmail.com



Restoring Hope: Faith and Finances

ECCR is proud
to present
'Restoring Hope',

a series of online events, run during Good Money Week (24th – 30th October) exploring the connections between faith and finance:

www.eccr.org.uk/news/restoring-hope-a-series-of-online-events-24-30-october-2020-2

Homeward Bound: The Climate Sessions

A four-part online series exploring climate change. Sundays 15, 22, 29 November & 6 December starting at 7.15pm:

<https://aschoolcalledhome.org/>

Unitarian and Free Christian Bible Discussion Group

An online meeting on Facebook set up by Rory Castle-Jones. To find out more, visit them at: tinyurl.com/UFCBible

Online Worship

Many congregations have moved to online services. This site has a list of congregations and how to connect with them online:

www.unitarian.org.uk/online-services

Heart and Soul Groups

Heart & Soul is a contemplative spiritual gathering (online) in which you can take time to reflect on life in the company of others. Visit the website for more information:

www.heartandsoulcircles.org.uk

Recent Service Highlights **Recorded, available online:**

YouTube: tinyurl.com/NUnitarianYouTube

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/NewcastleuponTyneUnitarians

2 August – Diana Bebby

Diana Bebby is a member of the congregation at Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians. Diana hosted a live Zoom worship on the subject of water and blue spaces, with readings from the congregation. It was in honour of August being Water Quality Month.

9 August – Diana Bebby

Diana hosted a live Zoom worship on the subject of the joy of the written word, with contributions from various members of the

congregation. It was in honour of 9th August being Book Lovers' Day.

16 August – Louise Reeve

Louise welcomed us back into our church building with a service on 'Welcome'.

23 August – Louise Reeve

Louise stood in for Tom McCready with a service on tolerance, exploring the history of dissenting faith and the changing law which made Unitarianism legal again.

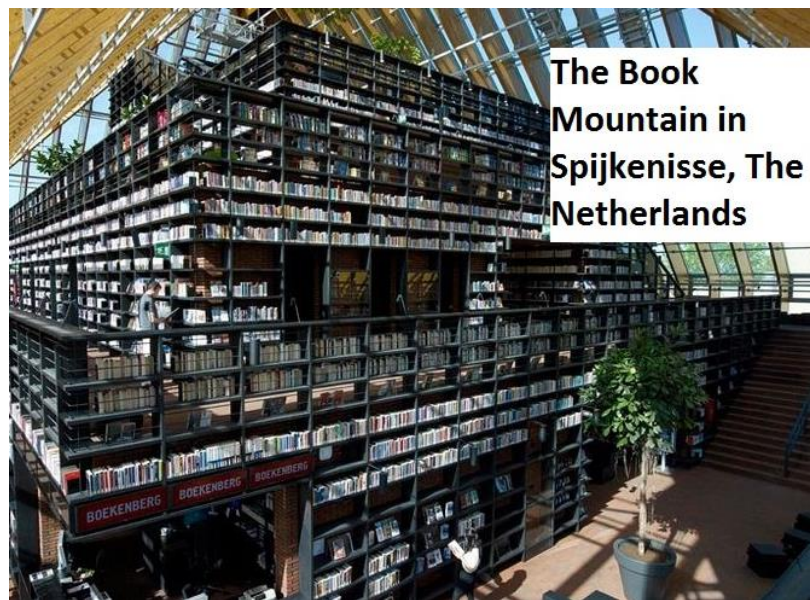
30 August – Diana Bebby

Diana presented a service on the topic of 'Happiness', looking at stoicism, rewriting our own stories and life being 'good enough'.



6 September – Diana Bebby

Diana presented a service continuing from last week on the topic of 'The



Science of Smiling’ looking at what happens to our brains when we smile and when we see others smile.

13 September – Margaret Robinson

Margaret Robinson joined us from Stockton Unitarians for a service on the topic of ‘Grandparents’, in honour of National Grandparents Day.

20 September – Joan Cook

Joan Cook joined us from Edinburgh Unitarians for a service on the topic of ‘The Gift of Time’ looking at how we can make our time a gift by using it to serve.

27 September – Louise van der Hoeven

Louise presented our annual Harvest Festival live on Zoom. The congregation were encouraged to donate food to their local foodbanks rather than having a collection at the church, as in previous years.



Where are we going?



An online Unitarian discussion

On 18 August 2020, 12 Unitarians from across the UK, invited by our Chief Officer Liz Slade met online for a focus group about the issues we've experienced as Unitarians, the challenges we think we face as a movement, and what our future might be. Facilitated by Mirka Packard, the Director of Verto Consulting (doing this for free as part of her academic work) the aim was to learn about the dynamics and attitudes that exist in our

movement, and how they are experienced. It was a mix of ministers and laypeople, chosen for their different experiences, their congregational experience - and their ability to attend! Some were familiar faces, including Rev. Tony McNeile, others, new friends.

I really enjoyed the session. I feel we had a challenging, but constructive discussion. Some of what we discussed would be familiar to Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians, including the disconnect between the national movement and local congregations and the challenges of publicity for a movement that varies so widely from location to location. I put across the view we've often expressed here; that if we are not going to be one homogenous movement across the UK, then local congregations must do local publicity – with support and (some) resources provided by the national head office. The will of all to see our movement survive and thrive was strong!

I followed up with Liz Slade about the next steps for this initiative, and commented that whilst it was a very useful discussion, sometimes it seems as though we have had rather a lot of these in recent years, such as 'Next Steps' or 'Vision 2020'. She replied that she rather agreed there had been a few of them, but that the lessons from them had been absorbed into the plans for the future that the national movement is working on. She also commented: “Part of what I hope Mirka will help us uncover is why we seem to get stuck at the talking stage with renewal initiatives!”

We agreed that ensuring congregations have enough resources and “fuel in the tanks” to keep going in difficult times and support those in leadership roles was vitally important. I’ll keep everyone posted about what happens next!

- Louise Reeve

History of the Church: JAMES LOSH 1763 – 1833

James Losh was born on 10th June 1763 at Woodside, the family house near Wreay, a small village about four miles south of Carlisle.



The Losh family were long settled at Woodside, having been well established there by the time of Henry VIII and having established a large estate around the house. The generation which included James and his brothers established themselves as members of the congregation of Rev William Turner in Hanover Square Unitarian Chapel. James was the fourth child, and the fourth of eight sons and one daughter of John and Catherine Losh.

James was educated at Sedbergh and Cambridge. He was called to the bar in 1789

and at one time considered ordination, but his Unitarian views made that impossible. Not long after the Revolution he went to France, and escaped the wrath of the *sans-culottes* who, by reason of his manner and style, thought he was an aristocrat. It is said that he was saved because he knew Jean-Paul Marat, who had practised as a vet in Newcastle where the two men had become acquainted. He was intellectually and politically active all his life and translated publications on the Revolution into English.

In 1795 he had a breakdown and recuperated in Bath, where he made the acquaintance of Humphrey Davy. Similarly he counted Southey, Coleridge and the Wordsworths among his circle of friends, and gets mention in Dorothy Wordsworth's diary as he would visit the couple who were near neighbours in Cumberland.

In 1798 he married Cecilia Baldwin and shortly thereafter moved to The Grove, a house in Jesmond which was demolished in

1927, but whose name survives in a street which runs from Queens Road to Jesmond Dene Road. He practised as a barrister on the Northern Circuit, which at that time included the eastern counties which later became the North-Eastern Circuit. The nature of work in those days meant that he had time to pursue his political interests and also the mining, ironworking and chemical manufacturing which were run by his brothers George and William. As a barrister he was regarded as a man of strict integrity and sound judgment, although one biographer in referring to his habit of keeping a diary says, *“It is his diary which makes it possible to obtain a portrait of a man who was a dull plodder at his work, and yet had vision; a man who could be surprisingly mean and petty, yet one whose generosity and compassion towards others made him nearly a very great man.”**

Losh was an active reformer and philanthropist. Among the causes which he espoused with fervour were the abolition of

the slave trade, Catholic emancipation together with total religious freedom, and, above all, parliamentary reform. A friend of both Charles (later second Earl) Grey and Henry Brougham, he used his influence in the northern counties to speed the passing of the Reform Bill. In the smaller world of Newcastle, Losh did valuable work towards the relief of indigence and the betterment of social conditions and educational standards; he was a leading figure in the improvement of services in the infirmary and the fever hospital, and the establishment of Sunday schools, infant and secondary schools, and mechanics' institutes. Always forward-looking, and abreast of industrial developments, he was a prime mover, as chairman of the directors, in the construction of the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway. He supported George Stevenson's invention of the safety lamp against the claims of his old friend Humphrey Davy, which greatly piqued Davy. The family businesses, run by his brothers, were involved in the development of cast iron rails for the

railways to be built by George and Robert Stevenson (at one time George Stevenson was employed by the firm) and also were subcontractors on the approach works to the High Level Bridge. Losh, Wilson and Bell eventually became part of Dorman Long.

In 1813 the Doctrine of the Trinity Act was passed, at last granting toleration for Unitarian worship. The Test and Corporation Acts were repealed in 1828, finally making it possible for Unitarians to hold public office. For Losh it resulted in the final and greatest honour, when he was appointed Honorary Recorder of Newcastle, the senior criminal judge in the city.

Losh had two sons who died in infancy. His third son, James Losh Jnr became a County Court Judge.

Losh died in 1833 and is buried in St Nicholas' churchyard in Church Road Gosforth. The funeral cortege from Jesmond Grove was led by Sir Matthew Ridley, Bart., Dr Headlam and others, followed by members of the Lit & Phil,

the lawyers, the Anti-Slavery Society, the Mechanics Institute and the Schoolmasters' Association and others. Then followed the principal representatives of the Unitarian congregation from Hanover Square. The Mayor and Corporation of



Newcastle and Lord Durham were also in the procession. It must have been quite an occasion. Wordsworth could not attend but commented that 1833 had been a bad year as he had lost Coleridge, Charles Lamb and James Losh in the same year.

The principal memorial to Losh is the statue which stands on the staircase of the Lit & Phil in Westgate Road.

Losh's brother John was prominent in the Tyneside alkali industry and in 1809 founded

the Walker Iron Works, managed by brother William. In 1817, John's gifted daughter Sara Losh and her beloved sister Katherine (with Uncle William) made a continental tour. On the death of her sister in 1835, Sara resolved to build a church at Wreay in her memory, basing her design on the architecture she had seen when abroad. She had no architect, and used a local man as sculptor. The result is one of the most remarkable churches in England. Dedicated in 1842, it has symbolic carving unique to itself and may be said to have anticipated the Arts and Crafts movement by some fifty years. Simon Jenkins calls Sara 'an individual genius, a Charlotte Bronte of wood and stone'.

**Foul Bills and Dagger Money* by Dick Hamilton

- Maurice Large

August-September Committee Meeting (via Zoom) notes

Sale and Use of the Building: The sale is ongoing but the church is not being used.

NUA: Brian Robson and Ben MacLeod continue to represent us; meetings online.

Publicity: We continue to update our website, YouTube and Facebook pages. We are placing update posters outside the church building. We want to start a blog.

Services: We briefly opened the building for services, but new restrictions mean we are back online with recorded videos and live Zoom meetings. Except for a couple of gaps in November, we have worship ready until the end of the year.

Standard items: We discussed the treasurer's and secretary's reports, pulpit supply, correspondence and the reading group.

Next committee meeting will be Sunday 1 November at 12.45pm on Zoom.



Services are back online due to new restrictions – see our YouTube and Facebook pages. Keep up to date by visiting our website and Facebook, or email or call us:

info@newcastleunitarians.org.uk

07506 255 731

YouTube: tinyurl.com/NUnitarianYouTube

Facebook: facebook.com/NewcastleuponTyneUnitarians

Alternatively, you can join another Unitarian congregation online – see this page for a list of choices:

www.unitarian.org.uk/online-services

October Services:

4 – Fellowship Service

11 – Anne Mills

18 – Café Church

25 – Tom McCready and Margaret Whitham

November Services are also planned as live online Zoom meetings

Pulpit supply: Diana Bebbby

diana.bebby@newcastleunitarians.org.uk

Flower Dedications

Our regular flower display will be suspended while the church is closed.

If you would still like to dedicate some flowers to a loved one in the future, please email

info@newcastleunitarians.org.uk

Many thanks go to Sheila and Joan for the flowers we have enjoyed so far this year.



Articles for the August-September calendar to be submitted no later, please, than **Sunday 22 November 2020**. Thanks to Rev. Roger Tarbuck, Louise Reeve, Maurice Large and Ben MacLeod for their contributions to this calendar.



Newcastle upon Tyne Unitarians

All are welcome here



We are a free religious faith and affirm the unity of the human family, regardless of race, creed, class, orientation or sex.

We believe that peace, compassion and justice should be the hallmarks of a truly spiritual society, pursued in a spirit of freedom, reason and tolerance.



The Unitarian Community in this city traces its history back to 1662, when Dr. Richard Gilpin and Rev. William Durant started separate Nonconformist meetings after the Act of Uniformity. Under the Rev. Herbert Barnes,

our current building in Ellison Place opened on Sunday 21 January 1940.

Calendar editor: Diana Bebbby

Email: info@newcastleunitarians.org.uk

Telephone: 07506 255 731

Facebook: facebook.com/NewcastleuponTyneUnitarians

PRIDE