



"Reverence for life"
Cherishing the diverse life of our planet



Dear Friends

We are in celebratory mode here at HUC as we enter the month of May. Spring is well and truly upon us. The blossoms on our harbinger of spring, the magnificent magnolia outside the front porch, have already died away. Now it is the turn of the azaleas to take pride of place with their dazzling array of colours. And our arresting new wayside pulpit is attracting a great deal of interest.

On Sunday 30 April, we are holding a special service to celebrate membership of our precious spiritual community. I am looking forward to hearing the testimony and stories of members as they share how and why they became Unitarians and what they most value about being part of our beloved community. Our sacred space, the building in which we worship, is dear to us. (Indeed, we are very much looking forward to our Anniversary Service on 14 May, led by Rev Bill Darlison, celebrating the foundation of our church.) However, in the words of the hymn, HFL 174: "A church is a living fellowship more than a holy shrine; a church is a place of human trust more than of brick and stone; of Love we will sing to make it ring in every joyous tone."

The Opening Celebration at this year's General Assembly in Birmingham earlier in April was simply wonderful. Welsh Unitarians presented a musical drama telling the story of Unitarianism in Wales, a story inextricably linked with radical thought and battles for social justice. It was both moving and entertaining, delivered with great conviction and, of course, the singing was marvellous. Stirring stuff! We have much to celebrate in our heritage.

Our *GreenSpirit* meeting on Wed 3 May will take the form of a Celebration of Spring. In our *GS* meetings we are often lamenting the damage we have done and continue to do to our beautiful home planet. It is easy when considering ecological challenges to be filled with despair... and yet Spring returns year after year, with its sustaining vision of hope.

In June, we are participating in the Great Get Together to commemorate the murder of pioneering MP Jo Cox, but, above all, to celebrate her life and the generosity of spirit she represented.

Let us celebrate with gratitude: our living fellowship; our beautiful worship environment; people of conviction who can inspire us with words and deeds; stirring music; and the wonder of spring.

Blessings from the Minister

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Services May 2017

SUNDAY	Service Leader	FLOWERS	COFFEE
7th	Francis Clark-Lowes	Catherine Andrews	Teresa Ramsden
14th	Bill Darlison Anniversary Service 3.00pm		
21st	Rev Maria Curtis	Carol Chambers	Carol Chambers
28th	Rev Ashley Hills	Teresa Ramsden	Jill Allen

Events - May 2017

Wednesday 3rd May

7.00 – 9.00pm in Church Hall

HUC *GreenSpirit* Meeting



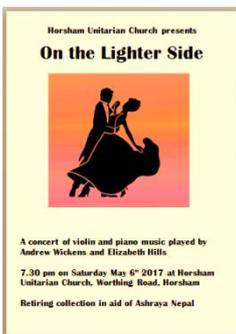
Celebration of Spring

Please bring a poem, prose or a prayer to read; a film clip or some recorded music to play. Andrew Wickens will play his violin; Charmaine Sadler will play the piano. There will also be some singing.

If you would like to contribute to this evening in any way, please let Maria know, so that a programme can be devised. All are welcome. Why not bring a friend? Please contact Maria on (revdocmaria@gmail.com or 01403 612319)

Saturday 6th May

7.30pm in the Church



'On the Lighter Side'

Concert in aid of the Nepalese education charity Ashraya Nepal. Andrew Wickens and Liz Hills will present a varied modern and classical repertoire from films and opera. Concluding with drinks, canapes and a retiring collection.

Sunday 7th May

2.30 pm "Hayes" Farm

Bluebell Walk weather permitting, at Andrew and Teresa Ramsden's farm followed by afternoon tea.



Saturday 13th May - 12.00 Godalming

General Baptist Assembly AGM. Service



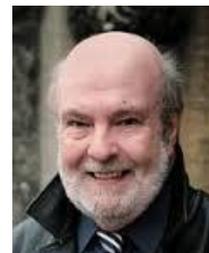
led by Rev Sheena Gabriel, followed by lunch and AGM. A great opportunity to meet others from

former GB chapels across the country, (now all Unitarian.) All welcome to this event at Meadow Chapel, Godalming.

Anniversary Service

**Sunday 14th May 2017 at
3pm, followed by Tea**

This year's service will be led by **Rev Bill Darlison**, Minister Emeritus of Dublin Unitarian Church and General Assembly President, 2012-13. He is author of several books, including collections of his Addresses to his Dublin congregation, and stories from faith traditions all over the world.



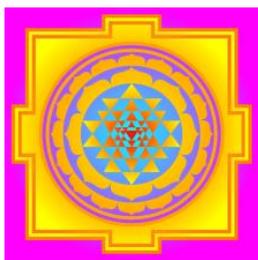
The Gospel and the Zodiac: The Secret Truth about Jesus, is a controversial work which argues that the Gospel of Mark is structured on the signs of the zodiac. Bill Darlison has also written for *The Inquirer* and other Unitarian publications.

Please join us for an inspirational service.

Events - May Continued 2017

Sunday 14th May

Departure 11.30pm



Horsham Interfaith Forum Excursion

(with lunch), visiting Crawley Hindu and Sikh temples (the Gurjar Hindu Union Mandir &

Apple Tree Centre, Ifield, Crawley).

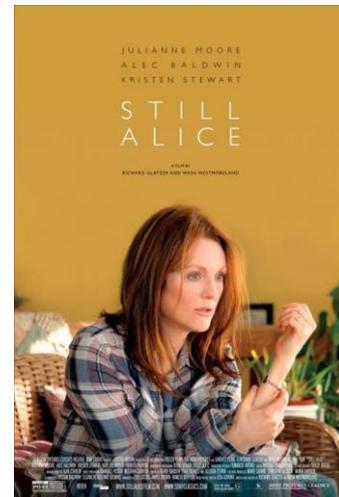
There will be greetings on arrival and an explanation about the Mandir & Apple Tree Centre followed by a short service at 12 noon. A Hindu Temple question and answer session will be followed by a free simple vegetarian lunch at approx. 12.30. There will then be a visit to the Ifield Gurdwara for about 30 minutes. Anyone requiring a lift please put down your name on the sheet provided on the church notice board.

Wednesday 24th May

7.00pm in Church Hall

Church Film Evening screening the 2014

Richard Glatzer film *Still Alice*, charting the struggles of once-vibrant linguistics professor Dr Alice Howland (Julianne Moore) as she comes face-to-face with a devastating diagnosis of early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Julianne Moore won a Best Actress Academy Award for her role in the film which, although challenging, will be particularly relevant to our church as a Dementia Friendly organisation.



Charity Fundraising Success

We can report with pleasure that the Unity Player's 7th and 8th April cabaret *Give my Regards to Broadway* raised a total of £2134.00.

The funds will be divided between our two church charities, Cancer Research and Red Cross Syria, each of which will receive £1067.00

Events – June 2017

Sunday 4th June, Flower Communion Service

We will be joining Unitarians all over the world in celebrating the 95th anniversary of the first flower communion service written by Norbert Capek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Prague.



Wednesday 7th June 7.00 – 9.00pm in Church Hall



HUC GreenSpirit Meeting Multi award winning environmental communicator, Carrie Cort, will share Al Gore's Climate Reality presentation with us. The presentation will break down the complex terms of science and policy into the language of everyday life, so that people everywhere can understand how climate change directly affects them. They can then join the millions of people worldwide in making changes to their everyday lives which will make a real difference. Alongside information on the negative effects humans are having on the planet Carrie will include lots of positive evidence to show that all is not lost.

Events - June Continued 2017

Sunday 18th June

10.30am to 2.30pm



Sunday **THE GREAT GET TOGETHER** **18th June**
IN HONOUR OF JO COX

Across the UK, communities will be marking the first anniversary of the death of Jo Cox, with 'Great Get Together' events. We at Horsham Unitarian Church are hosting our own event on Sunday 18th June. We will be holding a special community service for members and invited guests on the theme of unity. This will be co-led by our minister Rev Dr Maria Curtis and Mehrdad Kalani from the Baha'i faith, and will be followed by lunch.

This event is a non-political, non-denominational celebration of Jo's life. It aims to bring communities together in a spirit of friendship and harmony.

'We have FAR MORE IN COMMON than that which divides us.' Jo Cox, MP

We hope you will be able to attend this special event and share in our community celebration.

Events – July 2017

Sunday 30th July

12.00-1.00pm in Church Hall



Congregational Meeting Our minister will give feedback from the Festival of Unitarians in the South-East (FUSE) held in February. Maria and our delegate, Rev Richard Boeke, will report to the congregation on April's General Assembly in Birmingham. Rev Jopie Boeke and Richard will also report on 20-25 June 2017 UUA General Assembly in New Orleans. Please join us to hear all our news.



Stories from our Congregation

The third in our series of stories taken from the range of inventive and touching stories presented by members of the congregation at our 19th February service. This contribution was made by Jill Allen.



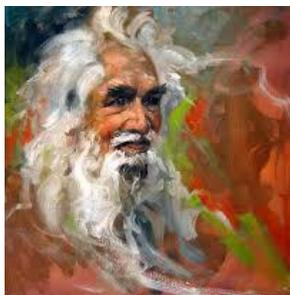
There was once a woman called Abrihet who married a widower. The man had a young son, about twelve years old, and before she married the boy's father,

Abrihet realised that her new stepson would resent her presence in the house, thinking that she was trying to replace his dead mother.

But she wasn't prepared for just how much hostility he actually showed her. He wouldn't eat the food she prepared, he wouldn't wear the clothes she bought him, and he wouldn't do anything she asked him to do. Whenever she tried to reason with him he would say, 'You're not my mother. I don't have to listen to you.'

This made Abrihet very sad; but she was determined to win the young lad's respect and affection come what may. She had heard that there was a very wise man who lived in the forest, a man who could make magic spells. 'Perhaps he can help me,' she thought. She set out to find this wise man, and after many hours of walking she eventually came across his hut. She went inside and explained her problem.

'I have a stepson who doesn't love me,' she said. 'He won't eat the food I cook, he won't wear the clothes I buy for him, and he won't do anything I ask him to do. In fact, he barely even talks to me. Could you make me a magic potion which I could secretly give to him so that he would love me?'



'What you ask is very difficult,' replied the wise man of the forest, 'but I can do it. However, the spell requires one very special ingredient, and you must bring it to me.'

'Oh, yes, I'll bring whatever you need. You must bring me a whisker from the face of a lion.'

'That shouldn't be too difficult' said Abrihet, 'there are plenty of dead lions I can take one from.' 'Ah, but here's the problem,' he said. 'The lion must be alive when you take it!'

Abrihet left the magician's hut very downhearted. She had seen just how ferocious lions could be, and she had heard stories of how angry lions had killed men and women who had been foolish enough to get in their way. Still, she desperately wanted her stepson to love her and so she resolved to try to get a whisker from the face of a living lion.

That night she went out into the forest where she knew some lions lived. She brought some food in a dish and left it where a lion could find it. Then she retreated a long way off, and crouched down to see what would happen. In a few minutes a big lion came and ate the food and then lay down for a nap.

The next night Abrihet went out again. She took another bowl of meat, and left it for the lion, but this time she didn't go quite so far away. Once again, the lion came and ate the food and then lay down for a nap.

Each night Abrihet got a little braver, getting closer and closer to the lion. After two weeks she left the dish of food near a clump of bushes, and after making sure the wind was blowing towards her and not away from her towards the dish, she hid herself in the bushes.

The lion came, looked around, gobbled up the meat, and then lay down to sleep.



Abrihet waited until she felt he must have dozed off, and then, even though she was terrified of what might happen, she slowly crawled towards the lion, and taking out some scissors, she carefully snipped a whisker from the lion's face.

She stepped away very gingerly, walking backwards, until she was about fifty yards away and then she began to run as fast as she could. She had done it! She had got the whisker from the face of a living lion!

She went speedily to the magician's hut. 'I've got it!' she exclaimed, with a big smile on her face. 'I've got the lion's whisker,' and she held it out proudly for the wise man to see. 'Yes, I can see you have it,' he said. 'Well done. Please give it to me.'

Abrihet gave him the whisker gladly, but no sooner did the magician have it in his hand than he threw it into the fire where it was instantly burned up.

'What have you done?' shouted Abrihet. 'Why have you burned the whisker? Don't you realise how much trouble I've gone through to get it? I could have been killed? What about the magic potion you were going to make for me?' Abrihet was very angry. 'The magic has already been done,' said the wise man with a smile. 'You have learned a very important lesson. By putting all your energy and attention to the problem you had, you solved it. Now go home and put all your attention to your other problem. If you can take a whisker from the face of a living lion, surely you can get a young boy to love you.' Abrihet thanked the wise man and returned home.

On the way she thought about the magician's words, and she realised he was right. Her problem didn't need magic; it just needed a willingness to focus her attention on finding a solution.



They say that in a few short months she was able to win the young man's trust and affection, and they stayed the best of friends throughout Abrihet's life.

spring by e. e. cummings

*O sweet spontaneous
earth how often have
the
doting*

*fingers of
prurient philosophers pinched
and
poked*

*thee
, has the naughty thumb
of science prodded
thy*

*beauty . how
often have religions taken
thee upon their scraggy knees
squeezing and*

*buffeting thee that thou mightest
conceive
gods
(but
true*

*to the incomparable
couch of death thy
rhythmic
lover*

thou answerest

them only with

spring)