



The
Monthly
Messenger
for

February
2025

A Journal of the
Unitarian Church
Clover Street
Rochdale

Volume 139

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PASTORAL TEAM

Interfaith Minister Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie,
Joyce Ashworth, Dorothy Jones & Helen Illingworth

CHURCH COUNCIL

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Treasurer – John Illingworth

Church Admin Assistant – Paul Hubbard

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Edna Wood, Helen Wilkinson, Anne Dawson

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FEBRUARY

Flowers

Should you know of someone for whom Church flowers would be a source of comfort and solace please have a word with Helen or Joyce

	2nd Vacant
	9th Vacant
	16th John and Helen Illingworth In Celebration of their Wedding Anniversary
	23rd Joyce and Greta In Memory of Mum, Dad and Raymond
	Flowers lovingly arranged by: Dorothy Jones (2nd), Helen Illingworth (9th), Anne Dawson (16th,) Margaret Shore (23rd)

REMINDER

100 CLUB RENEWALS

John is still looking to receive renewals for the 100 Club subscriptions. A combined January & February draw will take place on Sunday 9th February 2025.

PLEASE!!
NOTE

Welcome to the February Messenger newsletter.

I can't believe how fast January has gone — though, given how awful the weather has been of late, I'm glad to see the back of it — roll on February!



What has Clover Street got in store then? Quite a lot, as it turns out: we've got our Book Circle and Film Night (see pg 8), as well as a very promising talk by Mr Richard Lord on 1900s Rochdale for our monthly Women's League meeting (preceded by an excellent Tea, of course!).

Finally on pg 9, we have an important update on, and invitation to join, our church Ministry Group by Rev Abi, so please make sure to give it a read.

See you in March — Ed

CHARITY UPDATES

Thanks to your generous donations starting with remembrance day and concluding with the Christmas Card Scheme, we have managed to donate the following to various charitable causes:-

- Remembrance Day Retiring Collection - £115 to the Royal British Legion
- £1 Sale Event - £100 raised for our local foodbank
- Toy & Gift Service - Toys to RMBC Christmas Giving Scheme plus £150 to Rochdale Children's Moorland Home
- Carol Service Retiring Collection - £200 to the British Red Cross
- Christmas Card Scheme - added £87 for Springhill Hospice. To date we have raised just over £2,100 and still 3 months left for fundraising.

These are amazing amounts all thanks to your continued generosity.

John Illingworth, Church Treasurer



MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear friends,

In some of the small areas where I shop, it's become quite a 'thing' for shop windows to be decorated with seasonal painting, and I really enjoy seeing them. On cold grey days, when the decorations and lights of Christmas have gone, this creativity brings a brightness which I really appreciate. From card shops to restaurants and beauty salons, the window art has turned to hearts and flowers for Valentine's Day. The seasons change and the windows change, as do relationships.

Each of us individually is constantly evolving, therefore, every relationship is a process that's also evolving. A process in which we grow in our understanding of ourselves and each other, and from my perspective I feel that's been happening, and it feels good.

Last month the upper windows on the Holland Street side of our building were replaced, for which scaffolding was required. The windows were replaced as planned (despite snow fall and extreme cold!), but it was some time after before the scaffolding was taken down.

An example in my mind, of what any relationship (whether of romantic or platonic love) needs. In the early stages we need something that acts as the scaffolding, so that we can build, repair or replace. And when the work is complete, the scaffolding is brought down at the appropriate time, though sometimes it might stay in place a bit longer and that's ok. The temporary structure can be removed because we're confident that what we've built or repaired is solid and its safe.

It doesn't mean that what we've yet to build is any less unknown or that we won't need to make use of scaffolding again, but we know the support is there if needed.

I think we can be proud of what we've built so far. I'm confident that it's healthy, it's solid and it's safe. So, thank you, each of you, for your trust and your love. Happy Valentine's Day!

With my love, Abi xx



FEBRUARY NEWS AND EVENTS



Flowers lovingly arranged by:

Dorothy Jones (2nd), Helen Illingworth (9th), Anne Dawson (16th,) Margaret Shore (23rd)



Sun	02	10.30	Sunday Service led by Rev Abi
Mon	03	19.15	NELUM Meeting at Unity
Thur	06	17.00	Monthly Tea Hostess: Adele Henson
		18.30	WL Meeting —see opposite
Sat	08	19.00	Film Night — Joy
Sun	09	10.30	Sunday Service led by Paul Hubbard
Mon	10	19.30	Book Circle at 5 Bagnall Close
Sun	16	10.30	Sunday Service led by Rev Abi
Sun	23	10.30	Sunday Service led by Rev Helen Mills

ABOUT PEOPLE

Dear friends, a rather belated but none-the-less sincere thank you for the wonderful variety of goodies in the Christmas boxes, presented to members of the congregation who are over a certain age! Also a big thank you for the lovely Christmas Music Service, conducted by the Rev'd Beryl Allerton, with music from Ewa. **Edna** (January 2025)

I'm sure I speak for all of us "oldies" when I say how very much we appreciated the delightful Christmas "goodie" boxes we were privileged to receive. They were so thoughtfully packed with just the right items that, certainly I, thoroughly enjoyed and indeed am still enjoying. **Joyce**

Tracy has had her operation and is recovering well. She has had a check up and they are happy with her so far. She is walking better and swimming. She said: 'I hope everyone is doing well. Happy New Year to all.'

WOMEN'S LEAGUE MEETING 6.30PM

Speaker Mr Richard Lord:

Rochdale in the 1900's



Spring Lunch
Sat 8th March
11.45 am
£13

Rochdale Unitarian Church
lover Street, Rochdale OL12 6TF

WARDEN/COFFEE ROTA FOR 2025

Helen Illingworth & Margaret Salt	05 Jan	09 Feb	16 Mar	20 Apl	25 May	29 Jun	03 Aug	07 Sep	12 Oct	16 Nov	21 Dec
Dorothy Jones & Margaret Shore	12 Jan	16 Feb	23 Mar	27 Apl	01 Jun	06 Jul	10 Aug	14 Sep	19 Oct	23 Nov	25 Dec
Margaret Salt & Joyce Ashworth	19 Jan	23 Feb	30 Mar	04 May	08 Jun	13 Jul	17 Aug	21 Sep	26 Oct	30 Nov	28 Dec
John & Helen Illingworth	26 Jan	02 Mar	06 Apl	11 May	15 Jun	20 Jul	24 Aug	28 Sep	02 Nov	07 Dec	
Margaret Shore & Dorothy Jones	02 Feb	09 Mar	13 Apl	18 May	22 Jun	27 Jul	31 Aug	05 Oct	09 Nov	14 Dec	

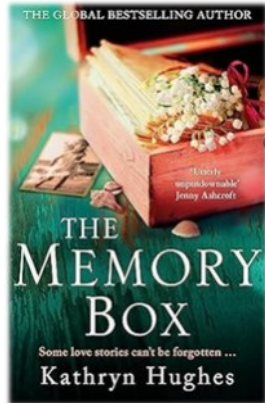
Important - should you be unable to attend please arrange for a stand-in, it is difficult for one person to cover both functions.

BOOK CIRCLE



Monday 10th February

For our February meeting we will be discussing *The Memory Box* by bestselling author Kathryn Hughes. Jenny Tanner opens the box she has cherished for decades. Contained within are her most precious mementoes, amongst them a pebble, a carving and a newspaper cutting she can hardly bear to read. But Jenny knows the time is finally here. After the war, in a mountainside village in Italy, she left behind a piece of her heart. However painful, she must return to Cinque Alberi and lay the past to rest.



FILM NIGHT



Saturday 8th February

For our next Film Night we are showing the film *Joy*. *Joy* is a 2024 British biographical drama film starring Bill Nighy, Thomasin McKenzie and James Norton. Directed by Ben Taylor from a screenplay by Jack Thorne, it is the true story of the world's first in vitro fertilisation baby Louise Brown.

Based on real events in the 1960s and 1970s, nurse and embryologist Jean Purdy, visionary scientist Dr Robert Edwards and innovative surgeon Patrick Steptoe work to develop the first 'test tube baby'. As the team have little funding, Jean and Robert must commute four hours daily to Dr Kershaw's District Hospital, Oldham, now a hospice.

As usual, we start at 7 pm with an interval for ice cream. Please add your name to the list on the notice board to book your supper for a donation of £8.00.



The Ministry Group – what's it about?

Ministry is about everything we do as a community; what serves us as individuals, what serves this Unitarian community and what we do in service for the wider community. It's not just about the Minister, but what we all do together.

Ministry is the big umbrella under which our community functions and it needs input from as many of us as possible, so that what we do and how we represent ourselves is representative of the whole. We deal with the ordinary and practical things, but it's also a place for discussion, sharing ideas and talking about our vision.

During my time with you (can you believe we're already embarking on the 4th year!), Diane Bennett and Helen Illingworth have accompanied me in implementing a lot of what has gone on in these meetings, and I hope you've appreciated the impact on this community.

On a personal note, I've valued all that Diane and Helen have contributed, and have appreciated their support in helping me bring the best I can to my role as Minister.

This year we intend to meet once every four months (meetings are usually held in person and are approx. an hour long), the next meeting will be due in April.

So, an invitation!

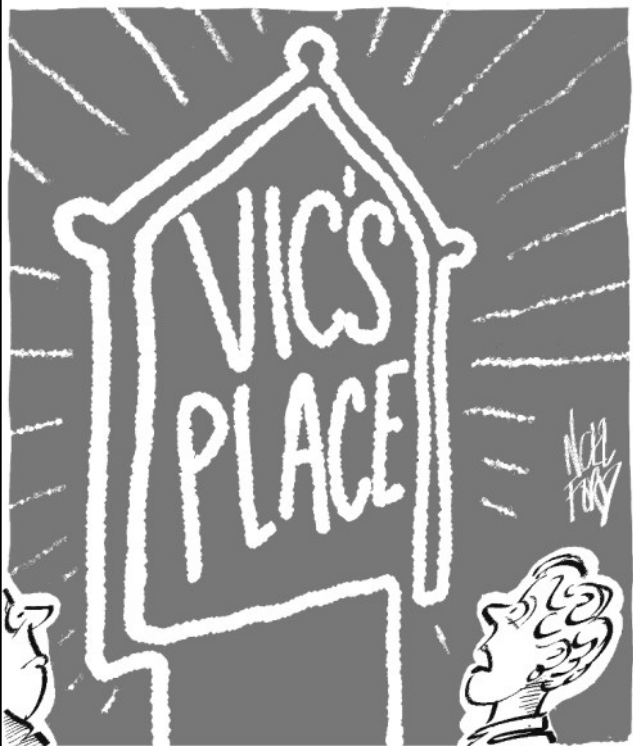
Would you like to be part of the ministry group as we look to our future here at Clover Street?

Is there anything concerning ministry that you want to discuss, even if you don't feel that being part of the group is for you?

Either way, please come and talk to either Diane, Helen or myself, we want to hear from you.

Rev Abi xx

CARTOONS FOR FEBRUARY



"It may well attract more young folk to join the congregation but I still prefer the old church notice board"

Two cartoons for you to enjoy this month, from the excellent Parish Pump resource (it is a true god-send to Church Newsletter Editors everywhere!).

Above: we spent a long time on the design and ordering of the church noticeboard (now standing in resplendent green outside our Clover Street building). It is reassuring to know that many other congregations have faced similar struggles!

Below: I think this one speaks for itself. The Rochdale contributors are normally very punctual — which is more than I can say of previous employers!



the unitarians

ANNUAL MEETINGS

12-14 APRIL 2025



BOOKINGS NOW OPEN

The Annual Meetings of the General Assembly of Unitarians and Free Christians are just 10 weeks away and bookings are now open! If you are coming from afar or just would like some time to "land", you might want to take advantage of the special B&B rate that we organised with the hotel for the 11th April, the night before the meeting start. This is a separate booking to the main event registration.

This year we will be back at the Hilton Metropole in Birmingham. This location has advantages such as good transport links and excellent accessibility within the building. Although it is in an urban setting, there is a pond on the grounds with a walking path, offering a connection with nature during the weekend. We will do our best to create spaces inside for quiet spiritual reflection, so that you have a place to pause and be calm.

We are very pleased to have Alison Webster, General Secretary of Modern Church and Mission Theologian in Residence at Citizens UK as our keynote speaker. The inspiring **Rev Maud Robinson** will lead our Anniversary Service, which is always a highlight.



EVENT DATES 2025

Date	EVENT
08 Feb	Film Club 7pm, Admission includes pie & pea supper and an ice cream interval
08 Mar	Spring Lunch 11:45am
04 Apr	Friday Music Night 7:30pm back by popular demand - Stacksteads Brass Band
10 May	Film Club 7pm, Admission includes pie & pea supper and an ice cream interval
07 Jun	Summer Lunch 11:45am
20 Sep	Autumn Lunch 11:45
10 Oct	Friday Music Night 7:30pm with the award winning Rossendale Male Voice Choir
15 Nov	Film Club 7pm, Admission includes pie & pea supper and an ice cream interval
06 Dec	Christmas Lunch 11:45am

Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship Safeguarding

Safeguarding Team

1. Mrs. Helen Illingworth (co-ordinator)
2. Rev. Abi Elliott-McGuffie



Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship (also known as Rochdale Unitarian Church) recognises its responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, online, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children. Our church believes in the upholding and support of the rights and personal dignity of every adult and child, and will work to ensure that our policies and procedures reflect this, including in any such appointment and selection of persons who work on the Church's behalf. Clover Street Unitarian Fellowship is committed to ensure that every adult and child feels valued, safe and happy and will work to make sure that all feel empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm. We will report any abuse we discover or suspect.

Interested in learning more?



<http://www.rochdaleunitarians.org.uk>

<http://www.unitarian.org.uk/>



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