



The
Monthly
Messenger
for

January
2024

A Journal of the
Unitarian Church
Clover Street
Rochdale

Volume 138

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PASTORAL TEAM

Interfaith Minister Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie

Joyce Ashworth, Dorothy Jones, Helen Illingworth & Margaret Salt

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Treasurer – John Illingworth

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PULPIT AND LETTINGS

Paul Hubbard

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Flowers

Sunday 7th January 2024 Elaine Whyment In Memory of the Howarth Family
Sunday 14th January 2024 Madge Rimmer
Sunday 21st January 2024 Dorothy Jones & Family To Memory of Trevor
Sunday 28th January 2024 Margaret Shore In Memory of her Family
Sunday 29th January 2024 Sylvia Palmer In Memory of Walter & Duncan
Flowers lovingly arranged by: 7th Joyce Ashworth, 14th Anne Dawson, 21st Dorothy Jones, 28th Helen Illingworth

A Reminder

To all of you loyal 100 Club subscribers — don't forget your renewals! The combined Jan+Feb draw will be on 28th January. It costs just £12 per number to enter, with a draw normally taking place once a month. If you are lucky enough to be a winner one month, your numbers go back in for the following draw, so you can be a winner as many times as your chosen numbers come out of the bag. It's a great way to support your church too.

100 CLUB WINNERS

DEC 2023

1st	26	Katherine Schofield
2nd	19	John Wood
3rd	69	Glynn Whyment

Congratulations

Prizes- 1st £30 - 2nd £15 - 3rd £5

A Happy New Year to all of you!
 Goodness, where has 2023 gone? I hope you all got what you wanted for Christmas (perhaps a well-deserved rest)?



We have a lovely message from our minister Abi, opposite, welcoming us gently into the year ahead. A reminder that the first working party for our 50th year celebrations at Clover Street is meeting on Fri 26th January at 12.30pm. So please try and come along if you can. Enjoy the issue — Ed

Inquirer & Messenger Subscriptions:

If you wish to continue your subscription to The Messenger or The Inquirer this year, please cut out, fill-in and return the renewal slips opposite to:

**Paul Hubbard, Rochdale Unitarian Church,
 Clover Street, Rochdale, OL12 6TP.**

Please also enclose payment (cheques must be payable to 'Rochdale Unitarian Church', otherwise the bank will not accept them).

If you need replacement slips, or any further info, please email: rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com or phone **01706 648461**. Many thanks — Ed.

MESSENGER & INQUIRER ORDER FORM

It is essential that this form is included with your subscription. Please fill in the details and hand or post to:-
 Rochdale Unitarian Church, Clover Street, OL12 6TP
Cheques payable to 'Rochdale Unitarian Church'
Or send via Bacs. Sort Code: 40-52-40 A/C 0006-0040

Messenger (volume 138-9) - Jan to Dec 2024 £6.00

Postage if required 12 issues £8.00

Inquirer - (delivered to church) Jan to Dec 2024 £25.00

Please deliver to me each month

_____ copies of the Messenger £

_____ copies of the Inquirer £

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Total £

Please write your name and address clearly below

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear friends

Writing this piece amidst the busyness of the Christmas season, I'm tempted to say "breathe"! I hope your Christmas wasn't too pressured and that it was a happy and enjoyable time for you and your families. However, by the time you read this we'll have landed on the other side, and on reflection I'm still going to suggest we breathe.

Let us breathe into the space of the year that lies ahead, with openness and curiosity for the possibilities it may hold. Of course there will be the usual markers through the year, times of celebration, ritual and tradition, but the in between spaces are where we add meaning and purpose to life. I wonder what creative energy we might infuse those spaces with; what will 2024 bring to fruition?

I'm looking forward to seeing how it unfolds, I hope you are too.



And after the pause of breath, a poem for a new year by Matt Goodfellow

Something's moving in,
 I hear the weather in the wind,
 sense the tension of a sheep-field
 and the pilgrimage of fins.
 Something's not the same,
 I taste the sap and feel the grain,
 hear the rolling of the rowan
 ringing, singing in a change.
 Something's set to start,
 there's meadow-music in the dark
 and the clouds that shroud the mountain
 slowly, softly start to part.

Happy New Year!
 With my love
 Abi xx

RUC NEWS AND EVENTS



Flower Month

Joyce Ashworth, Anne Dawson,
Dorothy Jones, Helen Illingworth

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



JANUARY

Thur	04	17.00	Monthly Afternoon Tea—Hostess: Kate Salt
		18.30	Women's League AGM. Followed by a film!
Sun	07	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie
Wed	10	19.30	Book Circle at 5 Bagnall Close
Sun	14	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Dr Ann Peart
Tues	16	19.30	General Council Meeting via Zoom
Sun	21	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Abi Elliott-McGuffie
Mon	23	19.30	General Council Meeting via Zoom
Fri	26		100 Club subs due by today!
		12.30 2.00	50th Anniversary Working Party
		13.00	Lunch-time recital at Cross St Chapel, Manchester
Sun	28	10.30	S unday Service led by Rev Helen Mills

“WORDS TO LIVE BY...”

Christians may not see eye to eye, but they can walk arm in arm. – *Anon*

The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved, loved for ourselves, or rather, in spite of ourselves. – *Victor Hugo*

Opportunity knocks but once, but temptation leans on the doorbell. – *Anon*

“ABOUT PEOPLE”

We were sorry to learn that **Sylvia Palmer** had been admitted to Fairfield Hospital. Her stay was extended because of Covid on the Ward. Sylvia has now tested negative and the Ward was recently declared Covid clear. We send our very good wishes to Sylvia.

Steve Harrold is relocating to Morecambe in the New Year although will still retain a base in Heywood for the time being. We will miss Steve's presence with us in Worship but wish him and his wife Liz well in this new venture. We do hope we may still see you in church on occasions Steve. You will always be welcome.

Adele Henson has very recently relocated to Norden. We wish her well in her new home and hope she will quickly settle in, and that it may now be possible to for her to join in more of our activities.

50th Years at Clover Street – 6th & 7th July

We are celebrating a very special anniversary in July – an amazing 50 years since the new building was opened in 1974!

Important DATE!



A Working Party is being set up to arrange a series of events over the weekend to mark the occasion and we would welcome your attendance at the first meeting on Friday 26th January. If you are interested, please have a word with Helen who will be pleased to hear from you.

1974—2024

Interested in learning more?



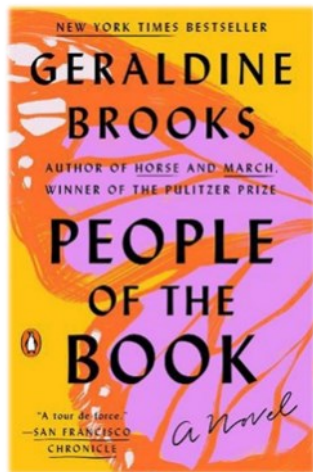
<http://www.rochdaleunitarians.org.uk>

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

BOOK CIRCLE



Following a very enjoyable Italian takeaway supper in December we are back to our usual meetings but please note we have changed the day this month to Wednesday 10th January. We will be discussing *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks. During World War II a Bosnian Muslim risks his life to save the book from the Nazis; it gets caught up in the intrigues of hedonistic 19th century Vienna; a Catholic priest saves it from burning in the fires of the Inquisition. These stories and more make up the secret history of the priceless Sarajevo Haggadah – a medieval Jewish prayer book recovered from the smouldering ruins of the war-torn city. Now it is in the hands of rare-book restorer Hanna Heath who through various tiny clues unlocks its mysteries.



Christmas Donations

Thank you to everyone for your generous donation of toys to the Council's 'Giving Back' toy appeal. I took some lovely gifts to Norden Library, one of the collection points and I'm sure the families who receive them will appreciate your kindness.

Thanks also for the monetary collections for the Moorland Children's Home, Springhill Hospice and the Red Cross.

Gift Boxes

How festive all those boxes lined up below the altar rail looked at the Carol Service. And what a feast of surprises my box contained - cheering and comforting.

On behalf of "all the oldies", a very sincere thank you to those who made time, within the busy Christmas schedule, to think of us over 80s. A real perk to the age thing !! Joyce



Carol Service

I am sure all those who attended enjoyed the Carol Service. It was lovely to see the Choir behind the choir stall for the first time since Covid. Thanks to the shepherds and the lamb for our little sketch and a big thanks to Abi for putting such a lovely, thoughtful service together.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION FOR OUTSTANDING WORK

What a happy event the after-service "coffee and mince pie chat" following Carol Service turned out to be, when John & Helen Illingworth were given the well-deserved "Christmas Star" treatment. On our behalf Abi thanked them for the outstanding contribution they both make to the continuous day-by-day overseeing of church maintenance and smooth running of our religious community in Clover Street. Much of their routine work goes on behind the scenes and virtually unnoticed, but things would quickly grind to a halt without it. We are deeply grateful to you both.



GASKELL LECTURE

Harris Manchester College Oxford
5 February 2024

Harris Manchester College Oxford's inaugural Manchester Lecture will be on "William and Elizabeth Gaskell: The Unitarian making of a



novelist", given by Professor Dinah Birch. To book go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/william-and-elizabeth-gaskell-the-unitarian-making-of-a-novelist-tickets-778166576177?aff=oddtcreator>

SMILE LINES

The church notices that did not come out quite as they were meant to do!

Correction: The following typo appeared in our last bulletin: 'Lunch will be gin at 12:15.' Please correct to read '12 noon.'

Remember the church jumble sale. We have a gents three-speed bicycle, and also two ladies for sale, in good running order.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.

Tuesday at 4:00 pm there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk, will please come early.

The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Belzer; the sin of Rev. and Mrs. Julius Belzer.

Windows

A wife texted her husband on a cold winter morning: "Windows frozen."

Her husband texted back: "Pour some lukewarm water over it."

The wife texted back five minutes later:



"Computer's completely not working now."

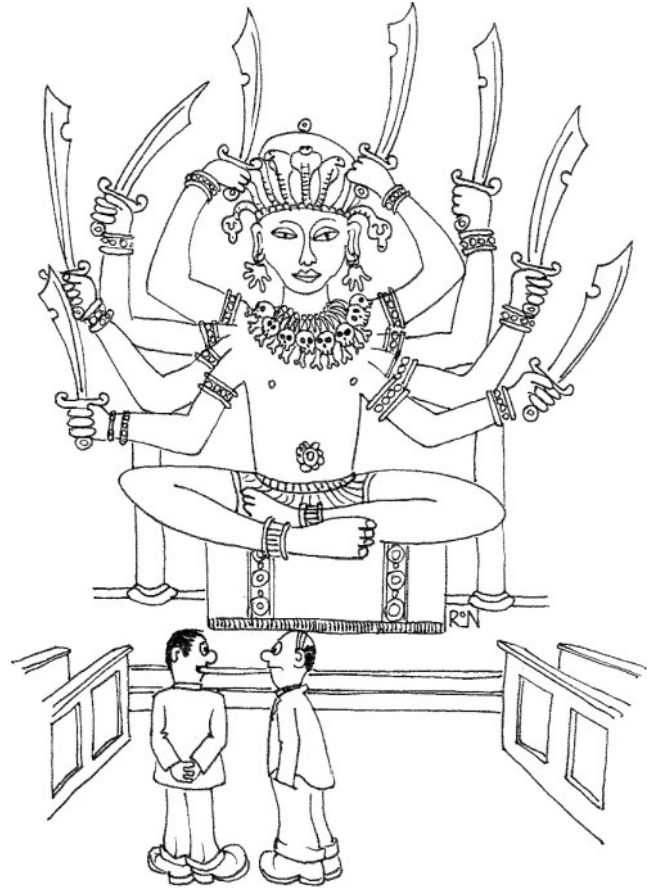
Church-speak

PEW: A medieval torture device still found in some churches.

AMEN: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

BULLETIN: Your receipt for attending a church service.

CARTOON FOR JANUARY



*"Strictly speaking", said the Archdeacon
"You should have applied for a faculty"*

The New Year

He comes he goes, his times are set,
The New Year now has shown his face.
For time is here and will not wait
For dwellers all in time and space.

We sojourn here on this fair earth,
Just for a time so quickly gone,
Our lives just like a vapour spent,
As we await another dawn.

There is a day God has ordained,
When we will reach a distant shore,
Eternity our new address
Where time will cease and be no more.

By Megan Carter

REGULAR BOOKINGS

Day	EVENT
Mon	■ 09.30-2.30pm Early Years — Blue Room
	■ 09.30-2.30pm Maths & English Green Room
	■ 12.30-2.30pm Prima Dance—Main Hall
Tues	■ 1.00-3.00pm Prima Dance—Main Hall
	■ 1.00-3.00pm Norden Cards— Blue Room
	■ 4.30-6.00pm Carers' Choir—Blue Room
	■ 7.00-9.00pm Central Bridge—Blue Room
Wed	■ 7.30-9.30pm Philatelic Group—Green Room
	■ 7.30-9.30pm Photographic—Blue Room
Thur	■ 11.00am 12.00pm Move & Munch-Main Hall
	■ 11.00am 12.00pm Yt Zumba—Main Hall
Sun	■ 08.00pm Badminton — Main Hall
	■ 10.30am 12.00pm Sunday Worship in Hall
For full booking details please contact rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com or leave a message on 01706 648461	

Ethos for Rochdale Unitarian Church:

- ◆ “We aim to be a faith community which supports individuals in taking ownership of and responsibility for personal beliefs and actions.
- ◆ We offer a supporting environment in which to embrace life and its challenging questions.”

Messenger by Email?

Reduce your carbon footprint and get your copy in colour by subscribing to our email service, its free - rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com



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