



# The Monthly Messenger for

## December 2024

A Journal of the  
Unitarian Church  
Clover Street  
Rochdale



*Volume 139*

*Issue 1659*



**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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Margaret Shore & John Illingworth

**PULPIT AND LETTINGS**

Paul Hubbard

**FLOWER FUND SECRETARIES**

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Member - Abi Elliott-McGuffie

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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

1st	George Scaife In Celebration of Di's Birthday
8th	Helen Illingworth In Memory of her brother John
15th	Sheila Goodwin In Memory of Tom and Jessie Reid
22nd	Vacant
29th	Vacant

Flowers lovingly arranged by:  
Margaret Shore (1<sup>st</sup>), Joyce Ashworth (8<sup>th</sup>),  
Anne Dawson (15<sup>th</sup>), Helen Illingworth (22<sup>nd</sup>), Dorothy Jones (29<sup>th</sup>)

**100 CLUB WINNERS**  
(Drawn by Vince McCully)

**NOV 2024**

1st	24	Ian Dawson
2nd	25	Sura Yilmaz
3rd	50	Greta Henson

**Congratulations**  
Prizes- 1st £30 - 2nd £15 - 3rd £5



Welcome to the December issue of the Messenger 2024! As Rev Abi notes, opposite, where has this year gone?!

On 16th November we enjoyed the film The Great Escaper, from which we raised £110 for our Church Charity Spring Hill Hospice, so many thanks to all!



As usual, December is a really busy time of year for our church (and, I'm sure for all of you at home) so we've put together a special Christmas Calendar on pg 6 and a Special Events double spread on pgs 8-9 to help you remember all those important dates for the diary.

All that remains is for me to wish you all the very best for this Season and a prosperous 2025 — Ed

## !! CHURCH DELEGATE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS !!

If you have never attended the meetings, this is your opportunity to act as Voting Delegate for the congregation. You would need to briefly report back in the Messenger the results of the Assembly's voting on the Motions and add something on what were the highlights for you. Others from Rochdale will be attending, Abi, Diane, Joyce possibly Paul so there would be someone to "show you the ropes". The other perk is that the Church would pay your expenses including travel. The meetings will be held at NEC in Birmingham this year so it is possible to go by train right to the venue.



Please speak to any member of Church Council if you are interested. Applications need to be made by early March.

Another big "thank you!" to all your generous donations to our local foodbank in 2024. Your generosity makes a massive difference to local lives, especially at Christmas time!



## MINISTER'S MESSAGE



Dear friends,  
I think I've lost something, has anyone seen it? Can you tell me where it went? 2024 ... it's not in my pocket, so where did it go? You may laugh, but I really could lose anything these days!

Wow, hasn't it been an eventful year, and I think we can say that it's been a year of ups and downs. It is of course very sad to think of the number of dear friends we've lost this year. Both active members and people we've kept in contact with over many years, each one important to this community.

There have also been many things that we can celebrate this year, not least the joy of our 50th Anniversary, the many events we've hosted and the ongoing work of this congregation.

I wish to add a personal note of thanks here, to everyone who donated household and gift items for our '£1 Sale' and to those who helped out on the day. Your support of this event was very generous and we can only hope that it helped relieve some of the pressures that some people experience, often most keenly felt at this time of year.

So this Christmas my wish for everyone, and especially for those for whom this Christmas feels difficult ... is for something special to keep in your pocket.

And if I speak of Paradise,  
then I'm speaking of my grandmother  
who told me to carry it always  
on my person, concealed, so  
no one else would know but me.  
That way they can't steal it, she'd say.  
And if life puts you under pressure,  
trace its ridges in your pocket,  
smell its piney scent on your handkerchief,  
hum its anthem under your breath.  
And if your stresses are sustained and daily,  
get yourself to an empty room – be it hotel,  
hostel or hovel – find a lamp  
and empty your paradise onto a desk:  
your white sands, green hills and fresh fish.  
Shine the lamp on it like the fresh hope  
of morning, and keep staring at it till you sleep.

A Portable Paradise by Roger Robinson ... is not just for Christmas!

With love and good wishes from my family, to you and yours this Christmas season. Abi xx



# DECEMBER NEWS AND EVENTS



Flowers lovingly arranged by:  
Margaret Shore (1st), Joyce Ashworth  
(8th), Anne Dawson (15th), Helen  
Illingworth (22nd), Dorothy Jones (29th)



## “ABOUT PEOPLE”

It is with sadness that we record the recent death of **Elaine Schofield** after a long illness. After moving to Moss Row sheltered accommodation in Norden for a short while, Elaine spent the last two years of her life in a care home, where she passed away peacefully with her family around her. We remember Elaine and Fred with much affection, especially their humorous interaction.

We also received in November the sad news that **Megan Crabtree** had passed away at the age of 95. For the last 7 years Megan had been resident at Beechwood House, Cutgate where she passed away peacefully in her sleep. Joyce and Helen attended Megan’s funeral and wake where they were able to chat to Megan’s children Jill, Judith and Philip who send their best wishes to the Congregation.

Sun	01	10.30	<b>T</b> oy & Gift service led by Rev Celia Cartwright
Wed	04	18.45	Carols by Candlelight at Manchester Cathedral (for those who have already bought tickets)
Thur	05	17.00	Christmas Tea—Hosts: Anne & Ian Dawson
		18.30	Women’s League Meeting, followed by a Christmas film
Sat	07	11.45	Church Christmas Lunch (now fully booked)
Sun	08	10.30	<b>S</b> unday Service led by Rev Abi
		12.45	Congregational Lunch at Stocco
Mon	09	19.30	<b>B</b> ook Circle at 5 Bagnall Close (see pg 8)
Sun	15	<b>18.00</b>	Carol Service led by Rev Abi <b><u>Note start time, please</u></b>
Sun	22	10.30	<b>S</b> ervice of Music led by Rev Beryl Allerton
Sun	25	11.00	<b>C</b> hristmas Morning Service led by Rev Abi
Sun	29	10.30	<b>S</b> unday Service led by Graeme Pilbrough



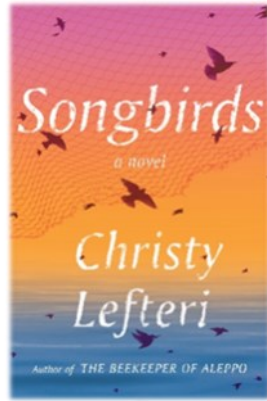
## WARDEN/COFFEE ROTA FOR 2024

WARDEN/COFFEE ROTA FOR 2024											
Margaret Salt & Joyce Ashworth	07 Jan	11 Feb	17 Mar	21 Apl	26 May	30 Jun	4 Aug	8 Sep	13 Oct	17 Nov	22 Dec
John & Helen Illingworth	14 Jan	18 Feb	24 Mar	28 Apl	2 Jun	7 Jul	11 Aug	15 Sep	20 Oct	24 Nov	25 Dec
Margaret Shore & Dorothy Jones	21 Jan	25 Feb	31 Mar	5 May	9 Jun	14 Jul	18 Aug	22 Sep	27 Oct	1 Dec	29 Dec
Helen Illingworth & Margaret Salt	28 Jan	3 Mar	7 Apl	12 May	16 Jun	21 Jul	25 Aug	29 Sep	3 Nov	8 Dec	
Dorothy Jones & Margaret Shore	4 Feb	10 Mar	14 Apl	19 May	23 Jun	28 Jul	1 Sep	6 Oct	10 Nov	15 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 Club – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00 pm

For our Christmas Meeting we are reading *Songbirds* by Christy Lefteri a follow up to *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* which we read some years ago. Based on the real-life disappearance of domestic workers in Cyprus, Christy Lefteri has crafted a poignant, deeply empathetic narrative of the human stories behind the headlines. With infinite tenderness and skill, *Songbirds* offers a triumphant story of the fight for truth and justice, and of women reclaiming their lost voices.



Please note that as it's the Christmas meeting, we are starting at 7.00 pm as the main focus of the evening is the Italian supper.

## CHRISTMAS EVENTS

### TOY AND GIFT SERVICE – 1ST DECEMBER

Gifts received at this Service will go to Rochdale Borough Council Christmas Scheme to help financially struggling families. Monetary gifts will be donated to Moorland Children's Home.



### CHRISTMAS CARD SCHEME

We will again be operating our now established tradition of a Church Posting Box being available on Sundays in December for the congregation to send greetings to each other. Donations in lieu of postage will go to our current Church Charity, *Springhill Hospice*.



### CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH – SUNDAY 8TH DECEMBER

Following Morning Service on 8th December, we are looking forward to our Congregational Lunch at Stocco, the Italian restaurant in Norden. We will number 24 in the party so it should be quite an occasion. We need to be at Stocco by 12.45 pm which will still give time for coffee after the service – but no biscuits!

### CAROL SERVICE – SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER AT 6.00 PM

Abi is to lead our Carol Service this year and would like to hear from volunteers for readings. The Choir will also be singing an introit and Christmas anthem. Come and join us in singing your favourite carols and enjoy tea, coffee, fruit cake and mince pies served after the service. A retiring collection will be donated to the Red Cross.



### A SERVICE OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Rev Beryl Allerton and our very own Ewa are preparing a special service for us! We are going to be treated to a hand-crafted service of Christmas Music, with Ewa play pieces live. Don't miss it!





**The Monthly Messenger**

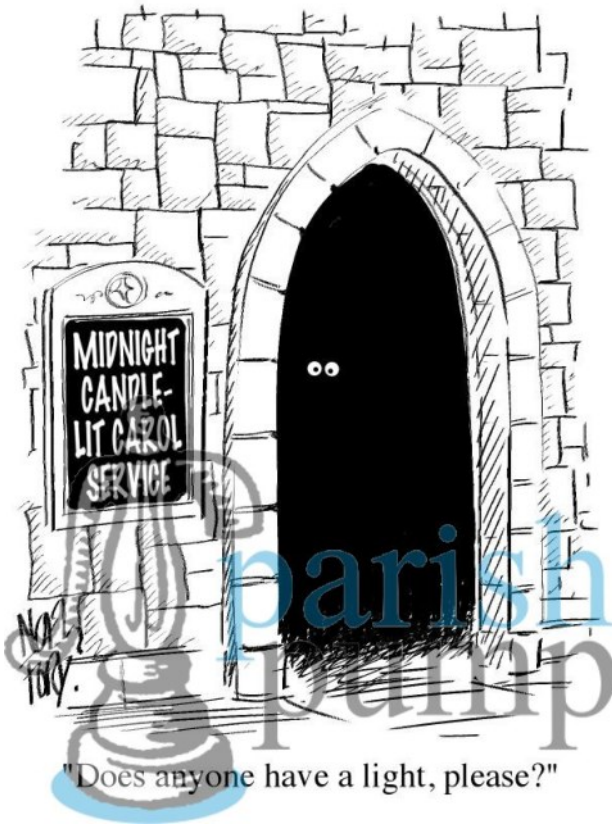
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If you wish to continue your subscription to The Messenger or The Inquirer next year, please cut out, fill-in and return the renewal slip below to:

**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](mailto:rochdaleunitarian@outlook.com) or phone **01706 648461**. Many thanks — Ed.



**Spare a thought (and lend a hand) to those who work so hard to prepare our festive fare!**

*The kitchen is, at Christmas  
A very busy room!  
Lots of work in such a rush  
Or Christmas Day will loom.*

*First there is the cake to bake  
And many pastries too,  
Mince pies and biscuits, festive fare  
There is so much to do!*

*Then comes the day, the kitchen fills  
With wondrous cooking smells,  
As turkey roasts and parsnip toasts  
The cooks must work their spells.*

*The dinner's on the table  
We gather round and eat,  
But someone has to wash the pots  
And make the kitchen neat.*

*So have a happy Christmas,  
Enjoy the festive fare,  
But grab a towel and help the cook,  
And show them that you care!*

*By Nigel Beeton*

**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 139-140) - Jan to Dec 2025	£9.00
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Inquirer - (delivered to church) Jan to Dec 2025	£25.00

Please deliver to me each month

_____ copies of the Messenger	£
_____ copies of the Inquirer	£
Postage if required	£
Total	£

Please write your name and address clearly below

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## EVENT DATES 2024

Date	EVENT
16-Mar	Spring Lunch
23-Mar	Unitarian District Service
26-Apr	Music Night — Stacksteads Brass Band
25-May	Film Night
8-June	Summer Lunch
6 & 7 July	Clover Street 50th Anniversary
28-Sept	Women's League Project Lunch
11-Oct	Music Night — Simeon Wood
16-Nov	Film Night
7 Dec	Christmas Lunch

### **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/>



**Rochdale Unitarian Church**  
**Clover Street**  
**ROCHDALE OL12 6TP**  
 01706 648461 (voicemail)

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