

**BELPER UNITARIAN  
CHAPEL**

A Community with living  
and loving spirituality  
that engages both the  
Heart and the Mind

**NEWSLETTER  
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER  
2024**

*God of love,*

Thank you for your word that calls  
us to stand up for fairness,  
To protect and care for those  
in need,

And to work for change to bring  
about a fairer world.

May we remember that every small  
action is a step forward and that  
by working together, everyone  
achieves more.

Amen.



## STUDENT MINISTER INTRODUCTION

Hello, everyone! This is my first article for the newsletter, and it makes sense that it should be one where I introduce myself (especially for those folks I haven't had a chance to meet with yet).

Where do I start? I first encountered Unitarianism when developing teaching materials while working as a secondary R.E. teacher. The spark inside me for the diversity of opinions yet balanced with a fellowship of all searching and inquiring together is quite beautiful when done in the spirit of love, and I was hooked! Recently, I have stepped away from teaching and now work in financial services alongside my Ministry Training with Unitarian College.

A bit more about me: I live with my husband Ben, our dog Pepsi (she's a 14-year-old Jack Russell terrier) and our 18-year-old cat Russ – oh, and I am a Disney & Sci-Fi nut in my downtime.

Spiritually, I value the practice of meditation and mindfulness regularly alongside music (though I am not the best singer...yet!). Thinking about that inner spark, it is what made me step up for ministry in the first place, having wanted to lead a life of service since a young age. Finally, I could join this with the loving, supportive outlooks we Unitarians offer everyone who walks through our doors.

As your student minister for the next 9 months, my primary objective will be to serve you. Theoretically, this would be a couple of services a month – but also providing pastoral care, being with you as a community, facilitating groups and attending events. I hope to nurture and preserve the divine spark within each of us as we journey together within the loving community you have built at Belper and extend this beyond the chapel walls, reaching into the wider Belper community.

What this boils down to is I will be there for each of you. I endeavour to support you however I can, whether spiritually, pastorally, or practically – I am here in your service.

I am eagerly looking forward to September when my placement with you begins. I am excited to embark on this journey with you, to learn from you all, and to serve you. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to be part of this wonderful community.

## NEWS UPDATES

First, the Belper Congregation is delighted to welcome *Kieran Mardle-Moss* who on 1st of September officially becomes our “ Student Minister “ here at Field Row Unitarian Chapel Belper.

Already, we have valued stimulating Services of Worship well conducted by Kieran. The role of “ Student Minister “ Will be for nine months in conjunction with Kieran’s theological training with The Unitarian College.

We all wish Kieran well during the time he spends with us assuring him of our full support !

The Congregation place on record their immense gratitude to our District Association, East Midlands Unitarians for their financial commitment in enabling this appointment to happen !

**Belper Pride** :With your presence our Chapel will fully take part in this years Belper Pride events on Saturday 3rd August -

We will take part in the Official Procession with our Unitarian Chapel Banner. Our “Rainbow Bench “ will also be positioned in the Belper Memorial Gardens with the opportunity for us to share Unitarian Publicity Leaflets.

For information regarding times please speak to Rowan -

**East Midland Unitarians Family Day : Saturday 17th August** :Last year we successfully hosted this event at Belper Chapel. Many were so impressed by the Belper experience that it encouraged our Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel in Leicester to host this years District Family Day.

We hope plenty of us from the Belper Congregation will support this interesting event.

A Minibus has been booked to leave Field Row Chapel Belper on Saturday 17th August at 9.15 am. There is a sign up sheet in the Chapel Kitchen - Please indicate on the sheet if you require a seat on the Mini Bus which will be £10 per person.

**Chapel AGM** Our Congregational Chairman Cllr. David Burton will conduct a short Devotional Service on Sunday 29th September at 11am - This will be followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation culminating with a shared Lunch. Please support your acting Officers by your presence as we review the work & witness of our Unitarian presence in Belper !

## **HUMILITY, UNDERSTANDING, COMPASSION AND CONCERN**

“None of us can see the whole picture, and what is likely to matter the most in the end, in our search for truth and for what's right, will not be the answers we think we found, but most likely the humility with which we approached our search and the compassion we extended to others along the way.

In the grand scheme of things, the true measure of our journey lies not in the certainty we claim, but in the understanding and the kindness we share, as we tackle life's complex questions and contradictions. Our understanding, compassion and concern should begin to expand to include people, creatures and things we previously neglected, misunderstood or even fought against.

Eventually we realise that although transformation and transcendence begins with a deeply personal process, the goals and implications of this process are really communal. We rise and then we lift others. We begin to prioritise living honourably and with integrity. That is, we integrate all of our values, principles, rationales and convictions into one harmonious whole.

Finally to transcend our human condition, we need to love fiercely. Nothing else my friends, nothing else can compare to love in its generative, transformative and transcending power. A great many prophets, artists, religious leaders and other enlightened individuals have declared that only love can save the world and the longer I live the more I tend to agree with them.

Embracing love as a transformative power means actively practising forgiveness, showing compassion and engaging in acts of kindness, even in difficult circumstances, even with difficult people. Love involves making tough choices to support and uplift others, which ultimately fosters deep connections and communal healing. Indeed love may be the only thing that gives our lives meaning and what ultimately saves the world. Look around my friends, if it appears that the world still needs saving, then I challenge you to pour more love on it.

As we navigate the complexities of the world, let's foster peace, let us build bridges and thrive in our faith, knowing that it's not really about who's right, it's about being connected. Someone once said that we cannot shame ourselves into change, we can only love ourselves into evolution. Friends let's love, let's evolve and let's keep moving forward, but let's do it together.”

***Rev. Randy Lewis***

[From Simon Gibson]

All Souls Unitarian Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma

## **BELPER PRIDE 3/8/24 + 4/8/24**

On Saturday the third of August, our chapel will be participating in Belper Pride 2024. Belper Pride is a wonderful event that celebrates our LGBTQ+ community. It's a great opportunity for our chapel to engage with members of the community and to demonstrate our commitment to inclusivity at every level. As one member of our Congregation eloquently put it this morning "Lets celebrate our Diversity in Unity and our Unity in Diversity" Another member says "It is colourful, heart warming – the the epitome of inclusivity".

People will start to gather at the Market Square at 11am, ready for the procession to start at 12 noon. The chapel will be taking part in the main procession. We will have our chapel banner in the procession, so please feel free to come along and walk with us. The organisers are encouraging folks to be loud, and also to bring along as much percussion as possible!

The procession promises to be a great celebration of our diversity. We will have our Rainbow Bench, Parasols and leaflets in the Memorial Gardens. Charity stalls and commercial stalls will be there.

We will need some help to move the bench from the chapel to the Memorial Gardens. It's likely that we will be placed with other local faith groups such as St. Peters, the Methodist church etc. So we need people to please come along and represent our chapel.

On Sunday the fourth, there will be a "Pride Dog Show". This is not something that the Chapel is actively engaged in, but if members want to enter their dogs please enter using the form on the Belper Pride website or Facebook site. This is a hugely enjoyable event, and a great way for us to put our faith out there!

***Rowan Beton***



***You can see the Rainbow Flag in full colour in our electronic edition and also in [BelperUnitarians.org](http://BelperUnitarians.org)***

## **WORSHIP SERVICES - August – September 2024**

Sunday 4th August 11.00 am	Alison Scrowston and Helen James “Summer”
Sunday 11th August 11.00 am	Kath and Peter Faulkner Members of Mansfield Unitarian
Sunday 18th August 11.00 am	Rob Tuck and Simon Gibson “Don't be such a child?”
Sunday 25th August 11.00 am	Fred Barrett “Lucky, Lucky, Lucky Me”
Sunday 1st September 11.00 am	Kieran Mardle-Moss Student Minister
Sunday 8th September 11.00 am	Rowan Beton Unsung Local Unitarians
Sunday 15th September 11.00 am	Kieran Mardle-Moss Student Minister
Sunday 22nd September 11.00 am	Revd Tony McNeile Chaplain to the National Unitarian Fellowship
Sunday 29th September 11.00 am 11.40 approx	David Burton (Short devotional Service) “Will you join us?” Chapel AGM to follow with shared lunch
Sunday 6th October 11.00 am	David Burton “Sharing the Journey”

All members and friends of the Chapel are welcome to offer contributions to our newsletter. It could be a 380 word article, or a poem, or something arresting or humorous you have read. Contributions should be in the hands of your editor [contact details on page12] by Sunday 15th September if they are intended for inclusion in the October - November edition.

Many people from chapel will remember Jean who was our organist for many years since the age of 16 in fact! Jean has been in the process of moving to the Isle of Arran in Scotland for the last year. She is now happily settled there and recently got married to David.

A card has been sent from everyone at chapel to convey our Congratulations and wish them every happiness in their lives together.

The next Chapel Planning Committee will be held on Monday 2nd September at 10am prompt. Please let Ruth Beck have in good time any appropriate Agenda Items you may have

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WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“ When people say that religion and politics don’t mix,  
I wonder which Bible it is they are reading.

Jesus , of course, received much venom for speaking truth to power ! “

“ My humanity is bound up in yours,  
for we can only be human together “

***Bishop Desmond Tutu*** [1931-2021]

“ Say not in grief they are no more,  
But in Thankfulness he was -

A death is not the extinguishing of a light - But the putting out of the Lamp,  
Because The Dawn Has Come ! “

***Rabindranath Tagore***

Back in April I lost a very close lifelong friend. David’s family asked me to take part in the funeral service by giving a personal tribute. Over those years of friendship we had shared so many experiences amid the ups & downs of life !

These words from the Poet & Mystic Rabindranath Tagore concluded my tribute to David Monkhouse who on past occasions had occasionally supported special services & social events at Belper Chapel.

David was a Methodist and his wife Lorna for a time served as Treasurer to our Chapel Trustees.

***David Burton***



To view these excellent photographs, submitted by Jan Barrett, in full colour, please see a copy of the electronic version of this newsletter - obtainable from Ruth, our Church Secretary - or have a look at the “news” on [belperunitarians.org](http://belperunitarians.org).





# Piano

Teenagers often get a bad press, but in my experience in teaching, the vast majority of adolescents want what we want – to do well, to have a happy and useful life and to keep learning new things.

The Headmaster of a Solihull School has bought seven upright pianos for a total outlay of £16. The pianos have been placed all around the school for children to play at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They are mainly outdoors - but under cover.

Most of the pianos were offered to the school by local residents who no longer had use for them. In fact, four of the “new” pianos were totally free, two cost £1 each on eBay and the “luxury” one cost £13.99.

Headmaster, Charles Fillingham, previously worked on the Eurostar train and brought the idea up to the Midlands from the pianos which are dotted around St Pancras Station in London.

Mr Fillingham said: “Solihull School has some really talented pupil musicians and also some whose playing is less conventional. It is a delight to hear the pianos being played well and I am prepared to tolerate the crashing and banging that sometimes goes along with it.”

On the first day that the pianos were put into the school, a shy boy in Year 8 sat down to play a piece of classical music. Afterwards, the other children gave him a round of applause. Interestingly, the pianos have turned out to be especially popular with boys in Year 9 and girls in Years 12 & 13.

Charles Fillingham added: “There are worse things that young people can do at lunchtime than mucking around on an old piano. Creativity, innovation, the arts and music are really important for a rounded education – at this price any school could afford to install pianos.”

(You might also watch ‘The Piano’ on Channel 4 catchup and see the huge talent out there, sometimes from some of the most unlikely people.

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-piano> )

*from Solihull Updates*

[via Jan Barrett]

## ROBERT MIDWORTH 1809 – 1885

Robert Midworth was a Carver and Gilder, originally from Mansfield. He married Frances Lane in Saint Pancras, London in 1831. By 1841 the family had moved to Bridge Street, Belper. Their son Lane was born in 1842 and by 1851 there were 7 children, including Lane who is also commemorated on this grave, and Robert had added Painter to his list of occupations. By 1861 he had added Paper Hanger too so was a man of many talents!

Their son Lane had moved in with Charles Brown, a few doors down on Bridge Street as his apprentice druggist. Mum Frances died in 1866 and in 1871 Robert, Lane and his sister Mary were living on Brookside, next to the Old King's Head with Lane, no longer an apprentice, chemist and druggist and the family had 16-year-old Louisa living with them as a servant. Lane emigrated to Australia in the 1870s, married out there in 1879 but sadly died young in 1881 at the age of 39.

An 1870 article tells us that Robert had been appointed by the Workhouse Board of Guardians to “superintend the painting of the Union Workhouse” later known as Babington Hospital. Robert was happy the contract had been well carried out except that the colour of the ironwork at the entrance had been painted bright green instead of bronze green by mistake!

Robert was a Unitarian and a founder and honorary secretary of the Belper Humane Society, a charity which sought to lend out “clean linen for sick persons who are unable to provide it for themselves”. On its return it was “effectually disinfected” says the Derby Mercury in 1872. It records that in that year the society sent out 1292 sheets, 648 pillowcases, 312 towels and 714 night dresses. His obituary says he was “a highly respected townsman of Belper”. What a privilege to tend his grave and tell his story.

**Editorial Note** – The “Find a Grave” website provides some further details about Robert Midworth which are not entirely consistent with the account given above by the Belper Rotarian Club. Robert died in London on 30<sup>th</sup> April 1885 and was buried in Hampstead Cemetery – a photograph of his grave is given on the website. His daughter Mary was buried with him in 1909. It seems probable that his wife Frances and the other children, apart from Lane, died in Belper, and their family grave may be the one found by the Rotarians. **Rowan Beton** will be taking a service at the Chapel on Sunday September 8th, when he will address us about Robert Midworth and other unsung Belper Unitarians.

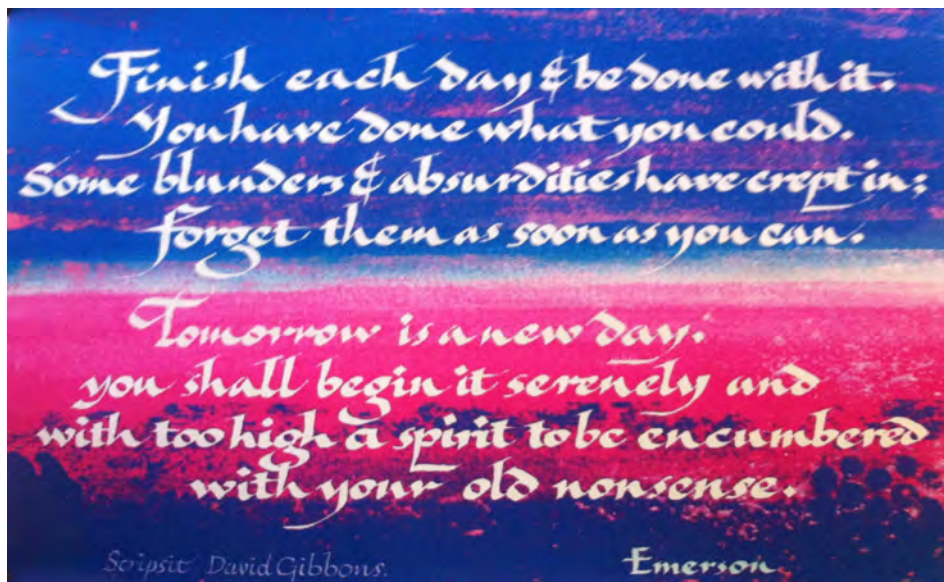
## CREATING FIRE

Is the fire going out? Not in your belly, for you are still alive,

but the fire in in your soul, that place where dreams fuel commitment;  
where longings shape action; where meaning flames purpose; where passion ignites and rekindles your life fire.

If your soul smoulders still, dream on till you flame like a chalice of hope.

**Stephen M. Shick**



*-A little good advice, sent to you by your Publicity Officer, Jan Barrett*

[www.belperunitarians.org](http://www.belperunitarians.org)

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Belper Unitarians aim to be a loving community of spiritual seekers. We are diverse in our opinions yet united in our common search for truth and our desire to support each other, and sometimes challenge each other, in that search.

We have our roots in those Christian non-conformists who gathered in Belper in the late 1660s following the ejection from the established church as a result of the 1662 Act of Uniformity of belief and worship. The famous industrialist, Jedediah Strutt, had the central section of the present chapel built in 1788 to replace a Meeting House that had been built at the other end of Green Lane in 1721, and which still stands there. Today our present Chapel is a Grade II\* listed building.

We are on the Belper Poetry Trail, displaying on the front chapel railings the poem "To Nature" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

*\*Please contact David Burton to enquire about chapel hire, Christenings, Namings, Weddings/Civil Partnership Ceremonies, or Funeral Services.*