

Hull Unitarians aim to welcome and care for all, celebrating life through free and inquiring religion, respecting the diversity of views of the congregation. Find us at Park Street HU2 8TA.

Why?

Members and friends are invited to submit pictures, poems or short articles to Ralph Catts for publication in this magazine. Articles of about 270 words will fit one page. Longer articles may be up to 540 or 810 words. All submissions are best sent electronically. Author biographies are limited to 30 words. Please refer to the Hull Unitarians Website for copyright matters and advice to authors.

What?

Each month Hull Unitarians also publish a newsletter, and it is in the newsletter that details of services and charity coffee mornings are published.

Services are held 11:00 am Sundays and Coffee Mornings 10:30 am Fridays.

The Pastor is Dr Ralph Catts. Telephone: 07444540925

The Board of Church Trustees: Michael Tracey, Barry Cundill, Mavis Lake, John Williams.

The Webmaker is Keith Brown; the Treasurer is Barry Cundill; the Reaching Out Co-ordinator is Mavis Lake; Music Providers are Dr Tony Ward, Dr Daniela Fountain and Dr Adrian Worsfold; Pastor Dr Ralph Catts is the Magazine Editor and Dr Adrian Worsfold is the Writer and Compiler.

Who?

The Bar at the General Assembly!



Can you see the eighteen differences?



Pastor's Letter

In this issue of our magazine you will find a report and a reflection about our consultation meeting on January 24 2016.

Thanks to all who contributed I hope that the decisions based on your views will encourage you to contribute further ideas. All who attended said how much they valued the contribution of our facilitator, Marion Baker of Sheffield.



I ask that you get involved in the things that we attempt, and especially new events.

On April 6 we will have a spring outing. Barry Cundill has offered to drive a minibus and we can pick up people from their homes. This is re-establishing a practice from our past. Please join us for this outing. This is for every member of the church to enjoy. We hope you can come. Let us know by email or a phone call to the church.

People asked for more involvement in worship. I welcome this and there are many ways to contribute to our Sunday worship. You can light the chalice, with or without some supporting words. You can do a reading or share your thoughts.

For example, on February 7 we shared poetry readings. We will have further opportunities to share in ways that people find spiritually inspiring. Please give some thought to how you would like to contribute to our worship.

Second Objective: Support for Charities

Hull Unitarians have an established tradition of support for charities. We are a spiritual community committed to living our faith through our actions. Our work in aid of charities is a natural expression of our faith and our commitment to the well-being of the world in which we live. Our Friday coffee mornings with a table top sale, a tombola, and refreshments, allow us to meet the charities and raise funds for their support.

Looking forward, we will build our mutual engagement between our congregation and members of the charities. The trustees have therefore agreed that we will ask all local charities to attend our fund raising efforts on their behalf.

Third Objective: Interfaith Engagement

Interfaith involvement in other cities involves faith groups engaging with each other. In Hull, however, the present interfaith forum is normally attended by just a few representatives from the Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Unitarians and Humanists. So, in conjunction with the Humanists, I have asked if we could have events held in each worship community to which others are invited. This could include a shared experience of worship or be a social occasion after some explanatory presentations. Members of each faith group concerned would be on hand to welcome visitors.

I ask for your support in this initiative when visits have been arranged to other venues, and also to be willing to attend if we have the opportunity to welcome others to Chamberlain House. By learning more about our diverse British communities we can help to overcome the fear that could lead to a breakdown in our society.

Connecting with Our Community

On January 24 a Congregational Consultation was facilitated by Marion Baker, who was recently our GA President. Many ideas were put forward by those in attendance and they were compiled into a Consultation Report. This report is available at the church for members and friends to read.



The Trustees met on February 17 and collectively decided upon what initiatives are to be taken based on the input received. It was agreed that we should give priority to strategies for growth. To do this it was decided to make some immediate improvements to the layout of the church and to refurbish the area where the red curtains are to make a permanent presentation that signifies that our building is a space for worship. This will involve moving the musical equipment to the rear, improving our sound and audio-visual systems, and relocating the CCTV monitor and box. We hope that this will make our church more welcoming to new comers. Input into the design is invited.



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Consultation Reflection

By Adrian Worsfold

Of course I knew of suggestions to have a window at the west end of the church, usually proposed with some design as in a coloured window. I had not considered a conservatory, and although such would be very expensive and lose car parking space, the alternative of a window and a door is very attractive. The glass door is key because it unites any event taking place in the garden and in the building at the same time. It transforms the light within and makes for a focus of the outside. I think it is indeed imaginative and as simplified gets my support.

The central debate is the speed of change. A minister was appointed for five years for speedy, sustainable change. If we have that person with hands on the wheel and feet on the pedals, we should speed up, not slow him down. It is not enough to limit the changes to toilets and the worship space, even these are priorities. The idea is that this simpler change keeps people. No one has ever said to me that they did not stay because the place is gloomy and of a poor environment; I have known people who might not have stayed because of service content and the product not meeting the publicity. We need a range of initiatives that interest the random enquirer. Nevertheless, the proposal to have a door and window I think would be key to transforming the worship environment.

The fact is that *other uses* create a traffic of people that might also find the Unitarian approach to religion attractive. The Hull Folk Club would attract a known group of

sponsored by the bequest of John Harvard, a dissenting minister, who died in the same year as the Rowley pilgrims arrived. That original printing press found its way into the new college. Harvard has been strongly identified with Unitarianism since the 19th century.

Eighteen years before this settling, the Mayflower had brought to America the original pilgrims, the majority of whom perished during the first winter ashore. Those who went to America on the John of London learned from their forerunners' mistakes. It is reasonable to assume that Chamberlain and his ilk of Puritanical worshippers would have been great admirers of the achievements of the Rowley settlers, and as lots of their families were interconnected he may well have had relations or friends of relations who made that perilous journey.

Chamberlain's wife Katherine was a Tomlin, part of a notable family in the village of Riby, Lincolnshire. I believe too that Mike Tomlin of the Stockton congregation has old Hull connections.



A practising Catholic, an attending Unitarian and an observant Jew.

THEOLOGY SEMINARS

Presenter: Adrian Worsfold

Between 2008 and 2010 I presented 18 theology papers to St. Mary's Parish Church In Depth group in Barton-upon-Humber. As well as the strong United States and German base, there was a bias to the 1960s to 1980s English Anglican debates. There was Unitarian content too, for comparative reference. It stopped because the group wanted a pause, I was moving house, and I had effectively changed denomination.

The proposal now is for an ecumenical presentation of Christian theology within the Hull Creative Learning Centre. As at Barton, the discussion would be open and not seeking any form of confessional conclusion. This is a theology series, and so discusses Christian and related concepts 'from the inside', whether the participant believes the concepts or not.

Two introductory session tackle theology as a subset of Religious Education methods, rationality and ethics, and then denominational and national/ institutional settings including examples of English theology in Rowan Williams and Sarah Coakley. Next it is on to nineteenth century founding liberals like Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Harnack and Troeltsch. Karl Barth (1886-1968) and James Martineau (1805-1900) are contrasted as two contrasting routes to the postmodern. Secular theology naturally follows on, and then systematic correlation via Tillich (1886-1965). Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) is a social pragmatist and Bultmann (1884-1976) a demythologiser whilst keeping a distinctive Christian gospel. I ask whether commitment to institutional liberalism is robust enough regarding James Luther Adams (1901-1994) - is he a

Chesters



Hi Fans! Barry has been rather preoccupied of late and to be blunt about it, a tad hang-dog from time to time. You'll be pleased to know I've been taking him on walks and generally keeping his spirits up (though to be honest he's been hard work at times).

You would think he'd show a little more gratitude for my efforts but NO! In fact, I've been placed on a diet and lost a kilo and a half. The result, though, is I can run faster, especially when there's dinner waiting at home.

Regular attenders at Chamberlain house will bear testimony to the fact that I suffer in a certain way on occasions. The fire door is to be upgraded and I'm unsure whether there is a connection.

As I say, BC has seemed somewhat unwitting and he actually asked me to pen a piece about Leonard Chamberlain in this tercentenary year of his death. "Oh, you do it," he said. What do I know? Rowley? I'd rather Rowley over for a tickle.

All I do know is that later in the year HWMO will walk from Rowley village, Chamberlain's burial ground, to our meeting

Letter from Juan



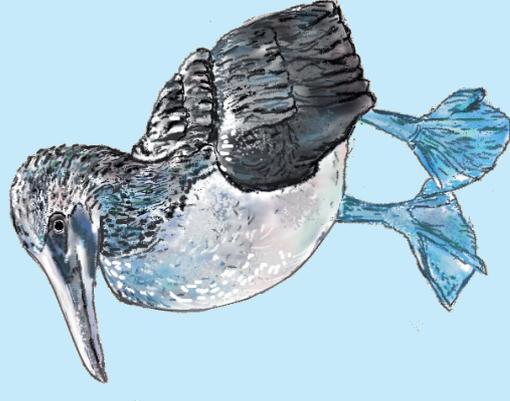
Thanks for your warm responses to my last letter. You know, like you, we are **going for growth**. We in the Galapagos *will have to look for other species to join us*. Recently some of us penguins from Ferdinandina popped over to Española for the *Penguin Communicators Gathering*, led by James, which we thought was all about "P-P Pick Up a Penguin". But our paid professional facilitator with travel expenses all the way from Barry Island argued that we should market ourselves towards nearby **Blue-footed Boobies**.

We penguins have to be **adaptable**. For example, the blue boobies have their ritual where the males lift their feet up and down while strutting before the female, whereas we put out our feet to cool off. Their ritual also includes "sky-pointing", which involves the male pointing his head and bill up to the sky while keeping the wings and tail raised. It is suggested that we target the Blue-footed Booby first because the Red-footed Booby is clumsy in take-offs and landings and complicate matters with their elaborate greeting rituals.

My friend Betty Booby is sensitive about her name. 'Boobies' is politically incorrect. This naming is a response to their apparent disability or clumsiness walking on land and because they are stupidly fearless of you humans. How many times have birds like that vanished from their congregations?

Boobies **taking services** should have good eye contact with

members of the congregation because their eyes are placed on either side of their bills and oriented towards the front, enabling excellent binocular vision. We need vision in our movement. Also they will not cough and sneeze during services, because they have permanently closed nostrils due to diving headlong into the water for fish. They tell each other about the fish, and they all dive in together, which is collective action, and we want that as well.



Sunday schools would be challenging because parents lay eggs in sequence some five days apart, which means that when food is scarce an early hatched baby can kill the younger one. The parents sometimes encourage this, although steep-sided nests prevent the consequences of over-eager bad behaviour among the children. Parents deliberately put more yolk into their earlier eggs: so they invest up front; yet, early season second eggs can be larger. The first child kills by pecking vigorously at the egg, or it may drag its younger sibling by the neck and throw it out. Dads usually give more parental care to larger eggs, of apparent good genetics, but his attitude can be overridden if mum has brightly coloured feet, like Betty's attractive pair. Our approach to pastoral ministry and Sunday School would have to adapt to these family customs. Improve the congregational refreshments and see the females get better coloured legs and children might behave better.

Like us, Boobies prefer the water, and so **coming to church** is a strictly brief matter each week.