

**HULL  
UNITARIAN  
MAGAZINE**

March to  
April 2015

**SERVICE 11.00am SUNDAY**



**WELCOME**



**COFFEE MORNING  
10.30 am - 12 Noon  
FRIDAY**

**Liberal  
Religion  
at  
HU2 8TA**



**DIXON, Rev. James M.,** left the Methodist Church to join the Unitarian Congregation at Sunderland, where he occasionally occupied the pulpit. While a lay preacher here, he was invited to take the pulpit at Dewsbury, whence he was called to Hull, where he ministered for sixteen years, a new chapel being built during the latter years of his labour. **Died February 22, 1883, age 60.**

# PUZZLES

*Spot the Difference Changes*



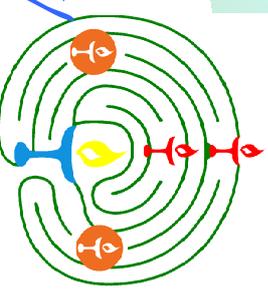
Here is the solution to the puzzle in the previous issue.

This issue it is back to the crossword. Hopefully it is a little easier this time.

The decision was made not to produce a March supplement but a March and April edition and its timing is based on the start of Ralph Catts's ministry and relevant content. This is evident in the preaching rota below and included articles. I design, write or rewrite, unless otherwise stated, and I compile, but the magazine is actively overseen by Ralph Catts and also by Keith Brown. Adrian Worsfold

[adrian@pluralist.co.uk](mailto:adrian@pluralist.co.uk)

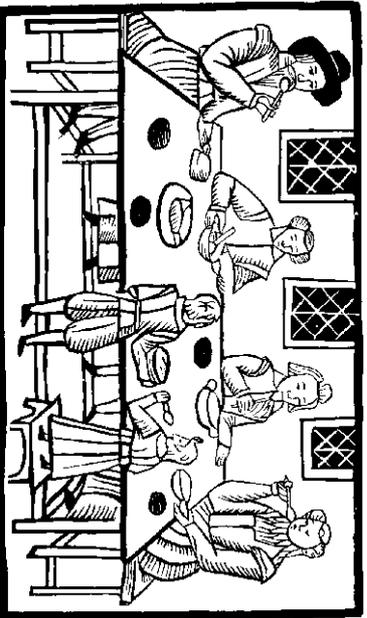
## Services next in March and April



Ralph Catts	Compassion	8th March	11:00 am
Brinley Price	A New Religion?	15th March	11:00 am
Ralph Catts	Planting a Seed	22nd March	11:00 am
(Pending)	(GA Sunday)	29th March	11:00 am

Ralph Catts	On Easter	5th April	11:00 am
Ralph Catts	On the GA	12th April	11:00 am
Ralph Catts	New Directions	19th April	11:00 am
Ralph Catts	Anzac Day	Sat 25th April	11:00 am
Rev. John Midgley	(To be advised)	Sun 26th April	11:00 am

Did the Christianity Timelines 149 were ministers and all were Diagram in the last issue miss at least one link line from the Church of England to the English Presbyterians? On a simple basis, yes, because in 1662 some 1700 ministers were ejected from the Church of England. (A later connection between Anglican Arians and the first named Unitarian church in 1774 was implied by nearness: the work of Samuel Clarke and his Arian titled *Book of Common Prayer* used by ex-Anglican Theophilus Lindsey, who discovered that liberal Anglicans tend to remain and so his church was absorbed by the English Presbyterian stream.) However, it can be argued that a line from the Church of England to Presbyterianism is misleading. **Were they ever Anglicans?** Anglicanism is defined by its three orders of ministry of bishops, priests and deacons. Even though in a reformed Church of England Presbyterians would have lost presbyteries, they insisted that bishops must go.



The descent into Civil War was the high point of the Presbyterian emergence into power, having bubbled up within the only fully legal Church structure. Parliament appointed the Westminster Assembly of Divines that began its work on 1st July 1643. 119 of the Presbyterians except for five independents and a few episcopals. The *Apologetica Narration* said that Scripture alone should be the guide for its action, but the Independents showed influence because it also stated that where any believers were gathered for the sacraments then here was a Church, and such worship should be free of ecclesiastical and political interference. But it didn't happen like that with the Presbyterian majority in Parliament, seeking Scottish support against the King, accepted in 1646 the *Scottish Solemn League and Covenant* and thus brought Presbyterianism officially into England. In 1647 Parliament tried to insist that every Army officer take the Presbyterian Covenant, and at one point Parliament would have disbanded the Army. **Cromwell's Army took upon itself, via its prayer meetings, religious diversity**, with a whole range of Protestant groups represented within its ranks. The Army became the Church Militant,

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what people say in public, and what they would really like to say, can be different.

The focus of our discussions will be on the way forward for our community. For that reason, while there may be issues from the past, I ask that you focus your mind on the way forward. To that end I ask that you look at the document from last December called: Hull Unitarians - Our Guiding Principles, Vision and Objectives. The document outlines our principles and then summarises the priorities for the congregation. I have reproduced this list below and I will ask for your thoughts and reflections when we talk.

This process of consultation has an added benefit in that it also allows each of you to get to know me a little better, and for me to start to get to know each of you. I am happy to meet with you individually, but also if you prefer to meet two or three together. I invite you to meet with me at the church, or if you prefer I can come to visit you.

The tasks listed below are complex and demanding. I therefore want you to not only think about what you would like us to attempt in the various areas of activity proposed, but also to identify what you think are the priority areas where you feel my ministry should first be focused?

- (A) Improve our worship services; (B) Ensure that our financial path is clearly planned; (C) Strengthen the efficiency of our governance, ensuring that the leadership has a good understanding of the concerns of the congregation; (D) Improve community awareness; (E) Establish a Pastoral Support Plan; (F) Involve our church membership in making a contribution to our community and the world (G) Ensure that all future decisions move us forward in becoming a green community; (H) Transforming Chamberlain House.

To give justice to your ideas, and to have time for us to connect as well, I suggest you plan on one hour for our initial meeting. I am happy to have ideas in writing (in brief please) but I will rely primarily on what I learn in discussion.

Timing is important since I want to prepare a report to the congregation by March 26 at the latest. I will ask you to sign up at church - there will be plenty of times available. If we can keep to this timetable there will be a chance for the congregation to discuss what I have learnt at an open meeting after the service on Sunday April 19.

With blessings, Ralph Catts

# Chester's Piece

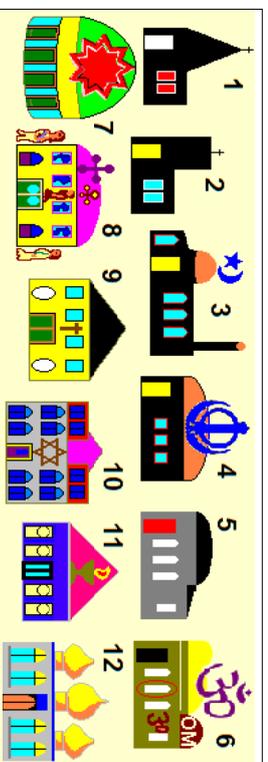
Hi Folks! Just when you think things are settling down nicely, something pops up (or dives down) and bites you on the backside. My closest friends will tell you that I have never, ever ever, suffered the ignominy (not to mention the sheer indignity) of having FLEASI! So yours truly has to acquire them for the first time in mid-winter! What's all that about?



On a more savoury note... Mavis, please point out to my fans that when fed a whole biscuit, crumbs are left behind on the carpet: so less means more or less less crumbs, if you get my drift. So no more whole ones, or less I'll be in trouble some more.

Now I'm getting vibes here that folks might be criticizing my grammar. Just try and get your head round the fact that a corresponding dog is a miracle in its own right. Keep a sense of perspective, please!

I'm not one to make a fuss, as you all know, but I overheard something the other day which was unsettling to say the least. Rumour has it that the church has adopted a cat called Ralph. Whatever, I just hope I can still be the centre of attention on any occasion. That's all for now folks.



Identify the  
Faiths or  
the  
Churches



All members and friends please make a big effort to attend the open meeting on Sunday April 19 after the service. There will be a 'bring and share' lunch from noon to 1 pm and a meeting from 1.15 to 2.45 pm.

**Unitarian Discovery Holiday**  
2015 runs from Monday 13th July (after 14.00) to after lunch on Friday 17th 2015. Please book before 30 April.

Called "Birds of a Feather Flock Together", it is a themed holiday with some educational, intellectual and spiritual content. The cost starts at around £280. Nature, Animals, People: Why do they flock together? For good or ill? It includes two theme speakers, on Tuesday and Thursday, some outdoor and indoor workshops, and social and free time. On Thursday 16th July 2015, Jean Bradley will speak on "Finding Our Feathers". Relaxation Time will include choices: walking, music, poetry and prose appreciation, chatting to friends, exploring Derbyshire. Additional workshops may be slotted in. There may be a chance to do some bird watching when walking. Spiritual needs are catered for throughout: mornings and evenings have reflections; on Thursday there will be a serendipity event to share readings, music, art, talents, (spiritual and secular); there should be some time aside for singing together very informally. The free day is on Wednesday to make own arrangements or join an organised outing with a packed lunch provided. Held at the Nightingale Centre Great Hucklow, Buxton Derbyshire SK17 8RH, all initial enquiries go to Marjorie Walker, 236 Clement Rise, Dedridge, Livingston, EH54 6LR Tel: 01506 493612 or 07718 106732. Unitarian Discovery Information/ Booking Form is on <http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/discovery/>. There is the option of booking for the Walking Weekend that David Copley is running over the weekend of 17th of 19th July 2015 or simply book extra days: contact the Nightingale Centre to see if there are places available.

The YUU scheme to appoint a District Minister is going ahead. The post will be a full-time one but made up of 50% minister at Bradford Unitarians and 50% YUU District. The project could begin towards the end of 2015, with a suitable candidate.

# Who?

On 8th February 2015 Bernard McHugh in his service asked Who Are Our Teachers? The service began with a chalice lighting read from this magazine. Bernard was asking about who made a lasting impression in how we view the world and behave to others. We are considering here life experience and absorbed teaching.

The first person he considered was his "Nana", who attended St. Vincent's Roman Catholic church. She did not foist her religion on to others, and only quoted one line of scripture that it is more blessed to give than to receive. She is remembered for her kindness. Bernard quoted the widow's might scripture in Mark 12 and the Kahlili Gibran piece that possessions are a fear of need and that one should truly give of yourself.

After an intercession, the second influence of teaching was between five and sixteen years of age at Sunday School. It outlined the life of Jesus, the saints and the Church, but above all taught that religion is about happiness. Unitarian minister Paul Travis at a candlelit supper once showed and said that he had never changed profession from when he worked the clubs: he was still spreading happiness.

Happiness, said Bernard, is not just froth but inhabits at various levels including in the soul. Happiness in all beings would mean no desire to hurt another. Bernard's own father thought that happiness belongs to those who give it to others. This led to a reading from the New English Bible and its use of 'Happy' instead of 'Blessed' for the Beatitudes.

Then there is the Unitarian tradition, that taught freedom, self-realisation, and being true to insights. Religion is personal, evolving and on a voyage of discovery. Unitarian openness is liberating for its

band. I suddenly heard Louis Armstrong's music in a totally different frame. That experience convinced me that this was the sort of church I'd like to join.

Once I came to the UK I was able to attend a Unitarian church on a regular basis and I became a member of *Glasgow Unitarians*.

In the past three years I have changed dramatically in so many ways. You may recall the line in *Jesus Christ Superstar*: 'It's been three years, feels like thirty.' Commuting each week from Stirling in Central Scotland to Manchester for training was a long haul. In my first year I also had a placement with St Mark's *Unitarian Church* in Edinburgh. I believe it is the only Unitarian church that has the name of a disciple but I think it is an excellent name. I've been reading Mark's gospel with the aid of some contextual theological texts. I found solidarity with the way Jesus is portrayed in this Gospel as an opponent of oppression and discrimination. Ched Myers, a Catholic theologian says of this text:

"Mark's Gospel is a story by, about and for those committed to God's work of justice, compassion and liberation in the world. To modern theologians, Mark offers no signs from heaven; to scholars, who refuse to ideologically commit

themselves, he offers no answer; but to those willing to risk the wrath of the Empire, Mark offers a way of discipleship."

For my final year of training I had to move temporarily for a year to Birmingham to undertake my placement. This placement led to a fantastic process of development and change in my ministry. Through the *Birmingham Inter-faith Committee* I had the benefit of being invited to share in the celebration of the birth of the Prophet at one of the local mosques. A trustee at *Unitarian New Meeting* and I attended. It was really quite an insightful experience. Everyone in that community knew that I attended the mosque to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet. I was greeted in the streets: "Hello brother!"

It was really interesting also to see how they feel excluded from British culture, and how much they are taken by the fact that we Unitarians reached out and accepted their invitation. So I think that we as Unitarians, with our notion of respect for all faiths, are in a powerful position to contribute to our society by showing how in practice our commitment to respect for all pathways to the knowledge of God and spirituality can reduce the barriers and the ignorance toward others.