



Northampton Unitarians News

*A spiritual fellowship, encouraging tolerance,
reason and independent thought*

Issue 77, September - November 2023

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Statement of Belief (taken from our website)

Unitarianism is a religious movement in which individuals are free to follow their reason and conscience; there is no pressure from creed or scripture. We are open to change in the light of new thought and discoveries.

We believe that:

- everyone has the right to seek truth and meaning for themselves.
- the fundamental tools for doing this are your own life experience, your reflection upon it, your intuitive understanding and the promptings of your own conscience.
- the best place to do this is a community that welcomes you for who you are,
- complete with your beliefs, doubts, and questions.

We offer:

- liberty of conscience from imposed creed, confessions, and dogmas.
- a fellowship where people come together to worship; to share times of celebration and trial; and to help each other in the quest for a faith to live by.

We affirm the universal values of love and compassion, peace, truth, and justice.

We welcome all who come to us in the spirit of goodwill and enquiry, regardless of ethnic or religious background, age, gender, or sexual orientation.

Our thanks to the General Assembly Information Department, for extracts from 'A Faith Worth Thinking About' by Peter Sampson et al; and to Ipswich Unitarians for extracts from a leaflet by Rev. Cliff Reed.

Websites & Social Media

www.northamptonunitarians.org.uk
[https://www.facebook.com/Northampton Unitarians](https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonUnitarians)
<http://sue-still-i-am-one.blogspot.co.uk>
<http://www.midland-unitarian-association.org.uk>
www.unitarian.org.uk
www.unitariansocieties.org.uk

Calendar for September - November 2023

Events for September- November are as follows:

September

Sunday 3rd Worship service: Aleks Zglinska
Sunday 17th Circle service, Harvest
Weds. 27th Threads, craft & chat group

October

Sunday 1st Worship service, leader to be confirmed
Sunday 15th Worship service, Aleks Zglinska
Weds. 25th Threads, craft and chat group

November

Sunday 5th Worship service: Rev Sue Woolley
Sunday 19th Worship service: Aleks Zglinska
Weds. 29th Threads, craft and chat group

All worship services take place at 11.00 am.

The Threads group meets between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm.



Message from our Community Development Coordinator: Northampton Unitarians

Autumn days are with us again, after a busy summer when I am sure we all enjoyed getting involved in celebrations and taking some well-earned holidays! As our newsletter schedule now more closely reflects the seasonal calendar, it feels good to be sure that we're heading into the cooler, crisper days and will soon be crunching leaves underfoot again (And most likely sweeping them up off the church premises!)

The summer involved holding our Flower Celebration in June to celebrate 100 years of the ritual begun by the Czech Unitarian Minister Norbert Čapek. We had a lovely time sharing flowers and also planted up some containers, which have been blooming in the bed beneath the outside noticeboard throughout the summer. I suspect this has brought joy to our passing neighbours and has also given the bees and other pollinators a little variety.



For the Summer Solstice I walked the Dairywalk Labyrinth in Victoria Park. The upper section of the park was once the site of a dairy on the edge of the town known as Dallington Dairy, for the brook which runs down through what was the village of Dallington and joins the upper branch of the Nene just by what is now the park. Jon Small tells me that local schoolchildren were involved in the design of the labyrinth, which is an unusual processional circuit with a large gathering circle leading to an exit alongside the entrance path. It can be walked in both the traditional “in and out” way or the processional way, and for the Solstice I took the opportunity to do both. I also took the leftover petals from the flowers that didn’t make it home with the congregation and blessed the ground around the path with them. It would be lovely to do this again for other significant times of year, even in the winter (weather permitting). The space has a lovely energy and is very accessible to all abilities.



The Dairywalk Labyrinth on the evening of the Summer Solstice 2023

The main highlight of the summer for many of us was the now annual Northampton Pride celebration which was held at the University of Northampton Campus this year. Our Threads group made a banner which was a combination of embroidered and felted squares in the colours inspired by the original Gilbert Baker Pride Flag. This made a very colourful addition to our

decorations. Sue and I chose a significant spot in Beckett’s Park to stand and greet the returning mass of paraders (partly because of the showery weather and partly because of the distance to get to the start of the parade). It proved to be a great snap decision, since everyone in the parade saw our hard work and several people stopped to take pictures of us and with us. It is a privilege to hear people’s stories as part of being at the pride stands. This year, for the first time, we put on a special celebration on Sunday evening where we were joined by local friends and some Unitarian friends from Coventry as a gentle celebration of our commitment to the LGBTQ+ community, to equal marriage and to the recognition of the place spiritual wellbeing and faith has in the lives of all people. It is important to recognise we are not alone in this endeavour. At Pride we were happy to see our friends from Northampton Interfaith Forum (NIFF) and it was great to talk to those of other faiths about their inclusive welcome, but our commitment alongside these other offerings still really matters, especially in a time when there is increased hostility to LGBTQ+ folk around the world, even in places like the UK and the USA where there had been so much progress previously. We can be reminded that as a dissenting faith, the right to worship in the way we see fit was a countercultural move by our forebears. We continue to stand with those whose ability to live their truth may be threatened by those with greater influence and power.





[Note from Ed: Aleks' wonderful rainbow-coloured hair also came in for a good deal of attention and many compliments]

This autumn brings us a great deal of opportunity. We plan to bring back our own labyrinth walking as a regular feature of our programme and are currently exploring the form The Blue Boat project will take in the future, so please look out for updates and further dates for your diary throughout the next few months!

Harvest Circle Service Please take note that the service for Harvest on September 17th is a shared circle service where contributions are welcomed from the congregation. If you can attend and would like to bring something to share in the form of music, poetry, reading or other element please let Aleks know. Otherwise, if you can not attend but have a favourite seasonal offering please email it to Aleks.Zglinska@gmail.com and it can be shared in service by someone who is in attendance with your attribution as the contributor.

Aleks

Northampton Unitarians

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*Blessing for the Equinoxes*

As light and dark are poised in equilibrium for a brief pause in the cosmic dance,

May you pause today to breathe deeply the air of inspiration,  
feel the warmth of the fiery sun of passion on your skin,  
drink deeply from the waters of the well of belonging,  
and touch the sacred grounding earth beneath your feet.

May you find the balance you need, today and every day.  
Blessed be.

**Laura Dobson**