



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

Issue 54, October - December 2016

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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://twitter.com/@NtonUnitarians>
- <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 October - December 2016

October

Sunday 2nd Worship service, Howard Wilkins (Hinckley)
Sunday 9th Worship service, Rev. Sue Woolley
Sunday 16th Soul Haven gathering, Simon Hall
Sunday 23rd Worship service, Jon Small
Sunday 30th Congregational Service. Theme: All Hallows' Eve

November

Sunday 6th Worship service, Rev. Jeffrey Bowes (Coventry)
Sunday 13th Worship service, Rev. Sue Woolley
Sunday 20th Soul Haven gathering, Simon Hall
Sunday 27th Worship Service, Dr. Mark Beaumont

December

Sunday 4th Worship Service, Aleks Zglinska (Kidderminster)
Sunday 11th Worship Service, Rev. Sue Woolley
Sunday 18th Soul Haven gathering, Simon Hall
Sunday 25th Christmas Day: No service

*****Weekday Gatherings*****

There are regular Gatherings on 2nd Tuesdays:

2nd Tuesdays: Happiness Project Group - based on Gretchen Rubin's book

**IDEAS FOR ANOTHER WEEKDAY GATHERING
WOULD BE WELCOMED! (SEE PAGE 5)**

We also meet on **Friday evenings, between 5.00 and 6.30 pm**, to **Walk Away the Cares of the Week** on our Labyrinth.

More details on our website: www.northamptonunitarians.org.uk

*All Worship Services and Gatherings are held at
Northampton Unitarians Meeting House, St. Katherine's Terrace,
Northampton NN1 2AX.
Worship Services start at 10.30 am, Tuesday Gatherings at 7.30 pm
ALL ARE WELCOME!*

Chairman's Chat

First a traditional start! We're still here – not however, where we were last time we had an anniversary. This year, well, late last year, the most amazing thing occurred we were able to purchase this place. Superbly suited for our purpose. We no longer have toilets in the basement that smelt of damp, we no longer have a toilet in a precarious position at the top of the stairs. We don't have interesting cracks in the walls nor steep steps to get into the meeting. We've a ramp, toilets on the one and only floor, a kitchen instead of a sink in the corner and this lovely, large room for when we have a much larger congregation. Light, airy and in a much more public place than before.

It seemed as if everything fell into place I think we really did have G-D on our side!

So now we have a Meeting in a deprived area and a duty I feel to try to involve more of the immediate community and us with them. Things are already happening with the AA meeting here each week and hopefully we will get more and more local groups to meet here or we shall start them ourselves. Our minister has already started on this with two groups which are reasonable successful.

Another interesting fact is that we are now located only a few yards from where the idea of a community avowing Unitarian principles was born after the new minister appointed to the Castle Hill Meeting just over the road arrived determined to root out the liberal ideas and firmly instil due reverence for the principle of Trinitarianism. Those twelve first established themselves in the upper room of a public house that once stood where the new 'bus interchange has been built also not too far away.

To add to this we are even closer to the ancient Anglo-Saxon town centre than to our place of birth. This part of town is rich in Northampton's history.

Most of the work involved in changing Meeting has been done now. We have our folding partition so we can hire out the outer part and now we have a proper notice board just like a real place of worship. A few jobs are left to be done, but probably the most important is getting more people through our doors for whatever reason – more bums on seats, either worshipping with us or meeting here for various reasons. We must all work at this!

We potentially have a great future ahead, but it can't be done without involvement of all of us. So my message for the next year is get on with it! Much as I have enjoyed and excited by the move my involvement has wiped out several plans I had over the last year and I feel it is time I began to slow down.

I think we can all be proud of what we have achieved over the last year. We are small, but we are growing, and what we have is quality!

Jon Small

Weekday Gatherings

Since we moved here last December, we have tried to reach out to the wider community by offering other-than-Sunday events. The weekly Labyrinth Walk, appropriately entitled 'Walk Away The Cares of the Week' has been the biggest success, and people come and walk it every Friday evening.

And our Happiness Project Group is going well on second Tuesdays, but there has been little support for the other Tuesday Gatherings. Perhaps it would be fun to go through a specific

course, such as *The British Unitarian Journey*, an adult RE course in eight sessions, exploring the evolution of the British Unitarian tradition. Or *Home And Away*, another course which has six sessions, and explores the spirituality of place and pilgrimage, home and travel, roots and wings. Or *Spirituality in Everyday Life*, a course with six sessions, which explores the way in which our everyday life enriches our spiritual search. All three of these courses are available from Essex Hall. Or something else altogether!

If you have any ideas for a new other-than-Sunday Gathering, that you would be willing to support with your presence, please let me know. **Sue Woolley**

Hucklow Summer School 2016

This year's theme was 'This changes everything'. We were treated to some outstanding theme talks, and inspirational engagement groups. And some wonderful afternoon and evening activities; as always, it was a very rich and nourishing mix.

But the thing I have taken away this year, that I haven't been able to stop thinking about since, is a lovely song, which was taught to us all at the end of one of the theme talks, by Nancy Crumbine, a Summer School stalwart from the US. It goes like this:

"Here I am, here and now, in this moment, / Here I am, in the place I am meant to be / Nothing can hurt me, nothing can shake me / I am free, I am whole."

This is what I love so much about Summer School - the unexpected, life-changing gifts it provides, year after year. It is the spiritual highlight of my year, and I wouldn't miss it for the world. Why not give it a try next year?

Regional Events

**MUA of Lay Preachers & Worship Leaders
Autumn Training Day
Engaging with Unitarianism: A Workshop
on Engagement Groups & Sharing Our Ethos**

Workshop Leaders: Rev. Sue Woolley & Mrs. Alison Thursfield

Where: Kingswood Meeting House, Packhorse Lane,
Hollywood, Worcs B47 5DQ

When: Saturday 15th October 2016

Times: 10.00 am - 4.15 pm (coffee/tea from 9.30 am)

Cost: FREE to MUA participants; £10 a head to others

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**MUA Annual Lunch**

**Guest Speaker:** Patricia Earle, Midland representative,  
Women's Federation for World Peace

**Where:** Kingswood Meeting House, Packhorse Lane,  
Hollywood, Worcs B47 5DQ

**When:** Saturday 29th October 2016

**Times:** 11.00 for 11.30 am - c.3.00 pm

**Cost:** £10.00 a head  
(more details from Sue Woolley or Mark Beaumont)

## Northampton Unitarians

**Northampton Unitarians Meeting House,  
St. Katherine's Terrace, Northampton NN1 2AX  
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**Minister and Newsletter Editor:** Rev. Sue Woolley  
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**Chairman & Treasurer:** Mr. Jon Small  
e-mail: [jonasmall@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jonasmall@hotmail.co.uk)

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### **From *The Wow of Creation* by David Hawkey**

When you think of the simplicity of the basic building blocks  
of the universe, such as the hydrogen atom -  
and the fact that its potential for change is limited  
to the rise and fall of its energy levels,  
and reflect that with this are made:  
the hummingbird and the whale,  
the mind of an Einstein,  
the music of Handel,  
the words of Shakespeare,  
the Iona landscape,  
the laughter of children,  
the courage of people suffering,  
then no miracle,  
no sign,  
can ever arouse more wonder  
than the facts of the natural universe,  
and the mystery of the human soul.