



### Christmas by Candlelight

We look forward to welcoming you to the annual Christmas readings by Bob Allen on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 5pm. He will be reading from Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' and other 'festive delights' and we will be serving mince pies and mulled wine (with non-alcoholic options too). Pay on the door or email [iuhfriends@gmail.com](mailto:iuhfriends@gmail.com)



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### Candlelight Carol Service

Please too, remember our traditional carol service on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 6pm when we welcome you to an 'alternative' carol service with music, readings and fun, followed by refreshments. If you would like to contribute to the service (a song, a reading, some music, a joke ...) then please let Rev Cliff Reed know as soon as possible - [cliffreed@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cliffreed@hotmail.co.uk) – so he can plan the order of the service.



## Forum of Faiths

On Friday 15th November Ann Baeppler and I attended a Forum of Faiths organised by the "Faith & Spirituality Network Suffolk" and were there to represent our Unitarian community. Some 25 people were present, with the local Anglican, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Latter Day Saints, Quaker, Roman Catholic and Sikh communities being represented. Cynthia Capey, the driving force behind the Interfaith initiative many years ago, started by taking a look at the early aspirations and experiences of interfaith pioneers in Suffolk and went on to take stock of how things stand today. No firm conclusions were reached about the way forward, but the general consensus was to hold further meetings and to let activities evolve. At a time when many parts of the world are troubled by armed conflict, it is important for the different strands of our society to know and understand each other and to gain a better insight into the faiths underlying their thoughts and actions. Sarah Adams has taken over the chairmanship of FSNS from Cynthia, who has now fully earned a quiet retirement.

The Meeting House when Rev Cliff Reed was Minister has played an important role in the past by hosting the first annual interfaith services (a role which was acknowledged and celebrated). As part of the inaugural Inter Faith Week in 2009, a special national event was attended by Faith Community Leaders who signed a statement acknowledging the value of and representing their commitment to inter faith work. The statement is well worth quoting and may help strengthen a revived intention to work at a better understanding between people of all faiths and none.

*"We believe that good inter faith relations are a vital part of a harmonious, just and respectful society."*

*We pledge today, to deepen our work to increase understanding about and between our faiths and*

*to strengthen our cooperation on social issues.*

*We renew our commitment to developing effective and long term ways of dialogue and mutual learning. We shall continue to seek to understand the patterns of engagement of our faith communities – through history and today; to affirm the positive aspects of these patterns; and to heal wounds of misunderstanding where these are found.*

*While our great religious traditions are distinct in belief and practice, there is much that unites us. We will draw on fundamental values held in common and on the wisdom of our respective faith traditions to continue to work – as individual communities together – for the wellbeing of our society, our wider global community and the planet that is our home.*

*Alongside all of good will, we will work to tackle with renewed determination the challenges of poverty, ignorance, injustice, crime and violence, and social fragmentation and to help shape a society where all feel at home; all are valued and justly treated; and all have a chance to thrive."*

Riena Jackson





## Malcolm Hawes Tributes



Malcolm's memorial service and celebration of his life was held on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October and we all were invited to bring and put a flower into a vase as we entered the Meeting House. Together they looked amazing -



So far a total of £1460 – has been collected in his memory and if you would like to add to that total, please go to- <https://malcolmhawes.muchloved.com> There are also photos in a gallery to admire.



### Are you new to the Unitarian world?

A brand new group meets for the first time on **Saturday, 9th November**. Hosted by Lizzie Kingston Harrison and Kieren Mardle-Moss who are both training for ministry, this is an **online group for anyone new to Unitarianism**.

Please email Lizzie for the invitation, time and link and then pass it on to anyone new in your congregation.

**the unitarians** 

The first event was held in November and if you too are new to Unitarianism, you might like to make contact with Lizzie Kingston Harrison to be included in information about future events.

Contact her on [ekingston@unitarian.org.uk](mailto:ekingston@unitarian.org.uk)

### Services in December

**1<sup>st</sup> - Rev Cliff Reed**, Minister Emeritus. Service followed by communion.

Coffee and chat will be in the hall, along with our Christmas 'Bits & Bobs' stall. Please bring any good quality new or unused items for sale in aid of our charity Suffolk Refugee Support. You might find a present or two to buy too!

**8<sup>th</sup> - Jodi Warren**, Ipswich Unitarians.

The local Amnesty group will be bringing their cards for us to sign and send messages of support to prisoners of conscience.

**15<sup>th</sup> - Shana Parvin Begum**, Unitarian Ministry Student.

**21<sup>st</sup> – Candlelight CAROL SERVICE. 6pm.** Followed by refreshments – any food or drinks contributions welcome.

**22<sup>nd</sup> - Lynne Davies**, Octagon Unitarian Chapel, Norwich.

**25<sup>th</sup> - CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE. 10.45am** Led by Rev. Cliff Reed.

**29<sup>th</sup> - Rev John Carter**, Unitarian Minister.

**All services (except the Carol Service) start at 10.45 and are also available on Zoom.**

## **Birthdays in December**

We wish everyone who is celebrating their birthday in December many happy days –

Ray Seal on 12<sup>th</sup> ; Edward Shaw on 22<sup>nd</sup> ; Carol Gibbs on 26<sup>th</sup> ; John Hamilton and Liz Constable on 30<sup>th</sup>

## **Dates for your Diary**

1<sup>st</sup> December – Christmas by Candlelight – readings by Bob Allen – 5pm

21<sup>st</sup> December – Candlelight Carol Service – 6pm

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 – Book Group – to discuss 'James' by Percival Everett – 7pm

30<sup>th</sup> January – Friends AGM with talk by architect Stuart Edgar on restoration projects in Ipswich – 6pm

1<sup>st</sup> March – concert by Stella Acapella organised by the FIUMH

11<sup>th</sup> October – concert by Trianon

Please keep a note of these dates and do let us know if you plan or have ideas about other fundraising events.



## **Meaning of the Advent Ring**

Holly – is said to heal certain ailments and in some countries is known as Christ's thorn. The berries are thought to represent the drops of blood which fell from Jesus' crown of thorns at the time of the crucifixion.

Rosemary - is a symbol of friendship and remembrance, thus used at Christmas when we remember the birth of Jesus.

Mistletoe - is a symbol of fertility, which is probably the origin of the traditional kissing beneath the mistletoe and is said to offer protection from evil spirits.

Bay and Laurel are symbols of victory and honour and were used in ancient Rome to decorate the wreaths worn by heroes, emperors or athletes.

Ivy is associated with Bacchus, the god of revelry, representing happiness and good cheer.

Yew is said to offer protection against witches.

*Thanks to Rosemary Hamilton for this contribution.*

## **Thought for the month**

I believe the greatest gift I can conceive of having from anyone is to be seen by them, heard by them, to be understood and touched by them. The greatest gift I can give is to see, hear, understand and to touch another person. When this is done I feel contact has been made.

Virginia Satir

## **Disclaimer**

We welcome contributions from all members and friends of our congregation. Views expressed in the articles are those of the individual and not necessarily those of our congregation or of our Unitarian community.

## **Contacts**

Contributions PLEASE for the next newsletter to Tessa Forsdike before the deadline of Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December, ideally by email to [tessa@tessajordan.co.uk](mailto:tessa@tessajordan.co.uk)

To contact our Secretary, ring 01473 728498 (or email [tessa@tessajordan.co.uk](mailto:tessa@tessajordan.co.uk) ) or ring our Treasurer Robert Waller on 01473 610723.