

# Christward

The magazine of



January 10<sup>th</sup>–February 28<sup>th</sup>  
2016

## ~ From the Minister's Desk ~

Thanks to the generosity and graciousness of Union Chapel, I enjoyed a strange and delightful Christmas without responsibility for the services on the 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>. I know that for some, the idea of a minister 'having Christmas off' does not sit well, or feels unnecessary, or even seems a little bizarre. I can only speak from my experiences, but I think it is vital. Vital for the minister to experience Christmas differently; of course the reduced pressure and busyness obviously helps to recapture some of the magic, but as important is the change in mentality from producing to receiving, from speaking to listening. Vital for the minister's family (who, it must be said, are also very grateful) to experience a Christmas alongside a parent-without-portfolio, who is therefore probably more attentive and joyous than usual! And vital for a church committed to multi-voiced life; convinced of the wisdom and depth that comes from shared participation and rejecting the idea that only ministers can do things 'properly'. All that said, I won't be making another request any time soon, so accept my heartfelt gratitude safe in that knowledge!

Shortly before Christmas I read a brief article written by Tim Lott, *Christmas reminds me how well we do religion-lite in Britain* (The Guardian, 18/12/15). Tim found himself, as part of his daughter's cub troupe, belting out Christmas Carols at their local tube station. Whilst he was enjoying sending out Christian messages of good cheer, it struck him that none of the singers or listeners were likely to be Christians. Tim did not have a problem with this, but recognised 'it is a pantomime that we join in together and play out what it would feel like if we really did believe'. He likens it to the kind of good-natured fudge that also happens at Christenings, Weddings, and Funerals – completely disingenuous, but rarely cynical.

Even as a humanist, Tim does not advocate the diminishing of Christian influence from our society, 'because Christianity is the faith most of us don't believe in, but we live by all the same – which is a form of faith in itself'. The living by it involves the attraction to most people of retaining and promoting the ideals of love,

forgiveness and selflessness. Not that Christianity is the only way to do this, but it is significant in our context, and seems to offer this opportunity without making any immediate demands in return. In the same way, the attraction of church at Christmas is not in the affirmation of the literal beliefs in events surrounding the Nativity, but rather with a season filled with the messages of peace, love, and joy.

It becomes clear that the definition of 'religion-lite' here is based on the observation that Christianity in Britain does not require people to believe in order to participate. Very few of those who visit church at Christmas do so because they believe what's being said and sung, and anyone can pop into a midnight mass without being challenged. For Tim this is a positive attribute. I'm not quite sure I would concur with his assertion that 'not all faiths have the same laissez faire attitude to their canon of beliefs' – I hope there is space amongst many faiths to be genuinely hospitable without compromising commitment. It does however reveal an interesting assumption about what makes religion-lite.

'Lite' is an increasingly used variant of 'light' (I like the potential with that metaphor already). It seems to be increasingly used as a way of describing a product which has had something undesirable removed from it; sweet things with less sugar or fat, beer with less alcohol, cigarettes that do marginally less damage, and so on. In the case of religion, the undesirable element is the dogma, which, once removed, leaves a faith full of appealing values that is far healthier to ingest. I can't help but sympathise with that perception, although it would be a shame to remove so much that all that remained was sentimental fluff with little substance or longevity. After all, despite the marketing hype, there is often a feeling that these 'lite' products are a pale imitation of the real thing.

For Tim though, this does not appear to be the case. He concludes: 'Religion-lite is what we do in this country and it is all the more valuable for that. So Merry Christmas, one and all, even though we don't believe in it. Because on one level we try to live it, even as we live to doubt it.'

I like the idea of humanists trying to live the principles of the Christian religion whilst refusing to believe it – that seems a lot healthier than those so preoccupied with belief that they forget to live it. It's not that the systems of belief are all bad, after all values tend to need a structure and story in order to survive - it's just that if you're not very careful they become the focus. So perhaps it is worth us 'full-fat' religious types thinking about whether our faith is indeed lite enough. We may even ponder if the faith of Jesus really required all the artificial additives that have weighed it down since.

It also seems important that we understand the perspective of all those like Tim. We might have mixed responses to it, but the fact is that there are large numbers of people in our country that feel the same way. We would do well to position ourselves in this space where religion still interfaces with society, a place of doubt and possible misinterpretation, but also a place of goodwill and commonality.

I will leave you with what I found to be a thought-provoking reflection that I recently discovered in a book of Iona worship resources (Ruth Burgess, *Acorns and Archangles*, Wild Goose, 2009). I have not come across its writer Stuart Barrie before. He is a Glasgow-born engineer who explores faith through poetry, and it may be that he is in the in-between space that I describe. It also strikes me, a year on from the Charlie Hebdo killings and their recent anniversary edition response, that this place of interface has never been more important. The piece is titled 'Always Knew'.

I always knew there was no God in the sky.  
I always knew Jesus's dad didn't exist.  
I could see that God was made in man's image,  
but beyond that was fog; was sightlessness.  
I kept these views to myself, I'm no fool.  
The 'I'm right, so you're wrong brigade' often kill.  
Another's delusions is a sorry reason for dying.  
All delusions need the nutrient of darkness  
and light's terrifying when you're shackled in shadow.

So after many years of care and research

I stated (to myself) with confidence,  
'I am an unconditional atheist!'  
Immediately I knew this was untrue.

There was still that which cannot be articulated,  
a knowledge which cannot be written of,  
which has joy as a mark;  
mayhap approached through a door of silence,  
tethered in the very second you read this word.  
When I sensed this, I smiled, and smiled, and smiled.  
(But relax ... If you don't believe me I won't kill you,  
I'm not that scared, plus I might be wrong.)

## **~ Link to Hope Shoe Box Collection ~**

Despite the lovely weather, we have celebrated Christmas with our usual enthusiasm and sung our usual songs. On the sunny Sunday before Christmas it struck me how the words of "Jingle Bells" reflect life from a period of history in this country, between one and two hundred years ago. A while ago I read Arnold Bennett's Clayhanger series, and in his last book, These Twain, the main character drives around his estate in a one-horse open sleigh (or trap!), while most of the populace walk, as indeed he had done in his earlier years. How different from nowadays..... unless we live elsewhere in the world. Two of our children live in France, where it isn't so different from here. Another has married a young woman from Belarus, which borders onto Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. I feel very privileged to have visited Belarus to attend their wedding at the Baptist church in the capital, Minsk.

It really was winter! Every morning at 5am a team of women swept the ice off the pavements and knocked down icicles to prevent accidents, before others set out for work. In the evening the pavements became covered with sheet ice, terrifying to try and walk on! The days were bright and sunny, and on the day of the wedding the photographs were taken in a lovely park, though we had to

move aside when a huge tractor complete with snow shovel came along the paths and heaped up huge piles of snow along the edges. The beautiful bride in her white dress had a small shawl to stop her from completely freezing, and our son took off his coat and put it round her between photos while they shared a small flask of tea between photos. Happy memories!

At the wedding service we met her parents and some of the family, and spoke to each other through an army of willing and patient translators. We learned a little bit about each other. Since then, we've learned a lot more. So, when we sang "Jingle Bells" it was her father in his small village three hours away by train from Minsk, that I thought of. He would be visiting his family on his horse, three miles from his home, snow and all! For him, his daily way of life is not dissimilar to the period here when Jingle Bells was written.

One year our daughter-in-law was thrilled to receive a shoebox, full of exciting things! Her memories of that experience and the gratitude she still feels, have made her an avid supporter of the scheme. She wants others to have the pleasure of receiving too. So, when we decided to make up some shoeboxes at Union Chapel, I wanted to help.

We decided to send our shoeboxes through Link to Hope, a charity which was begun by members of a church in Worthing, Surrey. They began in 1991 after seeing television coverage of the dreadful conditions in the orphanages in Romania. Since then they've been invited to work with nationals in Moldova and Romania, Bulgaria and the Ukraine. They also send Shoeboxes to all of these countries.

At Union Chapel we started rather late in the year and there wasn't much time to organise our efforts, so one Sunday we discussed the charity and distributed literature, then another Sunday we came armed with shoeboxes and useful items as well as treats to fill them with. It was very much a joint effort. Altogether we filled 16 shoeboxes. Later we took them to a Methodist Church in North Manchester which was acting as a collection point for all donations.

From there the boxes were due to be collected and taken to Worthing, so starting their journey to eastern Europe.



Years ago when my children filled shoeboxes, each box was for one child. However, Link to Hope supply shoeboxes for either a family or an elderly couple or an individual. Often it is the elderly who end up being alone and struggling. By ticking the contents list and sticking it on the box, the people delivering the boxes in their villages are able to match a box with a known family, couple or person.

This is some of the information Link to Hope have on their website.... see [linktohope.co.uk](http://linktohope.co.uk)

“Our aims (are) to help the poorest and most marginalised through education and social care and to change lives by releasing communities out of poverty. We deal directly with trusted partners who deliver the aid directly to the people that need it and therefore see results very quickly. We are very proud that money is not wasted and every penny that is given counts.

Link to Hope works with a variety of nationals on a range of projects throughout Eastern Europe. Link to Hope success and good reputation is based on 22 years of dedication by a range of individuals who have a heart for Eastern Europe and want to offer

the hand of friendship, finance and knowledge to the people of these countries to lift them out of poverty.

**Education** Our aim is to combat poverty through education. We work with children and young people through our Kindergarten in Iasi, Romania and the Emmaus Club in Dancu Moldova. Both projects aim to target marginalised and poor children who struggle with normal schooling, or because of their background or ethnic origin, are marginalised and drop out. The kindergarten teaches children from Dallas Shanty Town between 4-7 years and the Emmaus Club targets children with special needs who need extra help to keep them in schools. We also support adult education and training with our Farm of Hope project for ex-orphanage young men and a school for gypsy children in the Ukraine.

**Community development and social work** Our aim is to promote family cohesion and the inclusion of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups into society. In Romania we work with families and their children some of whom live in Dallas Shanty town. We go and meet with them regularly to extend help and advice to those that others would ignore. The team also helps with medical and dental bills, official paperwork, repairing of homes, helping with fuel in the winter etc. Our projects in Moldova include the Inn of Love, a 'meals on wheels' service for the very poorest and elderly in Dancu to provide food and friendship. In addition the building of a Soup Kitchen in the village of Cosnita to feed between 50 -100 of the poorest residents."

Finally.... None of us pretend that shoeboxes are the answer to the world's problems, but for those of us who want to help from the confines of our own homes, they are simply a step in the right direction. So thank you to everyone who helped our shoebox appeal, whether it be by bringing boxes or goodies, or by donating money to help purchase the goodies or to cover the £2 we have to attach to each box. As for 2016, if we decide to do this again, we must start early and give ourselves time to enjoy the process in a more leisurely fashion!

A Samaritans Purse volunteer has told me that, sadly, no shoeboxes have gone to Belarus this year. I don't know why.

*Carole Walker*



## ~ A Letter of Appreciation ~

*[I have added the names of the performers and few illustrative photo graphs to this letter. (Ed.)]*

Dear Sir

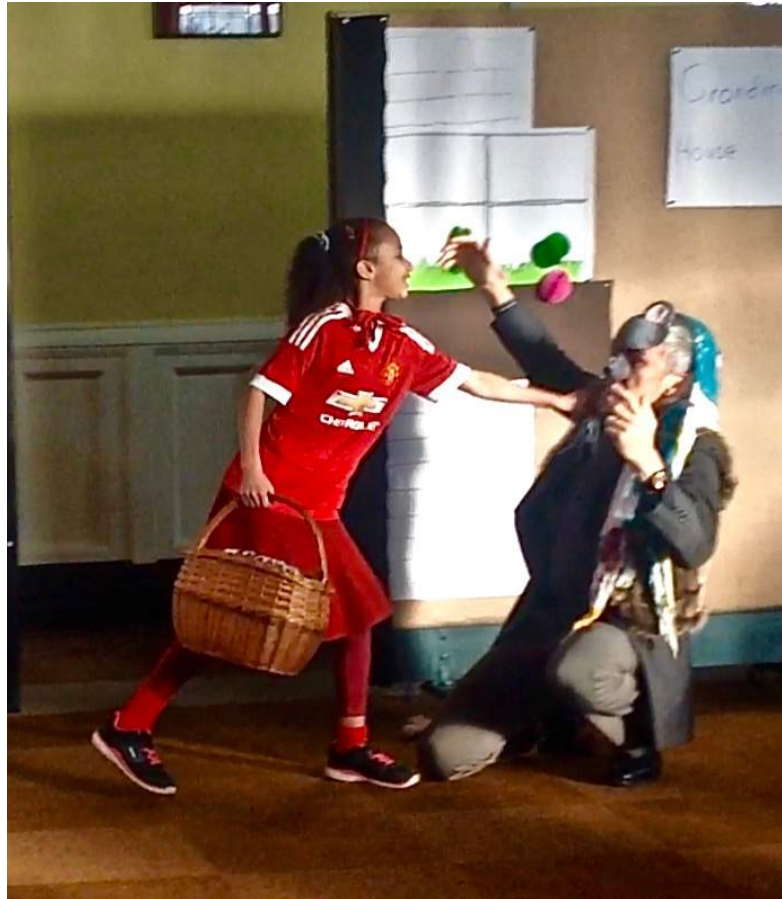
In Manchester for the Christmas Markets we visited Union Chapel on 20th December last. We would like to congratulate your young people for a most affecting performance of the minimalist play 'Hansel and Gretel Meet Little Red Riding Hood'. Their enthusiasm together with their spell binding technique made for a most enjoyable six minutes.

From the moment Hansel (*Nathan Geere*), with his jaunty hat and check shirt, arrived on stage followed by his breathless older sister Gretel we knew we were in for a great time. Hansel conveyed his considerable frustration with his sister perfectly as he listened to Gretel (*Anna Geere*) ruthlessly explaining to him why everything was his fault. They really inhabited their parts.



**A frustrated Hansel & super cool Gretel**

With the arrival of Little Red Riding Hood we were lulled into thinking that here was a sweet demure naive little girl. This made the transformation into something like Superwoman as she karate chopped the wolf all the more amazing. The actor (*Isobel Earnshaw*) showed real skill in bringing this off.



### **Superwoman delivers the knockout blow**

The witch Griselda (*Jess Howes*) was the most frightening witch we have seen since the one in Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. There was such ferocity in the performance but she also managed the pathos required when she bemoaned her enforced vegetarianism.

We very much enjoyed the Wolf (*Andy Howes*) who tried so hard to be nasty but was really a great big softie. The rich symbolism of his tail coming off just as the tale was coming to an end was not lost on us.



### **A Wolf who is no match for the Witch**

The appearance of Father Christmas (*David Garner*) was rather a surprise but no less welcome for that. Played as an avuncular peacemaker a cross between a garden gnome and Albus Dumbledore he nicely rounded off the performance.



It only remained for the company to produce a dance finale of such breathtaking complexity that we could only wonder at how they managed it.



### **Hansel neatly de-tails the Wolf in the Finale**

We only hope that if we return to Manchester next Christmas for the Markets we will have the good fortune to witness further work by these talented young performers.

Seasonal Felicitations

Hans & Leda Roue

## **~ Using Our Buildings ~**

Over 20 years ago the church community spent most of three years in intense debate about the future use of the chapel building. The outcome was that we repaired the dry rot, stripped out the pews, pulpit and organ in the chapel: we refitted the building to offer the new entrance, four meeting rooms, kitchen, and store rooms, carpeted and serviced as you know it today. This made it possible

for us to start up a recreational/educational community replacing some of the provision that Mrs Thatcher's financial cuts had forced Manchester to withdraw. With the support of our minister Eric Bray, and hard work from Eileen Land and the early tutors, the project grew steadily.

The church sponsored group became known as Opportunities and Activities and has grown considerably. It has now become an independent charity administered by a group of trustees including Ian Geere, Eileen Land and myself, together with a number of volunteers. If you look at their brochure or go to [www.o-a.org.uk](http://www.o-a.org.uk) you will find listed 8 art classes, 6 for Health & Well Being, 16 Language courses and a book group. Last term O&A attracted about 300 students each week. Although it is independent of the church the trustees still follow the principles considered in setting up the group. There are reduced fees for students receiving Statutory Means Tested Benefits as well as bursaries (free places), for those in extreme financial difficulty. It is still true that the majority of students are able to afford the fees but many of them rely on their classes for company. Many classes exercise a caring pastoral role enquiring if a member fails turn up and often visiting.

The independent groups who rent from us are varied and complex: There are four church groups. There is the Hebron Pentecostal Church which worships & runs a youth group in the Large Hall: an Indian language branch of the 7th Day Adventist Church worships on Saturday evening: French speaking worship for some Congolese Christians is run by a former member of our congregation, Urbain: the Mahanaim Pentecostal Group runs an all day Bible Study on Saturdays once a month.

We then have five groups which use 12 step principles to help individuals with psychological problems to take responsibility for changing their own lives. These, necessarily, have to offer their members a level of anonymity and privacy when they meet. In addition there is a group seeking to develop the Personal Skills of Individuals with Learning Difficulties.

There are two groups involving children from a range of backgrounds. The Humpty Dumpty group offers developmental activities to toddlers who are accompanied by their parents/carers.

The Anne Finnegan Theatre School trains students aged 2 - 18 in dancing and stagecraft developing their physical abilities, their self discipline and their self belief. Both groups offer a pastoral environment and have established Safeguarding Policies.

There are four performing music groups: Drumroots teaches the tradition of African Djembe drumming, Manchester Music Makers which offers orchestral instrumentalists of a wide range of ability the opportunity to play together, Trad Jazz encourages players of average ability to experience ensemble work, and the Gloriana Ladies' Choir which offers the chance for people to sing together without requiring detailed musical knowledge. In addition there is the group Opera for All which shares reaction to audio and visual recordings of opera and Playback Theatre which improvises performances responding to stories from their audience

Exercise groups include Gentle Exercise, Pilates, Opanka Folk Dancers and Jinlong Martial Arts. There are 3 Yoga groups with different approaches and a teaching group leading students to a recognised yoga teaching qualification.

The creative arts are well represented. Every week Shabana encourages her students to experiment doing new work with textiles and jewellery. The WEA runs a regular painting class while the Chinese Brush painters meet weekly and also once a month. The Embroiderers' Guild takes over the whole chapel building once a month running workshops with expert teachers.

Perhaps the most familiar groups are the five German Language classes and the groups with Alan Sennett reflecting on a historical theme.

Finally we have a regular social meeting of the Jordanian Arab community once a month and we are in negotiation with a Libyan Community group.

All of this excludes special 'one off' bookings which get fitted in where there is room. It's not easy for with five rooms to let and offering four sessions a day we get over 75% occupancy except in the holidays. Even then, because students get lonely, there is a special summer programme.

I haven't mentioned the use we get from university groups who use us for overnight 'on the floor' accommodation when volunteers are coming to collect for a charity.

In the middle of all this the church uses the chapel building on a Sunday morning and for some Sunday lunches, for the meditative prayer meetings and for the Open Tuesday group. While the last began within the church community most meetings now include more people from outside the worshipping membership.

One group you will know about, is still sponsored by our church amongst others - the Food Bank. It uses the Large Hall for one morning a week and stores food for distribution in a side room.

We specifically reserve the right to cancel groups if the building is needed for church activities so that important things like weddings, funerals and ceilidhs can be held.

*Michael Welford*

*Two users of the building write:*

Since I started doing still life classes at Union Chapel I think my work there has improved considerably due, I think, to the happy, warm, friendly atmosphere and the excellent, experienced tutorship of John Fasnacht.

*Phil Mohan.*

We were delighted when we moved to Union Chapel as you allowed us to have a large cupboard for storage which we didn't have in our previous premises. We were also allowed the use of the whole building which enables us to have an Open Day once a year, a workshop in the large hall, a general meeting in the smaller hall, the use of the smaller rooms for Committee Meetings and the use of the kitchen. The disabled access and toilets, which we didn't have in our previous premises, have proved to be a boon as we have two members in wheelchairs. The fact that we have use of the carpark is another plus. You have also allowed us to put up notices regarding events the Guild is involved in. There will be another poster coming in January as we are having our Diamond Jubilee exhibition at Ordsall Hall starting on 22nd February and finishing Mid May 2016. We look forward to long and happy association with Union Chapel.

*Ida Bradshaw: Embroiderers' Guild*

## ~ Fallowfield & Withington Food Bank ~

I have to admit that there were many sleepless nights during October & November as I began to doubt whether food donations would outweigh the food given to our clients. The Tesco collection couldn't come quick enough!

The generosity of so many people from Churches, companies, individuals and our Sister Food Bank at South Manchester enabled us to continue feeding an ever increasing number of people attending all three Food Bank sessions.

The Tesco collection was a huge success as we collected just over three tonnes of food a record for us. The generosity of those who gave amazed me and together with food donations we had some very large financial donations.



Below is a picture of Anna & Nathan holding up a huge till receipt for food purchased by a generous donor.. This picture even went viral on our new Twitter Account and featured in the Trussel Trust's bulletin.





The weekend wasn't without humour as the entrance door to Withington Methodist Church blew shut in the cold blustery winds, we were stranded so there was nothing else we could do but ask Rev Jane Wild to come to our rescue. I was beginning to think it was all going to descend into a Noel Coward farce!

The additional storage space at Withington Methodist Church is of huge importance to us and we are so grateful for the on going support of Rev Jane Wild and the members of the congregation. The success of our Foodbank Project is down to the many volunteers who give so much of their time and energy and it was no less so as we moved, sorted, dated and warehoused 3 tonnes of food.

December 13<sup>th</sup> saw the Withington Community Carol Service take place at St. Paul's where I was asked to read a Lesson and the Foodbank has benefited from the collection, which amounted to £340. Thank you to Rev Gisela Raines for her continued support.

Numbers attending the Foodbank sessions continue to rise and the weeks leading up to Christmas were very busy.

One final plea if I may? We are currently asking for donations of tin openers so that we might give them out to clients.

*Colin Marchbank Smith*

## **~ Happy memories of singing with Manchester Community Choir at Union Chapel ~**

It was sixteen years ago that I nervously stepped through the doors of Union Chapel to come to the first rehearsal for the newly formed Manchester Community Choir. That was a life changing experience, the songs were wonderful to learn, everyone was so friendly and encouraging. The space at Union Chapel is great to use. Michael, Margaret and Eileen and the rest of the team there have been very helpful in accommodating our rehearsal needs over the years. So it is with a tear in my eye that I say goodbye to Union Chapel, but take away such happy memories of singing there. Now the choir has grown bigger, and we are moving in January 2016 to a larger rehearsal space at Didsbury Baptist Church. Thank you all for your support and hope to see you again at one of our upcoming performances.

*Margaret Seaby, founder member Manchester Community Choir.  
[www.manchestercommunitychoir.com](http://www.manchestercommunitychoir.com)*

## **~ News of the Family ~**

**Hilda Linton's** sister Alice passed away in Mid December just a few days after her 99th Birthday. Alice used to attend O & A classes and the Church lunch. Please remember Hilda at this time.

**Rose Bell** managed to spend Christmas and the New Year in Rio de Janeiro visiting her niece who is working there in preparation for the forthcoming Olympic Games. Rose hasn't been too well of late but she continues to bring much love and joy to our Saturday Foodbank sessions.

**~ Minutes of the Church Meeting  
of Union Chapel Fallowfield (Baptist)  
held on Sunday 15th November 2015  
at 11.20am.~**

**Present:** Ian Geere (chair), Gwyneth Heritage Roberts, Andy Howes, Margaret Edmonds, Eileen Land, Ted Land, Gwen Mattock, Michael Welford, Leonie Earnshaw, Steve Roberts, Jonathan Roberts, Colin Marchbank-Smith, Owen Roberts, Rose Bell, Sarah Geere, Carole Walker, Geoff Walker, Nicola Hamilton, Owen Jones, Brenda Marston.

**Apologies:** Alan Redhouse and Margaret Redhouse; and Enid Welford and Rachel Adebago (with children)

**The Minutes** of the September 2015 meeting (in current magazine) were approved.

**Matters Arising:** update on all agenda items from last meeting

**Notification of AOB for this meeting:** none

**Matters Arising:**

- (i) a letter had been sent to Harry Fleming as requested by the September meeting;
- (ii) Linton House – still nothing further in writing from the University;
- (iii) Insurance requirements – these are being progressed;
- (iv) NWBA Co-Moderators – Ian and Sarah G are now in post.

**2. Information items:**

- (i) Foodbank has had a formal audit from the Trussell Trust. One or two areas were highlighted for improvement but the report was highly complimentary. Thanks to Colin M-S and all the Foodbank team.
- (ii) A reminder that Beryl D collects used stamps for BMS World Mission.

**3. Harvest Feedback:**

We have sent £300 to Richard and Rosemary Kidd for their charity Freeset. The money has gone towards the production of a book of

reflections by Richard and an artist/minister Mike Lowe, which will be sold for the benefit of the charity. The Church has been acknowledged in the book as a funder and most copies from the initial print run have now been sold. Ian G can obtain copies for anyone who would like to buy one.

There was some unhappiness that we had not discussed properly that there would be such a radical departure from the traditional harvest service (although it had been mentioned at the previous meeting that there was no plan for a traditional service this year). A number of people felt that it was important to remember where our food comes from, and the work of the producers – especially the independent farmers. To be discussed again before next year.

#### **4. Uplift in Minister's Stipend:**

The Meeting approved an increase in January to the new Baptist Union recommended minimum, plus 2% in line with our usual practice.

Ian G was not present for the discussion of this item and Sarah G did not participate or vote.

#### **5. Donations to other charities from our congregational giving:**

The Meeting resolved to make these donations to the same charities and on the same basis as last year: the bulk of the money to be divided equally between Home Mission, BMS World Mission, the Northern Baptist Learning Community and Christian Aid, with a smaller payment to Greater Manchester Industrial Mission.

#### **6. Christmas Card:**

Julie B has designed a striking card. The message inside includes details of the Christmas services and something about the life of the Church. David G is dealing with the printers. The Meeting decided that the card should be distributed in the immediate locality of the Church and Andy H will allocate streets to willing volunteers.

Thanks to Julie for her work on this.

#### **7. Topic for the Church Weekend 2016:**

We have no speaker booked as yet. We have had weekends in the past without an external speaker. Suggestions for topics were invited. We need to bear in mind that the weekend needs to be of interest to the children and young people, and also to those who

come to the weekend but do not live in Manchester. Possibilities raised included other strands of thought and belief (especially Islam), and festivals in our own and other religions.

Michael W made the point strongly that we need to discuss our mission as a church, and how we relate our practice to our Gospel understanding, but it was felt that this needs to start sooner than next June. What is the hope that Union Chapel should express?

Steve R felt that the topic was of secondary importance to being able to spend plenty of time together and allow space for longer conversations.

### **8. Notice Boards and Magazine:**

New blue Notice Boards have been put up in the Small Hall (which pins will go into easily). We need to give more thought to how they can best be used to communicate with the people who see them.

The Magazine is read by former members of the congregation and by visitors to the premises as well as by the current congregation. We are all hugely appreciative of Alan R's work on this. The question was put as to whether there should be more articles written with people who do not attend the Church in mind. After some discussion the feeling of the Meeting was that the Magazine in its current form gives an insight for others into who we are, and helps to keep the wider Union Chapel dispersed community together in spirit. That said, a greater diversity of contributors would be good.

**The Meeting closed** with the singing of Hallelujah at 12.10pm

**Date of Next Meeting:** 17th January 2016