

# Banbury Unitarians News



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

## Issue 15, July - September 2015 Contents

Letter from the Minister	page 2
Calendar for July - September 2015	page 3
<i>Making a Difference</i> by Sue Woolley	page 3
Poetry Please	page 8
<i>Life</i> by Rosemary Booth	page 8
<i>Return</i> by Pamela Parrish	page 10
<i>Curtains</i> by Rosemary Booth	page 11
Who we are and how to contact us	page 12
<i>Approaching Divinity</i> by Cliff Reed	page 12

## Letter from the Minister

Dear Friends,

And finally, we get some nice weather! My husband and I have recently spent a lovely week in mid-Wales, and the sun shone every day, which was just marvellous.

Exciting things have happened in the Fellowship, since the last Newsletter came out. At our service at the end of May, we committed as a Fellowship to two pieces of social action: we are going to donate food regularly to the Banbury Food Bank (very many thanks to Don and Rosemary Booth for volunteering to coordinate this), and we have decided to adopt Helen and Douglas House, a hospice for children and young adults near Oxford, as our Charity of the Year. Please see my article on page 3 for more details. We are hoping to raise a goodly amount for them, so please remember to save your small change, and to bring it along to every service.

I was also delighted to receive some wonderful poems from two members of the congregation - they are on pages 8 to 11.

In other news, Richard Clugston very kindly stepped in to lead our Discussion Group session in June, as I was on holiday that week. I understand that the topic was mathematics, and that it was most interesting. We won't be having a Discussion Group session in August, as many members of the congregation take their holidays at this time, but we will be back in September, when members will again be leading it, as I will be at the Unitarian Ministerial Fellowship's Autumn Conference at Great Hucklow, which is an annual opportunity for me to spend some time with colleagues and to learn something new.

Wishing you all a lovely Summer, *Sue*

## Calendar for July - September 2015

### July

- Thursday 9th Discussion Group, led by Sue Woolley:  
*Do you believe in miracles?*
- Sunday 26th Worship service, led by Sue Woolley

### August

- Thursday 13th Discussion Group: no session, due to holidays
- Sunday 30th Worship service, led by Sue Woolley

### September

- Thursday 10th Discussion Group, led by members:  
*Topic to be announced*
- Sunday 28th Worship service, led by Sue Woolley

*All worship services are held at  
Grimsbury Community Centre and start at 11.00 am*

*Discussion Group sessions are held in the small room at  
Grimsbury Community Centre and start at 10.30 am*

~~~~~

## Making a Difference by Sue Woolley

At the May session of our Discussion Group, the topic was "Should Unitarians be political?" I had chosen the topic because of the recent General Election, but wasn't sure how it would go.

But my golly gosh, it turned into such a special time! There were seven people there, including me, and the meeting evolved into a passionate discussion of what we, \*as a Unitarian fellowship\* could do to make the world a better place. And the upshot of it was: we have decided to support the local Banbury Food Bank, by

bringing something along to every service, starting in June, and would also like to propose that the Fellowship adopts the local children's and young adults' hospice, Helen and Douglas House, where Elaine's daughter Imogen works, as our Charity of the Year, and donate all our small change every month.



Let me tell you something about the charity that is Helen and Douglas House, which I have found out from their website: they provide medical, emotional and practical support, helping families deal with the implications of living with a child who will die prematurely, so they can make the most of their time together. They care for children and young adults, aged from birth to 35, from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, and parts of London.

"Helen House was the world's first children's hospice, opening in the outskirts of Oxford in November 1982. It sprang from the friendship between Sister Frances Dominica and the parents of a seriously ill little girl called Helen who lived at home with her family but required 24 hour care.

It is natural that the parents of a much-loved but very ill child would want to care for them at home, but caring for your child every day and night, as well as looking after the rest of your family, and earning a living, can be exhausting.

Helen's family's experience highlighted the need for respite care and support for children with life-shortening conditions and so

Helen House was set up to help families cope by providing occasional respite care modelled on that provided in the family home - personalised and tailored to individual needs.

The building was based on the family home with just eight children's bedrooms, as the small scale provides flexibility, as well as affording the children and families who stay there sensitivity and dignity. The emphasis is on making the most of life, whatever the circumstances.



the Helen House garden (image from [www.helenanddouglas.org.uk](http://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk))

Helen House cares for children aged from birth to 18 years-old. There are eight beds in total, including two emergency beds. There are also four flats so the whole family can stay if they choose.

Each child is allocated a number of nights respite per year, depending on their needs and this is reviewed as their needs

change. In addition they offer symptom management stays and end-of-life care.

The newly refurbished house has a spa, a large art and play area, a games area, music room, a sensory room and lots of books and toys. There are often outings and activities going on to make the most of respite time.

The Helen House Care Team includes registered children's nurses, nursery nurses, carers, physiotherapist, play specialists, an aromatherapist and a teacher. A small team of specialist doctors provides 24-hour medical cover.

With improvements in medical care, children and young adults with life-shortening conditions are in some instances living longer than ever before. A children's hospice environment is unlikely to be suitable for someone who is 16 or over, but neither is an adult hospice, which is why Douglas House was opened in February 2004 specifically for young adults.

Douglas House provides a young person with the time to do the things they like to do with the support of the nursing and care team. They care for young adults aged 16-35 years-old. The building is modern, purpose built and not at all clinical in appearance. There are seven beds, including one emergency bed.

Each person is allocated a number of nights respite per year, depending on their needs, and this is reviewed as their needs change. In addition they offer symptom management stays and end-of-life care.

There is a Jacuzzi, games room, sensory room, music room ....and even a bar! There are opportunities for days or evenings out and lots of fun activities. There is also the chance to meet other young people who are facing similar challenges, in an atmosphere that focuses on living life to the full.

The Douglas House Care Team includes registered nurses, registered learning disability nurses, carers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, an aromatherapist and Care Team volunteers. A small team of specialist doctors provides 24-hour medical cover."



A Helen and Douglas House teddy, which can be bought from the charity's online shop (image from [www.helenanddouglas.org.uk](http://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk))

Our Treasurer Elaine's daughter, Imogen, is one of the staff at Helen and Douglas House. She says: "I love working at Douglas House because it is unlike anywhere I have ever worked before: from eating homemade food and cakes that are served everyday, to going with patients into the jacuzzi, the art and craft room, the music room, or to staying up all night watching films with the patients, it is really different from most qualified nursing work. No two days are the same. Working at Douglas House means that I form strong relationships with the patients and their families which is very rewarding.

Helen and Douglas House is a charity run hospice for children and young adults aged 0-35 years old. Douglas House helps young adults to go and fulfil their dreams. From getting married to barge trips, concerts, musicals, eating out, cinema or whatever the patient wants. Helen House provides accommodation for the whole family to stay with their child. We have even had a

penguin walking down the corridor as a child wanted to see a penguin before he passed away. Another child had never been to the beach so it was arranged that the beach would come to him. Sand, ice-creams, the whole garden was transformed into a beach! Helen and Douglas House are very lucky to be able to use their money for making their patients wishes come true."

And it is all done through charitable donations. Helen and Douglas House is entirely reliant on donations from people like us. And all the people at the Discussion Group meeting a couple of weeks ago believe that it is worthy of our support. The idea is, that every month, we save all our loose change, and then bring it along to the service, to put in the collecting tin. Elaine will then count it, take it home, and bank it. At the end of the year, we will donate a cheque to Helen and Douglas House.

Through this, and through regular donations to the Banbury Food Bank, Banbury Unitarian Fellowship can really make a difference!

~~~~~

## Poetry Please!

### Life by Rosemary Booth

A struggle, a muddle, a skin round a bubble.  
Holding it in is so much trouble.

Pop

As cares seem to double

Pop

So much hot air

Sometimes elated, often deflated.

Sorrow and joy, are moods created.



Pop

Time will erase them, overrated.

Pop

So much hot air.

This world spins so fast, I'll fall off at last.  
Spin into space, my life will be past.

Pop

Knowing or caring, out with a blast.

Pop

So much hot air.



## Return by Pamela Parrish

She listened, in the  
Silent darkness  
Of the night, to her  
Beating heart.



This God-given part  
Of her  
So susceptible to  
Grief and pain

Separation, desperation,  
Loss, fear;  
All part of this Life  
So dear

A passionate force,  
Weakening the whole  
Soul-based core

Beat on, dear heart, she cried  
Be not deterred  
By further loss and fear,  
That she may again  
Further sip the cups  
Of sweetness life may  
Bring and allow her  
Anxious soul to sing.



**Curtains by Rosemary Booth**

Every dawn the light of day is shown,  
as dark of night lifts like a curtain.

The stage is set with props, many made by man,  
though others, gifts of God I'm certain.

Each day another act is shown,  
life, death, happiness, good and evil, by players on the stage.

At night the curtains close to let the players rest,  
forget the toil of life, the sorrow and the rage.

Sleep and the night descending like a safety curtain,  
although through our dreams our minds will act another play.

Next day our dreams are half remembered,  
while other nights we sleep so deeply, to the break of day.

Will we arise, refreshed, ready to wear our public face  
or feel we cannot take our part?

Mindless live out our lives, taking the loser's role,  
or live and love with all our heart.

We have no choice upon this earthly sphere,  
the play is all, death is its only end.

The curtain drops, the players go from view,  
Farewell to enemy or friend.

Though in another realm, we living souls can never see,  
The curtain rises on a better life for all eternity.

**Banbury Unitarian Fellowship**  
At Grimsbury Community Centre, Burchester Place,  
Banbury OX16 3WT  
Website: [www.banbury-unitarians.org.uk](http://www.banbury-unitarians.org.uk)

**Minister:** Rev. Sue Woolley  
01604-870746 e-mail: [revsuewoolley@gmail.com](mailto:revsuewoolley@gmail.com)  
blog: <http://sue-still-i-am-one.blogspot.com>

**Chairman:** David Heppingstall  
079-3155-9531 e-mail: [heppingstall@googlemail.com](mailto:heppingstall@googlemail.com)

**Treasurer:** Elaine Nomura  
077-6967-8363 e-mail: [emtnomura@aol.com](mailto:emtnomura@aol.com)

**Secretary & Musical Director:** Malcolm Sadler  
01789-205571

~~~~~

**Approaching Divinity by Cliff Reed**  
(based on words by William Ellery Channing)

Creator Spirit, within our hearts and moving among the stars,  
we approach you with the powers and capacities you give us.

We approach you whenever we invigorate the understanding by  
seeking truth; whenever we invigorate the conscience by following  
it, rather than our passions.

We approach you whenever we receive a blessing gratefully, bear  
a trial patiently, or encounter peril and scorn with courage;  
whenever we perform an unselfish deed, or lift up our hearts in  
true adoration.

We approach you whenever we resist the habits and desires that  
are in conflict with our higher principles; whenever we speak or  
act with moral urgency and devotion to duty.

So may your Divinity grow strong within us, and the religion we  
profess blend seamlessly with the life we lead. Amen