

## NEWSLETTER FOR FEBRUARY and MARCH 2025

### **The End of 2024 - and a cold coming for 2025 - notes from the secretary.**

Walking through Bradford City Centre on December, I noticed the preparation for it becoming the 2025 City of Culture is showing more signs of being ready. The extended traffic free areas now have numerous planters with soil in ready to be planted to green the streets. I was particularly pleased to find that new taxi ranks have been delineated close to Forster Square station. This meant that I was in good time for the Advent service at church! Our Christmas tree was decorated as part of the worship.



**Farewell to Stephanie.** Sunday the eighth December was the last worship service of Stephanie's contract with us. Following the service, there was presentation in gratitude for her work with us. I have since received the following message from her:

*"Thank you so much to you and all the congregation for your kindness, and for the lovely flowers and book token. So far, I have bought Oliver Burkeman's 'Meditations for Mortals' and am very much enjoying reading it. Highly recommended as is his other book 4000 Weeks."*

There was an excellent bring and share lunch before Natalie led us in games, bringing out our 'inner child'. The collection for *Send a Child to Hucklow* raised £60.

On the last Sunday before Christmas, we shared a **service of carols and readings**, held in the back room for warmth. The readings included a reminder of the biblical stories on which the carols are based. Joan led the singing and we discussed some other traditional activities that have developed around Christmas.

Friday 27 December Jimmy organised a **folk song and poetry gathering**. Despite a slow start this went well. Good to share time with others, thank-you Jimmy.

With the New Year came the frost; by Sunday 5th most of the country was covered in snow with warnings not to travel unless absolutely necessary. We needed to cancel the service and watch the continuing snow fall from home. Then the big freeze followed.

**Thank-you to Jimmy, Isabel and Barbara** who went in to check on the building and take down the Christmas tree. It was all clean and warm when eight of us gathered on Tuesday 21st to share food for thought-some positive thoughts about winter.

On Tuesday 21st those of us present discussed the need for us to appoint a **delegate to the General Assembly Annual Meetings** on 12-14 April at Birmingham. It was agreed that this should be Isabel. The trustees are willing to give grants to others wishing to attend: Jimmy and Shirley; Celia and John.

**Christine Dawson**

# Winter Walking

## Weekend - January 2025.

The winter walking weekend held at the Nightingale Centre in the village of Great Hucklow, Derbyshire, has had some risky weather over the years, but in recent years, perhaps with global warming, it has been mainly wet weather with mud and more mud. This year it turned out to be a winter walking wonderland as the temperature dropped and laid a deep blanket of snow on many places of our fair island, including the magical Peak District, bringing delight to children and adults alike.



We had some reservations about whether we should travel and kept an eye on the weather forecasts as they announced the drop in temperature and the road conditions, but in the end, we decided to go. Filling a couple of flasks with hot drinks we turned the water off at the stop tap and left the central heating on low. We had an uneventful journey apart

from one slippery country road that I should not have taken and arrived safe and sound. On our way we visited Chesterfield where we visited the famous parish church, St. Marys, with its crooked spire.



Buxton Pavilion Gardens  
in the snow



The main activities of the weekend were held on Saturday. There was a choice of a long walk for the fittest or a leisurely shorter walk. The long walkers climbed around a thousand feet to walk along Stanage Edge. On the shorter walk the adults watched the children as they rolled and played in the snow. Other people did their own thing, our chosen activity for the day was to visit Buxton where we walked through the lovely Pavilion Park and then enjoyed the winter conservatory with its oasis of unusual plants in-

cluding banana trees.

On Sunday, with other people, we went to the **Unitarian Old Chapel** in the village. Ed Fordham took the service and welcomed Simon on his first visit to play the organ. We all appreciated his music as we also did Ed's inclusion of readings and thoughts around walking. This fitted into the weekend theme. After the service some of us helped take down the Christmas decorations, as many hands make light work.



All in all, this was a lovely weekend of walking and talking, enjoying excellent food with good company and much appreciation for those who organised the weekend and put good wholesome food on the table.

*Jimmy Timiney*

## NEWS OF PEOPLE

**Christine Dawson** enjoyed Christmas day on her own, but was far from unhappy about it. Her day included a walk out in mild weather, and then video calls with the two branches of her family. **Alan and Christina** and their children are in faraway Stanley in the Falkland Islands. **Richard and Dang** are in Thailand. The wonders of science brings people together.

**John and Celia Midgley's** Christmas Eve included tuning in to the traditional Nine Lessons and Carols service from Kings College, and then attending a crowded Skipton parish church for a similar service in the evening. They are lovers of Christmas carols! Their Christmas Day included a visit from members of a Muslim Syrian family, living in Skipton as refugees. Their children enjoyed receiving gifts from the Christmas tree.

**Kathy Packer's** condition remains much the same, a slow decline. She spends much of the time asleep, then a few hours up in a chair. At Christmas she and **Brian** enjoyed a visit from family members, including a Christmas meal and sharing presents which Kathy showed every sign of enjoying. Brian's health remains much the same, with some concern at putting on weight!

Good news from **Natalie, John and Esme Rees**. They moved to their new address just in time to celebrate Christmas. We wish them much happiness in their new home.

Our secretary was recently in touch with **Phil Silk**, who is, health wise, on the better side. **Joyce Silk** recently underwent a hip operation following a fall, but she is now back in the care home.

**Date for your diary:** despite it being a third Sunday, there *will* be worship on 20th April, which is Easter Sunday.

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## THE CLARITY OF WINTER

The Old Year and its turning is behind you.

In the spareness and clarity of winter,  
see the promise of a New Year.  
Sense the possibilities forming within you,  
feel the silent stirring of life beneath your feet.

The nights are still long, but they're getting shorter,  
The days are still dark, but they're getting lighter.  
Nature still seems to sleep, but she is awakening.  
Winter is preparing the earth for Spring.

Give thanks.

*Cliff Reed.*



## CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY and MARCH

Date	Time	Event
2 February	10.45am	Sunday worship Serendipity Service led by Christine Dawson.
9 February	10.45am	Sunday worship Leader: To be announced
16 February		No service at Bradford. <i>nb Service at Pepper Hill Unitarian Chapel, 10.45am, conducted by. Prof. Geoff Levermore, President of the General Assembly. All welcome.</i>
18 February	12noon for 12.30	Food for Thought
23 February	10.45	Sunday worship Leader: To be announced
2 March	10.45	Serendipity Service for St. David's Day
9 March	10.45	Worship Service led by lay worship leader William West from Birmingham
16 March	10.45	No Service at Bradford. <i>nb Service at Pepper Hill Unitarian Chapel.</i>
18 March	12noon for 12.30	Food for Thought
23 March	10.45	Worship Service led by Celia Midgley
30 March	10.45	Mothering Sunday Worship Leader: To be announced
6 April	10.45	Serendipity Worship Leader: To be announced

### BRADFORD UNITARIANS

**Secretary** - Christine Dawson. [dcdawson3@hotmail.com](mailto:dcdawson3@hotmail.com)

**Newsletter Editor** - Rev. John Midgley. [johnmidgley60@hotmail.com](mailto:johnmidgley60@hotmail.com)