



Great Meeting Tercentenary

November , December and January

Newsletter 2008/09



1708-2008

300 years of freedom, reason and tolerance

Great Meeting Chapel Newsletter for November and December and January 2008/09

SERVICES IN NOVEMBER

Sunday	2nd	11am	The Minister
Sunday	9th	11am	<u>Remembrance Sunday</u> The Minister
Sunday	16th	3pm	The Minister
Sunday	23rd	11am	The Minister
Sunday	30th	11am	Advent Sunday The Minister

SERVICES IN DECEMBER

Sunday	7th	11am	Patrick Timperley
Sunday	14th	11am	The Minister
Sunday	21st	3pm	<u>Carol Service</u> The Minister
Thursday	25th	10am	<u>Christmas morning</u> The Minister
Sunday	28th	11am	The Minister

SERVICES IN JANUARY

Sunday	4th	11am	The Minister
Sunday	11th	11am	The Minister
Sunday	18th	11am	The Minister
Sunday	25th	11am	The Minister

Items intended for inclusion in the February issue of the Newsletter should be in the minister's hands no later than Sunday 11th January, if possible. Thank you.

Dates and times of the Vestry and Making Things Happen Group meetings will be announced from the pulpit.

DIARY FOR NOVEMBER

Saturday	1st	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Sunday	2nd	3pm	Loughborough Unitarians meet.
Friday	7th	6pm - 7.30pm	<u>Art Seminar at Chapel</u>
Saturday	8th	10.30am -12.30pm 7.30pm	Coffee Morning <u>Ian Imlay and Dr David Hughes at Chapel</u>
Saturday	15th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Saturday	29th	10.30am - 12.30pm 3pm	Coffee Morning <u>Speaker Dr Jane Mackay at Chapel followed by Tea in the Garden Room</u>

DIARY FOR DECEMBER

Saturday	6th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Saturday	13th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Thursday	11th	12.00 noon	<u>EMU Xmas Lunch at Great Hucklow</u>
Saturday	20th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning <u>Decoration of the Chapel or Christmas</u>
Sunday	21st	3pm	<u>Christmas Carol Service and Tea - All welcome</u>

DIARY FOR JANUARY

Sunday	4th	3pm	Loughborough Unitarians meet
Saturday	10th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Friday	16th	7.30pm	<u>Chapel Outing to Cinderella, A Musical 'Curve' Theatre.</u>
Saturday	17th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Saturday	24th	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning
Saturday	31st	10.30am - 12.30pm	Coffee Morning

FROM THE MINISTER

Dear Friends,

I saw a £1 note the other day.

It wasn't in an antique shop or in a collection of old coins. It was taken from the pocket book of someone who could just that week have used it as legal tender. It was British currency, but it was not English, for embossed upon it was the familiar and unmistakable symbol of the Three Legs of Man.

The friend who showed it to me had recently returned from the Isle of Man, and had decided not to spend the note but to keep it as a souvenir – not of his visit, but as a souvenir of that time, now so long ago, when a £1 note used to be a part of our legal currency. “It is just good to remember,” he said, “how nice it used to be to have £1 notes, and what they used to be worth.”

From September the shops have been gradually filling with Christmas things. When I see the early displays of cards, decorations and artificial trees I have to admit to an inward groan and the averting of my eyes! I don't want to think of Christmas just yet, and you too may also feel the same. Now it's not the season or the celebration that I want to avoid, indeed I look forward to them; but the one thing so many people dread (especially in the present economic climate) is the early onset of expense and the strain on our bank balances.— How are we going to meet the demands of the season in terms of food and drink, presents and cards?

But at the same time as I think this, and turn away from the shop displays, another thought arises, and I remind myself that this isn't all that Christmas is about. Far from it.

The pound in our pocket is certainly not worth what it was. But just like my friend who kept his Isle of Man £1 note, in the face of all the seasonal pressure, we too must remind ourselves of what Christmas really means to us, and of what its value used to be, and still is for us today.

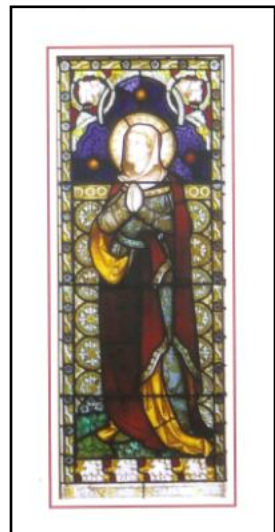
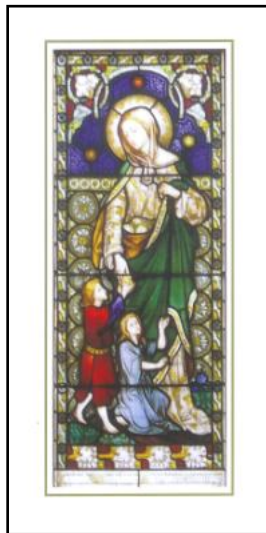
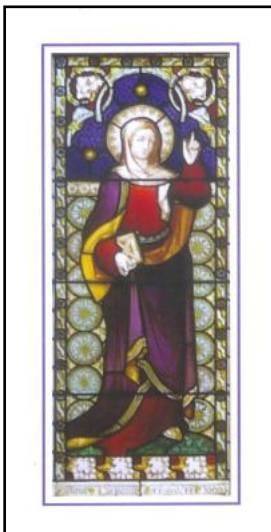
It is the time when people gather together, in chapel, in church or at home, and in the warmth of genuine love and affection, reaffirm the religious hope for humanity that is symbolised for us in the birth of the Christ-child: the hope that we express in the lovely words of our familiar Christmas readings, prayers and carols.

May I take the opportunity of this winter newsletter, on behalf of our family, to wish all loyal members and friends a Joyous Christmas and a peaceful and Happy New year!

- And one way of easily acquiring cards this year, is by purchasing our Faith, Hope and Charity selection of greetings cards. All proceeds in aid of Great Meeting. They are already on display and available at a Chapel near you!!!

With warm good wishes,

Arthur



*Packs of 6 Greetings cards, 2 x 3 Designs, Blank
Priced @ £2.50 or 50p per single card,*

CHAPEL GARDEN SUMMER SATURDAY

One of the happiest of our Tercentenary events took place on Saturday 30th of August when the Enderby Youth Band, under the able direction of Trevor Haunsome, came to play for us.

A cheerful crowd made up of chapel members, family, friends, and visitors who were just passing by and came to join in, gathered in the Chapel Garden on a beautiful afternoon to listen to a wide variety of brass band music, all played to a high and thoroughly enjoyable standard.

Between the sets, volunteers in the Garden Room were kept very busy dispensing refreshments and a delicious assortment of cakes, kindly donated by our members, and enthusiastically demolished by the audience and members of the band.

The garden proved to be the perfect location and the weather was more than kind. Although the advent of September marked the abrupt end of summer, August 30th was one of its most memorable and lovely days.



THE BLACKETT-HOWE SINGERS CONCERT

On the evening of 13th September last the Blackett-Howe Singers performed a concert of songs and instrumental pieces before an audience of chapel members, friends and East Midland District guests.

The atmosphere at Great Meeting was warm and informal and despite the absence of one or two participants through illness, the singers gave one of their most appreciated performances.

During the interval chapel members provided wine and other refreshments, all of which were greatly enjoyed by the audience, singers and musicians alike.

The concert was the 5th item in our very enjoyable programme of Tercentenary events.

HARVEST FESTIVAL 2008

Thank you to all our members who kindly donated produce and flowers and helped to decorate the Chapel so beautifully for our harvest. The sale of produce, following the service, raised £40 for our chosen charity this year 'The Disasters Emergency Fund'.

Extracts from a newspaper article reporting on Great Meeting's Harvest Festival 100 years ago!

A PLEA FOR THE EXCELLENT

Large congregations attended the Great Meeting, East Bond Street, yesterday, on the occasion of the harvest festival. The chapel was tastefully decorated with numerous gifts of flowers, fruit, and vegetables, which were afterwards to be distributed amongst the poor.

The Pastor, the Rev. E.I. Fripp, preached morning and evening, his address on the latter occasion being founded on the text, "The harvest truly is plenteous but the labourers are few." At the outset he applied the text to religious and moral effort, commenting on the paucity of good workers in the Sunday schools, in the temperance cause, and combating social evils.....

"I have often wished," proceeded the preacher, "that I might keep a shop. If I did it would be a public-house! I think I could open the eyes of some Leicester people as to what a public-house might be, and what it might do for a large section of the population untouched by the preacher or bookseller. I say to all tradesmen 'Be yourself, and not your customers' puppet. Belong to yourself, and not to them even if you have to be poor for doing it.' But they would not necessarily be poor.

Everyone, every apprentice, every factory-hand, might create a demand for himself: might do work that would cause his master and the community to send for him, and say, "I find you valuable." Let them do their best, and put their highest into occupation, and though they might suffer for so doing, men would ultimately come to realise their worth and say, "We want such work as yours, we did not think so at first, but we have learnt differently. We need a man like you."



The Rev. Edgar Innes Fripp, BA

1908

CHAPEL TRICENTENARY SERVICE

At 3pm on Saturday 4th October 2008 over a hundred individuals filled the pews at Great Meeting, with an overspill in the balcony, to join with the Minister and congregation in celebrating the 300th Anniversary of our Chapel building. The service began with our Chairman, Sir Peter Soulsby MP, welcoming the assembly and its honoured guests, The Lord Mayor of Leicester, Cllr. Manjula Sood, the President of the General Assembly Mrs Joyce Ashworth and The Chief Executive Rev. Steve Dick.



Pictured above: Our Minister Rev. Dr Arthur Stewart, Lord Mayor of Leicester Cllr. Manjula Sood, GA President Mrs Joyce Ashworth, Organist Mr Qyan Arnachellum, President of the Congregation Dr David Wykes and GA Chief Executive, Rev. Steve Dick.

The Minister preached the sermon and led the service, which featured musical contributions from Ms Blackett-Howe and our organist Mr Qyan Arnachellum. Our President, Dr David Wykes, spoke both of the historical background of our building and at the end of the service introduced our special guests, who each bore greetings and good wishes. The Lord Mayor in particular spoke of her long association with Great Meeting and expressed her pride in the multicultural open-mindedness which has enabled her, as a

Hindu, to feel at home in Chapel. She recalled how many mayors of Leicester had emerged from Great Meeting, (somewhere in the region of 9 in total) and said how proud she was herself, not only to be the first female Asian Lord Mayor in the UK, but to count herself as part of our congregation.

On this memorable occasion the Chapel had been delightfully decorated with flower arrangements on every table, pedestal, pew and even pulpit, and our honoured guests were presented with posies.

After the service all present adjourned to the Garden Room (opened in 2001) to enjoy a delicious tea of sandwiches, savouries and a variety of home-made cakes.

Members of the congregation experienced a genuine sense of warmth, buzz of excitement and a degree of satisfaction that this special milestone in our Chapel's history had been marked so successfully.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in the tercentenary preparations: from the earliest planning stage to the actual cleaning in readiness of the Chapel itself; the refreshments, lovely flower arrangements, our commemorative badges and cards; publicity, invitations, and orders of service. I would especially like to thank those who contributed to the service itself, those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, and indeed everyone who attended and made 2008 an anniversary which would have delighted those worthy forebears, who 300 years ago might not have dared to imagine that their construction of a place of worship, in a then orchard on the outskirts of town, would have gone on to make such a considerable mark on the history of Leicester, and an indelible impression on the lives of everyone associated with it.

*“Within this temple, reared of old
By faithful folk and true
We keep the faith our founders kept,
Their vows to God renew.”*

Arthur



*The Lord Mayor Cllr. Manjula Sood
and Chairman Sir Peter Soulsby MP*

Not the “OMEGA COURSE.”

The guest speaker at the East Midlands Unitarian AGM at Derby in October this year was the London District Minister, the Rev. Dr David Usher.

David had been invited to talk about his recent commission by the Hibbert Trust to create a course suitable for Unitarians and other like-minded people which would be a response to the very successful Alpha course marketed by the Anglican denomination.

As a result of its being a response to the Alpha course, David's course had been nicknamed the 'Omega course', but in fact its actual title is "Practical Spirituality."

David began by describing his research into this field, his attendance at an Alpha course at a course in practical philosophy, - both of which he described as "baby food" and largely intolerable.

In his own 6-session d.v.d., shared meal and discussion programme, David had sought to cover some of the most serious of concerns e.g. prayer, relationships, the meaning of life, death etc, and he stated that throughout he had striven for high quality.

Launched in 2008 and field-tested subsequently, 'Practical Spirituality' is a 3 - year project which aims to pay for itself. The 6 sessions d,v.d. is priced at £300 for the set, and users are invited to charge £50 per individual for the course. The course can only be administered by specifically trained facilitators.

David answered a variety questions for the audience and was warmly thanked by the meeting for his entertaining and informative presentation.

To see David talking about different aspects of Unitarianism please go to <http://uk.youtube.com/user/kylaphotographics>

Elizabeth Gaskell



Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell was born in London in 1810, but she spent her formative years in Cheshire, Stratford-upon-Avon and the north of England. In 1832 she married the Reverend William Gaskell who became well known as the minister of the Unitarian Chapel, Cross Street, Manchester. For the first sixteen years of her marriage, she combined the activities of motherhood, the management of a busy household and parish work in an area notorious for its poverty and appalling living conditions. She also travelled and started to write. *Mary Barton*, her first full-length fiction, published in 1848 and set in industrial Manchester, was an instant success.

Two years later she began writing for Dickens's magazine, *Household Words*, to which she contributed fiction for the next thirteen years, her most notable work being another novel of Manchester life, *North and South* (1855). In 1850 she met Charlotte Brontë, who became a close friend until the latter's death in 1855. Soon after this, Gaskell was chosen by Patrick Brontë to write *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857), a carefully researched and sympathetic account of this great Victorian novelist. Gaskell's situation as minister's wife and as a successful writer gave her a wide circle of friends, from both the professional world of Manchester and the larger literary world. She was a committed and uncompromising artist, as Dickens discovered when, as editor of *Household Words*, he unsuccessfully tried to impose his views on her. She proved that she was not to be bullied, even by a man of such genius as he. Her later works, *Sylvia's Lovers* (1863), *Cousin Phillis* (1864) and *Wives and Daughters* (1866), are usually considered to be her finest, revealing developments in narrative technique and subtleties of character portrayal. Gaskell died suddenly in November 1865 at Alton, Hampshire, in the house that she had bought with her literary earnings.

(from the Penguin Introduction to [Mary Barton](#) .)

Our Tercentenary speaker, Dr Jane Mackay, will be speaking on the subject of Elizabeth Gaskell and her novel Mary Barton in Chapel, 3pm Saturday 29th November.

G M News

CONDOLENCES

It is with great sadness that we record the death on Wednesday 24th September last of GEORGE HENRY BAKER at the good old age of 93 years.

Born over his Grandmother's shop just a few yards from Chapel on East Bond Street, George knew our part of town as it was probably better than anyone.

A life-long and loyal member of Great Meeting and brother of our late organist Betty Meadows, George leaves behind his dear wife JOAN. Our deepest sympathies are with her and all his family members in their sad loss.

The funeral was held at Chapel on 3rd October with cremation following at Gilroes, the Minister officiating.



We are very sorry to learn of the death on Saturday 11th October last of WINSOME PRIME, mother of Lady Alison Soulsby. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Alison and her father Jack, Peter and all the family.

CONGRATULATIONS

On Sunday 31st August we were delighted as part of our morning worship to celebrate the baptism of ELIZABETH ELLA CADOUX with her parents Alexandra and Arlo, members of their family and many friends.

Elizabeth and her parents have been a welcome addition to our congregation over recent weeks and it was a joy to share in this happy occasion.

CHAPEL FLOWERS

Our Flower Secretary Morag Jones will shortly be compiling a list of those individuals who wish to donate and/or arrange flowers in Chapel throughout the coming year. If you wish to mark a special anniversary or simply take a turn, please sign up on the sheet provided.

Many Thanks

Dragonfly on Honesty Plant



Cathy Bailey took a photo of this dragonfly in her garden. Three year old grandson Thomas spotted it while he was playing on the grass and called out "there's a colour stick thing on a plant here." He was right. After looking at it carefully we identified it on the internet as a Southern Hawker Dragonfly - (we think!) - *Aeshna cyanaea*.

Look VERY carefully and closely and you can see the incredibly fine wings and wing patterns. Well done Thomas - and Cathy of course.

Thomas earlier this year



SPONSORED CHILD, KEVIN JOSE

Some years ago Great Meeting Congregation joined with Alan and Cathy Bailey to help sponsor a child through the organisation 'Plan'. The sponsored child's name is Kevin Jose Tomala Orrala. He lives in Engabao, Equador with his parents Carlos and Dora and elder brother Carlos. Kevin is now 11 years old. Plan Equador works with Kevin Jose's family and others like them to identify their most basic needs in health, education, housing and income. Through contributions of manual labour, local materials, technical expertise or financial contributions Plan helps to ensure a brighter future for Kevin Jose and other children like him.

If you would like to contribute towards Kevin Jose continued support there is a collection box in the Garden Room. Just a small donation each week will make a difference to Kevin Jose, his family and community.

Thank you to Alan Bailey for sending us this most recent photograph of Kevin Jose.



COFFEE SHOP

On **Saturday 1st November** we will hold our first '**Coffee Shop**' from **10.30am - 12.30pm**. Fairtrade ground coffee, tea and other beverages will be on sale accompanied by biscuits and cake. We also hope to begin a second-hand book sale in aid of chapel funds.

So invite your family and friends and bring along those unwanted paperbacks that someone else might now enjoy.

If you are able to help with the 'Coffee Shop' on an occasional Saturday morning, please sign up on the rota sheet in the kitchen.

Many Thanks

ART SEMINAR

How to Make and Do With DOT 4

Artist-led Activity in this region.

Friday 7th November
6pm - 7.30pm

Great Meeting Chapel,
Leicester.

DOT is an art group based in Leicester, established in 2004, and this seminar forms part of the of the 'Arena Arts Festival 1st -16th November, 2008.'

Hear about the adventures of a.a.s.collective based in Birmingham. Jennie Syson of Hinterland Projects, Nottingham and John Plowman from Beacon Art Project, Linconshire have developed their own ways of making and showing art in rural places, non-gallery venues and creating events. Their work has involved working with many other local and national artists. DOT has been inspired by the work of these artists (and many others within the region) so we are now giving you the opportunity to share the experience.

All Welcome

Stephen Lynch

*To find out more about DOT and the Arena Art's Festival visit their website
<http://www.dotleicester.org.uk>*

EMU CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The East Midland Unitarian Christmas lunch at Great Hucklow will be held this year on Thursday 11th December at 12 noon.at the cost of £15.50 per person.

If you are interested, and wish to go, please sign-up by Sunday 16th November. A menu will be available at Chapel.

Ruth

AND FINALLY

Brideshead Revisited

I suppose I was chiefly concerned that I would not enjoy Julian Jarrold's 2008 production of *Brideshead Revisited* starring Matthew Goode, Ben Whishaw and Hayley Atwell, because the 1981 television series of the novel by Evelyn Waugh, led by Anthony Andrews, Jeremy Irons and Diana Quick, was still so fresh in my mind.

I need not have been concerned. If Jarrold's *Brideshead* was going to succeed, it could almost have done so on the strength of its wonderful settings, gorgeous music and costumes alone.

In a sense, that is really what the story is about anyway: one man's total obsession with an aristocratic way of life which is way above his usual milieu.

The first half of the story focuses upon Charles Ryder's relationship with Sebastian Flyte: the rare orchid of tormented sensibility nurtured in the *Brideshead* hot-house. With Sebastian's fall into decadence, the true principal protagonist emerges from the shadows of the narrative. Against the background of Charles' love affair with Sebastian's sister Julia, the all-pervasive and all-controlling Roman Catholic faith of the Flyte dynasty takes centre-stage, as it manipulates the characters' responses and reactions both to each other and to their future lives, shrouding all the splendor, wealth and distinction of this family with a suffocating and tortuous sense of rigid duty and guilt.

I was engrossed by the movie and captivated by this superb production filmed both in Oxford and at Castle Howard. Go and see it if you can, and if



you can, go and see it at the new and spacious Showcase Cinema De Lux, Highcross, Leicester, which has the most comfortable cinema seats I've ever had the pleasure of sitting in.

Arthur

If you would like to share a review of a book, film or play, please send it to Annie for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter.

Pictured here—Matthew Goode as Charles Ryder, Hayley Atwell as Julia, and Ben Whishaw as Sebastian Flyte.



To celebrate the tercentenary of
Great Meeting
Leicester

An Evening of Organ Music and Verse

with

Ian Imlay and

Professor David Hughes

Saturday November 8th 7.30 pm

Tickets at the door £ 5.00





To celebrate the tercentenary of
Great Meeting
Leicester

Speaker
Dr Jane Mackay
on

Elizabeth Gaskell's novel

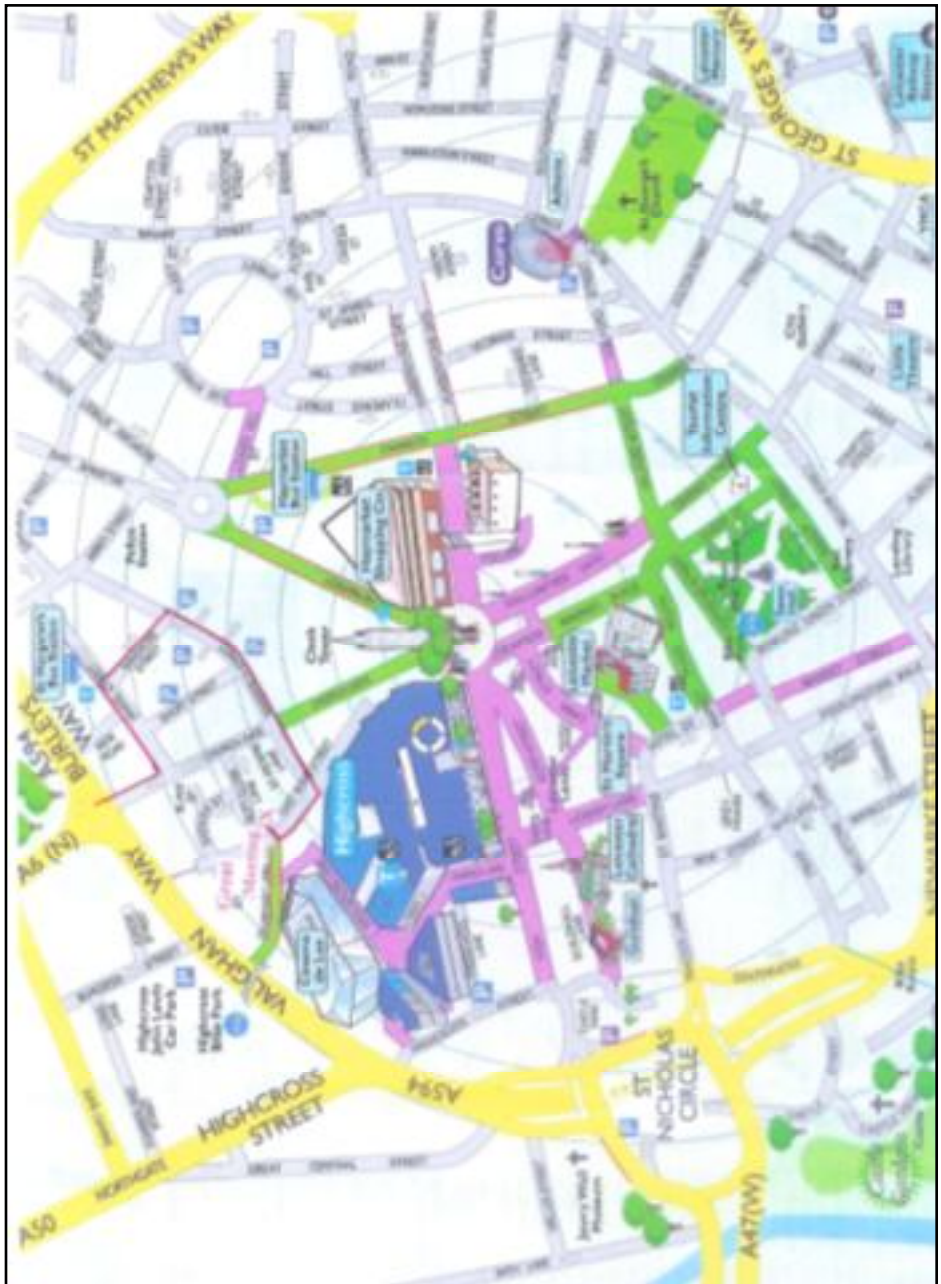
‘Mary Barton’

Saturday November 29th 3.00 pm

Tickets at the door £ 5.00



G M on the map.....



DIRECTORY:

MINISTER:

Rev Dr Arthur Stewart,

11 Herrick Close, Sileby, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 7RL.

Tel: 01509 812236 Mobile: 07803895828

E-mail: arfstew@btinternet.com

PRESIDENT:

Dr David Wykes F.R.Hist.S,

4 Quickthorns, Blackthorns, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 4EE.

Tel: 0116 2710784

E-mail: directory@dwlib.co.uk

CHAIRMAN:

Sir Peter Soulsby MP,

288 Evington Road, Leicester, LE2 1HN.

Tel: 0116 2217419 Mobile: 0771 517 4820

E-mail: soulsbyp@parliament.uk

TREASURER:

Dr David Wykes F.R.Hist.S,

4 Quickthorns, Blackthorns, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 4EE.

Tel: 0116 2710784

E-mail: directory@dwlib.co.uk

ASSISTANT TREASURER:

Lady Alison Soulsby

288 Evington Road, Leicester, LE2 1HN.

Email: soulsbya@parliament.uk

ACTING SECRETARY:

Rev Dr Arthur Stewart,

11 Herrick Close, Sileby, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 7RL.

Tel: 01509 812236 Mobile: 07803895828

E-mail: arfstew@btinternet.com

NEWSLETTER COMPILER

Mrs Annie Stewart

11 Herrick Close, Sibleby, Loughborough, Leics. LE12 7RL.

Tel. 01509 812236 Mobile:0773772381

Email: anniestewart@btinternet.com

FLOWER SECRETARY:

Mrs Morag Jones

10 Scraftoft Lane, Leicester LE5 1HU.

Tel: 0116 2760400

ORGANISTS:

Mr Mark Balding

458 Narborough Road, Leicester, LE3 2FT.

Tel: 0116 2892203

Mr Qyan Arnachellum,

223 Glenfield Road, Western Park, Leicester, LE3 6DL

Tel: 0116 2858502 Mobile: 07881953348

CARETAKER:

Mr Stephen Lynch

Mobile: 07811970859

CHAPEL WEBSITE:

www.leicesterunitarians.co.uk

CHAPEL ADDRESS:

Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel, 45 East Bond Street, Leicester
LE1 4SW.



Great Meeting

Unitarian Chapel

45 East Bond Street

Leicester LE1 4SX

www.leicesterunitarians.co.uk