



# LEAGUE LETTER

THE BRITISH LEAGUE OF UNITARIAN & OTHER LIBERAL CHRISTIAN WOMEN

Registered Charity No. 230834



November / December 2015

## President's Message

Greetings to all our league members. I hope you have all enjoyed the Summer. We are now on the cusp of the seasons, Autumn turning into Winter. I wouldn't have it any other way, for each season brings gifts to embrace.



I visited Bolton Bank Street on September 19th and conducted a service especially for their 95th Anniversary of their Women's League. Padiham and Kendal Women's Leagues were also represented. I had a tremendously friendly welcome to their lovely chapel where I had the pleasure to meet with Rev. Jim Corrigal, who I admire a lot. Also I met Bank Street's Minister Rev. Stephen Lingwood. After cutting the celebration cake and an excellent buffet, Janet Poole took my husband and myself for a quick tour of the town. I was very impressed with the Town Hall and Square. Thank you Janet for your kindness and all who made it such a lovely occasion.

I led the service at Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil, S. E. Wales recently. It was a District event so we were joined by the ladies of Cardiff and Aberdare. I was presented with a silver 'Chalice' pendant, with the 'Blue John' stone as the flame. It means the world to me. I was also given a large basket of flowering plants. We shared fellowship after the service and had a Bring and Buy sale and raffle for the Project. Every little helps!

I have no visits now until February and March. I am enjoying my Presidency so far and hope to continue to do so. I hope that we inspire each other and each in our own way, as separate Branches and Districts, do our part to keep us thriving long into the future. Remembering always our connectedness and purpose.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and sincerely wishing each and everyone of us a Happy New Year.

Love and blessings

Joy

### WOMEN'S LEAGUE RALLY AT WHALLEY ABBEY

Twenty guests enjoyed the Rally organised by Mary Wightman and hosted by our President, Joy Foster, held at Whalley Abbey 21st/22nd October 2015. After greetings and a welcome cup of tea. The chalice candle being lit Joy conducted a service in the chapel in which she read a delightful story about two frogs. We sang three hymns to a recording as the Women's League does not seem to have forthcoming pianists. Candles of concern were lit by several ladies.

In the evening we sat down to an enjoyable meal but not before Rev. Celia Midgley sang Grace after which we assembled in the lounge for a very interesting talk given by Joyce Ashworth on ministerial training at University College Manchester. Training is expensive

and Joyce explained that the money which we collect for the 2015/16 project will go towards expenditure needed for a review of this training including payment for a co-ordinator. At the beginning of her talk Joyce read mission statements of 1888, 1939, and 2003 as well as of to-day. They illustrated the shift from an emphasis on Christianity and the training of men to today's gender inclusive statement "UCM - a vibrant centre for spiritual and religious learning with a Unitarian ethos but accessible to all." Much discussion followed. Joyce's talk and willingness to stay for the duration of the Rally were greatly appreciated. A cheque will be presented to UCM at the AGM to be held at the 2016 GA meetings in Birmingham at the end March.

We checked out of our rooms the next day following a hearty breakfast and went to the lounge for the Central Committee Meeting. There was much on the agenda and much participation. The Treasurer's Report indicated a healthy balance. New badges are being investigated. After which Eunice Smith, Project Treasurer, said the project stood at £795.11. The Secretary, Susan Wildman, passed on greetings from Ann Harrison and Jean Bradley and read letters from Anita Stephens of Aberdeen Branch and Barbara Clifford who was unable to attend. Proposals which were passed included one that we write to the Inquirer and ask for the Women's League column to be reinstated. A second proposal that we return to having an elected member on Central Committee is a constitutional change and will have to be brought to the AGM. Thirdly it was decided that as much as we enjoyed Whalley Abbey it was time for a change and we voted that Mary try and book us in at Leeds for the next Rally. Sylvia Spencer and Janet Poole were thanked for researching venues.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Rev. Celia Cartwright for producing the A5 League Annual and several people offered to Proof Read next year. All agreed that Celia be offered the position of President Elect for 2016/17 which she accepted. Mary Wightman volunteered to collect photos of past Presidents for an album which we hope to display from time to time.

There were Reports from the National Fellowship, the India Fund, Memorial & Benevolent Fund and Rev. Penny Johnson said that the Unitarian Women's group would be meeting at the Nightingale Centre the following week. Representatives wrote District and Branch News on post cards and these were read out. Cards were signed for Judy Hague, Daphne and John Roberts, and Barbara Clifford who were unable to attend and for Ann Latham and Jean Inkson who were in our thoughts.

Janet Poole, President Elect, gave a well composed vote of thanks and Joy closed the meeting with appropriate words after which we had lunch, thanked the staff and said good bye.

Susan Wildman