



## *The Frambridge Chronicle*

**News from the Minister & Congregation of the Unitarian Meeting House,  
Bridge Street, Framlingham**



Dear Friends,

That we all need friends is true of communities as much as for individuals. A particular challenge is how our congregations can draw strength from the wider Unitarian community. Each of our congregations – however small – has its own strengths but it is natural to wish to learn from and share fellowship with Unitarians and like-minded people further afield.

With this at the forefront of my thinking, whilst I attended our national General Assembly Meetings (GA) in Birmingham recently, the decision taken in March that our District Association, The Eastern Union, is to take a two-year break from activity – with the possibility/likelihood of then winding up has some significance. From my perspective, **it is sometimes necessary to create space for the new to emerge by letting some familiar things go – but the challenge of connection and mutual support remains.**

The Annual Meetings are a mixture of business sessions, worship and social time during which one can browse the exhibition area, Unitarian books and associated publications, share ideas and simply catch up with Unitarians from far afield. It is just about the only time each year that well over 300 Unitarians - from Britain and abroad – are gathered in one place!

May I focus on two points. Firstly, I proposed a motion to the GA on our community and personal response to climate change. The motion was seconded by Rev Fergus O'Connor and backed by over forty fellow ministers. Among the supporters were Geoff Levermore, a Unitarian and member of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the BBC's Environment Analyst, Roger Harrabin. The Assembly passed the motion with an overwhelming majority. The text of the resolution will be displayed in the Meeting House and I trust we can talk about it and find ways to move forward.

Secondly, our Assembly is engaging in planning a process "Next Steps" to strengthen Unitarian Witness. 'Next Steps' was accepted by the Assembly but not unanimously so. We were told that our national Executive Committee will be focusing on the following which relate to the area of "reaching out" to:

- Develop a comprehensive response to **explain our identity**
- Support a **web- based spiritual learning resource....**
- **Engage with the wider community** on today's issues
- **Increase collaboration** with other like-minded organizations
- Promote **more Unitarian thought and writing**
- Formulate a plan to undertake **Campus Ministry** i.e. at Universities and Colleges
- Support **new congregational development**

Do you like these proposals? How well placed is the Executive Committee to deliver on these plans? If you were to pick just two of these goals to focus on which would they be?

Please remember, this is YOUR community of free spirituality without dogma based on a living tradition that is open to evolve with the needs of our times. However we may describe our own personal approach to spirituality - and whether or not we use the Unitarian label – each one of us makes this community what it is.  
Blessings

*Matthew*

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**Please Note:** The Minister's **rest days** are **Thursdays & Fridays** except in case of a pastoral emergency

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**Minister:** Rev Matthew Smith    **Tel:** 01728 621409    **Email:** [matthew@clayhill2.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:matthew@clayhill2.freeserve.co.uk)

**Editor:** Mrs Janice Croucher    **Tel:** 01728 663745    **Email:** [janice.croucher@btinternet.com](mailto:janice.croucher@btinternet.com)

**Lettings:** Mrs Angela Hatt    **Tel:** 01728 723451    **Email:** [angelahatt@btinternet.com](mailto:angelahatt@btinternet.com)

Services in May 2016			
Date	Time	The Unitarian Meeting House Bridge St. Framlingham, IPI 3 9AJ	The Unitarian Meeting House Churchgate St., Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RH
1 May	3 p.m.		<i>What have the Romans ever done for us?</i>
8 May	4 p.m.	Rev Lewis Connolly  <i>SON OF KRYPTON – LET THY KINGDOM COME</i>	
15 May	11a.m.		<i>With Renewed Spirit: Pentecost Service</i>
24 April	4 p.m.	A series of services on themes from the work of Oscar Hammerstein  <i>1. The Oklahoma Controversy</i>	

“Mindful Monday” + “Feel Good Friday” YOGA 09.30 – 10.30 a.m. Pre-book via [www.bigskyyoga.co.uk](http://www.bigskyyoga.co.uk) .

Tuesdays 10 – 12 noon: CAFE CONNECT our community **Coffee Morning**. All welcome.

Saturday 14 May 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. GREENER FRAM: Swap or Mend Fair Trade Refreshments for sale.

Monday 16 May 7 p.m. MINDFULNESS: Refresher Session for the Group led by Barbara Winfield (01728 720029).

Sunday 29 May No Services. Arrangements re. Frambury Fifth Sunday Meet Up at Stonham Barns TBA

Wed 1 – Sat 4 June 10 – 4 p.m. RAG RUG EXHIBITION + Demonstrations & Sale wall hangings, cushions, etc.

Guest Review: **Jane Austen at Home**: in the Framlingham Unitarian Meeting House, Saturday 5 March.

From the moment Emerald O’Hanrahan (aka ‘Emma Grundy’ in ‘*The Archers*’) made her entrance dressed in a simple white gown and cap, she was Jane Austen not only in her voice and expression but also in her gait. Emerald O’Hanrahan further demonstrated her skills as she so convincingly inhabited the other characters she portrayed.

As the loquacious Miss Bates (of ‘Emma’), she extolled the arrangements for the ball at *The Crown Inn*, pointing out the beauties of the elegantly refurbished Meeting House as she did so. Thereafter, ‘Jane’ selected books and read extracts from her novels, letters and the hilarious HISTORY OF ENGLAND ‘by a partial, prejudiced & ignorant Historian’ (aged 16). NB. *There will be very few dates in this History.*’

Elizabeth Bennet (of ‘*Pride and Prejudice*’) says ‘*I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies do divert me, I own...*’ The extracts revealed Jane Austen’s sense of fun, her ironic view of society and her astute perception of character. Letters to her family opened up a different perspective on the novelist.

Perhaps the *tour de force* was the final scene. Emerald O’Hanrahan aged visibly as she tottered towards a writing table, reminiscent of Jane Austen’s own, and wrote her last letter - to her nephew Edward - within weeks of her death. Her pen slowed down, she wilted, and closed her eyes. The rest was silence.

Stephen Siddall must be congratulated on devising this poignant, intimate presentation, aimed at ‘country house’ performance. If not at Chawton, what better period ambience could there be than Framlingham Unitarian Meeting House?

In spite of minimal local publicity, *Slice of Life* had ensured a packed and enthusiastic house. **Ann Elliott**

**Material for the JUNE edition must be with the editor by 10.00 hrs Monday 16 MAY 2016** – thank you