



The Frambridge Chronicle

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



Dear Friends,

When the people of Birstall in Yorkshire needed a way to express their grief following the murder of their young MP, Jo Cox, in her constituency surgery on 16 June 2016, they did the natural thing in placing flowers at the feet of the statue of the town's most famous son, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), at the centre of the town square.

Jo Cox and Joseph Priestley had far more in common than that they were both born in Yorkshire. Both suffered persecution for their belief in our common humanity. Although Joseph Priestley began his dissenting ministry in Needham Market, Suffolk he was eventually forced to seek refuge for himself and his wife and a new life in America. Jo Cox paid the ultimate price: she gave her life.

Joseph Priestley is arguably the most significant figure in English Unitarian history. For not only was he a brilliant scientist - credited by many as the discoverer of oxygen - but he was one of the key figures in making our dissenting tradition Unitarian by asking us to focus on the simple humanity of Jesus and thus concentrating on his teachings rather than beliefs about him. Priestley was a believer in social justice; this led him to support the French Revolution (but not its excesses). Akin to Jo Cox, Priestley could not accept that ordinary people should forever be without a voice.

Priestley also paid a price for his beliefs. Vilified by the press, after his home and his Meeting House were burned by the mob in 1791, he ultimately decided the only safe course was to set out for a new life in America in 1794.

Only three days before the senseless and brutal killing of an MP who was simply doing her duty by her constituents, without regard for race or creed, on Monday 13 June 2016 came the shocking news of the appalling murder of forty-nine Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender people shot dead at the "Pulse" Night Club in Orlando, Florida. This was another hate killing. Yet after both these tragic events we have seen communities come together to say that we must and will stand up against hatred.

People are saying that we will not allow the memory of those who died to fade; their deaths cannot be in vain.





More and more people in the West, I believe, are realising that we face a stark choice. The choice is between choosing a path of hatred and division - where people are discriminated against for being different. Or we can choose a path of love. We can be our best selves. We can look beyond the superficial differences to our common humanity.

[Based on a service delivered at Bury St Edmunds Unitarian Meeting House on Sunday 19 June].

Blessings *Matthew*

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

NB Any articles published in *The Frambridge Chronicle* express the individual views of the author. -Ed.

Services in July 2016			
Date	Time	The Unitarian Meeting House Bridge St Framlingham, IP13 9AJ	The Unitarian Meeting House Churchgate St., Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RH
3 July	3 p.m.		<i>Beyond the Gullible & Cynical: Restoring hope</i>
10 July	4 p.m.	The postponed 2 nd service on themes from the work of Oscar Hammerstein <i>2. Carousel of Life or Beyond?</i>	
17 July	11a.m.		<i>Special Places Service Leader: Martin Gienke</i>
24 July	4 p.m.	<i>Service Leader: Jackie Grace of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich</i>	

Sunday 29 July Fifth Sunday Anyone wishing to meet up with our fellow Unitarians of Bury St Edmunds, please contact BSE Secretary **Rosemary Hegerty 01284 727739** for details. **There will be no service at Framlingham, Bridge Street.**

JULY events at the Bridge Street Meeting House:

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

YOGA classes have stopped for the time being due to lack of numbers but if you are interested please see www.bigskyyoga.co.uk (Angie Foster) for details about classes in the autumn.

MINDFULNESS: For more information, please contact Barbara Winfield (01728 720029).

Saturday 16 July 9 a.m.–1 p.m. GREENER FRAM: Swap or Mend **Fair Trade Refreshments for sale.**

17–24 July The Minister will be away attending the International Council of Universalists (ICU) in the Netherlands.



The **Ragtime Ruggers** held a splendid exhibition of their work at Framlingham Unitarian Meeting House from 31st May to 4 June. The Meeting House was a riot of colour and lots of people came in to admire the wonderful creations of Val Speight and her friends - despite the rather grey weather that week!

Photo & text by Matthew Smith

Material for the August edition of the *Frambridge Chronicle* must be with the Editor before 12 noon on **Monday 25 JULY – Ed.**

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