

*The Black Country Group of
Unitarian Churches
Chairman: Mrs P. Rose
Correspondent Mrs. BS Russell*

The Black Country Group of Unitarian churches was formed when three Midland Union churches joined together for mutual support. These churches are Dudley, Oldbury and All Souls' Wolverhampton.

The congregations meet in the Old Meeting House, Wolverhampton Street, hidden behind 'Kentucky Fried Chicken' and guarded by fearsome looking iron gates. But come through those gates on the First or Third Sunday of each month at 3.00pm, go through the porch and into the church and you will find a gem, light, airy, warm and welcoming.

Although the church dates back to 1690 and is a listed building, thoughtful refurbishment has made it a most inviting place of worship for a faith that delights in openness and free thinking, in a belief in one universal power which some of us call God, and a recognition of the worth of the teachings of Jesus and of other great men and women.

Our worship is led by lay speakers and we invite you to join in as much – or as little – as you wish.

February



March



*The Black Country Group
Of
Unitarian Churches*

*Meeting at the
Unitarian Old Meeting House
Wolverhampton Street
Dudley*

Contact 01902 650168

Phil Niblock, (Shrewsbury) who led our service on 1st November, often 'takes us on visits' in his readings. This week was no exception, as he read of a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We gained some idea of the busyness of the place; it was from this that Phil took the theme of his address -how people will go to a great deal of effort to praise God, sometimes not realising that the greater worship was in our attitude to others. Care, consideration, fair dealing, a helping hand - just living as good a life as possible, that is worship at its best. Thank you, Phil, for reminding us of these simple truths.



Gavin Lloyd, (Oxford) taking our service on 15th November, chose 'Original Sin' but from quite an original viewpoint. With Charles Darwin very much in the news, Gavin wondered whether we could be born perhaps not with sin, but with weaknesses in our lives that would be difficult to overcome. Difficult, he said, but not impossible if we could only develop a strong spiritual faith.

Ritchie Shaw, also from Oxford, read from Psalm 8 "What is man, that thou art mindful of him..." reminding us that the Almighty is only too aware of our shortcomings and that help can be found.

As neither Helen (Coseley) or David (Stourbridge) was able to play the organ for us that day, I earned myself a new title 'Disc-jockey!'

Our thanks to Gavin and Ritchie for a refreshingly different service.

After both services, tea and cakes were provided, thanks to Irene (Dudley) Pam and Evelyn (Oldbury) and Audrey (Stourbridge)

All gratefully received!



Bronwen Taylor, from Shrewsbury, started off our Christmas season with a service on 6th December. She began by asking us to

think back to Christmases past and what they meant to us - something, she said, we could talk about over our 'cuppa'. Bronwen voiced the concern of many of us that the must-have aspect of Christmas was often making the festival a worry rather than a time of remembering the birth of our great teacher. She emphasised this point with a carol of her own devising- 'Jingle Tills' which we sang with gusto to the popular tune! And we did share memories of Christmas over tea and cakes. Thanks to all.



Carols at Christmas was led by Phil Niblock; although the words and music were familiar, starting with the passage from Isaiah which includes "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given", Phil put his own touch to the service with apt remarks about the readings. He even reminded us, when we came to a certain carol that "As you are no longer in the fourth form, I expect to hear NO reference to socks, frocks or laundrywork"

We all took part in the readings and it was good to welcome Trish Niblock to our service.

Thanks to all that gave the afternoon a real Christmassy feel!



Coming up:-

1st March Bronwen Taylor (Shrewsbury)

21st March:- Sue Woolley MUA Facilitator (Northampton)

4th April:- Easter Sunday Gavin Lloyd (Oxford)

18th April:- Rev. Penny Johnson. Penny was Minister to the churches of the Midlands from 1976 -81; she is a life long friend, was our bridesmaid and took the wedding service for our daughter.

She also introduced me to the Unitarian Faith- thank you Penny!