

*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.



August &
September 2009



*The Black Country Group
Of
Unitarian Churches*

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

Contact 01902 650168

5th July 2009 was Oldbury's Annual Rose Service.

The Church was beautifully decorated by Mrs. Pam Rose, chairman of the Black Country Group of Unitarian Churches. Each window sill bore a floral arrangement and a card with the name of a past member or of a dedicated Service Leader.

Pam opened the Service with a welcome to all, and lit the Chalice Candle with a remembrance of past members, a greeting to the present congregation, and a hope for the future.

Miss Audrey Green, from Stourbridge, gave the Opening Prayer and Mr. David Mearman, also from Stourbridge, provided not only accompaniment for our hymns, but also a delightful composition of his own as interlude music.

We enjoyed Readings from Mr. Gavin Lloyd (Oxford) - Revd. Tony McNeile's *The Garden of the Spirit* and from Mr. Ritchie Shaw (Oxford) *Simple Joys* by the Scottish poet Robert Tannahill.

After the singing and the reading we were glad of the customary tea and cakes and our thanks go to Mrs Irene Hickman (Dudley) and Miss Evelyn Cowley (Oldbury) for their help.

The flowers were distributed to - and much appreciated by- the ladies of the congregation and I was given a lovely bouquet. Thank you, Pam.

BS Russell

On 19th July, we welcomed Mr. Philip Niblock, from Shrewsbury, who always provides a thought-provoking Service. This time the theme was the competitive spirit, something unique to humans, and how it has pushed us forward, from the earliest of days to moon landings.

Janice Ashley

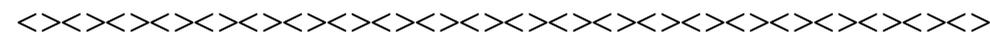
The Unitarian Faith lost a fine Lay Speaker, the Moose Fraternal a loyal member, and we lost a good friend when Janice Ashley died in the early morning of 20th July 2009.

As a Lay Speaker she was the 'backbone' of our services at Dudley Old Meeting House and All Souls' Wolverhampton, always ready to step in if someone could not come. "Can't do a sermon" she would say "But I'll find some good readings". These would be spiced with an anecdote, for Janice had a fine sense of humour which she kept to the end.

Others will speak of the contributions Janice made to many organisations - the Birmingham District Women's League will mourn her not only as a long-time colleague but as President, but it is as a friend that Ken and I will miss her.

She was a good companion in our holidays at Mooseheart, and I always looked forward to our 'phone conversations and exchange of news -and a bit of gossip! Janice has left a gap in our lives. Good night and God bless, Dear Friend.

Ken and Barbara Russell



Services in August and September

2nd August (Dudley) NO SERVICE
16th (W'ton@Dudley) Mrs. BS Russell:- All Souls' W'ton

6th September (Oldbury with Dudley) Mrs A. Thursfield:-
Bayshill U.C. Cheltenham; Immediate Past President of the MUA.

20th (W'ton@Dudley) Mr.P Niblock:- Shrewsbury