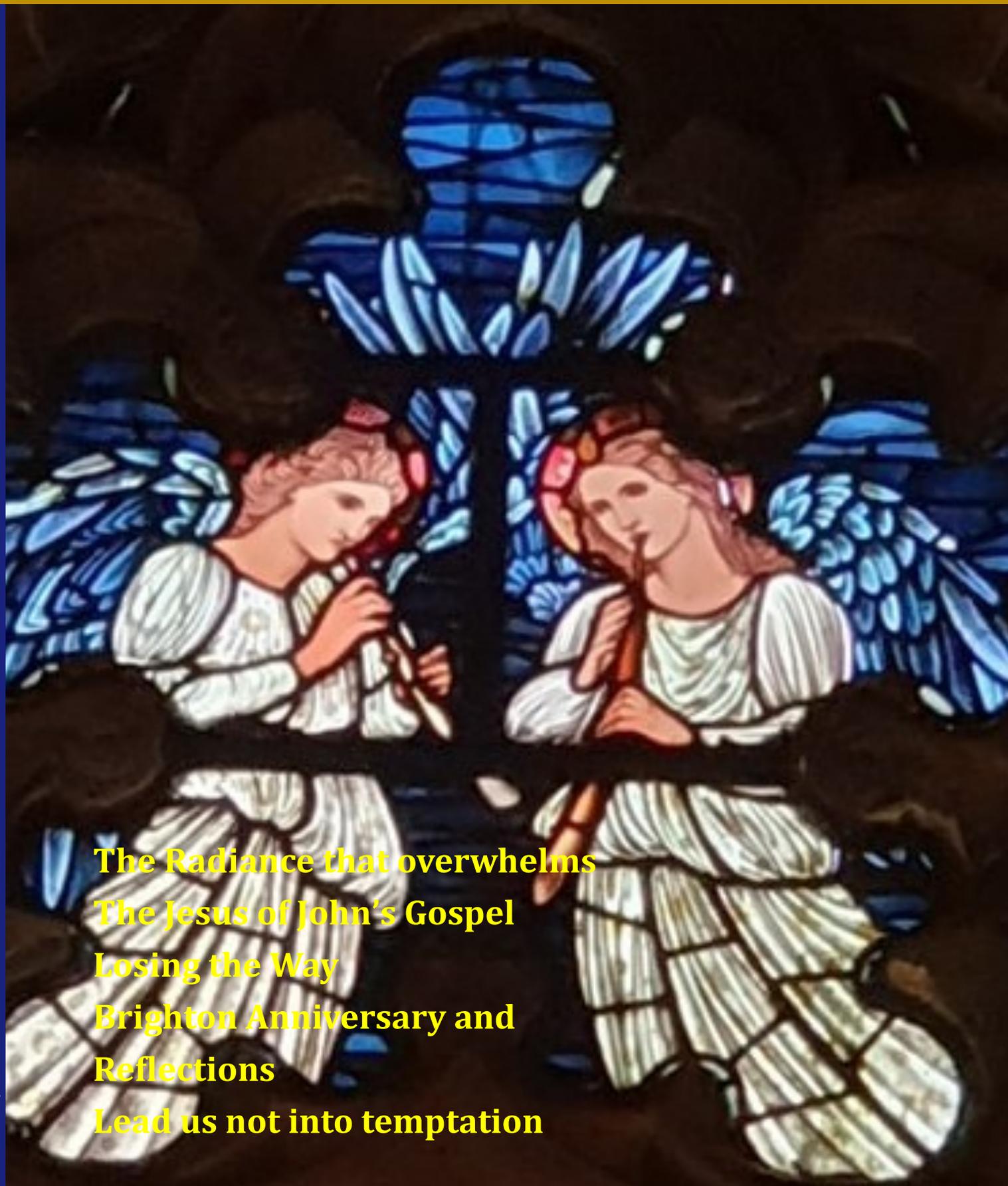


# The Liberal Christian Herald

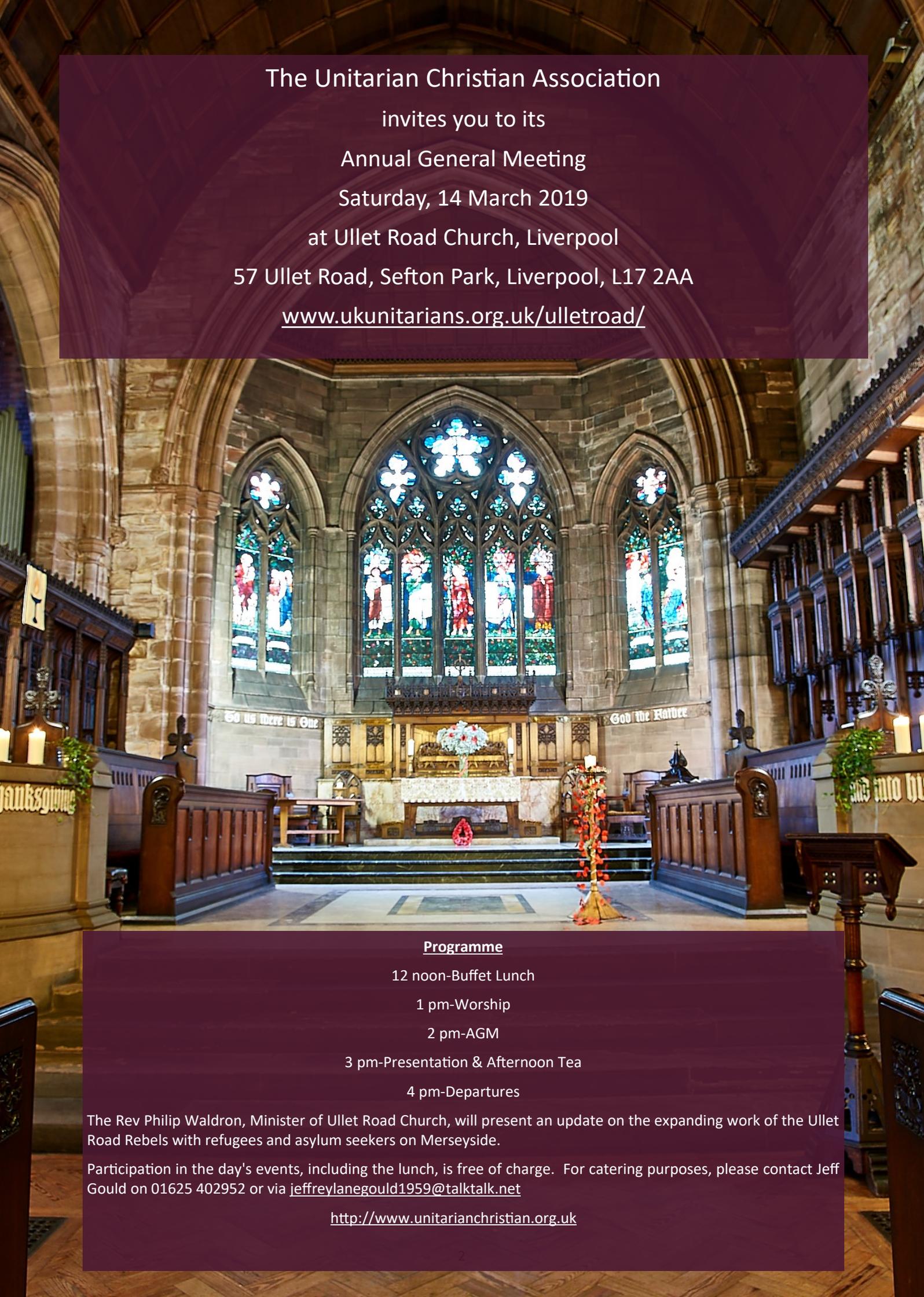


*The Unitarian Christian Association seeks to strengthen and revitalise the liberal Christian tradition.*



**The Radiance that overwhelms  
The Jesus of John's Gospel  
Losing the Way  
Brighton Anniversary and  
Reflections  
Lead us not into temptation**

Issue 97, December 2019



The Unitarian Christian Association  
invites you to its  
Annual General Meeting  
Saturday, 14 March 2019  
at Ullet Road Church, Liverpool  
57 Ullet Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool, L17 2AA  
[www.ukunitarians.org.uk/ulletroad/](http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/ulletroad/)

Programme

12 noon-Buffer Lunch

1 pm-Worship

2 pm-AGM

3 pm-Presentation & Afternoon Tea

4 pm-Departures

The Rev Philip Waldron, Minister of Ullet Road Church, will present an update on the expanding work of the Ullet Road Rebels with refugees and asylum seekers on Merseyside.

Participation in the day's events, including the lunch, is free of charge. For catering purposes, please contact Jeff Gould on 01625 402952 or via [jeffreylanegould1959@talktalk.net](mailto:jeffreylanegould1959@talktalk.net)

<http://www.unitarianchristian.org.uk>

# The Liberal Christian Herald

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## Editorial

By Jeff Gould



In many of our movement's churches and chapels the four Sundays in Advent are observed through the lighting of an Advent wreath. The four candles on the outside of the wreath symbolise the virtues of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy, whilst the candle located in the centre of the wreath speaks to the arrival of the Christ-child. The custom of lighting such a wreath is ancient and has Pagan origins. It is particularly observed in Germany and the other nations of Northern Europe. Such a ritual serves as a reminder that the season of Advent is not one prolonged 'Christmas' celebration, but

instead a time of preparation and anticipation. The liturgical colour for this season is purple, which is the same colour that marks Lent. Today's pre-Christmas shopping frenzy, office parties and overall merry-making hardly respect the penitential origins of the season. The demands of commerce obscure this valuable element of the four weeks leading up to Christmas Day. At its best, Advent is a time in which to ponder the powerful scriptural exhortation to 'Keep awake!' [Matthew 24.42], as we interpret in our own manner what it means to anticipate the arrival of the Kingdom of God.

Advent this year has had the added element of anticipation in the form of a General Election, with all the potential and possibility it contains for a better world. When Christmas Day does arrive, there will be more certainties in our collective and individual futures, but there will be yet more expectations that result from the new government that is formed. The Gospel that Jesus lived and

proclaimed was essentially a political phenomenon. It challenged the *status quo* of the Jewish orthodoxy of his time and the power of the occupying Roman authorities. May this Christmas offer us, as people of faith, an equally relevant and meaningful challenge to whatever we identify as hindrances to the arrival of the kingdom of God. 'Come, Lord Jesus' [Revelation 22.20].

A blessed and happy Christmas to all our readers,  
*Jeff Gould, Editor*

## The radiance that overwhelms

*Nativity Service sermon by Jim Corrigan, Padiham, 10 December 2017*

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We often find a problem, I think, when we encounter the Christian nativity story, as in our second reading today, with the shepherds coming from the hillside to Bethlehem to witness the new-born Saviour in the manger (*Luke 2: 8-20*). But, we protest, we've read and heard this before, countless times ... surely there's nothing new to learn from these stories? ... nothing new to understand. *We've done them, been there, know this stuff!*

Certainly I as the preacher have these feelings: What on earth can I say about these stories that's new, when I preached it only last year? In actual fact, I think I used a different text last year, but this one the year before I'm sure ... *So where can we go? Is there anything new to say about this nativity story from Luke's gospel? I doubt it! ...* but wait a minute, why don't we enter the stories again, and see what happens? ... see if anything happens ...

Let's start then with the first Reading, from *Isaiah (9: 2-7)*, a passage in which this Prophet foretells of the coming of the Messiah, the Saviour of the Jewish people, who will overthrow the oppressors ... we will first know of his coming when those in darkness '*will see a great light*' ..

and this great light will shine, and '*break the yoke*' of the people's slavery, and will '*break the oppressor's rod*' ... how will this be though? ... well '*a child is born to us, a son is given to us ... the government will rest on his shoulders, and he will be called: Wonderful counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ... He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity, the peace of his rule will have no end.*'

Now this is just one of the prophecies in the Old Testament of the Saviour who is to come, the Messiah ... a new King David, who will rescue the Jewish people, and whose rule will bring justice and peace to the land.

And the Gospel writers, writing many hundreds of years after Isaiah, in fact writing just after the death of Jesus -- the man who challenged the new oppressors, the Romans -- these Gospel writers were keen to portray Jesus as this long-awaited Saviour of the Jewish people, the Messiah who had come at last. The Gospel writers *believed* Jesus was the Messiah, and in fact, Jesus saw himself as the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy, as the Saviour who had come to bring light to the world.

But this is to be a very different kind of saviour, which is made clear from the start of Luke's nativity story. The mother of Jesus is Mary, a simple peasant woman -- although Luke maintains Joseph is descended from the line of David. Mary and Joseph have had to leave Nazareth and travel to Bethlehem because of the census ... and the new Saviour is born there, in David's city ... but in a manger, a cattle shed ... and the audience that the angels choose to announce the nativity to, are humble shepherds on a nearby hillside, shepherds at that time being social outcasts. And the shepherds need no persuading, they are overawed and they believe, and thus they become the first outside witnesses to this new-born King.

So we understand from the start of Luke's gospel that Jesus is to become a quite different Saviour, not a ruler, but one who will be put to death by the rulers because of the challenge he poses. He will preach, and in fact, demonstrate by his actions, that a new world is possible, a world of peace and justice, but that in order to build this new world, we will first need to build it within ourselves and our communities.

Within ourselves and our communities? But is this possible? Can we do it?

Six hundred years ago, a German mystic known as Meister Eckhart wrote: *'The Eternal birth takes place in time, and still happens daily in the innermost part of the soul.'* Let me repeat that saying: *'The Eternal birth takes place in time, and still happens daily in the innermost part of the soul.'*

So what does Meister Eckhart mean? ... well, as an orthodox Christian he affirms the doctrine of the Incarnation: *'The Eternal birth takes place in time'* -- so he affirms the birth of Christ (the Eternal) as a real historical event, yes it took place *'in time'* ... but as a mystic, he goes on to affirm that the eternal birth *'still happens daily in the innermost part of the soul.'*

So it happens inside each one of us, potentially at least, deep inside us, every day. But why haven't we all been miraculously transformed then, into God-like creatures? *Ah, ha! ... yes, that's the question.* And it goes to the heart of a contradiction in the text of this very passage from Luke we've been discussing. Because the passage that traditionally has the heavenly host of angels saying: *'Glory to God in the highest, and goodwill towards all mankind'* is disputed by Biblical scholars, who say it's an incorrect translation. They say those lines of Christmas good cheer should in reality be translated: *'Glory to God in the highest, and goodwill to those with whom God is pleased.'*

So only those with whom God is pleased will receive a blessing then? *Gosh, that doesn't sound very Christian!* And doesn't that contradict what the Angel tells the shepherds at the start of their encounter, that he brings good news that will give great joy to *all* people.

So a contradiction then? Can it be resolved though? ... I think maybe it can ... if we think of the good news, Jesus, the Christ, God -- as light, radiant light, as we are invited to do at the beginning of this passage from Luke: *'the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them'*. So the light reaches us all, but for it to penetrate into the innermost reaches of the soul, we have to be open to receive that light. Oh yes, we can allow the

darkness to continue to reign within us. We can refuse to open ourselves to the light that transforms, as we so often do.

We prefer to remain shut up in our own little world, where we are in charge, where we get our own way, where we sort things to our advantage, where we hold on tight to our greed and our pride, hoard and protect them, because they're ours! We won't let the light in, the light that can radiate and cleanse and renew our souls, oh no, *we* wouldn't be in control if we did!

## **But we could let the light in, couldn't we?**

But we could let the light in, couldn't we? -- we know we could, because we have done so before. And its fierce radiance rekindles the little light within ourselves – and it is this light that inspires our best selves, our best deeds.

It has inspired the best work of this congregation – the extraordinary work so many of you put in, to: Fairtrade, working for a fairer world week in and week out; our splendid concert programme, now in its 14<sup>th</sup> year, which raises large sums for North-West Air Ambulance and The Children's Heart Surgery Fund; our Women's League, and the big sums they raise for nominated charities each year; and then the Socks and Chocs we collect and take to Lifeshare, for the homeless of Manchester, each a gift wrapped up, to be delivered there by car this year by Joyce and Freda, as happened last year, together with tins of food, and warm blankets made by our members and

volunteers. This is inspired work, work inspired by our best selves, our inner light.

Can we bring the same generous spirit to those closest to us, to our family and friends? I hope so. And can we bring that same generosity to all members of this congregation, not just those who we feel close to, but to those who we are not so close to, or to those we feel estranged from, or even those who we have grudges against? Can we let the light in to heal the bitter feelings within?

This Christmas you are invited to open yourself to the light of the world, and in our Christian narrative, that is to the light of Jesus, the light of Christ, to the radiance that overcomes hate, and overwhelms us with its love.

May your hearts be open to this love this Christmas. **Amen.**

## The Jesus of John's Gospel

### Peter B. Godfrey

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A couple of years ago I was asked to read the lesson at the funeral of a friend. The vicar gave me a reading from the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel of John. I did not want to cause any trouble so I managed to avoid asking the vicar afterwards if he believed that 'no one comes to the Father' except by Jesus?

I do not think that is the case. If there is an afterlife I do not believe it would be for followers of Jesus only. Much more to the point is that this particular teaching in John's Gospel does not seem to be in accord with the teaching of Jesus as we find it in the synoptic Gospels. We have in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples the clear implication that we can be forgiven – saved – if we are forgiving. Being forgiving is a central part of Jesus's teaching, for example in the wonderful story of the forgiving father. Jesus is surely saying that God the Father is forgiving.

In the synoptic Gospels Jesus seems to me to be saying that what matters is following his teaching – repent of our wrong-doing and build on the rock of his teaching.

If one reads the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew and Luke and then reads any of the 'I am' passages in John's Gospel one begins to wonder if it is the same person speaking. Sometimes it almost seems as if the synoptic Gospel writers and the author of John's Gospel are referring to two different people. Certainly the tone is different. One thing that rather irks me is the way John's Gospel keeps referring to 'the Jews' as if Jesus himself were not a Jew. For example: 'the Jews of Jerusalem sent a deputation' (1v19), 'Works of this kind...stirred the Jews to persecute Jesus', (5v16), 'the Jews were looking for a chance to kill him' (7v1). There are many other examples.

The Jesus of John's Gospel seems so egotistical with the frequent use of 'I', compared to the 'Son of Man' of the synoptic Gospels.

John Barton is an Anglican priest who was Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture at Oxford University. In his recently published book 'A History of the Bible: The Book and its Faiths' he writes 'John's difference from the synoptics is enormous' (p203). 'In John it is clear that the historical figure of Jesus, the ethical teacher, has receded behind someone who primarily reveals the nature of his own status in relation to God. Where the sayings of Jesus are concerned there is more or less no overlap at all', (p203). The position of the account of the cleansing of the temple is very different, and the accounts of the Last Supper and crucifixion are different. John only has one parable whereas the synoptic Gospels are full of them. There is a difference in emphasis. Barton says the emphasis in John is more like that of Paul 'who talks very little about the message of Jesus and much more of the message *about* Jesus' (p2.30).

Why is there this difference? Barton's view is that John's Gospel is what Clement of Alexandria called 'a spiritual Gospel'. He thinks it is quite possible that it was the product of a school or group, as it is not certain that it was the product of one writer - there are dislocations in its narrative. So the Gospel is saying 'This is what Jesus means to us'. It is not stating facts. It is giving expression in strong form of strongly held beliefs. The logic, it seems to me, is the same as that which says 'My mother is the best in the world'. It is not logically true but it tells us something.

In 'The Five Gospels: The search for the Authentic Words of Jesus', the authors - Funk, Hoover and the Jesus Seminar - take the view that the 'I am' sayings were possibly a credal summary for the members of a Johannine community. 'In virtually every case, the reader is confronted with the language of the evangelist and not the language of Jesus' (p419).

Not taking parts of the Gospel of John as being literally true is not to deny the beauty or the value of those parts. Just as saying 'It is not

literally true that my heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky' does not deny that the saying has a meaning. There are so many beautiful things in John's Gospel that I would not want to be without - 'Set your troubled hearts at rest' (14v1), 'This is my commandment to you; love one another' (15v17),

## Being forgiving is a central part of Jesus's teaching

It is possible that in some ways John's Gospel may be more accurate than the synoptics. For example, it has reference to people wanting to make Jesus king (John 1v49 and 6v15). On the whole the synoptic writers try to keep

this quiet. When Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time Luke records the crowd as crying 'Blessings on him who comes as king in the name of the Lord' (19v38), whereas Matthew says the cry was 'Hosanna to the Son of David' (21v9) - though earlier in the same chapter Jesus does say he is fulfilling a prophecy that said 'Here is your king' (v5) and he refers to Mark's Gospel which has the crowd shouting in words similar to those in Matthew (11v9, 10) but has the (ominous?) words 'Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David'. Years ago a distinguished biblical scholar - I think it may have been C.H.Dodd - wondered if such gatherings as those of the five hundred were gatherings of terrorist supporters of Jesus. That is another subject, but it would not be surprising if the Romans had considered Jesus to be a political danger and hence Pilate's inscription for the cross.

Something that specially appeals to me is the way in which, in John's Gospel Jesus speaks of eternal life now, not in an afterlife. Jesus is said to speak of *possessing* eternal life (3v15), *having hold* of it (3v36 and (5v24) for example.

At this point (if not before!) readers might be saying 'How typically Unitarian, just picking out the bits you like'. Well, one of the beauties of Barton's book is how it shows that - everyone does it!

# Losing the Way

## (A Unitarian Nightmare)

Jeremy Goring

---

I recently had a long, vivid and troublesome dream. It was set in Brighton, a place I know well; but, apart from the seaside, I could not recognise any features that were familiar to me. I was with a group of people that I had never met before, but we had one thing in common: we were all Unitarians. And we had a common purpose: we were trying to find a Unitarian information centre that had recently opened there. But the problem was that, although we knew it was somewhere in the east of the city, we did not know exactly where.

We spent hours travelling around, first in a vehicle and later on foot, going up streets that led nowhere and up alleys that turned out to be blind. In desperation I decided to phone someone who might be able to help: I spoke to an elderly Unitarian minister of my acquaintance, but alas! he was too deaf to hear what I was saying. Then I thought I would try Essex Hall, but all I got was a recorded voice describing in tedious detail the 'values and principles of Unitarianism'.

By this time we were so exhausted that I decided to take a taxi. Most of the ones I hailed ignored me, but one eventually did condescend to stop. 'Where do you want to go?', asked the driver. 'I don't know', I said. 'Well', he replied, 'if you don't know where you are going, I can't help you.' 'Do take us,' I pleaded; 'Just drive us around for a bit so we can see if we can spot what we are looking for.' But after driving around for a while we found ourselves on the outskirts of the city and decided to get out and walk.

Still meeting with no success, I thought it best to head for the one place whose location I knew well – the railway station. And so we hailed another taxi and piled in, feeling sure that the driver would know how to get there. But he didn't and drove us in a totally wrong direction ....

Then I woke up and got out of bed, feeling so disoriented that I managed to take a wrong turn on my way to the bathroom.

In thinking about the dream, I recalled Freud's view that dreams normally include what he termed 'the day's residues'. What had I been doing or thinking about before I retired to bed? Ah, yes, I recalled; I had been reading *The Inquirer*. (Although for spiritual nourishment I now turn to *The Tablet*, I still read *The Inquirer* in the hope of finding news of friends.) This particular issue of the paper, like many others, was largely taken up with plans for the future of the denomination. How best, writers were asking, can we move forward in our endeavour to promote the principles and values of Unitarianism?

The message of my dream seems to have been that, in trying to find a way forward, Unitarians have lost their way. They see themselves as pioneer people on a spiritual journey, perpetually searching for truth wherever it can be found, pursuing every avenue of enquiry that is open to them; but the fact is that they never actually get anywhere. In this respect they resemble those referred to in the Epistle to the Ephesians who are 'tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine'. These are people who, according to the writer, have become 'alienated from the life of God' because of 'the blindness of their heart'.

It is perhaps significant that, although my dream was set in Brighton, I was evidently unaware that there was a Unitarian church in the city. In fact I myself have a long acquaintance with it; 89 years ago I was carried into it to be christened. In those days it was called Christ Church (with 'Unitarian' in brackets to show it was not Church of England). The services always included Bible readings, the Lord's Prayer and hymns about such themes as the 'Life and Ministry of Christ' or 'Christian Discipleship'.

When I last conducted worship there about 25 years ago the services had not greatly changed. It is true that prayers were no longer read from *Orders of Worship*, but the hymns were still sung from *Hymns of Worship* (now in a revised version) so that anyone who had worshipped there in pre-war days would probably not have felt out of place. As far as I can gather from its website things are very different now. The congregation, it says, it has no time for a 'judgmental God' and no-one is expected to believe anything that goes against their 'reason or instinct'. There are no references to Christian festivals, but special services are held to celebrate the solstices. I suspect that, as with the majority of Unitarian congregations nowadays, services will not normally include a Bible reading or the Lord's Prayer, and that hymns will be sung from a book that leaves out most of those still happily preserved (thanks to the UCA) in *Hymns of Faith and Freedom*. As readers will know, among the hymns that have been preserved are those in a section called 'Divine Guidance' – something that many Unitarians would not be happy to sing about because, so it seems, they think they have no need of this. They would reject as outmoded the sentiments expressed in

**In trying to find a way forward, Unitarians have lost their way.**

William Burleigh's fine hymn: 'Lead us, O Father, in the paths of peace;/Without thy guiding hand we go astray,/And doubts appal, and sorrows still increase;/Lead us through Christ, the true and living Way.' But the truth is evident. If we don't follow the Way and don't heed the Guide we shall, like the people in my dream, all get frustratingly lost.

Today, when I attend a service in my usual place of worship, I know that it will always include psalms, readings from the New Testament, the Lord's Prayer

and hymns which, although they may not have great literary merit, are unblemished by hubris or humanism..

The people I meet there are not intellectuals and they are never likely to talk about 'values and principles', but they all have a robust belief in God.

They too are on a spiritual journey, but they do know where they are heading and exactly what they are looking for. Like Abraham, as the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, they seek 'a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God'.

*Dr Jeremy Goring, a former Unitarian minister, is European Representative of Brotherhood of the Cross and Star*

## Brighton Anniversary & Reflections

### Jef Jones

This extract from the following article first appeared in the Autumn 2019 edition of the LDPA quarterly magazine and was written by Jef Jones, the Lay Leader at Brighton. It was delivered on the congregation's 199th anniversary in August. Jef outlines the founding members' thinking and highlights what made them special. The address was poignant not least because Jef had recently shared with the congregation his intention to draw his memorable ministry at Brighton to a close in September 2020.

199 years ago, 350 people came to our first service. The church had 16 trustees and in their honour I would like to share sixteen thoughts about liberal religion as it was then, and as it is today.

1. Our founders were brave and their bravery came from an interior struggle. They would have been raised with the notion of God as a loving and forgiving power, but that God would also have been a moral judge, part of a punitive scheme in which all human beings were held to be innately sinful. This principle of Original Sin was not just the prevailing intellectual idea in Christianity: it lived inside people as a truth. Our founders' truth, a God of reason, love and human potential, was unorthodox if not entirely new. Some of our founders must have struggled in their very souls. This inner process must have been committed, painful, creative and liberating.

2. Our founders not only rejected Calvinist dogma, they asserted their own faith. They revered Jesus the man for his moral example, for the poetry of his soul and for his sense of justice and compassion. This was their anchor: a serious, thoughtful respect for Jesus. They believed in God; they believed Jesus was not God, but that he was a godly man even so. Unitarianism loses depth and resonance when it forgets its Christian origins. I have heard Unitarians speak of Jesus with a kind of casual contempt that they would not use to speak about the prophets of other faiths. If one of our key values is respect for other faiths, it is spiritually morbid to despise our own roots.

Our founders were open to teachings and traditions outside of Christianity but, in the freedom they bequeathed us, we can easily forget their Christianity. Let's not dismiss the creative dynamic generated by Christians struggling with Christianity in order to become new kinds of Christians. This dynamic created our church.

3. Our founders weren't just open to non-Christian teachings, they were actively interested in them. They were positive and curious about what they could learn from Greek philosophy, Buddhism, the Romantic poets, the American transcendentalists. They positively embraced new ideas.

4. They weren't so open-minded that their brains fell out. They were shaped by an ethos of reason and they believed in thinking. They believed it was possible to have a religious life without dogma, superstition and hierarchy. We still do

5. They had a positive attitude to science. They were living through an age of astonishing discoveries, and so are we, although our troubled times distract us from it. Our troubled times, however, also compel us to face the truth that what we do with science is often destructive. Let's not lose sight, though, of the fact that petrol, plastic, antibiotics and the internet were not invented by evil geniuses. They were contributions to human life. This leads to some interesting questions. How can humanity as a whole interact with science so that it benefits humans and sustains the natural world? How can we learn to think beyond our immediate convenience, and anticipate more intelligently the long term consequences of technology and manufacturing? Given what science has achieved, surely that is not beyond us.

6. Our relationship with the divine cannot be made out of thought alone. Our commitment to thinking matters, but over-thinking God might lead us to conclude that God is tidy and mathematical. God might very well be mathematical, but they must surely be the mathematics of music, galaxies, oceans, evolution: a divine mathematics beyond the comprehension of a single human mind. Whatever we think we know about God is precious, but partial. We can know God from thinking, but from dreaming, dancing, gardening and laughing too.

7. Our founders were inclusive and their inclusivity was religious. We would certainly regard their social and political values as generally progressive for their day. They were democrats and abolitionists and they would be the first to recognise the ministry of women. Their inclusivity drew on a positive vision of humanity, and on a belief in the sacred dignity of every single human soul. These are our values too.



LEFT Brighton Church  
Circa 1888.  
Drawing by  
William Alfred  
Delamotte.



Jef Jones

Lay Leader Brighton Unitarian Church

# Lead us not into temptation?

Roger Booth

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I think there is a need for caution in considering the authenticity of sayings of Jesus which appear to conflict with his other sayings or his general teaching. A good example of this need arose from a recent discussion we had at the Sidmouth Chapel about the above petition in the Lord's Prayer. The Greek manuscripts from all the centres of early Christianity (Antioch, Alexandria, Caesarea, Byzantium – dated 3<sup>rd</sup> century C.E.) except one, have, “ me eisenegkes emas eis peirasmon “, which is correctly translated as above. Yet it seems impossible that the loving God described in the Gospels should lead his children into temptation. Or did Jesus think that he would? There is much evidence that Jesus, like his contemporaries, believed in the existence of Satan as described in the Old Testament. For Yahweh at Satan's request authorises him to kill Job's family and take away his wealth, to induce him to betray his loyalty to Yahweh (Job 2,1-6). And Jesus acknowledges the existence of Satan in several places: at Luke 10,18 he exclaims, “I watched Satan fall like a flash of lightening “ (cf. Mark 3,26,

And most importantly, it is arguable that in the petition which follows – ‘but deliver us from evil’, the Greek ‘tou ponerou’ should be translated ‘the evil one’ (i.e. Satan). However in the Peshitta, a manuscript in Aramaic (dated C.E. 462) which is the standard Syriac version of the New Testament, that petition reads “ do not let us enter into temptation ” which accords closely with Yahweh's role as man's guardian, not persecutor.

This difference in the manuscripts may be due to Jesus' original listener, or a trident, altering Jesus' words because of their inconsistency with Jesus' other teaching as mentioned above, or because the Aramaic scribes heard Jesus' speech more correctly than the scribes writing in Greek ! Yet the manuscript evidence is weighted so strongly in favour of the Greek manuscripts that we are inclined to accept the unexpected conclusion that Jesus did believe that Yahweh might, for reasons unknown to mere mortals, cause a person to be tempted, as he did with Job.

Other sayings of Jesus which exhibit views of Jesus which surprise us, if correctly reported, are found at Mark 4,12, Luke 12,51-53 and 14,26.

# HELP !

## Attention all computer experts - the Officers of the UCA need you..

We are looking for a person who is skilled in using Microsoft Publisher to set up the layout of the Liberal Christian Herald , three times a year. All the articles and images will be emailed to you by the editor, Jeff Gould. If you think you could be of assistance, please contact Jeff .

T: 01625 402952 E: jeffreylanegould1959@talktalk.net

### WONDER



*And (the Shepherds) came with haste, and found Mary , and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:16-19 (KJV)*

God of all creation, may I, like the Shepherds, be so filled with the Wonder of Your presence in this world that my daily work, though important, does not keep me from taking time to stop and look at the miracle of life . Give me the courage to say “No!”, just now and then, to the many demands made upon me so that I have time to go to a place of peace and new beginnings. Teach me, after these moments of Wonder, not to rush back to my daily round, but to wait, like Mary, pondering them and letting them take root in my heart. Amen

**Daybreak and Eventide Day 25**

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2020

**A reminder for all our members, congregational members and Herald subscribers that membership subscriptions for 2020 are now due.**

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The rates and bank detail for transfers are shown below. Please make cheques payable to the Unitarian Christian Association and post to the address below. **If you have set up a standing order you do not need to do anything.** You may prefer to pay by standing order, forms are available on the website or can be posted out to you. Standing orders do help with administration and costs, so please consider this method of payment. You are able to cancel a standing order at any time, just contact your bank.

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# Unitarian Christian Association

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# Ministry Students receiving their gift book from the UCA Chair, the Rev. Jean Bradley, at the Annual Meetings in Birmingham 2019



L to R , Ant Howe, Alex Bradley, Michael Allured  
Jane Blackall , Stephanie Bisby



Liz Harley and Jean Bradley



Melda Grantham and Jean Bradley



