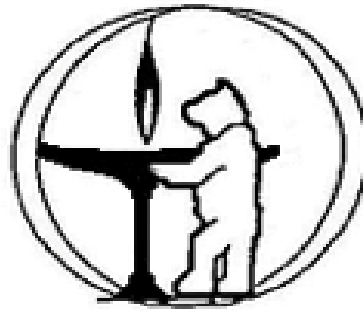


# Warwick Unitarians

## Newsletter

### March and April

### 2020



As we step into March, 2022 is shaping up to be an eventful year.

After two years of pandemic restrictions we are all looking forward to a freer time and more opportunities to enjoy life in all its variety. But some of the ‘events’ we might have looked forward to have been rather negative so far, with far too much unpredictability in the air, not least the recent storms and floods, and now the events in Ukraine.

One utterly reliable thing that we always look for is the arrival of Spring. But even that has taken us a bit by surprise this year. Nature seems to be getting ahead of itself, with crocuses (particularly the yellow ones) and daffodils and other plants flowering weeks before their usual time. Have they been misled by higher temperatures in January, by unusual rain patterns, we ask ourselves? We don’t depend for our existence on such variabilities, though the balance of all nature may very well do so, and insect life and bird life are very dependent on them. As Unitarians believe, there is a vital link across all life, although we rarely understand it fully. *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part* is a basic tenet of Unitarian thinking. Bees are known for example to be heavily under threat – and we do know that we depend on bees for the pollination of our plants, not just the pretty flowers in the garden but the crops that provide us with our food.

Another feature of 2022 may well turn out to be the lasting effects of the dilution of the concept of Truth. We have many examples already in the opening months of the year, with the most alarming currently being the different views of what is developing in Ukraine. The

“truths” being pedalled by the West and by Russia are widely divergent. And opinions of the ordinary man or woman in the street anywhere are formed entirely from the media, whether the newspapers they read, the radio or television they listen to, the social media platforms they follow. How are we to judge which is the truth? We have an undesirable tendency to believe our sources with too little questioning. In an age of Fake News, Trump, Putin and possibly even our own propaganda, we need to be on our guard as we search to understand the truth. The integrity of many of the basic foundations of our society seem to be under a challenging spotlight at the moment – in no particular order one could cite the police, the monarchy, parliament, the church, the NHS, the BBC, even our democracy. In the face of these challenges, it is important that we continue to use our own judgement and consider our own conscience as we try to assess the way forward, and then live our own truth in our daily lives.

Unitarians may not have a Creed or even a standard set of beliefs, but a common bond has always included this notion of searching for Truth and meaning. No individual can lay exclusive claim to The Truth and we have always been proud of our traditional belief in the right of individual conscience. Another of our tenets is that we find a basis for unity in our shared search for truth, our reverence for life, and in mutual respect for sincerely held beliefs.

This does not mean that we alone are right in our view of the truth. Many religions claim to be believers in The Truth. Can we all be right if our conclusions differ? One Baha’i explained that she believes that all religions are simply different versions of the same truth – defined only by context and timing. Baha’is believe in the unity of God, humans and religious faiths. Proponents of the faith revere prophets of other religious traditions, including Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad. And they believe in the words of their final messenger, Bahá’u’lláh, who taught that religions originated from the same source, and were ultimately different paths to a shared belief. Unitarians could ponder that.

As 2022 develops, as other Chapels are finally opening again after difficult months of pandemic constriction, we remain grateful to our friends who come to lead our weekly services and help us in our thinking, and we pray that there will be no other disruptions, be they caused by weather, war or illness.