

Warwick Unitarians
High Street Chapel
July and August 2022

There was a jolly celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee at the Chapel with Prosecco and cake to follow the service on Sunday 5th June taken by Rev Sue Woolley, who is both the President of the General Assembly of Unitarian Churches but also our District Minister. We are privileged to have had two Presidential visits already from Sue, as she will have a very full schedule of commitments around the country for the rest of her year in office.

The next week, on June 12th, Gavin Lloyd came to give another cheery service, with his characteristic reading from the Irish Times. But we did know that he was about to celebrate his 80th birthday later in the month and we were able to offer him too a tribute of cake and Prosecco, as well as a book token in fond recognition of all that he has contributed to the Chapel on his many visits over the last few years. The garden has been looking lovely, and full of roses, this month and helped us feel celebratory!

In July we are welcoming not just some of our more regular service leaders, Diane, Mark and Gavin, but also our popular pianist Peter who has already given us several splendid services showing us a further side to his skills (including one Sunday when he took the whole service at no notice when traffic problems stopped Diane coming). And this month we will welcome back Robin Hanford who visited several times some years ago before disappearing from the area while he prepared for the Ministry. He is now leading the congregation in Hinkley as the Rev Robin Hanford and we are delighted to see him return to Warwick at last.

But we are facing challenging times as a nation just now. The "special military operation" in Ukraine has not yet affected us directly, though the rise in the cost of living that is blighting our personal finances is certainly caused in part by President Putin's obsession and the UK's determination to support President Zelensky. There is little that we can do as a Chapel except contribute the proceeds of our collection to one of the refugee organisations that are attempting to provide for the vast numbers of displaced and distraught Ukrainians seeking safety in Europe and the UK. There will be another dedicated collection on the 24th July and again in August, and it is to be hoped that people will give generously.

At 7.30 on Friday, July 8th John Sheldon, who is one of our regular Chapel hirers using it for his Choir rehearsals, will be giving a Piano Recital in aid of Ukraine. He is calling it *Dance!* as the music will all reflect and hopes to have the assistance of a Ukrainian musician/dancer. We are very pleased to be able to offer him the use of our lovely venue free of charge to support this initiative, and we would encourage everyone to come and hear him. We hope there will be a good audience, ready to contribute generously to this needy cause.

After several weeks of disruptive roadworks around Warwick and Leamington we are approaching the Commonwealth Games and need to be aware that there may be further traffic difficulties affecting even our approach to the Chapel on Sundays. Do take care to check whether there will be diversions between now and mid- August. And prepare to enjoy some spirited and spectacular events both in our towns and on television as athletes from around the world demonstrate their extraordinary skills.

As I understand so far, the particular Sunday disruptions will be on **24th July** when work on Saltisford will cause a manageable diversion round the town AND the Portobello Bridge on Emscote Road will mean a longer diversion along Myton Road. Then on **31st July** Priory Road, from Northgate to St John's will be closed but the Butts will be open. More significant will be undated works at the roundabout for Myton Road and Banbury Road, by Warwick School, below the Castle which should be avoided as the diversion takes you through Barford. Then on **Sunday 7th August** we finally get to the Commonwealth Games Cycle race when the High Street, and most of the surrounding area it seems, will be inaccessible.

With regret we therefore now have to cancel the service that day Sunday 7th August.

On a very different note, we are very happy to congratulate Sandy Ellis on his 90th Birthday on Tuesday 2nd August. Sandy has taken many services for us in Warwick and given us important encouragement and advice over the years, partly in his role as Treasurer of the Midland Unitarians. And, of course, he is the father of Sue Woolley, our District Minister and the current President of the General Assembly. Many congratulations, Sandy.