

# Warwick Unitarians

## Newsletter

### December 2020

#### Services in December

6 <sup>th</sup> December	Diane Rutter
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Diane Rutter
20 <sup>th</sup> December	Gavin Lloyd

Although I was writing on the last day of November, with the already meagre daylight gone and passing showers dampening one's spirits even more, the message is one of hope!

Despite some hesitations about the interpretation of the supposedly clear Guidance given out by the Government we have judged that we are permitted to reopen the Chapel again in December as long as we observe all the proper protocols scrupulously, without 'socialising' or 'mingling'. We will therefore be gathering again on December 6<sup>th</sup> and on December 13<sup>th</sup> with Diane Rutter who is willing to come over from Kingswood (which is remarkably in Tier2). And then on the Sunday before Christmas Day Gavin has happily agreed to come and give us a Christmas Service. There will sadly be no Carol Service this year as it would be too tempting to sing our favourite traditional carols lustily when there is a justifiable ban on singing in places of worship everywhere.

So Christmas will take place this year but sound a little different. This has traditionally been a time of the year when the emphasis has turned to family celebrations and gatherings. In truth that has sometimes resulted in strained relations and artificial jollity,

combined with an undue materialism at odds with the basic Christian message of peace and goodwill to all men.

As Sue Woolley pointed out in her recorded service for November 29<sup>th</sup>, the First Sunday of Advent, <https://www.midland-unitarian-association.org.uk/news-and-events/mua-news/2020/11/online-service-for-29th-november-2020-doing-december-differently/>

the idealisation of family life doesn't suit everyone's situation and indeed seems to exclude many people. All the advertising on the media points to raucous parties and over consumption of food and drink, though for many single people and for poorer families the reality is something very different. For some of us Christmas is a time for the simple celebration of what can enjoy – be it our homes, our friends and family - without yearning for more possessions and without having to concentrate on the difficulties that surround us or the terrors that the world's state inspires.

Sue quoted Nicola Slee in suggesting we might find ways of doing Christmas differently, pointing to things like being compassionate to ourselves and others and being realistic about what we can 'get out of' Christmas. Cherish simplicity and 'enough-ness'. And communicate with others about how your own Christmas will be managed. Make connections with others – whether it be with family separated from us by distance and the risks of travelling this year or with people that we only know well enough to know that they are lonely.

Perhaps this year, after so many months of a stressful pandemic, we should try to use the festive time not to over-indulge and drown our woes, but to think of the reason why Christmas has been celebrated all over the world for so many centuries. To celebrate the birth of a baby whose story has changed so many attitudes and philosophies, spreading love and goodwill around the world.

Have a very Happy Christmas.

Malcolm