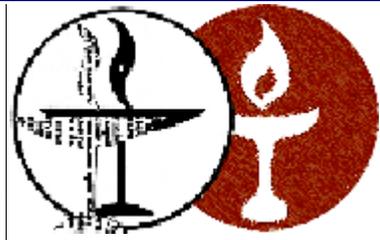


Ipswich Unitarian



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Planning for charity

Each year we support a different (usually local) charity and raise money for it with various events (Cream Teas, BBQ, our Bring and Buy table etc.). During this last year we have been supporting AgeUK Forget-me-not clubs and have raised a considerable sum for them (final totals in our next issue). Thank you to everyone who contributed, either with the fundraising work itself, or by supporting the events financially.

Now it is time to start thinking about which charity we will support for 2016/17. The selection we voted on last year included Samaritans; Suffolk Refugee Support; Melon Mission; Got to read; Suffolk Accident and Rescue Services.

So please have a think ... is there a charity which is close to your heart and which you would like to suggest? If so, then please pass the details on to Riena Jackson by October 25th at the latest. Please also write a short paragraph giving information about the charity and why you feel they deserve our support. Maybe you have a personal connection with them? We will include the details of all suggestions in the November newsletter and vote at our AGM.

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Heritage Open Days and Historic Churches Bike and Stride Days

The Meeting House was once again open for the Historic Churches Trust Bike & Stride and Heritage Open Days; 10/11 September. Saturday started slowly but picked up with a constant flow of people coming in throughout the day. Numbers were noticeably down on previous years for the Bikers & Striders but the reverse was so for the Heritage Seekers. People generally seemed to be appreciating the building and its purpose and a few said they would be coming again, maybe for a service. Sunday was altogether different. They were queuing outside waiting for the service to end! And we were kept busy until closing time.

The final count totalled 1191 including 82 children, plus 3 dogs, over the two days. We may well have missed counting some people because they were coming in via two doors; I also think that the pig trail may have helped to boost numbers. Roll on next year.

Paulette Reed

UFOS – Unitarian Focus On Seeing



Our topic in September was 'Holidays' and some of us have been to exotic places, but Felixstowe seafront can be just as much fun! Here is a 'sand-boat' before the tide comes in!

New Moral Absolutisms and Genocide - Lessons from the Holocaust

The recent concerns about immigration arising from turmoil in Asia and the Middle East, and from EU immigration policies, have fueled a tide of nationalism and xenophobia. Negative reactions to these immigration patterns contributed to the referendum vote supporting Britain's exit from the EU. Shortly after the "Brexit" vote, there was a surge of violence against immigrants across Britain. Xenophobia has now reared its nasty head for all to see and fear, and for some to feel.

Much of this xenophobia is based on ultra-nationalism and a perception that some people are of more value than others. An examination of what happened in Germany in the 1930s serves as a poignant, chilling example of what can happen when xenophobia expands its base and attracts additional followers. Much of this relates to the pseudoscience of eugenics and proponents of *Rassenhygiene*, "racial hygiene". The word "eugenics" is derived from the Greek for "pure birth". The paradigm of the eugenics proponents in the early-mid twentieth century was that much of a nation's ills could be explained on the basis of financial burdens placed on society by hereditary illnesses. Individuals afflicted with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses were considered genetically diseased, though little was really known about genetic inheritance beyond Gregor Mendel's pea plant and initial fruit fly experiments. Affected individuals were degrading the health of the nation, were expensive to care for, might not be able to contribute to society and were therefore of "less value".

The eugenics movement advocated selective breeding for those with the "best" genes and prevention of procreation for those deemed to have inheritable illnesses. Involuntary sterilization became the tool for reducing their numbers. Hoping to emulate the American model of eugenics-based sterilizations, doctors in Nazi Germany systematically sterilized over

400,000 individuals in order to reduce burdens to society.

Even more sinister was the tangential theme in Germany that individuals of different racial or ethnic backgrounds had more or less value to society, apart from any specific "hereditary illnesses". German doctors and scientists became compulsive about categorizing individuals based on their physical characteristics. They coupled these efforts with the new social construct that those of the so-called "Aryan race" were genetically superior to those of all other races. Non-Aryans were considered biological threats to Aryan Germans, who were endangered by the risk of genetic "infection" from those with less valuable, degenerate non-Aryan genes. Individual rights were subordinated to community goals. "Pure" Germans were Aryan and these individuals constituted the *Volksgemeinschaft* (National Community). Of course, only biologically healthy Aryans were included, so individuals characterized as "lives without value" were excluded, along with all non-Aryans.

Following the onset of WWII, the Nazis created a series of "euthanasia" programs designed to eliminate the "incurably ill": those with mental or developmental illnesses who could not contribute to the war effort and who occupied hospital beds that were now needed. Historians estimate that more than 200,000 patients were murdered by the Nazis as part of these secret programs. The "euthanasia" centres served as the pilot projects for the extermination of those who were deemed racially inferior, most notably Jews and Roma, in the Polish killing centers and concentration camps—Treblinka, Sobibor, Chelmno, Belzec, Majdanek, and Auschwitz. A kind of moral relativism, in which some people had great value and others had less, led first to discrimination, segregation and persecution, then evolved to a new moral absolutism where some people had no value and could be murdered. Slippery slopes became chasms, resulting in genocide.

Continued on page 3

New Moral Absolutisms cont.

Only by understanding the background of this new moral absolutism, and how it led to genocide, can we help prevent future genocides.

By Daniel L. Cohen MD



Daniel gave a talk at our Meeting House on 5th August and hopes to present a similar talk at other local Meeting Houses in the future. He is Volunteer Docent, US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC; Member, Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, Alexandria, VA, USA

Memories of our Meeting House

As I was struggling to put in a light bulb in on a staircase the other day, I was reminded of the Dec/Jan edition of the *Ipswich Unitarian* with its clear picture by Phil Chatfield of the roof of our Meeting House.

In 1957, when a small elderly congregation appointed Rev. Nick Teape as Minister, it was difficult to know where to start. He bought a scythe and began to attack the solid golden rod which covered the front garden. As winter progressed, he climbed alone and worked out the secrets of changing a light bulb as described in the previous article.

Nicholas was very keen about the floor too. We hired some scraping machines, had weekend help from our youth group in London and revealed the wood. He wanted the job to last at least 40 years – which it did. There were two of us working for weeks on our knees nightly applying the six coats of varnish which he calculated would be necessary. He also managed to remove snow from between the two pitched roofs – a very tricky balancing job. If the snow was not cleared, water seeped through into the body of the church when it warmed slightly on the Sabbath.

Memories – cont.

Nick was very good at doing practical jobs for the elderly members of the congregation, e.g. chopping wood and putting in light bulbs.

Marianne Prime's memoirs mention this with thankfulness. Much he managed, including three services a week and visits to members in Ipswich, Bedford and Framlingham on a large motorbike. I left his casket up in the roof for many years before taking it back to Inishannon, Co Cork, Republic of Ireland, to join his ancestors (both English and Huguenot) in the Protestant cemetery there.

By June Teape

Suffolk Refugee Support

On the 30th September, the Suffolk Refugee Support Centre held an open day which I was able to attend. They are a small local charity, based here in Ipswich. Ipswich is a dispersal area where the Home Office houses asylum seekers coming here to the UK. The charity currently supports over 600 refugees and asylum seekers. I was able to meet and have a chat with Rebecca Crerar, who is the Manager of the centre. She explained how the charity welcomes Refugees as they seek to acclimatise and build new lives here in Ipswich. The charity does this in a number of ways, offering one on one support to people to give advice on housing, schooling, finances, and anything else. The charity also runs English classes to help people adapt to British culture, and has various support groups for men and women. The vast majority of those they support come from war-torn countries in the Middle East, particularly Syria, Sudan and Iraq. Refugees seek asylum in our country for a whole host of reasons, often due to the persecution aimed towards them for their race or religion. My impression was that this charity is doing a great deal to alleviate the unimaginable stress and strain these asylum seekers must face. It was also invaluable to put human faces to all the suffering we only ever hear about second hand in the news. I hope to arrange at some future date for them to come and give a talk to us at the Meeting House, that we might all learn more about the work they do. In the meantime, if you want to know more about them or support the charity go to their website:

www.suffolkrefugee.org.uk

by Rev Lewis Connolly

Supporting our community

We really want to stay in contact with all members and friends in the congregation. It can be hard to hold a balance between being nosy and showing we care, so may we ask that anyone who would like a visit from our Minister, Lewis Connolly, or who would like the congregation to know when they are ill, so that we can call or drop by, to please give us a ring. It is probably best in the first instance to contact Lewis by phone or by email (see below).

Many of us have visited Christine Hyde over the last few months as she has struggled with a nasty leg ulcer. She is still not healing as well as she would like to and so will welcome visitors to cheer her up. The best times are afternoons and it is helpful to ring first – 01473 727153 (in case she has a medical appointment). The latest news about Sandra Hawes following her operation is that she is doing well and will soon be home. The family thank everyone for their good wishes.

Mindful walking with Riena

Would anyone like to join me for a walk in silence every week on Saturday mornings from 8 - 9?

My suggestion is to walk in the same area early in the morning, so we'll notice the changes in nature, weather and seasons. Alton Water, the Orwell river path or Fynn Valley are areas I could come up with for the walk, but hopefully there are other (better) suggestions? Please let me know if you would be interested by phoning me on 01473 210064 or emailing me on mjack76748@aol.com.

UFOS for October

The topic to inspire your photographic talents for October is 'Fungi'. Please bring or send your photos to the Meeting House for the last service.

Ipswich Unitarian Newsletter – For contributions to future newsletters, please email them to Tessa at - ipswichunitarian@gmail.com or post them to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS before the copy deadline for the next issue of Tuesday 25th October. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive this regularly by email, please just ask. To contact our secretary Riena Jackson, ring 01473 210064/email - mjack76748@aol.com To contact our Minister, Lewis Connolly, you can email him at revlewisconnolly@gmail.com or ring him on 01473 422528.

Happy Birthday -

In October to – Maggie Hodges on 17th; to Sandra Hawes, Louis Hawes and to Edmund Bradbrook on 25th; to Andrew Gibbs on 27th.

Events for your diary in October –

2nd – Harvest service and lunch (bring dry goods for the Women's Refuge)

9th – Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement

21st to 23rd Unitarian Women's Group Conference

– "Finding Beauty in the world, in each other, in ourselves."

At the Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow. For more information or bookings, contact: Stella Burney at 01298 871 218 or info@thenightingalecentre.org.uk

23rd Service and then our post Service Discussion

Slot to give us a chance to share our reflections and thoughts which have arisen from the service.

24th – United Nations Day

26th to 30th (7pm to 10pm) SPILL FESTIVAL at the MH

– a piece called [NAMES] by Elaine Mitchener –

free entry. Using music and movement, Mitchener focuses on the names enslaved Africans were forced to take.

Removing their birth names was a deliberately cruel and decisive effort to rob them of their identity and humanity.

30th Allhallowtide service followed by Communion.

Summer charity BBQ

The final total raised at Maggie and Neal Hodges' BBQ was £213. Thank you to everyone who contributed and to Maggie and Neal for hosting in their lovely garden.

Thought for the month –

'When two bulls fight, only the grass suffers.'

Proverb from Zimbabwe.

