



Unitarian College

Growing our faith from the inside



THE ASSOCIATE NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2023

GREETING FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Associates and friends of Unitarian College, I am delighted to be bringing you news from Unitarian College in our new-look Associate newsletter. Thanks so much to all of you for your continued support for Unitarian College, without which we wouldn't be able to do the valuable work we do 'growing our faith from the inside' and bringing on new leaders in our precious denomination. This summer has been a time of great busyness and change for the College. We are delighted to welcome three new members of the staff team who will help us immeasurably as our activities scale and develop. I remain grateful to the College Board, without whose ambition and support we would not have got as far as we have in just under five years. I do hope you will enjoy reading about our successes and new developments. You should expect to receive news from us three times a year going forward which I hope you will find interesting and useful.

Helen Mason, Director, Unitarian College



MINISTRY TRAINING UPDATE

By Rev Ant Howe, Senior Tutor



Every student training for professional Unitarian Ministry with Unitarian College has their own individual learning plan. All students come to a number of UC residential weeks each year alongside their academic study, and gain hands-on experience within a congregation. The college is very grateful to local Unitarian congregations who are willing to have students spend time with them on placement.

Two Graduating Ministers This Autumn



Lynda Kane completed her ministry training, successfully passed her Viva last May and has been added to the General Assembly Roll of Ministers. Her Ordination and Induction Service took place at Ballyclare Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church on Saturday 23rd September. We send our warmest congratulations to Lynda and hope for every blessing on her ministry.



Arek Malecki has completed his ministry training (gaining a first class theology degree along the way) and, following a successful Viva in September, we are now awaiting confirmation from the General Assembly that he has been added to the GA Roll of Ministers. Arek is serving as Minister-elect at Great Meeting Unitarians in Leicester. There will be a Service marking the commencement of his ministry which will take place at Mill Hill Chapel in Leeds on Saturday 7th October, to be followed by an Induction Service in Leicester on 18th November.

New and Continuing Students

This year we welcomed three new Ministry Students to our college community. Tina Gandhi, Kieren Mardle Moss and Janine Sim are all now in training. All three are undertaking a combination of Unitarian College residentials and assignments, academic study, and congregation-based placements.

Shana Parvin Begum, Francis Elliot Wright, Hannah Stephenson, Rob Foreman and Jennifer Sanders continue their ministry studies and are all at different points on their training journey. Jennifer is nearing the end of training and has been appointed Minister-elect with Brighton Unitarians.



Overseas Guest Tutors At UC Residentials

We have benefitted from the presence of two UUA Ministers joining us for Residentials this year.

In May, we were able to welcome Rev Chris Buice to our Residential which was held at the beautiful Ammerdown Retreat Centre. Chris is Minister at Knox Valley UU Church in Tennessee and led sessions on pastoral care and trauma. Chris generously shared of his experience and deep knowledge, delivered with gentle humour.

In September, we gathered at Holland House near Evesham. Rev Sharon Dittmar, who works for the UUA, joined us. Despite battling jet-lag and a cold, Sharon energetically delivered sessions on Covenants, congregational dynamics, and diversity.

We are also indebted to our UK colleagues who generously give of their time and expertise to deliver sessions to our Ministry Students. This year so far we have welcomed Revs Sheena Gabriel, Michael Dadson, Stephen Lingwood and Rory Castle Jones to our residentials to lead sessions.

Looking Forward

After a zoom Inquiry Event held in mid-July, the General Assembly accepted numerous applications in September and is currently progressing the annual interview process to be held in November. We are hopeful that we will have new Ministry Students joining the college community in due course.

Ministry Students to Lead Carol Service, 15th December
 The Ministry Students will again be leading a Christmas Carol Service in the Old Chapel, Great Hucklow. The Service this year will be on Friday 15th December 2023 at 7:30pm. All are welcome to join us for this Service. The village of Great Hucklow has amazing Christmas lights, and this Service is sure to get you in the mood for the festive season.

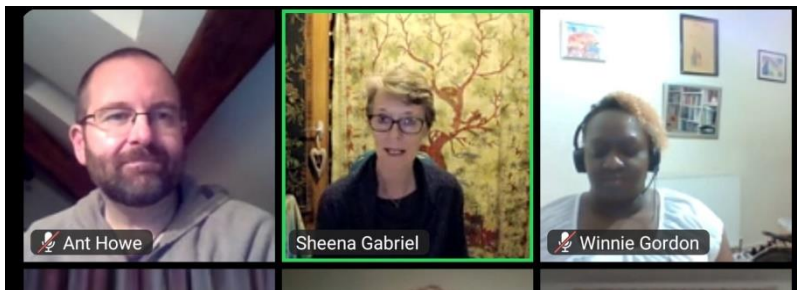


If you would like to join us and require overnight accommodation, please contact the Nightingale Centre directly to book.



LAY COURSES UPDATE

The Foundation Course in Lay Worship Studies with an International Twist



In addition to the UK Foundation course which began 20th Sept with 18 students, the Unitarian College was able to create a special edition for the Australia and New Zealand Unitarian Universalist group, with 12 students enrolled. Both courses will finish with students delivering a short service

online followed by leading two services in a local congregation.



The Advanced Course

Eight Advanced Course students have finished all the residential elements in July and are now working on the worship delivery elements and associated assignments. Once all this work is completed, successful students will be in a position to apply for recognition on the new GA roll for Lay Leaders.

A successful Rites of Passage Course ran again in July 2023 with a group of seven students.

We will be running an Intermediate Worship & Leadership residential programme in 2024. Details to follow.

A New Worship Works Weekend for Active Lay Persons Has Been Created

A special weekend for all active Lay Persons at The Nightingale Centre, 13th - 15th October 2023, has been developed to replace the annual UALM weekend. We have had broad interest so far with people expected to be attending from both the UK and abroad. Focusing on the development and collegiality needs of all lay worship leaders, we are hoping this will become an annual UC event.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES UPDATE



Kids on the Prowl!

An active and fun Inters Weekend was held in Flagg in late June with 10 participants. The silent disco in the woods was a huge hit, and a following weekend is planned for summer 2024.

Following on from the successful Junior Weekend held last March with 16 participants, a new Junior Weekend is upcoming on the 6th - 8th October 2023 at The Nightingale Centre. The subject of ‘Magical Journeys’ will take the group on local walks and on a special trip to the Theme Park, Gulliver’s World in Warrington.



MORE NEWS

Unitarians from Around the World to Gather in Prague

Unitarian College is one of the partner organisations organising an international gathering in Prague which will take place from 25th - 29th October. Unitarians from all around the world will gather to consider our future leadership needs as Unitarianism moves into the middle of the 21st Century. We will look for ways we can work together as a global Unitarian community and how we can learn from each other. We will also share inspiring times of worship and conversation.

Increasing Educational Demands Create New Staff Appointments



Since May 2023, Unitarian College has made several new appointments to meet the needs of a growing influx of students. All three have long histories with Unitarianism and look forward to supporting all the students, Ant and Helen to take Unitarian College to the next level.

Rev Winnie Gordon joins as a Tutor/Assessor.
Rev Melda Grantham joins as a Tutor/Assessor.
Jenifer Brenner joins as Administrator.

Meet Our Valued Board Members

Please have a look at a new page on our Unitarian College website that features all our Board Members. We are so grateful to have these amazing members working so diligently behind the scenes at the College.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Unitarian College could not function without the generous financial support given to us by individuals, congregations, districts and Unitarian trusts. We are very grateful for all those who support our work and who believe in our vision of 'growing our faith from the inside'.

The work and scope of the college has scaled and, with that, our costs.

If you feel you could support our work with a one-off or regular donation, here are the details you need:

Bank account: Unitarian College

Account: 00032558

Sort Code: 40-52-40