



# GLASGOW UNITARIANS

SEPTEMBER 2022

## NEWS & VIEWS



The breezes taste  
Of apple peel.  
The air is full  
Of smells to feel-



Ripe fruit,  
old footballs,  
Burning brush,  
New books,  
erasers,  
Chalk, and such.



The bee, his hive,  
Well-honeyed hum

And Mother cuts  
Chrysanthemums.

Like plates  
washed clean  
With suds, the days  
Are polished with  
A morning haze.

John Updike,  
*September*



# Programme

## Sunday Services

**September 4th 7.00pm** - Zoom only. Worship Leaders: Neelam and Rory Bakshi. Title: Life, Death and Surprises. Trailer: George Harrison said when he was dying "Death is Part of Life."

**September 11th 11.00am** - in church and by Zoom. Worship Leader: George Paxton. Title: The Religion of Tolstoy. Trailer: Although best known as a great writer of fiction Tolstoy's religious outlook bears a strong resemblance to Unitarianism.

**September 18th 7.00pm** - Zoom only. Worship Leader: Sue Good (Aberdeen). Title: How to Cope with Anything. Trailer: They say you should only write about what you have experienced.

**September 25th 11.00am** - in church and by Zoom (with a traditional afternoon tea in the church afterwards). Worship Leader: Alison Spurway. Title: "Quo Vadis?" Trailer: The life of Christ has inspired religious fervour, art, and selfless devotion for centuries, but many are now seeking truth by other routes. For one, it is through deism and the awe inspired by quantum mechanics, and another suggests that we need a new story. I shall share my own thoughts and inspirations.

## Wednesday Meetings on Zoom

**September 7th** - 'Don't Pay UK' and 'Enough is Enough' - should Unitarians support these cost of living crisis campaigns?

**September 14th** - 'The Arc' - a short video and discussion about the project to preserve the variety of lifeforms in an Arctic gene bank archive on the Svalbard archipelago

**September 21st** - Do you believe in Evil?

**September 28th** - What do Unitarians mean by 'sacred'? Is there anything we hold sacred?

We continue to meet **every Tuesday morning at 11am on Zoom** for a chat in our usual Zoom room. Feel free to drop in any time.

Link and access numbers for our Zoom meetings remain as follows:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/5291141523?pwd=YjdhaFgxakY0TWJHWENZMW1PYjhoZz09>

Meeting ID: 529 114 1523

Passcode: 159

The Glasgow congregation would like to express **congratulations to Ruth Paxton Wright** on attaining her MLitt degree in Technical Art History, Making and Meaning on the topic of 'The Scottish Colourists' from the University of Glasgow



**Barbara Clifford's son Duncan** is embarking on a remarkable journey in September to raise money for charity, he writes: **The Talent Foundry** seeks to increase social mobility by helping young people from disadvantaged backgrounds discover what they are amazing at, develop valuable new employment skills and take that first step into the world of work. Along with my Dell colleagues, I'm looking to raise money for The Talent Foundry by trekking the Inca trail in Peru. This involves five days of strenuous trekking, reaching a height of over 7000 feet above sea level that eventually leads to the ancient ruins of **Macchu Picchu**. Any money we raise will be matched by our employer, Dell Technologies, and help to make a real impact to disadvantaged young people in the UK. All donations are greatly appreciated!!!



**GoFundMe link:** <https://tinyurl.com/54uxaavf>

## Scottish Unitarian Association Clarification

I found last month's *News & Views* a stimulating and interesting magazine to read, so much so that I sent a congratulatory message to our Glasgow Editorial Team. Unfortunately, that was not the reaction of some of our valued readers.

Now, I don't think for one moment that Janet Briggs' contribution "Baby Steps", on page 8, meant to hurt any feelings but sadly that is what has happened and some of our readers, who have worked particularly hard with their own church over the last two and a half years, have felt hurt and undervalued. On closer inspection of the text, I can see why they might have felt that way. As one of Glasgow's members of the SUA Executive Committee for the last 5 years and in the interest of harmony within our wider church community, I hope it may help if I clarify the role of the SUA during the Covid19 pandemic and correct any false impressions of inaction on the part of the SUA which have arisen.

Let us all cast our mind back to what it was like in March 2020 when all of our churches were closed down and severe restrictions on meeting were in place. We were all extremely busy working out how to manage our lives and ensure the safety of our families. None of us had experienced a pandemic before. We didn't know how long it would last, how bad it would be. Some of us had never heard of Zoom, let alone being expected to set it up and operate it!

I can tell you that the SUA Executive took its role in looking after our churches very seriously. All SUA members were certainly highly involved in their own congregation in helping their church towards some degree of functioning, mostly with setting up Zoom for services or ensuring that the physical and mental wellbeing of the congregation was being monitored, that help was being given to members who required it and that some sense of community was being retained. Further, the SUA had no IT facilities itself and it was not until September 2020 that Executive Committee meetings could restart on Zoom, made possible by the sterling efforts of Rob Whiteman and Kyle McDonald of the Dundee Church.

Our instant concern was how best to help the churches. Giving them some money seemed the best way and it was proposed that they each be given a block grant of the same considerable size. Iain Brown and myself as your Glasgow representatives questioned whether that was a good plan and suggested help based on answering need as it arose. The current state of affairs in each of our churches was different and the level of need varied considerably. It took another meeting on 21-10-20 for us to collectively decide to offer assistance in the purchase of the actual IT equipment, the General Assembly were already offering training to those who required it and the churches beginning spontaneously to help each other, co-operating by sharing the required knowledge and skills. The SUA would also respond if pressing Covid-related financial difficulties were to arise.

Whilst the churches were struggling with the very trying circumstances they found themselves in, the SUA was quietly getting on with keeping the SUA in existence, carrying on its ongoing duties, such things as organising a Unitarian response to government consultations on upcoming legislation, being the official face of Unitarianism at public functions where these were being permitted, keeping in touch with Interfaith Scotland and other important bodies, up-dating the lists of Unitarian celebrants, financially contributing to other Unitarian efforts such as Unitarian College, organising and holding AGMs in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and a shared service for churches with the Rev Ant Howe in June of this year.

Of course, how effectively these actions and activities were conveyed to the congregations of our churches is open to question. Management committees would know what was being offered through their representatives but circumstances were so pressing I do not think it would have been considered a number one priority to pass the facts on to ordinary members of church congregations, difficult with no services taking place in person. Lack of knowledge could explain why some gained the impression that nothing much was being done. The whole business of communication needs further investigation by the SUA.

Nor was the SUA failing to consider the future. Before the pandemic the SUA had already been investigating how best to promote our views on religion. We knew that the generous donation of the Haughland Bequest was intended to support the growth of Unitarianism but we were short of ideas as to how to do that. We sought professional help from 2 marketing companies but on reading the details, by a majority decision the Committee decided not to go down that route. Some felt it was too expensive and was not guaranteed to work. My personal opinion for what it is worth was that members of the Executive were already overstretched, had been serving diligently for many years without a break; their lives were too busy and tiring to take on more work when the outcome was not certain.

A further suggestion that we might start costing and organising an enjoyable and enlivening weekend away for all interested church members after the pandemic had subsided met the same fate though it was suggested that the notion of a day away might be considered in the future.

At the AGM in September 2021, a majority of members agreed that it would be a good idea to review the Constitution to see whether anything in our rules was stifling interest in the SUA and resulting in a dearth of interested people coming forward to offer their services in running it. Perhaps more effective use of technology would reach a wider audience and result in more members being available to help with fresh ideas. A Constitutional research group was formed thereafter and will be reporting back in the autumn with some important changes in a new draft Constitution.

All in all, I think we can be proud of the achievements of our churches and of our SUA over the last two and a half years. It could so easily have gone the other way but here we are, all 4 of our churches functioning and the SUA looking to the future and already engaged in re-vamping the SUA web-site. I hope the SUA will constructively re-visit some of the ideas we have discussed before and decide it is now time to translate them into action. The suggestion of help from Lyanne Mitchell in the form of an action group I hope will be accepted. Let's work together, all valued and all determined to grow our Unitarian approach to matters religious, so precious to many of us.

Ruth Gregory  
Member of the SUA Executive Committee  
from Glasgow Unitarian Church



## Which Bible Version?

During one of our Wednesday meetings in August we shared our favourite, or memorable, stories from the Bible. These included the Good Samaritan, Jesus turning over the table of the money changers in the temple, the wisdom of Solomon, the unforgiving servant, and various stories about Moses: being found as an infant among the reeds, the burning bush, and the plagues in Egypt.

Which translation is best for exploring the rich variety of biblical narratives? The majesty and cultural legacy of the of the *King James*, or *Authorised Version*, “appointed to be read in the churches” in 1611, is beyond dispute. (‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’; ‘By the skin of his teeth’; ‘He doesn’t suffer fools gladly’; ‘It was a labour of love.’)

However, there are a number of good reasons why readers may choose a more modern version. Scholarship since the seventeenth century has made tremendous progress in determining the earliest retrievable forms of the biblical texts, utilising new manuscript finds, including the Chester Beatty Papyri for the New Testament, the Hebrew Dead Sea Scrolls for the Old Testament, and the impressive Codex Sinaiticus, held at the British Library, for both testaments in Greek. Study of the ancient Hebrew and Greek languages has yielded clearer renderings of many passages. Perhaps more urgently still, the English of the *King James*, in places, is no longer readily understood. Words such as ‘trow’, ‘bruit’, ‘emerod’, ‘durst’ and ‘collob’, to name a few, and phrases such as ‘fret not thyself in any wise to do evil’, are more liable to confuse and frustrate readers in the twenty first century, than to inspire.

An early twentieth century effort to render the entire Bible in modern English was made by Scottish scholar James Moffatt. (First published in 1926) Alienated from his position as minister in the Free Church of Scotland for his liberal scholarship, Moffatt went on to teach at Oxford, and later in New York, where he served on the committee of the *Revised Standard Version*. (Published in 1952) Striking features in the ‘Moffatt Bible’ include ‘barge’ in place of Noah’s ‘ark’; the rearrangement of many passages according to scholarly reconstructions of the text; and a Scottish inflection perceived in renderings such as ‘factor’ in Jesus’ parables. The modern language captured the imagination of readers in

its time – and the version was a favourite in the preaching of Martin Luther King Jr. – but is less often used today, nearly a century after its first publication.

When the *Revised Standard Version* was released in 1952 it was the result years of diligent labour of senior scholars utilising the latest developments, including incorporating readings from the newly discovered Scroll of Isaiah from the Dead Sea. A vocal minority criticised the replacement ‘virgin’ with ‘young woman’ in Isaiah 7:14, a text Christians traditionally interpret as referring prophetically to Mary the mother of Jesus. Under the stewardship of textual scholar Bruce Metzger, the *New Revised Standard Version* (1989) gained widespread acceptance, especially in academic institutions, for its reliability and accuracy. Metzger was especially gratified that this version of the Bible was approved for use by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox authorities: the first Bible version in English to gain such broad support since the Reformation.

Meanwhile other translation teams also sought to provide the Bible in modern language that could appeal to as broad a readership as possible. The *New English Bible* (1970, and the *Revised English Bible* in 1989), the result of a team of scholars from various denominations in the UK, provided a fresh translation, rather than a revision in the tradition of the *Authorised Version*. Biblical scholar FF Bruce praised the *New English Bible*



as, “attractive, and at times exciting in content”, whereas poet TS Eliot said the new version, “astonishes in its combination of the vulgar, the trivial and the pedantic.”

The most widely distributed Bible of recent decades has been the *New International Version*. (First published in 1978, and revised at various times since.) Popular among many evangelicals, it is less literal in its approach than its rivals in that tradition, the *New American Standard Bible* (1971) and, more recently, the *English Standard Version* (2001), adopting instead a ‘dynamic equivalence’ approach, that aims to reproduce the meaning of the original, without aiming for word for word translation. During discussion at the Unitarian Bible Group (that meets on Zoom on Mondays at 6.30pm, and which readers would be welcome to attend) a number of participants expressed a preference for the *New International Version* because its reader-friendly style lends itself well to use in services.



Space doesn’t permit us to go into detail about many more versions, although honourable mention should be made of the New Testament translation by the popular Glasgow communicator of the Christian gospel, William Barclay. (1968) Unitarians may also find useful the cultural contextual approach of the *The Original New Testament* by Hugh Schonfield (1985), a Jewish scholar who was minded to point out where the beliefs of the early Christians differed from later theological developments. The footnote to Acts 7:56, where Jesus appears at the right hand of God, states bluntly: “in the first century A.D. the Christians did not identify Jesus with God, or believe in a Trinity.”

It should also be noted that translations of individual books of the Bible have appeared that are worth reading as independent texts, often rich

with explanatory introductions and expansive footnotes. I used such a translation of *The Book of Job* by Raymond Scheindlin (1999) in a service for GUC last year, because its rendering of the ancient Hebrew poetry is vivid.

The past few years has witnessed the publication of couple striking new translations. Decades of work culminated in 2018, when scholar of Hebrew language and literature, Robert Alter, published his translation of the entire Hebrew Bible. This version pays careful attention to literary structure, and explains fascinating details concerning his choices, and disagreements, with other translations, in extensive footnotes. This resource was complemented by the arrival of new translation of the New Testament by the Orthodox theologian and scholar David Bentley Hart in the same year. Hart maintains that translators have often succumbed to the temptation of smoothing out the rough edges of the New Testament writings. His aim is to allow readers to appreciate the range of styles present in the various documents by reproducing these as far as possible in English. Hart renders the Beatitudes of Matthew chapter 5 thus:

*“How blissful the destitute, abject in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of the heavens. How blissful those who mourn, for they shall be aided; How blissful the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth; How blissful those who hunger and thirst for what is right, for they shall feast; How blissful the merciful, for they shall receive mercy; How blissful the pure in heart, for they shall see God; How blissful the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God; How blissful those who have been persecuted for the sake of what is right, for theirs is the Kingdom of the heavens; How blissful when they reproach you, and persecute you and falsely accuse you of every evil for my sake: Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in the heavens is great; for thus they persecuted the prophets before you.”*

Donald Jacobs



## Revisiting childhood reading

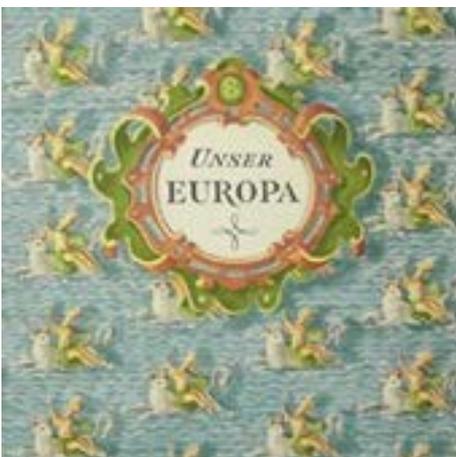
Recently I've been rereading books from childhood and it has been interesting to revisit them after the decades. This has made me realise how much the books I read in childhood, particularly the illustrations in them, shaped my outlook on the world. Among these books was a book called "Our Europe" which my mum had received on leaving school, and which I found on my gran's bookshelves.

Written in 1958, the book includes essays by the then director of the Louvre, members of the Académie Française, and other European organisations. The book covers the geography and culture of Europe, the history of art and architecture, music, philosophy and religion, and state formation. It emphasises commonalities and continuity in all these areas, and makes frequent passing references to Greek mythology and philosophy. Most illustrations are in colour, with some photographs, and drawings and maps drawn with charming detail.

Some of the content is completely out of step with current thinking, such as where at one point one writer asserts the superiority of the white race. The historic personalities pictured are all white and male, even though the text mentions some women writers and saints. In amongst all this, I came across one still very much valid sentiment in this book. It states that while an entrepreneur may think capital to be the most important factor in a business or the economy as a whole, entire countries and states must take a different view, namely that people are the most important factor.

The working lives of the intended readers, young adult Europeans in the post war regeneration years, are now in the past. What a poignant sentiment to come across sixty five years after the time of writing, with a cost of living crisis looming while large businesses continue to make large profits.

*Ruth Jacobs*



## Moving Forward - thoughts on the past, present and future of GUC

(Extract from the Service of *Margaret Paxton* delivered at GUC on 15th May)

### Myths, Monsters and Enlightenment

The monstrous Titans resulted from the union of Ouranus (Sky) and Gaia (Earth) at a time when the gods of Olympus, especially Zeus, were not yet in control of everything. Two of the Titans, Prometheus (Forethought) and Epimetheus (Afterthought) were friendly with Zeus. In the power struggle between the gods and Titans, the Titans lost and Zeus became ruler of gods and MEN. Prometheus had made men out of clay and Zeus breathed life into them. As long as the little clay people worshipped Zeus that was fine. But Prometheus had compassion for the poor men who were in awe of Zeus and had no will or knowledge of their own. Prometheus in the meantime had fallen foul of Zeus, and Zeus as a punishment took away his duty of guarding the heavenly fire. But Prometheus stole the fire back from Zeus and gave the gift of fire to mankind. But one thing was lacking: Woman. Zeus had a cunning plan. He made a woman and gave her and a golden box (some say it was a jar) to Prometheus's brother Epimetheus.



The box contained diseases, evils and death, and also hope, and as long as the box remained closed, humankind would live without suffering. Epimetheus (Afterthought) without thinking gave the box to Pandora. Pandora, being curious opened it and out flew the contents, except hope, and with hope remaining in the box men and women's sufferings and anxieties were reduced. The morale of the story being, it is better to be realistic and face up to situations, than have false expectations, which hope, if let out of the box, would cause! Fire in the myth is the symbol of reason, technology and science. Having fire meant that humankind could make what was useful and needed, and did not worship Zeus to the same extent as before. But fire causes pain if not used well. In the ancient myth we may reasonably say there was a very early age of enlightenment.

Mary Shelley, who lived during the more familiar Age of Enlightenment in the 17th-18th century, wrote a novel with a sub-title *The Modern Prometheus*. Mary was a young woman of nineteen when she wrote the novel, but she had judged well the dangers and benefits of science and technology. Her novel *Frankenstein* is about the scientist Victor Frankenstein, who plays god by creating another sentient being not quite human, which he calls the Monster. In this novel, Forethought and Afterthought together, lead to tragedy. The creature kills itself, and Victor, its creator, dies also.

### Becoming a beloved Community

Let's come back to reality now and another story we all know. This story is based on facts. In 2008 Glasgow Unitarian Church found itself without a minister. The minister had been writing a book and finished what he had to write. The book was called *Towards Beloved Community* and was published. For whatever reason the minister decided to move on. The Management Committee along with the congregation had to find a way forward. The suggestion that three members should act as leaders was rejected by the congregation. A group of four formed a Ministry Leadership Team. This was not to be a governing group, but would have close association with the Ministry Sub-committee and the Management Committee. As I recall, this arrangement was to be an experiment for two years, and petered out.

The democratically elected Management Committee led the church. Six worship leaders regularly took services. During this time the pastoral care group of six volunteers was formed, taking on the remit of the minister's pastoral duties. The minutes of the AGM of March 2013 record that one of the members of the church drew attention to the pastoral care report, adding that members of the pastoral care team are not the only members carrying out pastoral caring within the congregation. A very salient point to have made! The earliest report from the pastoral team to the Ministry Sub-committee I could access was dated 12 July 2012. That report shows that members of the church were using the technology of email to communicate. Zoom was yet to come. Members from Glasgow attended two days of pastoral care training at Dundee church. Safeguarding became an issue at this time too. GUC's worship room was moved from the top floor to where we are now, and the basement was transformed into the social room. The new worship room was photographed and added to the website, again making the most of technology. The church was granted SCIO status on 18 December 2012, as printed on the front cover of *News & Views* each month. Glasgow Unitarian Church (our congregation) was moving forward during these early years of conducting business without a minister's guidance. The GUC Handbook was compiled in 2013, and a little later the Standing Orders. We were growing as a church in management and governance. Members responded to the call for Celebrants. Some members offered transport to members who had difficulty reaching the church. Membership

has hardly varied from the 40 mark up to this day. But the one big difference was within the congregation. We moved forward, closer to a beloved community. When we look back it is interesting to see how the organism of our Glasgow Unitarian Church has been moving forward. Those who make the history don't really realise that they are of historical interest. To have foresight is hit and miss. Decisions on behalf of and for the good of others might at times appear to have been made as afterthoughts. Forward planning is not enough in itself. The unexpected does happen. The pandemic for instance. In the story of Prometheus and in the novel Frankenstein both protagonists did not avoid an unforeseen outcome. The fire of intelligence without compassion can cause unexpected trouble. We have to look out.

### A new Age of Enlightenment

Here is something else familiar to us. On 15 March 2020 Glasgow Unitarian Church closed its doors for worship. The pandemic raged over the world. It caused so many problems. As for our congregation, only now are we finding our ways to get along in this new normal way of living, again making use of the technology of Zoom. Fortunately we had an expert in the congregation who knew how to deal with that. The Management/Trustees Committee has had to decide what to do for the congregational Sunday worship, and how to conduct other meetings and church business. The Pastoral team carried out its caring (and still does) by contacting members and friends, seeing them virtually on Zoom as a bonus, but mainly through telephoning, emailing and sending friendly cards and flowers of empathy, and on the rare occasion making sure no-one was short of food. Caring for the congregation in past times was primarily the responsibility of the minister. But let's not forget that the Women's League, and men were not excluded from this, was actively involved too. Recently on one of the Zoom sessions, a member of the Edinburgh church suggested that the four Scottish churches might restart the Women's League as an online group. As the name says the work of the pastoral team is to show caring and offer friendship to members and friends of the congregation. This is our beloved community, our church family.

We try to do what a trained Minister of religion would do. Most of the original six members established in 2012 are still part of the pastoral team. Originally each carer had a list of members to be responsible for but then it was agreed to dispense with that list, and whoever it was felt needed contact then someone in the team would get in touch with that person. This meant that occasionally members were contacted by more than one pastoral carer. Feedback was appreciated, even when a little negative, but in general members were and are pleased to have interest shown in their well-being. Monthly meetings of the team continue to be held. The team has the support of the ministry sub-committee, and advice especially in safeguarding matters. As a team we know each other much better, than we did before the pandemic, and feel that our church community feels closer and happier than in the past. This church is moving forward. It seems to me we are already living through another Age of Enlightenment, but this time everything on earth is being affected. Already old familiar ways are passing and changing. Time and again we are told: BUT this is the new normal. This is where all the churches could be having greater input.

Compassion and love will never cease to be needed by human beings which is the message of all religions. Already it seems the race is to the strong, and there is not enough caring from the caring professions, who do their best but are under such strain because of lack of funding. Science and Technology and Artificial Intelligence are far ahead of what we, except for the experts, understand. Lord Rees, the Astronomer Royal, made headlines in The Times (14 June 2022) with: Bad Luck ET, You've Been Replaced by a Robot. In one of his online lectures he mentioned the post-human era and foretold that artificial intelligence would gain dominance by 2050. Darwinian evolution would be superseded faster by technological evolution. From what I have heard on the news recently the day is not that far off when robots will be clothed in this newly developed skin that is sensitive to touch. Robots may even share a human brain it is predicted, which will be downloaded into the artificial brain. Will robots eventually and soon be indistinguishable from human males and females? Is that the Enlightenment we human people want? We cannot rein in progress, and so more than ever we need to foster the spirituality that is breathed into us from birth, so that we save and do not destroy ourselves and everything else with our cleverness. That is good common sense and not Hope.

Shakespeare wrote these words (before gender correctness): What a piece of work is a man. How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving, how express and admirable. In action how like an Angel, in apprehension how like a god, the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals. (Hamlet Act 1, Scene 2)

What is there to be learned from the ancient Greek myth? My understanding is: Firstly we are not gods. There is something greater than we are collectively, and so it is good to keep humble in our thinking and inventions. Secondly we do enjoy the services of science and have a marvellous curiosity, but it is the humanities, literature, art, and music that keep us enlightened. Thirdly, imagination and creativity give us more of a positive expectation than hope itself ever could for the future, and greater faith in human beings, and through that a carefulness of everything in the universe.

The Worry Jar is a technique for people, especially children, who suffer from worry and anxiety. It can help folk of any age to identify, name and release their worries.

The idea behind the Worry Jar is simple:

1. Write your worries down on little slips of paper and put them into a jar or container.
2. Come back whenever you think about it [not 10 minutes later; I'm talking more like a month or something] and look through your worries again. Chances are, there will be several slip of paper that have come and passed, and you are still alive, still healthy, and your worries never amounted to anything.
3. So then you can rip them up and throw them away!
4. Repeat with new worries.

This worked for me on so many things over the years; There are still pieces of paper in my worry jar, and I'm curious to see what I can rip up when I check it next.

There is something therapeutic about writing your worries down and visually confirming them. Writing them down doesn't make them go away necessarily, but it seems like by writing them down, you take them from your mind and heart and put them on the paper, where they seem to haunt/taunt you less.

At least that's how it works for me. I will probably have my worry jar in use until I'm 105.

Go ahead and give it a try if you are prone to excessive worrying like me.

Even if you are a casual worrier, it can help to ease the stress in your heart and mind about whatever is causing you to worry.

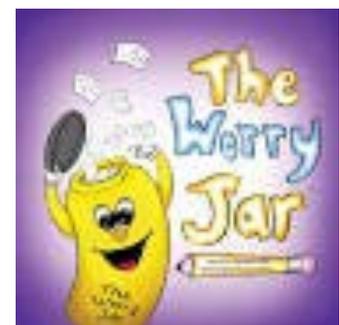
*Laura Radniecki*

# The WORRY JAR

for worry & anxiety



*There are at least two children's books about this technique:-*



*Contributed by Lyanne Mitchell*

## Early/false autumn

Various reports have noted deciduous trees losing their leaves early this year, especially in England, presumed to be a result of the record breaking heat this summer. A *Guardian* opinion piece this week mused on the meaning of early autumn in the context of our changing climate.

“There is, therefore, something deeply unsettling about such a graphic alteration of familiar rhythms. Droughts are not unknown in Britain, of course, and too many parts of the world are wearily familiar with far more severe versions. But increasingly they are occurring in the context of a climate emergency, and unprecedented heat. And the beauty of a false autumn, specifically, has an emotional effect, a deep uncanniness, something mysteriously suggestive of evil or danger; in that idea of evil is also an assertion of moral failure.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/aug/28/the-guardian-view-on-this-false-autumn-an-uncanny-beauty>

Scientists studying the pattern of autumnal leaf fall say that further research is needed to determine whether spectacular autumnal displays



will be a causality of climate change, noting that tourism will be affected in regions famous for their colourful forest landscapes.

“It’s possible that species could adapt to these changes, but the effects of climate change could be occurring too quickly for species to keep up. As temperatures rise and the timing of leaf senescence shifts, cascading effects could be felt by the tourism industry. Many places, such as New England, [And Glen Affric, and Perthshire in Scotland? — D.J.] rely on the autumn colours to bring in visitors.”

<https://daily.jstor.org/will-we-lose-fall-foliage-to-climate-change/>

*Donald Jacobs*

### **GLASGOW UNITARIAN CHURCH**

**THE PASTORAL CARE TEAM AND THE SOCIAL SUB-COMMITTEE INVITE YOU TO  
AFTERNOON TEA**

**ON SUNDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2022  
FROM 12.30PM UNTIL 4.00 OR 4.30PM**

YOU MAY VERY WELL HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONTACTED ABOUT THIS HAPPY OCCASION. THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN VERY GOOD, THE PLANNING IS WELL IN HAND AND WE WILL SOON BE ALL SET FOR AN AFTERNOON OF FRIENDSHIP AND GOODWILL AS A CHURCH COMMUNITY. SOME HAVE NEEDED A LITTLE MORE TIME TO SEE HOW THIS FITS IN WITH THEIR CALENDAR---IF YOU ARE ONE OF THESE FOLK, PLEASE LET MARGARET OR MYSELF KNOW BEFORE SUNDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER SO THAT WE HAVE FINAL NUMBERS FOR SEATING AND CATERING PURPOSES.

WE WOULD LIKE THIS TO BE AN OLD-FASHIONED TEA-PARTY WITH PRETTY CHINA CUPS, SAUCERS AND PLATES. UNFORTUNATELY, THE CHURCH DOESN'T HAVE ANY BUT WE HOPE THAT SOME OF YOU WILL FEEL THAT YOU CAN LEND THOSE YOU MAY HAVE. WE RECKON WE WILL NEED AROUND 40! IF YOU CAN OBLIGE THAT WILL BE LOVELY BUT AGAIN PLEASE LET US KNOW IN ADVANCE. ANYONE GOT CAKE-STANDS?

OUR CHURCH PLANS TO CELEBRATE THAT WE HAVE SURVIVED COVID 19 AS A COMMUNITY, STILL ABLE TO FUNCTION. WHAT BETTER WAY THAN TO BE ABLE TO GIVE SOMETHING TO THOSE FOR WHOM CALAMITY HAS STRUCK? THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO GIVE A DONATION AND AFTER EXPENSES HAVE BEEN MET, THE REST WILL GO TO AFGHANISTAN OR PAKISTAN.

RUTH GREGORY--SOCIAL CONVENER

CONTACT DETAILS: MARGARET PAXTON [0141 339 6917](tel:01413396917)

RUTH GREGORY [01294 822544](tel:01294822544)

## PERSONNEL

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