

the unitarians



**General Assembly of Unitarian
and Free Christian Churches**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION 2021

Candidates' biographical details
and election statements



Dear Voter

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

The election of the Executive Committee (EC) of the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (GA) is very important.

Enclosed with this letter are:

- Your ballot paper
- Candidates' statements
- A pre-paid envelope

Our agreed procedure requires that candidates provide biographical details and a statement. Submissions by the candidates have not been modified in any way. Therefore, each candidate bears full liability for the contents of his or her submission. Publication and distribution does not imply confirmation of any of the information contained in these details or statements.

The members of the Executive Committee are the trustees of the General Assembly, which is a registered charity (CC Number 250788), and have to fulfill legal responsibilities as well as overseeing its stewardship of resources. The Committee consists of eight members plus the Treasurer who is appointed at the Annual Meeting. The eight members are directly elected by members of congregations who have made a quota payment in the last financial year and full, honorary and associate members of the GA.

The EC determines the overall direction and development of the GA in line with the recommendations and policies adopted at the Annual Meetings. It is responsible for making good use of the GA's assets and for safeguarding and managing them. It supports the Chief Officer without becoming involved in operational matters and reviews his/her performance. Each member takes on responsibility for liaison with one or more district associations as an EC link person. Members may be asked to be involved in other GA activities or on groups or committees. Members are also Trustees of the Nightingale Centre (CC Number 242256) and appoint a management committee under agreed delegation arrangements but retain ultimate responsibility.

This year four positions are to be filled. The total number of votes to be cast by each voting member will therefore be four.

Please take a few minutes to read the enclosed election material, then fill in the ballot paper and return it in the pre-paid envelope to reach the Independent Scrutineer, Popularis Ltd, Nutsey Lane, Totton, Southampton, SO40 3RL to arrive by noon 23 March 2021.

Electoral Panel

Essex Hall



John Bates

Biographical Information

Unitarian association

Member at Cambridge Unitarian church from 1991 then Unity Church Islington from 2008 and of New Unity CIO since its formation in 2015.

Relevant experience within the Unitarian Community

Chair of Unity church Islington from 2012.

Led the merger of Unity Church Islington and Newington Green Unitarian Church in 2014/15 to form New Unity CIO.

Chair of New Unity CIO since 2015.

Led successful bid for £2.1m refurbishment and interpretation grant for Newington Green Unitarian Church from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2017. Subsequently chaired the project management team and completed the capital project within budget in 2020.

Current main occupation

Adjunct Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship at London Business School. (Retired)

Other relevant information

BSc Nottingham University 1971

Sales Manager Baird & Tatlock (Zambia) 1972-77

MBA – Harvard Business School 1979

Marketing Manager – Courtaulds 1979-83

Lecturer at HBS a/y 1983

London Business School faculty, from 1984

Founder and CEO Datapaq Ltd 1984 – 1992

Founder and Managing Director of Sussex Place Ventures 1999 – 2005

Election Statement

I wish to serve on the EC because I want to help more people find the Unitarian way of celebrating and reverencing life, love and community. As a movement, I feel we should strive to be greater than the sum of our parts, retaining all the vigour of our diversity and our localised autonomy, whilst working together towards a common vision of growth.

I understand the legal responsibility of charity trustees. I'm very experienced in strategic planning and implementation – whether founding and running my own technology businesses, teaching senior executives or advising young businesses. In 2020 I ran a strategy workshop for fourteen Unitarian Congregations. I also have 35 years experience of financial management.

I have very varied experience as a non-executive Director, supporting senior management without becoming embroiled in operational matters. As Chair at New Unity, I worked with and through our own Executive Committee to modernise the governance and make the physical and financial assets work harder for us in pursuing our mission of love and justice.

I believe that Unitarianism has so much to offer the modern world. I would be proud to help the movement grow and thrive today and prepare it for a relevant future.



Rev Celia Cartwright

Biographical Information

Unitarian association

66 years

Youth member of Motram Chapel,
Cheshire Union: 4 yrs

Youth member of Unity Chapel, Sheffield
District: 2.5 yrs

Youth member of Kilburn Church, London
District: 3 yrs

Teen member of Coventry Church &
Warwick Church, Midland District: 2.5 yrs
(occasional worshipper in various): 17 yrs

Adult member of Torquay Church, Western
Union: 10 yrs

Lay leader then Lay Pastor, Torquay,
Sidmouth, Exeter: 2 yrs

Unitarian College Manchester – Student: 3 yrs
Padiham, Locum Minister: 5 yrs

Rochdale Church Minister: 8 yrs

Kendal Chapel Minister: 10 yrs

Retired Minister on the Roll: 5 yrs

Relevant experience within the Unitarian Community

Member of Western Union Committee

Member of Unitarian Association of Lay
Leaders: 8 yrs

President for 3 years

Member of the Ministerial Fellowship

President for 1 year

Member of Unitarian Women's League: 23 yrs
District President 3 years

National President 1 year

Lay Preacher/Lay Pastor/Minister: 34 yrs

President of the General Assembly of U &
FCC: 1 yr (2 yrs counting the Covid yr)

Worship Studies Course Tutor: over 8 years

Unitarian Peace Fellowship treasurer: 4 yrs

Current main occupation

Unitarian Minister on the Roll (Retired).

Other relevant information

Management experience and Admin
experience – work prior to ministry
training and ministry.

Served as Chair of the South Lakes
Dementia Society

Election Statement

I have over 65 years experience within the Unitarian and Free Christian Movement; as a congregant, spiritual searcher, Lay Pastor and Minister. I was a member of 6 congregations and lay pastor & minister to 6 congregations all in England. This experience taught me and enabled me to see this many faceted denomination from a wide variety of perspectives.

I believe our Movement has a vital part to play in the wider world which needs a free and liberal faith group. I have watched our Movement, like many others, struggle somewhat through the latter part of the 20th and into the 21st Century, as congregations dwindled, but during the last year of Covid restrictions we have risen ably to the challenge and proved we are competent at moving into the technological future, bringing our valuable contribution to a world that is often polarised.

Throughout my life Unitarian faith has guided me, the Movement has supported and enabled me. As a lay preacher, lay pastor and minister, I have been honoured to serve my congregations. I have had the honour to serve as the GA national President, and I hope to continue to serve as part of the Executive Committee.



Simon Hall

Biographical Information

Unitarian association

Leicester Unitarians (Great Meeting Chapel) – since December 2012

Northampton Unitarians – 4 years included within the same period as above (bi-congregational!!)

Relevant experience within the Unitarian Community

Vestry Member / Trustee (Leicester) 2015-present

Committee Member / Trustee (Northampton) 2014-2018

MUA (District) – General Member / Congregational Representative 2013-18

EMU (District) – General Member / Congregational Representative 2018-present

UALM – General Member 2016-present

Lay Service Leader – MUA (various congregations) 2016-2018

Lay Worship Leader (assisting Minister) – Leicester 2020-present

General Assembly (annual meetings) – delegate 3 times

Hucklow Summer School – residential attendee twice

FUSE (annual conference) – attendee 3 times

Art of Hosting (Woodbrooke Quaker centre) – residential attendee February 2020

Current main occupation

Customer Accounts / Project Management – IT services/products (Social Care/NHS orgs) p/t

Customer Delivery Driver – Retail (Waitrose) p/t

Other relevant information

Examples to demonstrate my dedication to a philosophy of service to others:-

Social Work (visiting the elderly) whilst at secondary school

Youth Mayor of Great Yarmouth

Team Member – Talking Newspaper (GY)

Past President – Rotary Club of Dulwich & Peckham

RBA (Union) Representative – WH Smith

Initiator – Maidwell Village Support Group (Covid-19)

Election Statement

Born in Norwich to a liberal (Norfolk) Anglican priest and a (Wiltshire) PE teacher mother I was afforded an insightful and diverse upbringing, which very much focussed on service to others as an intrinsic element of our family spirit. Educated at Great Yarmouth Grammar School I departed education for an initial career in retail at eighteen. Working first for Martin the Newsagent and subsequently WH Smith, I enjoyed the world of interaction with others and the sense of community that was engendered in the shops whilst working collaboratively with my staff (I was the youngest *Instructor Branch Manager* in East Anglia, training new recruits). Since then I have worked in Social Care IT – project/account management and, whilst living in London, met my partner (David Kent) whom I subsequently had the honour of marrying in 2018 at Great Meeting chapel, Leicester – celebrating 25 years together! Having suffered great personal loss through the deaths of both my younger brother and sister in recent years, I feel uniquely placed to offer a wealth of essential life-skills and relevant experience to the role. Spiritually, I continue to develop and to nurture that through inspiration by sharing and in empathy with fellow souls and seekers.



Jenny Jacobs

Biographical Information

Unitarian association

4 years

Relevant experience within the Unitarian Community

Since March 2017 I have been on the Committee at York Unitarians, and have been Secretary since September 2020.

Member of Penal and Social Affairs Panel for several years; wrote two Issues Papers, on Housing (2018) and Food (2020).

Current main occupation

Valuer Member, First-Tier Tribunal (Property Chamber)

Other relevant information

Trustee of the Progressive Christianity Network, 2016 to date.

Election Statement

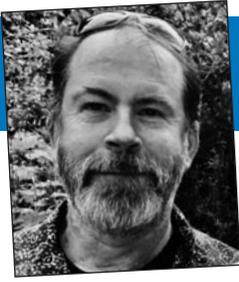
My first Unitarian service, in 2014, felt like coming home. Yet only shortly before that, I had no idea that Unitarians even existed. Coming from outside the movement, Unitarianism seemed like the world's best-kept secret.

I want to serve on EC in order to reveal that secret to as many people as possible. We are not a proselytising faith, but to be sustainable, we need new members – and people out there need us, our wonderful offer of inclusive, questioning, rational faith plus our deep commitment to social justice. I'm convinced that Unitarianism is what many people are looking for – but can't find.

Although newish to Unitarianism, I have plunged right in. I've been a member of the Penal and Social Affairs Panel for several years, during which time I've written Issues Papers on Housing (2018) and Food (2020), have contributed to *The Inquirer* on several occasions and am an occasional worship leader at York.

I love and value Unitarianism. I just wish I'd found it sooner. And that other people could find it too.

So vote for me if you want to harness the enthusiasm and eloquence of someone ready to work hard to share Unitarianism with the world.



Rev Jo James

Biographical Information

Unitarian association

16 years.

Relevant experience within the Unitarian Community

Member Effra Road Brixton 2005

Member LDPA council 2011

Student Pastor Bridport 2012

Student Pastor Hinkley 2013

Minister Mill Hill Leeds 2014 –

Election Statement

In my ministry (now into its seventh year) I've been successful in innovating change in culture and direction through creative leadership, management, community building and publicity outreach.

In this context I've been very closely involved with dynamic phases of change-resistance into a period of some uncertainty, and on towards stability and sustainable growth.

Throughout this period I've been a close observer of the denominational scene, contributing to the Theology Conferences, the denominational conversation on social media and contributing to District activity. I've led worship throughout the North of England and in Wales, and delivered lay leadership training modules and ministry presentation training for the new Unitarian College.

I have developed a contextual understanding of fiscal responsibility and investment strategy as I've helped to move my chapel's financial portfolio towards an ethical platform, and contributed to a thorough overview of congregational polity and governance.

I've been engaged as a co-opted member of the EC in the past year, and am aware of the great opportunities as well as great challenges currently facing our faith tradition. I ask you for the opportunity to contribute positively to a new spirit emerging through the EC and the movement.

What are the requirements for EC membership?

The following information was agreed by the Electoral Panel, and provided in the guidance for nominations which was sent to all candidates.

Candidates must be Full, Honorary or Associate Members of the GA or a quota paying member of a constituent congregation. They should not be a student in training for the Unitarian ministry, a close family member of anyone employed by the GA, or connected professionally with Popularis.

Candidates should:

- Demonstrate 3 years' active commitment to the Unitarian community
- Be in sympathy with the Objects of the General Assembly
- Be eligible to stand in accordance with legal requirements

Essential Requirements

(1) Experience in one or more of the following:

- An officer or member of a congregational/district governing body.
- An officer or member of a committee of an affiliated body.
- An officer or member of a charity trustee body or similar e.g. voluntary organisations such as a sports club or parent teacher association.
- As a Minister, Lay Pastor or Lay Person in Charge of a Unitarian congregation

(2) Good understanding of the Unitarian community

(3) Confidentiality

Desirable attributes include any or all of the following:

- Leadership
- Strategy development
- Communication skills
- Decision making
- Representation
- Financial awareness
- Team working



Environmental Statement: This booklet is printed on fully recyclable material made from elemental chlorine-free pulps sourced from sustainable forests.

Published by Popularis Ltd