



Open Mind

The Bulletin of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel

February 2014

*"Winter, a lingering season,
is a time to gather golden moments,
embark upon a sentimental journey,
and enjoy every idle hour."
- John Boswell*



February Services

Sunday 2 February (11.00am)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching

*'Glowing Coals: Spirit, Service, and Celebration'
or 'What's a Chapel For Anyway?'*

You might call them 'glowing coals' that reside at the heart of spiritual community. Three words that sum up what our Chapel stands for: Spirit, Service, and Celebration. All are welcome here! Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 2 February (7.00pm)

*'Celebration of Imbolc'
(also known as Candlemas)*

This is one of the eight Celtic holy days of the year. It is dedicated to the Goddess Brigid and celebrates mid-winter with fire, water and ritual. Come and celebrate Imbolc with music, song, poetry, and meditative silence. Led by members of our 'Wheel of the Year' Group.

Sunday 9 February (11.00 & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching
'The Privilege of Service'

It doesn't matter what one's formal faith tradition or creed might be. One universal consequence of a faith-filled attitude towards life is the call to come out of ourselves and join however one can, in whatever way one can, in the honest work of redeeming a wounded and weary world. Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 16 February (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching

*'Unitarian Heroes: Henry David Thoreau
on Walden Pond'*

When he moved into his cabin on Walden Pond in 1845, Thoreau wrote his immortal apologia for retreating into the sanctuary of natural surroundings far from the madding crowd: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

When he came out from Walden two years later in 1847, he wrote: "I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spend any more time for that one." - Come join us for worship today, and learn more about one of our Unitarian heroes.

Sunday 23 February (11.00am)

Guest Preacher Alan Ruston
'Trust What Is?'

Alan Ruston became a Unitarian at Newington Green in 1960 and has been active ever since. GA President in 2002-2003, he has held posts associated with most aspects of the Unitarian movement, which he fitted in with being a career civil servant. He is a well known writer and speaker within British Unitarianism.

Sunday 23 February (7.00pm)

We will be drawing on Alan Ruston's sermon from the morning, reflecting and sharing our thoughts. Led by Margaret Perry.

The Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel in the heart of Hampstead



Unitarianism is spirituality without dogma and welcomes people of all religious faiths as well as those who are humanistic. Unitarians cherish and live by the values of love, compassion, a free mind, service to others, human dignity, and other similar values. It encourages each person to deepen their relationship with God, yet allows each person to understand God in their own unique way.

The Chapel holds two services on Sundays, at 11.00am and 7.00pm

The morning service is more family-oriented, including activities for children led by professionally trained leaders, and a Children's Chapel is offered for children of all ages. The evening service is more intimate for those who prefer a more meditative tone.

Visitors and guests are always welcome!

The Chapel also offers a rich programme of social activities, covering a wide range of interests such as literature and poetry, Tai Chi, choir singing, monthly lectures, and a variety of monthly events for all age groups.

The Chapel is licensed for marriages, civil partnerships and other ceremonies.

For more information, visit our website at www.rosslynhillchapel.com

Publisher's Statement:

"Open Mind" is a tool of outreach for Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel. The views expressed in this publication reflect the spirit and substance of Unitarian values, as well as matters of concern to Unitarians, but are not necessarily shared by all members

Submitting copy:

Unsolicited copy is welcomed and should be emailed to: RHUCbulletin@yahoo.com. All submissions may be edited for content and length (200 words) at the discretion of the Communications Team, who also reserves the right to reject unsuitable material.

Deadline for submitting items for the **March** issue of 'Open Mind' is **Wednesday 19 February 2014**.

From the Editor

'February - the first month of Spring?', asks Ark Redwood in his book 'The Art of Mindful Gardening'. He answers his question with these words, 'February always used to be considered a month associated with wintertime, and I suppose to a lot of people it still is. However, with the climate chaos associated with the phenomenon of global warming, it feels more and more like the first month of spring'.

The beginning of the month is Candlemas - the Celtic fire festival of Imbolc - which heralds the coming of spring and the change from dark to light. It marks the return of the sun, and the first stirrings of germination in the Earth begin.

By Imbolc the days are noticeably longer and signs that winter is loosing its grip can be seen. The first shoots are pushing through the soil and snowdrops, the 'Maids of February' are gracing gardens and woodlands. Imbolc is a celebration of light and the renewal of the earth - life is beginning to stir again. It is a time to sow seeds for new projects and renew our commitments to the principles we hold dear.

What's on offer at Rosslyn Hill Chapel?

On the first Sunday, our minister will focus on 'Spirit, Service and Celebration' in the morning. In the evening, the 'Wheel of the Year' group invite us to join the celebration of Imbolc with music, song, poetry, and meditative silence. (p.1).

We are offered opportunities to participate in new projects - 'Questing Groups' (p.5) and 'Stitch & Stories' group (p.4). Then there are possibilities to renew our commitments to the principles we hold dear by offering our 'helping hands' and volunteering to be stewards (p.7), and/or by speaking about our 'values in action' (p.4). Last but not least, on Sunday 23 February, we can come along to the morning service and support our guest preacher Alan Ruston, and then join the monthly Pot Luck Lunch. - Just a few suggestions.
Ingrid Tavkar

*Stand by this faith.
Work for it and sacrifice for it.
There is nothing in all the world
so important
as to be loyal to this faith
which has placed before us
the loftiest ideals.*

Olympia Brown





PO'Nderings

From our Minister
Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

Anne LaMott has a wonderful piece in her book, 'Travelling Mercies', about why she brings her young son to church every week despite his protests that he would much rather be somewhere else on Sunday morning.

'First of all, I outweigh him,' she writes. 'But the main reason is that I want to give him what I found in the world, which is to say a path and a little light to see by. Most of the people I know who have what I want - which is to say purpose, heart, balance, gratitude, joy - are people with a deep sense of spirit. They are people in community, who pray or practise their faith. They are Buddhists, Jews, Christians (Unitarians) - people banding together to work on themselves and for human rights. They follow a brighter light than the glimmer of their own candle; they are part of something beautiful.....'

When I was at the end of my rope, the people in my church tied a knot in it for me and helped me hold on. The church became my home in the old meaning of home - that it's where, when you show up, they have to let you in. They let me in. They even said you come back now...!

(Anne LaMott, Travelling Mercies, Pantheon Books, New York. 1999. p.100)

See you in Chapel... ...po'n

Call to Worship

*Love is the doctrine of this church,
The quest of truth is its sacrament,
And service is its prayer.
To dwell together in peace,
To seek knowledge in freedom,
To serve humanity in harmony with the earth,
Thus do we covenant together.*



Chapel Activities



Weekly Activities

Children's Programme meets every Sunday at the 11.00am service. New children of all ages are always welcome. Infants are welcome in the creche.

Chapel Choir rehearses each Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Chapel. New voices are always welcomed into the choir. No audition necessary.

A **Tai Chi class** is held each Wednesday at 5.45pm in the Chapel.

Monthly Activities and Meetings

CHAPEL POETRY GROUP - If you like to read and /or write poetry, the group meets on **Tuesday 4 February at 7.30pm** in Basement Cottage 3. For more information contact George Appleby (Tel: 020 7424 9733, email: gappleby@talktalk.net)

THE CHAPEL MANAGEMENT BOARD meets on **Thursday 13 February at 7.00pm** in the Cottage basement science room at the Chapel. Members of the Chapel are welcome to attend but please contact, as a courtesy, Kerry Reid (Chair), in advance.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE meets on **Tuesday 11 February at 7.30pm**

CHAPEL BOOK GROUP - will meet on **Thursday 20 February 2014 at 7.30pm** to discuss 'Master Georgie' by Beryl Bainbridge. We will meet as usual at The Magdala at 2a South Hill Park, Hampstead. For further information, please contact Bill Ellington at ellingtonbill@aol.com

POT LUCK LUNCH - The next 'Pot Luck Lunch' will be on **Sunday 23 February** in the side aisle at 12.30pm (after the morning service). This is an informal, friendly occasions - all are welcome and the request is to bring some food to share, maybe homemade or cheese/fruit/salad. We look forward to seeing you there. **Margaret Perry**

OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY

CHAPEL COLD WEATHER SHELTER ENDS ITS 6TH MOVING AND ENJOYABLE SEASON



More than 40 homeless guests, who would otherwise have had nowhere to sleep, were able to join us on Friday nights in the Chapel hall, thanks to the congregation's overwhelmingly generous response to our 10-week involvement in Camden's Cold Weather Shelter this winter. 60 chapel volunteers and 11 friends cooked, made everyone welcome, served and shared food, played music and sang, stayed overnight, cooked fabulous breakfasts, and cleared up. Some evenings we were in danger of outnumbering the guests.

Sadly, many of the guests had to come back week after week until C4WS (Camden Churches Community Cold Weather Shelter) were able to find them somewhere permanent to be, which means that we must have hosted more than 120 overnight stays. The guests got to know us, and each other.

Every week we heard about the desperate circumstances in which our guests found themselves, and also shared the joy when C4WS found a permanent home, or helped with paperwork, or appealed to a housing authority on a guest's behalf, or helped to find a job.

On the final day of our we celebrated the move into a permanent room of a 20-year old woman from Eritrea who had been with us for nine weeks; since then, two of our stalwarts are set to move into accommodation close to one another, having become friends at the Shelter.

One person said it was the best volunteering experience ever. Several said it was the best food! A huge thank-you to everyone who contributed in so many ways to this truly life-changing project; it is wonderful to know that you are lining up to be involved this coming winter! Thank you so much.

Claire Julian
Shelter Co-ordinator for Social Action Committee



Values in Action

The Social Action Committee is delighted to invite anyone who is passionate about a cause or working, volunteering or campaigning for change to tell chapel friends about it: Reverend Patrick has offered a 3-minute slot for anyone who wishes to share news of **VALUES IN ACTION** during morning service on the **FIRST** Sunday in the month.

If you would like to take part, please send details of your topic to Social Action Committee member, Claire Julian [claire.marley@mac.com] so that these brief contributions can be co-ordinated.

Thank you. **Claire Julian** - On behalf of Social Action Committee.

Stitch & Stories



Last December, I talked about the dormant 'Stitch & Stories' group which used to meet twice a months to knit and crochet for various charity projects, and to share personal stories. One of the projects I continue to support is 'Knit for peace' (website: www.knitforpeace.org.uk) and one of their slogans is: 'Here at Knit for Peace we believe that knitting is good for people in all sorts of ways. As well as being fun and therapeutic, knitting brings people together and gives us a way of helping others in need'.

My hope is to resurrect the 'Stitch & Stories' group and create an opportunity for those interested to use their time and talents to create simple treasures for others in need. The group is open to experienced knitters, as well as those who would like to learn to knit or crochet. Everyone is welcome.

So here are some dates – 2nd Thursday (1.00-3.00pm) and 4th Thursday (7.00-9.00pm) of every months - starting on Thursday 13 February (1.00-3.00pm).

Ingrid Tavkar (Tel: 020 8455 0162;
email: ngridtavkar@gmail.com)

OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY

Questing Groups III



An Adult Spiritual Education Class for adults. Led by our Minister Rev Patrick O'Neill

Meeting on alternate Thursday evenings - beginning Thursday 6 February through to Thursday 1 May (7.00-8.30pm) in the Chapel.
Free and open to all, call the Chapel office to pre-register! 020-7433-3267

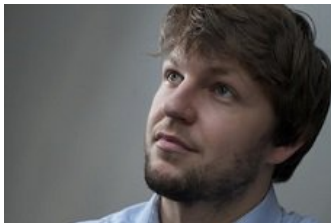
Mark the dates: 6 & 20 Feb; 6 & 20 March; 3 & 17 April; and 1 May

Unitarians view the human spirit as a pilgrim spirit, a questing spirit in search of a way to live that is authentic and true to itself, called to some serious engagement with the world.

'Questing Groups' is a programme designed around small groups of four or five people exploring questions of meaning, value, and purpose. This time around, our sessions will focus on what we are calling 'Gifts of the Spirit', what some might call virtues or products of a well-developed spiritual life. In each session participants are invited to reflect on a short theme piece introducing a 'focus question', e.g. "What gives you hope?" "What is Integrity?" "What brings you peace?"

The aim is not to debate these questions, but rather to share from our personal experience what we understand, what we intuit, what we believe, and to discover what we can learn from each other's experience.

Do something good for yourself and come spend an evening getting in touch with your deepest values. And bring a friend along, all are welcome! It is an easy way to experience and get to know our Unitarian approach to spiritual community.



**Matthew Fletcher is the
Organist and Choir
Director at RHUC.**



**A date for your diaries!
Friday 7 March at
7.30pm**

As from January 2014, we are fortunate to have Matthew as the new Choir Director.

During the three years that we were led by Georgina Drew-Edwards, with her husband James as accompanist and composer, we tackled exciting and demanding works such as 'Jubilato Deo' by James, his moving anthem 'Justice', also 'The Armed Man' by Karl Jenkins, parts of Mozart's 'Requiem', 'Requiem in Blue' by Harvey Brough and seasonal anthems and lighter works.

We are indeed grateful to Georgina and James for their inspirational work with the Choir, in developing our musical skills so considerably.

We now look forward to a new partnership with Matthew, whose music each Sunday at RHUC speaks of his talent. (**Margaret Perry**)

Future performances

Friday 7th March 7.30pm - Choir Fund-Raising evening.
Sunday 16th February - Sunday morning service
Sunday 13th April - Spring concert in the morning service.

Following their successful evening last year

ROSSLYN HILL UNITARIAN CHAPEL CHOIR

will be singing more songs from the shows.

Why not come and join them in singing some of your favourite songs.

Tickets £12 to include a hot meal
(children under 12 half price)
Tickets can be purchased either through a
choir member or following Sunday
morning service.

NEWS FROM THE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Any member of the Chapel is welcome to attend the Management Board meetings as an observer. If you would like to attend, as a courtesy, please contact Kerry Reid (Chair) in advance. The next meeting will be on Thursday 13 February 2014 at 7.00pm in the Chapel (in the Cottage Basement Science room).

Meeting held on Thursday 16 January 2014

Kerry Reid in the chair

Same-sex weddings: following the forthcoming legislation changes, the Chapel will be the location for a number of same sex weddings in this coming year.

March AGM: The AGM will be held on the Sunday 2nd March, 2014 at 12:25pm in the Chapel. In particular, the Chapel accounts and the progress of the Chapel's endowment fund will be presented, and pre-circulated for approval by the Congregation at the meeting. The matter of the Chapel accountants will also be addressed.

Minister's Report: Over the Holiday season, the Cold Weather Shelter was highly successful, and the Board would like to thank everyone involved in it. The Christmas Eve service also had a great attendance. The Food Bank being run at the Chapel by the Social Action Committee is doing very well and a good collection of foodstuffs is being amassed and passed on to the Trussell Trust for distribution..

Worship Committee: Rev O'Neill has been discussing plans with the Worship Committee to change the format of Sunday Evening services, because at present they are a significant amount of work but with a very low attendance. The name of the service will be changed to 'Sunday Evening at the Chapel', and each week of the month there will be a different format.

Steinway Piano and Music Committee: The Chapel's piano will have maintenance work done on it shortly. This will be undertaken in consultation with the new Music Committee. There will also be a new key procured for the piano from Steinway soon.

GA delegates & LDPA representatives: The Board are seeking an elder and other members of the congregations to go as delegates to the Unitarian GA. Any members of the Congregation interested should get in touch with Kerry Reid as soon as possible because the deadline is imminent.

Estates group: The Chapel grounds could be used more intensively or used more residentially to maximize revenue from them. The Estates Groups propose to bring in a surveyor in order to get full advice on this matter.



Annual General Meeting will be held on

**Sunday 2 March 2014 at 12.30pm
(after the morning service)**

Make a note in your diary now!

The AGM is the time to review the past year, discuss the report and accounts, hear from the Chapel groups and committees and appoint members to the Management Board.

The continuity of the Chapel depends on its members. Your vote counts, your voice counts, your presence counts!

*If you are proud of this church,
become its advocate.*

*If you are concerned for its future,
share its message.*

*If its values resonate deep within you,
Give it a measure of your devotion.*

*This church cannot survive without
your faith, your confidence,
your enthusiasm.*

*Its destiny, the larger hope,
rests in your hands.*

Michael A Schuler

OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



Pot Luck Lunches are friendly occasions, open to all and held in the side aisle on the last Sunday of each month (unless there is a good reason for re-scheduling the date).

All are most welcome and the request is to bring some food to share or make a financial contribution (£2.50 minimum). We look forward to seeing you there.

The dates of the lunches are as follows:-
Feb 23rd/ March 30/ April 27/ May 25/ June 29/
after the morning service.

'Pot Luck Suppers' happen on the same dates, before and after the evening service starting at 7.00pm. **Margaret Perry**



**Tea & Coffee donations during
January & February
will support Amnesty
International**

Coffee/tea money collections for Good Causes

Thank you for your generosity in contributing to recent charity collections. We are pleased to let you know that, so far, we have sent donations to the following good causes in 2013:

Jan & Feb - £148.76 to Amnesty International
March & April - £129.00 to PDSA
May & June - £117.13 to Money for Madagascar
July & Aug - £123.47 to Marie Curie
Sept & Oct - £121.34 to Wateraid
Nov & Dec - £139.44 to Cold Weather Shelter



MARYLEBONE SHELTER FOR WOMEN

Our Christmas Eve collection - £659.82 - was donated entirely to the Marylebone Shelter for Women.



Stewarding Can You Help? An Appeal to all Members

Stewarding is a simple way to get more involved. Good stewarding makes a difference: a warm welcome from the stewards is a welcome to the Chapel.

Please look at your diaries and contact Jim Burtes (email j.burtles@hotmail.com) with any dates in the next few months when you'd be available.

If you haven't stewarded at a service before please don't worry as there is always an experienced worship assistant present.



Worship Assistants

2 February	James Chiriyankandath
9 February	Julia Reid
16 February	Leighton Cole
23 February	James Chiriyankandath

Stewards

2 February	Jane Crispin & family
9 February	Leighton Cole & Will Hopper
16 February	Zoe Gerrard & George Appleby
23 February	Ken Levy & Christopher Mason

FEBRUARY DIARY

(* = further details elsewhere in Bulletin)

Sunday 2 February

11.00am – Morning service -
'Glowing Coals: Spirit, Service, and Celebration'
or *'What's a Chapel For Anyway?'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - *'Celebration of Imbolc'**
Led by members of the 'Wheel of the Year' group.

Tuesday 4 February

7.00pm – Poetry group meets*

Wednesday 5 February

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*
7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

Thursday 6 February

7.00pm – 'Questing Groups' meet in the Chapel*

Sunday 9 February

11.00am – Morning service – *'The Privilege of Service'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - *'The Privilege of Service'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Tuesday 11 February

7.30pm – Social Action Committee meets

Wednesday 12 February

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*
7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

Thursday 13 February

7.00pm – Management Committee meets*

Sunday 16 February

11.00am - Morning service – *'Unitarian Heroes: Henry David Thoreau on Walden Pond'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - *'Unitarian Heroes: Henry David Thoreau on Walden Pond'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Thursday 20 February

7.00pm – 'Questing Groups' meet in the Chapel*

Thursday 20 February

7.30pm – Book Group meets*

Sunday 23 February

11.00am - Morning service – *'Trust What Is?'**
Led by Guest Preacher Alan Ruston

12.30pm – Pot Luck Lunch in the side aisle

7.00pm – Evening service – *'Trust What Is?'*
Led by Margaret Perry

Wednesday 26 February

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*
7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

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The Unitarians - Nurturing faith, celebrating life, embracing differences.