



Open Mind

The Bulletin of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel

January 2014

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



January Services

Sunday 5 January (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching

'Proceed As The Way Opens'

The Quaker teacher, Parker Palmer writes that 'some journeys are direct, and some journeys are circuitous; some are heroic and some are fearful and muddled. But every journey, honestly undertaken, stands a chance of taking us where we belong.... We can learn as much about our nature by running into our limits as by experiencing our potentials...The trick to remember is to proceed as the Way opens'. A bit of Quaker wisdom is our focus this morning. Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 12 January (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching

*'Science and Religion:
On the Meeting of Minds and Souls'*

Historically science and religion have alternated between mutual support and bitter enmity....faith and reason parted ways when scientific research began to challenge church dogma. The polite way to reconcile science and theology was simply to agree that each would keep to its own realm; science would ask and answer empirical questions like what and how; religion would confront the spiritual, wondering why.

*'Science and Religion:
On the Meeting of Minds and Souls'*

In primitive times, it was religion that first explained the mysteries of the cosmos. We know the long and tedious struggle of science in claiming its rightful dominion as explainer of the workings of the universe. The paradox now is that science - at its purest, deepest, most esoteric and elegant levels - leads us almost full circle, to a point where it will require of us not only imagination to comprehend and appreciate, but, dare one say it, a sense of the poetic, the mystical, and perhaps even the mythological to move on this level of knowledge. Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 19 January (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching

*'The Way It's Supposed to Work,
and How It Really Works'*

Much of life, it turns out - much more of life than anyone would guess - is about navigating the transitions in life, coping and adjusting to the changes of age, of status, of work and vocation, of relationships and family and health. A sermon this morning reflecting on the way of transitions in our lives. Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 26 January (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Guest Preacher

The Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel stead



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 **February** issue of 'Open Mind' is **Friday 18 January 2014**.

From the Editor

Fresh Start

'Don't let yesterday use up too much of today!'

New Year's Day heralds much bell ringing and amazing fireworks, as people ring out the old and ring in the new. - So let's ring a bell and say, 'Welcome new year, we are glad you are here!' - Let's plan a 'fresh start'!

There couldn't be a better time to get a fresh start – it's the beginning of January, a new year and it's full of promise for new beginnings.

2014 is sure to hold many surprises and surely we must be looking forward to starting a new year with fresh goals and new ideas – to keep motivated and inspired.

In March (Sunday 2nd), our Annual General Meeting will be an opportunity to look ahead – to think about how we might help our Chapel community flourish and grow. As John Lawrence suggested some time ago -

'A starting point might be to consider the following question: 'What do I get from the Chapel in terms of spiritual nourishment, social contact and sheer enjoyment compared with what I contribute in terms of help where it is needed or money to keep everything running?' May we launch the New Year by 'releasing the past and making room for more good in our lives' and by 'integrating plans and activities for the new year with ease and joy'.

May we launch the New Year by releasing the past and making room for more good in our lives and by integrating plans and activities for the new year with ease and joy.

'The past has passed.

Thanks be for our yesterdays.

After all, it took a multitude of them to arrive at today.

*But the past dare not govern
what goes on this New Year.*

*Broken promises or sentimental reminiscences
can contaminate our current lives.*

Last year is gone.

*We are creating a never-before year,
utterly fresh, starting right now.'*

Tom Owen-Towle





PO'Nderings

From our Minister
Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

My Annual Letter to a Missing Member

Dear Old Friend,

It is not our usual custom to take attendance on Sunday mornings or chase after anyone who happens to be absent from chapel for a while. We hope you don't read that as a lack of caring on our part, for you are indeed important to us. But usually, unless we hear directly that there's a problem or an illness, we assume that friends will always return to chapel when circumstances are right. Weekly Sunday attendance at a Unitarian congregation is by no means mandatory. Of course, we hope people will make coming to chapel their usual practice, a part of their weekly routine. But we also understand there are times when that won't happen. When an old friend does reappear after an absence, I don't ask where you've been. What I say is, "Great to see you!"

But if you've not made it to church for a while, you may be sure your absence is felt. This is a different place without you.

We understand that membership and participation is sometimes a cyclical thing. There will be times when church is a greater or lesser part of our lives. But we hope that the bonds are deep and the connections do remain. The interdependent web that is our chapel continues to add new friends and participants every week. But your place among us remains reserved, until you tell us otherwise. Yet this fact remains true also: the chapel is shaped, guided, and directed by those who lend it their presence. There is no such thing as status quo in a living community. Good things have been happening in the congregation lately. Energy is high.

We want you to know that you still have a cherished place among us. We've been growing and changing a bit since you were here last; no doubt you have, too. It would be great to have back among us again, even if only for a visit now and then. We think you'd like some of the new people who now make Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel their own. You've been missed around here! In the meantime, as always, we'll keep a light in the window for you.

Sincerely,
Patrick O'Neill, Minister

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 **Monday 6 January 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 9 January 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 14 January at 7.30pm**

CHAPEL BOOK GROUP - will meet on **Thursday 16 January 2014 at 7.30pm** to discuss 'The French Lieutenant's Woman' by John Fowles., 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 26 January** 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



**Every year the Chapel looks beautiful
and this year was no exception.**

Special Thanks to the Decorating Crew from our Minister - to those who came on 14 December: Patricia Williams, Christina Ayckboun, Helene Howard, Claire Julian, Janna Williams, Louise Hepburn, Ken Levy, Deborah Frankel, Lorna Mikelson, Shirley Malin and Judy Harris. And those who helped in advance with shopping and wrapping: Ingrid and Mohan Tavkar, Hillary Ratna, Leighton Cole, Sharron Conduit and Huggie, and the Academy School for the tree.

This is the message Rev O'Neill sent to those who helped with decorating the Chapel for the Carol Service and the Christmas Eve service and the Wheel of the Year Yule celebration and keeping the decorations fresh and lovely right up to Twelfth Night is an exciting challenge.

When it comes to decorating the Chapel for special occasions, the Flower Group, just five people, plan and prepare and then call loudly for help. This year, Patricia Williams had the inspiration to represent Gifts of the Spirit as gift wrapped parcels labelled with such virtues as 'Simplicity, 'Understanding' 'Respect' 'Enthusiasm'. No less than seventy two came to mind, drawn, in part, from topics discussed at the Questing Groups. The parcels were wrapped in festive paper by a keen team. On 14 December, everything came together and the Chapel glowed with bright colours set off by dark holly, ivy and pine. The choir stalls and stair case were festooned with swags of green and lights, baubles hung on the tree, wreaths appeared and Helene Howard, who had helped with supplies of greenery, brought scarlet berries, huge lilies and fir branches and made a wonderful arrangement for the chancel table.

Working together, brightening midwinter darkness was fun but it couldn't have happened without people (seventeen of them) who gave up time at this busy season to take part.

The Flower Group is now looking for helpers who can lend a hand a few times during the year, so there are fresh flowers for the Chapel every Sunday. If anyone reading this would like to arrange a display from time to time, (it can be quite simple and expert help is available) please contact Janna Williams (j.williams16@virginmedia.com)

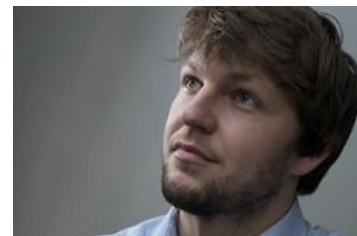
MORE HELP NEEDED, PLEASE!

Sunday 5 January 2014 - after the morning service

We will be dismantling and packing away the decorations for next year. Not quite the same as putting them up, but important none the less. So please come and help if you can.

**Concert of Russian Opera and Song:
7.30pm, 31 January 2014 (7.30pm)
at Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel**

**In aid of Age UK, Camden –
free admission with a retiring collection**



Including excerpts from Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin,
and songs by Rachmaninov, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky Korsakov

Cathy Di-Zhang – soprano
Gareth Brynmor John – baritone
Matthew Fletcher – piano

Three recent graduates of the Royal Academy of Music present a concert of Russian masterpieces. Cathy Di-Zhang's singing has recently been described by the Times as 'beautifully affecting' and Gareth John is the 2013 winner of the Kathleen Ferrier Awards. Matthew Fletcher is director of music at Rosslyn Hill Chapel, and a regular duo partner to both singers. The concert will last approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes, including a 15 minute interval in which there will be refreshments available.

OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



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.

On Sunday 1 December, Ingrid Tavkar presented 'Values in Action' and here is a shortened version.



In 1993, twenty years ago, I started work as the 'Social Responsibility Officer' at our Unitarian HQ. This gave me an opportunity to put my 'Unitarian Values into Action' – by raising awareness about contemporary social justice issues and encouraging individual Unitarians to express their faith in practical ways to benefit the community, and to think of ways we could work together to create a more just and peaceful society. This was very challenging, but also very fulfilling and rewarding.

In 2006, after I retired from full time paid work, I very much appreciated 'the gift of time' and I reflected on how I might make good use of this gift. At that time, I happened to have a brief conversation with Desmond Julian, and I remarked that I was trying to use 'this gift of time' wisely. Desmond asked if I could knit, and I said 'Yes, I can knit and crochet, but I have not done so for a very long time'. Desmond then mentioned 'The Uthando Project: Dolls for Zulu Children' – this project simply invites international members of the human family to make culturally appropriate black dolls for vulnerable African children – and so a seed was sown and some of us started the 'Stitch and Stories Group'.

We met twice a month, to knit and crochet for various charity projects, and to share personal stories. We began to support two projects: the 'Uthando Project' (knitting dolls for vulnerable African children) and the 'Baby Pack Project' (knitting clothes and blankets for newborn babies in African clinics).

Over time, we supported several other charity projects, and many parcels containing dolls, baby blankets, and baby clothes made their way to South Africa, to Bulgaria, to Scotland and to projects in England.

Sadly, in 2010, the 'Stitch and Stories Group' discontinued for various reasons, but I continue to knit and crochet, and now I donate all the finished items to 'Knit for Peace' - a project of the Charity Advisory Trust – and they distribute them to those in need.

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'.

I agree with this statement. I'm using 'the gift of time' and my talents to create attractive and useful items which I find very therapeutic, and the finished items will give comfort and joy to those in need. - Although, at the moment, I work on my own.

This is why I would like to resurrect the 'Stitch and Stories' group and create an opportunity for those interested to use their time and talents to create simple treasures for others. I invite any one interested to come and look at some of the finished creations and talk to me, after the service.

Ingrid can be contacted at: ingridtavkar@gmail.com

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 **9 January 2014 at 7.00pm** in the Chapel (in the Chapel Committee room).

Meeting held on 12 December 2013

Kerry Reid as Chair.

Administrator's report: Since the last Board meeting, there have been numerous events at the Chapel, such as Hampstead Women's Christmas Market, the Hampstead Christmas Fair and a Chapel Concert to help fund the Cold Weather Shelter. We welcome Hugh Leaver as the new Caretaker/Handyman of the Chapel on a part time basis from 1st December. The large trees in the grounds that were damaged by the recent storm have now had some thinning work done to them and any dangerous branches removed.

Minister's Report: The very popular Questing Group has now finished for the year, but these sessions will continue in the New Year. The new Search Committee has now been formed, with Hillary Ratna as Chair. Rev O'Neill offered his thanks to Claire Julian and all her helpers for their hard work they have put in to make the Cold Weather Shelter a success. He also wanted to thank Janna Williams and her team for their hard work on the 'Open Chapel' event.

Thriving Membership: The recent Chapel 'Open Day' was relatively quiet. The Board noted that the Chapel is in need of a 'spring clean' and some sprucing up, such as new lights and attention to the internal doors.

Steinway Piano: Given the great value of this piano to the Chapel, financially in bringing in concert revenue and as part of the Chapel's musical culture, the Board agreed to start works on it, and that the costs would be outweighed by the benefits of having the instrument in good repair. The Steinway will also be locked when not in use from the near future.

AGM: The Board agreed that the date of the next AGM will be **Sunday 2 March 2014**. There will be a report from the Treasurer circulated before this meeting and she will review the performance of the Chapel endowment in the M & G Charifund.



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!

OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



amnesty.org.uk

Amnesty's Write for Rights Campaign

This year, we will again be supporting Amnesty International's greeting card campaign. We will send messages of goodwill and solidarity to people whose rights have been abused, and those in danger for defending human rights. Cards will be available in the Chapel after morning services on 5, 12, 19 & 26 January, so that the congregation can send a message of hope to prisoners of conscience in many different parts of the world.

Coffee/tea money collections for Good Causes

Tea & Coffee donations
during January will
support Amnesty
International
(please see above)



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



MARYLEBONE
PROJECT

MARYLEBONE SHELTER FOR WOMEN

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

Your New Year's resolution: ethical online searching

Did you know that you can make money for the Chapel, simply by searching online? If you use <http://rosslynhillchapel.easysearch.org.uk> as your search engine, the Chapel will receive a small donation. So don't give all your business to Google etc, make a resolution to try Easysearch this year

Spiritual
PULSE
Unitarians



Spiritual Pulse - The new London District podcast

A new podcast has been launched by district minister Rev David Usher and Chapel member Kate Buchanan which will feature events and inspiration from Unitarians in London and the South East District. There will be a new episode each month which will alternate between a magazine programme of events listings and interviews one month, and a more meditative worship podcast the other month.

Listen online here: ldpa.org.uk
You can also download or subscribe via
iTunes Store or here: ldpa.podbean.com



Stewards

5 January	John Booth & Christopher Mason
12 January	Britta & Jim Burtles
19 January	Kate Buchanan & Judy Harris
26 January	Janna Williams & Ken Levy
Worship Assistants	
5 January	Zoe Gerrard
12 January	Leighton Cole
19 January	Julia Reid
26 January	Victoria Ellington

JANUARY DIARY

(* = further details elsewhere in Bulletin)

Sunday 5 January11.00am – Morning service - *'Proceed As The Way Opens'*. Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

12.30pm – Tidying up Christmas decorations*

7.00pm – Evening service - *'Proceed As The Way Opens'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill**Wednesday 8 January**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*

Monday 6 January

7.00pm – Poetry group meets*

Sunday 12 January11.00am – Morning service – *'Science and Religion: On the Meeting of Minds and Souls'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill7.00pm – Evening service - *'Science and Religion: On the Meeting of Minds and Souls'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill**Tuesday 14 January**

7.30pm – Social Action Committee meets*

Wednesday 15 January

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

Thursday 16 January

7.30pm – Book Group meets*

Sunday 19 January11.00am - Morning service - *'The Way It's Supposed to Work, and How It Really Works'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

12.15pm – Children's Programme team meeting in the Hall

7.00pm – Evening service - *'The Way It's Supposed to Work, and How It Really Works'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill**Wednesday 22 January**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

Sunday 26 January

11.00am – Morning service – Guest Preacher

12.30pm – Pot Luck Lunch

7.00pm – Evening service – Guest Preacher

Wednesday 29 January

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel*

Friday 31 January (7.30pm) – Charity Concert by Matthew Fletcher (Chapel Organist)***Chapel Directory****Chapel Office**Sharron Conduit
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