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# Open Mind

The Bulletin of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel

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March 2013

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*“The earth turns, the seasons shift,  
And our hearts shift with the changing light.  
May we be ready for spring and new life.  
May our hearts, like the flowers,  
Open wide in celebration of the season”.*



## March Services

**Sunday 3 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)**

**Annual General Meeting Sunday**  
**Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill preaching**  
**“Community: Approach and Avoidance”**

Urban life today creates a lifestyle which puts tremendous emotional distances between people. And more and more, people are identifying "a sense of community" as something missing from their lives. As we prepare for our Annual General Meeting this afternoon, let us ponder the nature of "Community" together.

**Sunday 10 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)**

**Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill preaching**  
**“A Place To Stand”**

Most modern people are readily articulate on all that they have rejected or outgrown from their religious upbringing. But can we just as easily say where we now stand at this point in our lives?

**Sunday 17 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)**

**Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill preaching**  
**“The Missing Piece: On the Blessings of Imperfection”**

Here is the paradox and the irony in which we live: we are creatures ever in search of our own wholeness, looking always for that "missing piece" in our lives, that piece that is the difference between the persons we are and the persons we hope someday to be.

**Sunday 24 March (11.00am)**

**Special Choir Music Sunday**  
**Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill preaching**  
**“What We Love, We Empower”**

Here is a truth to ponder: in every family, in healthy ways or unhealthy ways, love is always a power issue. Love is precisely about empowerment. That’s what parenthood is about. That’s what partnership and marriage is about. That’s what friendship is about. Empowerment. We empower the people we love. Who is it who will turn to you for empowerment today? You have more power than you might ever guess.

**Sunday 24 March (7.00pm)**

**“Celebration Ostara/Spring Equinox”**

Ostara is a Celtic festival of fire, light and fertility. A contemplative service led by the 'Wheel of the Year' group.

**Sunday 31 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)**

**Easter Sunday**  
**Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill preaching**  
**“Rising To Life”**

Easter has been called an impossible story written for anyone who has ever felt the sting of death and wished for something more. Easter is a story for anyone who loved life so much that they pray for more life to follow. Easter is a story for people who envision a loving divinity that will not be conquered by evil. It's a story of love that never dies; of immovable objects tossed aside; of a hopeful ending in a tragic world; of miracles; of faith rewarded, and vision restored, and hope justified. Come join us this Sunday, and bring a friend with you!

The Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel  
The 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](http://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](mailto: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 **April** issue of 'Open Mind' is **Monday 20 March 2013**.

## From the Editor

In the month of March, we have many opportunities to celebrate - we can celebrate St David's Day, St Patrick's Day, International Women's Day, Mothering Sunday, and Spring Equinox. This year, we can also mark or celebrate Passover and Easter in March.

Spring Equinox marks the beginning of the growing season, a time of rebirth and fertility, the renewal and rebirth of nature, when light and dark are in balance for a short time.

Passover and Easter are tied closely together. Both holidays are about deliverance from human suffering and have significance during this time of the year, with deliverance from winter by spring.

Easter commemorates the death and resurrection of Jesus and the renewal of faith, while Passover commemorates the Jewish flight from Egypt and the Jewish escape from persecution by the grace of God.

Let us light a chalice and reflect on the words below:

### **Spring/Passover/Easter**

*We light our chalice to remember the sorrow, the loss,  
and the joy that are within this season of the year.*

*The Passover, that brought freedom from slavery  
and bondage for the Jewish people, continues to  
bring light into the world.*

*Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter, that  
brought joy  
and the triumph of life over death for the Christian  
people, still bring the light of that joy to the world.*

*The spring equinox, that brings new life bursting  
forth  
on the land each year, brings lengthening days of  
sunlight to all life.*

*Passover for freedom, Easter for life, spring for  
rebirth.*

*We light our chalice for all three.*

(Elizabeth M Strong)





## PO'Nderings

From our Minister  
Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

The Rev Jane Rzepka is one of my oldest and dearest colleagues in Unitarian ministry. I pass along this piece written by Jane for the latest edition of *Quest*, the newsletter of the Unitarian Church of the Larger Fellowship. These words may be especially helpful to those new to our way of religion. Jane writes,

“When Unitarians set out on their theological journey toward independence...they broke away from the established religion of the day. What they stood for during their break for independence, and what we still stand for (among other things from other parts of our history) are these:

- If we believe in God at all, it's a benevolent one, not a frightening or punishing one.
- Most of us believe in the humanity of Jesus, whom we view as a wise and wonderful teacher, but not a god.
- We reject the doctrine of innate depravity. We do not believe in original sin; that becomes crystal clear when you listen to the words of our child dedications. We carry the theology of potential goodness with us.
- We believe in free will, not pre-destination. Events are not preordained, nor “meant to be.” We have the power to act in the world. We carry that free will with us as Unitarians.
- We believe in the freedom of conscience, that creeds do not serve us well. We carry that freedom of conscience with us on our journey.
- And we believe in the use of reason as part of determining personal religious truth.

We carry other aspects of identity with us too: the flaming chalice, our hymns, our rejection of the Trinity, our personal approach to memorial services and funerals, our self-governance, our commitment to social justice in the world here and now, our reverence for nature, our love of community.

May we carry all these with us, that they may offer us solace when we need it, inspiration when the world seems dull, challenge when we are lulled into complacency, and the seeds of love and friendship when we feel alone in the world.”

(From “*Carrying The Language of Freedom*” by Jane Rzepka in *Quest*, March 2013.)

See you in Chapel!

...po'n

## Chapel Activities



### Weekly Activities

Children's Chapel 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.

### March Activities and Meetings

**3 March - Annual General Meeting** at 12.30pm.

5 March - **Poetry Group** will meet at 7.00pm. For more information contact George Appleby (Tel: 020 7424 9733 email: [gappleby@talktalk.net](mailto:gappleby@talktalk.net))

**Questing Groups** – a new Religious Education programme for adults, led by our Minister Rev Patrick O'Neill. Meeting on alternative Thursday evenings – Thursday 7 March and Thursday 21 March at 7.00pm, in the Chapel.

12 March - **Social Action Committee** meets.

14 March - **Management Board** meets at 7.00pm in the cottage basement science room at the Chapel. Members of the Chapel are welcome to attend but contact one of the co-Chairs, James Chiriyankandath or Jane Crispin, ahead of time as a courtesy.

29 March - **Book Group** will meet at 7.30pm at the Magdala at 2a South Hill Park in Hampstead. For further information, please contact Bill Ellington at [ellingtonbill@aol.com](mailto:ellingtonbill@aol.com)

31 March - **Potluck Lunch** in the Hall 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.

# OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY

## Questing Groups

A New Religious Education Programme for adults  
Led by our Minister, Rev Patrick O'Neill



Meeting at alternate Thursday evenings -

next meetings **Thursday 7 and Thursday 21 March (7.00pm)** in the Chapel.

Free and open to all, call the Chapel office to pre-register 020-7433-3267

Unitarianism sees the human spirit as a pilgrim spirit, a soul in motion. A religious spirit is a spirit in search of a way to live that is authentic and true to itself, called to some serious engagement with the world. It is not about standing still or status quo. Spiritual living is about movement. It's about journey. A religious spirit is by nature a questing spirit.

“Questing Groups” is a programme designed around small groups of six or seven people exploring questions of meaning, value, and purpose. In each session participants are invited to reflect on a short theme piece introducing a “focus question” i.e. What is God? What is Death? What does it mean to be human? What are our obligations in life? What do we wish to accomplish with our lives? What do you hold to be “Sacred”?

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 – come join us, and bring a friend!



## VALUES IN ACTION

Do you feel passionate about a cause, project or issue that demonstrates your Unitarian values?

Are you involved in working, volunteering or campaigning for change and want to tell your chapel friends about it?

The Social Action Committee is delighted to invite you to do so: Rev O'Neill has offered a three-minute slot in which members of the congregation may share news of **VALUES IN ACTION** during morning service on the fourth Sunday in the month.

If you would like to take part, please send details of what you would like to talk about to Social Action Committee member, Claire Julian [claire.marley@mac.com] so that the Committee can co-ordinate these brief contributions to our morning services. Thank you.  
Claire Julian (On behalf of Social Action Committee)



## SECOND-HAND BOOKSALE

**DO YOU HAVE GOOD QUALITY  
SECOND-HAND BOOKS  
TO DONATE FOR THE RHUC BOOK  
SALE?**

**PLEASE BRING TO THE CHAPEL  
AS SOON AS YOU CAN!**

The sale is on **SATURDAY 11 May 2013**

All proceeds to “Simple Gifts”  
and “Money for Madagascar”

## OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



### In Memoriam

**Harold Frankel**  
(2nd February 1932 -  
2nd February 2013)

I found myself in tears today as I came across the amazing story of how, shortly after the sudden death of Lawrence Anthony in 2012, the South African conservationist and author of best seller, "The Elephant Whisperer", two separate herds of 31 elephants instinctively journeyed 12 long hours in funeral procession to pay their respects at the personal home of their beloved hero.

Of course I am moved by the story of the elephants' intuitive intelligence, learning about their legendary bonds and how they are known to mourn their dead, but I couldn't help but compare it to the recent passing of Harold Frankel. Not only because he was the most ardent animal-lover, but because family and friends from miles away, many whom considered him a "life-saver", journeyed to gather around him in his home to share stories, tears, singing and laughter in his final days. Even his dentist, who lives in Bath, made the two hour journey just to sit and visit for a while, then turn right back around to make the return journey. But Harold had that effect on people - his energy, generosity, humility, devotion to Deborah and her family, and infectious humour - always delivered to perfection - is what pulled all of us toward him. I think he was pleased with his send-off.

Harold was a long standing member and board member of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, having married Deborah in the Chapel almost 23 years ago on the 24th of March 1990, working on - or as he might even say, 'surviving' - several difficult minister searches, and having a "no-nonsense sensibility" about him and our spiritual community. I would say he found solace in this place that accepts those for who they are, not for their pasts or what they believe, simply a place for those who want to be, in Harold's words, "a good man".

And so in closing, and knowing Harold's "joie de vivre" attitude and zest for life, I think he would have enjoyed a final chuckle at the very apt words from Lawrence Anthony himself, "I have never understood the saying 'To think outside the box.' Why would anyone sit inside of a box and then think outside of it? Rather just get out of the box."

Harold, we will miss you.

Jenifer Brenner, Harold's daughter-in-law, former member of RHUC and current member of Undodiaid Bangor Unitarians in North Wales.

Over £500 has already been collected in Harold's memory for the **Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research**, a non-animal research cause close to Harold's heart. Among the patrons of the trust are Dame Judi Dench, Joanna Lumley and Brian May of Queen.

If you still wish to contribute, cash or cheques will kindly be accepted through the Rosslyn Hill Chapel Administrator.

### "Invitation to Members of RHUC to Ann Finer's Birthday Memorial Event"



You are warmly invited to a celebration in honour of Ann on what would have been her 88th birthday

**Saturday 16th March 3.30pm**

Cecil Sharp House,  
2 Regents Park Road,  
London NW1 7AY

Please RSVP to [jessfiner@me.com](mailto:jessfiner@me.com) or contact on 07977229413



**DECORATING THE  
CHAPEL  
FOR EASTER**

**Saturday 30 March 2013**

**From 10.00am to noon**

Please put the date in your diary if you are able to come and help for some of the time. It is an enjoyable thing to do! Greenery, blossom, flowers would also be most welcome.

For more information, please contact Janna Williams:  
email: [j.williams16.virginmedia.com](mailto:j.williams16.virginmedia.com)

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## OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



Annual General Meeting

Sunday 3 March 2013 ( )12.30pm

Make a note in your diary now!

The AGM is the time to review the past year, discuss the Annual Report and Accounts, hear from the Chapel groups and committees and appoint members to the 2012/13 Board.

Co-Chairs, James Chiryankandath (email: James\_chiryankandath@hotmail.co.uk) and Jane Crispin (email: jane.crispin@blueyonder.co.uk) would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in joining the Board.

There will be a light lunch of soup, bread and cheese provided in the chapel between the end of Sunday service and the beginning of the AGM. Childcare will be available.

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

### Willoughby Road Sale – The Final Chapter

And so ends the saga. On 25th January 2013, nearly 5 years after the project was first launched, the sale of the plot of land adjoining No. 2 Willoughby Road NW3 was finally completed.

The RHUC congregation had approved the WR project at an EGM in 2008, stipulating that the sale price of the land should be no less than £1 million. Planning consent for a residential property on the site had already been granted by Camden Borough, but by that time it was within a year of expiring. A Property Sale Group, composed of Kathee Myers, Jenny Hargreaves and myself, sought to renew the consent and engaged the Charlton Brown architectural partnership to design a house for the site that would be acceptable to the planners. The second planning permission was granted in March 2010 and the site was put on the market, attracting immediate interest.

However, we hadn't anticipated the reaction of the owner of No. 2. Even though the design of the new house had minimised any impact on his property, he made it clear that he would object to the proposed development on the grounds that his 'right to light' would be infringed. The threat of court action deterred buyers. All offers for the site were withdrawn.

At first we looked into trying to resolve the legal issues with No.2 ourselves, but the process would have been costly and the outcome uncertain. The only answer was to find a potential buyer who was willing to take on the challenge as part of the overall package.

By June 2011 a potential purchaser, Mr Avi Dodi, had been found. He agreed to take on the 'rtl' issue, on the basis that the sale would only be completed when the legal issue was resolved. After a long and tortuous negotiation an exchange of contracts was eventually agreed: the contract to purchase allowed Mr Dodi up to 6 months from exchange to resolve the 'rtl' issue, and RHUC agreed to share the cost of settling the 'rtl' dispute up to a specified limit. Compensation also had to be agreed with the owner of the other adjacent property, on the corner of Willoughby Road and Rosslyn Hill (Snappy Snaps), for 'loss of light'.

Negotiations then went from the complicated to the labyrinthine. As the deadline for completion (or withdrawal by the developer) approached, deals were hammered out with both neighbours. The Chapel's liability ends up in the region of £170,000, to be deducted from the overall sale price, but it's also agreed that a percentage of this will be recovered if the final sale price of the built house is above a certain amount. The net result of the agreements is that neither neighbour will take any legal action against the development and that the sale of the plot adjoining No.2 Willoughby Road can be completed. After further deductions for agent's and lawyer's fees, the sum of £1,000,017 was transferred to the RHUC account.

Like an Oscar winner, my list of 'thank you's' trails along the floor. To the original PSG members, and especially to Kathee Myers, who worked tirelessly to get the whole project off the ground and only became less involved when she moved back to the US. To John Lawrence for his support and advice. To Richard Humphreys of Goldschmidt & Howland who has almost changed my opinion of estate agents (never has one worked harder for his fee). To Graham Kaye, our solicitor from CKFT, who somehow came through the tangled undergrowth of legal dispute. To the Board of RHUC for bearing up and bearing with it. And to the congregation for giving the project a green light in the first place, never suspecting that the end of the road was so very far away...

But, of course, it's not the end of the road, just the beginning. The Board has set up a long term Finance Committee to oversee the management and investment of the funds – which will provide much needed financial security for the Chapel and enable growth on many levels, both spiritual and material. Yes, it was a very long and at times serpentine saga, but I hope you'll agree - it was worth it.

Paul Ver Bruggen  
(Paul's full report appears in the Annual Report for the AGM)

## NEWS FROM THE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Any member of the Chapel is welcome to attend the Management Committee meetings as an observer. If you would like to attend, as a courtesy, please contact either James Chiriyankandath or Jane Crispin (co-Chairs) in advance. The next meeting will be on Thursday 14 March 2013 at 7.00pm in the Chapel (in the Cottage basement Science room).

### Meeting held on Thursday 14 February 2012 James Chiriyankandath in the chair

The first item on the Agenda of Board meetings is always the Devotional, from the minister. This being Valentine's Day, Rev O'Neill had chosen the words from Paul's Letter to the Corinthians: 'if I speak with the tongue of mortals or angels, and have not love...'

**Property Sale Group:** With the completion of the sale of the Willoughby Road site, the Chapel has taken a major step forward towards ensuring financial stability. The chapel is indebted to Paul ver Bruggen for seeing this difficult sale through. Paul was on the PSG from the start, working with Kathee Myers until she returned to the States last year. Thanks to the PSG, the sale raised the net sum of £1,017,620.00, thus meeting the amount (£1M) stipulated by members at the June 2008 EGM when the decision was taken to sell. The Board congratulated Paul most warmly for his persistence, and skill as a negotiator.

**Minister's Report:** Rev O'Neill had circulated his report to the Board, in which he lists the services he has taken, the meetings he has attended, and other activities. He and his wife, Patricia, had attended the Festival of Unitarians in the South East (FUSE) weekend in Worthing. He led, with others, a workshop on Social Action.

**The Questing Groups** had met twice, with good participation and feedback. The meetings will continue on alternate Thursdays until May.

Members of the Chapel had attended the funeral of Harold Frankel at Golders Green Chapel. On behalf of Board members, James Chiriyankandath would send a note expressing condolences to Deborah. The Minister reported the death of the father of Georgina Drewe (Choir Director). A funeral service was to be held in the Chapel, with the Choir singing. The Board wished its condolences to be sent to Georgina.

**Worship Group Report:** Gordon Jackson, the leader of the WG, had circulated his detailed report for inclusion in the Annual Reports at the AGM. Over the year the Group, which has eight members, has provided Worship Assistants for the morning and evening Sunday services, and arranged guest Worship leaders for 19 services.

**Annual General Meeting:** The announcement of the AGM to be held on 3 March had been posted and the Agenda and other papers had been circulated. The draft report and accounts had been circulated to the Board and would be made available to members before the AGM.

Refreshments and child care: Ingrid Tavkar had kindly agreed to provide soup, bread and cheese before the meeting, and child care had been arranged.

**Cold Weather Shelter:** It was agreed that the Social Action Committee should be allocated extra time during the reports to seek commitment from members and Chapel friends for the running of the C4WS in the coming autumn and winter. This important project depends on the support of many volunteers. Rev O'Neill said he would be pleased to centre a service on the work of the C4WS.

**Administrator's Report:** Sharron Conduit (Administrator) had circulated her report, in which she noted that the work on the damp in Cottage 3 had been completed and fitting out the refurbished kitchen and office would begin shortly. The Academy School had contributed £20,000 to the costs.

**Good News:** It was decided an electric heater should be installed in the Chapel committee room.

The leak in the Manse roof had been stopped for the moment, but work has to be done to achieve a long term solution.

It was noted that the porch in front of the Hall has to be removed, following the sale of the Willoughby Road site. It was decided to obtain a report on these matters from Peter Hogan, the surveyor who undertook the recent quinquennial review. As part of the drive (discussed at the 'Our Chapel in 2013' meeting) to explore ways to best maintain and utilize Chapel assets, Stella Fakiyesi had gone round the Hall and surrounding area with a landscape designer. The Board recommended that an Estates Group be set up with the responsibility of taking an overview of all the Chapel's property.

**Elders' Report:** Tanya Morrison, chair of the Elders, reported that they had met twice. With the Minister, they were discussing the development of a 'vision process' to be led by Rev O'Neill and the Elders. They were considering the suggestion of the January Board meeting that the Elders should take part in a Nominating Committee.

**Chair's Report:** The Chair's report for the AGM had been circulated and other matters had been covered by the Agenda. James Chiriyankandath reported that Margaret Perry and Kerry Reid had agreed to attend the annual meeting of the General Assembly as delegates, subject to the approval of the AGM.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jane Crispin had circulated the Treasurer's report for February. The Finance Group will present a plan to the AGM with its recommendations for the management of the funds received from the sale of the land. The Board discussed the letter to be sent from the Treasurer to members regarding the changeover to payment for membership by standing order. The new Board will consider her proposals regarding the Offertory.

**Reports from Chapel Groups:** Flower Group: Patricia Williams, temporary chair of the Flower Group had submitted a report. The Flower Group provides fresh flowers for the Chapel for each Sunday and a special display for major festivals. Income from flower sponsorship and special collections for festivals funds around 20 Sundays a year, leaving the supply of flowers for the rest of the year dependent on the generosity of Group members. The Board felt that having a display of fresh flowers added to the beauty of the Chapel and was part of our welcome. A budget was allocated to the Flower Group, but it was hoped more members would choose to sponsor flowers.

**Website:** Stella Fakiyesi reported that work was proceeding on the website and the text from the present website being reviewed.

**Any Other Business:** The members of the Board reflected on the past year and discussed the role of the Board. The need to get a balance between overseeing the business of the Chapel and devoting time to looking beyond the day to day was recognised by all. Rev O'Neill proposes to hold a retreat for the new Board. This will be a valuable opportunity for reflection and looking forward with vision.

Business being concluded, the Board, accompanied by Tanya Morrison (Elder) and Patricia Williams, repaired to the Flask for an end of year drink and to thank Paul ver Bruggen for his tremendous contribution to the Chapel throughout the selling of the Willoughby Road site.

Janna Williams (my 40th and last 'News from the MC/Board' as I am standing down at the AGM)

# Our Chapel Community



## Good News

We're pleased to announce that Kate Buchanan has been accepted to train as a Unitarian minister. Her training begins in September and will last for two years. She will spend a day a week in Oxford as well as studying a postgraduate theology course in London. She says her happy experiences of the Rosslyn Hill community and encouragement by many chapel members led to her decision.

## Other events in the Chapel



**2 March (10.00am-6.00pm)** – ‘*Hampstead Craft Fair*’ - Arts & Crafts, Antiques & Jewellery, Textiles & Food Stall. Admission Free

**2 March (7.00-10.00pm)** - Live Music. Two of the best bands in London – Ronnie Smith & National Debt and ‘Bahareque’ The Latin America Band – Entry £5:00

**23 March** – Evening Concert (Further details from Christopher Mason)

**29 March (6.00pm)** - Concert by Kokila Gillett (No further details at this moment in time)

## Helping Hands

### Worship Assistants

3 March	Leighton Cole
10 March	Julia Reid
17 March	Zoe Gerrard
24 March	Tony Garrick
30 March	

### Stewards

4 March	Will Hopper & Tanya Morrison
10 March	Ken Levy & Jane Crispin
17 March	Jim & Britta Burtles
24 March	George Appleby
30 March	



*The Good Steward wears a welcoming smile,  
Greeting people as they pass through our door.  
The Good Steward has an engaging style,  
Encouraging them to return once more.*

*The Good Steward is their temporary friend,  
Someone who greets them as they first arrive  
And says goodbye when it comes to an end,  
Making our Chapel seem warm and alive.*

*Unless our stewards perform with good grace  
Towards all those who have come from afar,  
Welcoming strangers to this nice warm place,  
We may never know who they were, or are.*

*It doesn't have to be a great big grin,  
A pleasant smile is all you need to show.  
No lengthy speech as they first come in,  
Just tell them what they need to know.*

JimBurtles  
February 2013

## Ostara -Spring Equinox

Ostara is a time to celebrate the arrival of spring, the renewal and rebirth of Nature herself, and the coming lushness of summer. It is at this time when light and darkness are in balance, yet the light is growing stronger by the day. The forces of masculine and feminine energy, yin and yang, are also in balance at this time.

At this time we think of renewing ourselves. We renew our thoughts, our dreams, and our aspirations. We think of renewing our relationships. This is a good time of year to begin anything new or to completely revitalize something. This is also an excellent month for prosperity rituals or rituals that have anything to do with growth.



## What is Passover?

Passover (in Hebrew, Pesach) commemorates the exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. The holiday originated in the Torah, where the word pesach refers to the ancient Passover sacrifice (known as the Paschal Lamb); it is also said to refer to the idea that God "passed over" (pasach) the houses of the Jews during the 10th plague on the Egyptians, the slaying of the first born. The holiday is ultimately a celebration of freedom, and the story of the exodus from Egypt is a powerful metaphor that is appreciated not only by Jews, but by people of other faiths as well.

*Jewish Year 5774: Sunset March 25, 2013 – Nightfall  
April 2, 2013*



## Inquiring Words

As dwellers in the West, in the 21st century, we are blessed with more than our fair share of freedom. We have freedom of expression of faith, of movement, of association. Passover is a celebration of those freedoms, freedoms which, as Unitarians, we hold as central tenets of our being.

The Jewish people were held in bondage, and Passover celebrates their freedom from that bondage. At the same time that we pause to celebrate our freedoms, we should also be mindful of those who are still held in bondage. There are many millions of fellow-humans, both close by and far away, who experience few of our freedoms. As we look back on the history of the flight of the Jewish people from Egypt, we also remember those who still suffer from physical, emotional, financial or sexual slavery. There are thousands held in literal slavery, and thousands more trapped in situations where their freedom is curtailed. And we pledge ourselves to work for the improvement of their lot, by whatever means are available to us.

*(From a 'Unitarian Haggadah' by Kate McKenna,  
member at Octagon Chapel, Norwich).*

## Do Unitarians celebrate Easter?

Most Unitarians do, but with perhaps three separate, although not mutually exclusive, perspectives.

First there is the view that in the stories of Jesus' Resurrection we have a powerful myth. This celebrates the triumph of the human spirit, exemplified in Jesus, over all that would crush it, and even over death.

Second, from a more specifically Christian standpoint, is the belief that the loving spirit of Jesus triumphed over death and passed into the community of disciples who formed the early church. The body of the faithful thus became the physical resurrection, the risen body, of Christ. Inasmuch as a religious community continues to embody that loving spirit, then it continues to embody the resurrection. Most Unitarians would doubt the literal veracity of the Gospel resurrection accounts. Some, though, see them as based on vivid spiritual experiences undergone by several of Jesus's followers in the aftermath of his death. These then played an important part in convincing the disciples that his spirit was still among them.

The third principal way in which Unitarians celebrate Easter is as the festival of life's renewal in the spring. The earth's resurrection after winter's apparent death is something that affects us profoundly as dependent children of nature. Many Unitarians therefore feel that it is a time of deep spiritual significance in itself. They point out that the word "Easter" is derived from "Eastre", the name of the ancient Anglo-Saxon Goddess of spring, fertility and renewal.

*(Text taken from - 'Unitarian? What's That?'  
by Rev. Cliff Reed)*





## OUR LARGER UNITARIAN MOVEMENT

### Worship Studies Course – Begins Saturday 16 March 2013

The Unitarian Worship Studies Course (Foundation Step) is to be run in the London District during 2013 - open to anyone who is interested in taking this next step in congregational involvement.

The course will take place at Essex Church, Kensington, over four full Saturdays –

**16 March / 13 July /  
21 Sept / 30 Nov 2013**

This is a nationally recognised course which will be run in cooperation with the GA's 'Local Leadership Training Action Group' and utilising a variety of tutors.

There will be a registration fee of £15, and a fee of £10 per session. To receive the WSC foundation step certificate involves successfully completing an assessment process and attending at least three of the training days. It will also be possible for people not wanting to work towards the certificate to attend if space is available.

Please contact Jane Blackall to register your interest or with any queries you may have - email: [jane@kensington-unitarian.org.uk](mailto:jane@kensington-unitarian.org.uk)

*“This is the mission of our faith:  
To teach the fragile art of hospitality;  
To revere both the critical mind and the  
generous heart;  
To prove that diversity need not mean  
divisiveness;  
And to witness to all  
That we must hold the whole world in our  
hands.”*

William F Schulz

### London and the South East District (LDPA)



### Annual Meeting and Spring Quarterly Meeting

**Saturday 23 March (1.30-4.00pm)**

**Mansford Street, Bethnal Green**

Worship led by Rev David Usher  
(District Minister)

Council will present its work over the past year.  
New Council will be elected for 2013-14

For more information please contact Rev David Usher  
E-mail: [davidusher@ldpa.org.uk](mailto:davidusher@ldpa.org.uk) Tel: 01732 455 143

### Hucklow Summer School

#### RE Summer School – 17 – 24 August 2013

**Theme: "Living at the Edge" - How do we find  
meaning at the margins where we find ourselves**

**Venue: The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow,  
Derbyshire**

A week packed with a rich mix of activities to stimulate the heart and the head. Optional sessions will cover the theme along with relaxed fellowship and fun

For further information please contact us on this email address: [info@hucklowsummerschool.org.uk](mailto:info@hucklowsummerschool.org.uk)



## Our Larger Unitarian Movement

**Faith, Fun and Future - at the 2013 Annual Meetings**

**At the Jubilee Campus, Nottingham University**

**Thursday 11th to Sunday 14th April 2013.**

Every year, around Easter time, the General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches (GA) holds its Annual Meetings to which delegates from congregations, fellowships, district associations and affiliated societies are invited, along with individual Unitarians. These meetings are commonly known as "The G.A." within Unitarian circles.

Basically, it's a mixture of FAITH, FUN and FUTURE – an opportunity to influence decisions on the future of our Unitarian movement, and a chance to get together with lots of Unitarians to worship and sing together, exchange views, share delicious meals, learn something new, be inspired by quality lectures from guest speakers and fellow Unitarians, and enjoy being immersed in a convivial atmosphere.

For more information contact: Andrew Mason – Tel: 020 7240 2384

Come along and take part in the decisions on our Unitarian future!

**BE INSPIRED! BE MOTIVATED! BE THERE!**



On 8 February 100 Unitarians from London and the South-East gathered in Worthing for a weekend of workshops, worship and conviviality. Staying in the comfortable Chatsworth Hotel, people could be seen chatting on sofas in the lounge in front of the fire or making their way to workshops on yoga, drawing or more cerebral topics such as assisted dying or social action. On Saturday evening Robin Ince gave a spirited and amusing talk on Darwin and Dawkins. On Sunday there were more workshops followed by a moving service in celebration of FUSE. It was a stimulating weekend where people made new friends and connected with old ones. Around eleven people came from Rossllyn Hill Chapel and had a good time. If you missed it, do try to come next year.



Fellowship at FUSE - Patricia Williams, Rev Patrick O'Neill, Ingrid Tavkar, Hillary Ratna and Zoe Gerrard.

**MARCH DIARY**

(\* = further details elsewhere in Bulletin)

**Sunday 3 March**

11.00am – Morning service - 'Community: Approach and Avoidance' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

12.30pm - Chapel AGM

7.00pm – Evening service - 'Community: Approach and Avoidance' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

**Tuesday 5 March**

7.00pm – Poetry group meets\*

**Wednesday 6 March**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel\*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel\*

**Thursday 7 March**

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

**Sunday 10 March**

11.00am – Morning service – 'A Place To Stand' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - 'A Place To Stand' \*

Led by Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

**Tuesday 12 March**

7.30pm – Social Action Committee meets

**Wednesday 13 March**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel\*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel\*

**Thursday 14 March**

7.00pm – Management Committee meets\*

**Sunday 17 March**

11.00am - Morning service – 'The Missing Piece: On the Blessings of Imperfection' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - 'The Missing Piece: On the Blessings of Imperfection' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

**Wednesday 20 March**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel\*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel\*

**Thursday 21 March**

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

**Sunday 24 March**

11.00am - Morning service – 'What We Love, We Empower' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service – 'Celebration of the Equinox' \*

Led by members of the "Wheel of the Year" group.

**Wednesday 27 February**

5.45pm – Tai Chi class in the Chapel\*

7.30pm – Choir rehearsal in the Chapel\*

**Thursday 29 March**

7.30pm – Book Group meets\*

**Sunday 30 March**

11.00am - Morning Service - 'Rising To Life' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

12.30 - Potluck Lunch in the hall\*

7.00pm - Evening Service - 'Rising To Life' \*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

**Chapel Directory****Chapel Office**

Sharron Conduit  
Tel: 020 7433 3267  
Fax: 020 7435 7457

**Chapel E-mail**

admin@rosslynhillchapel.com

**Chapel Online**

www.rosslynhillchapel.com  
www.facebook.com/rosslynhillunitarianchapel

**Chapel Address**

Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, 3 Pilgrims Place  
London NW3 1NG United Kingdom

**Care & Support**

Deborah Frankel  
Tel: 020 8209 1000  
Email: debfrankel@totalise.co.uk

**The Minister**

The Rev Dr Patrick O'Neill, The Manse, 3 Pilgrim's Place,  
London NW3 1NG Tel: 020 7435 3506  
E-mail: revponeill@aol.com

**Children's Chapel**

Steve Thomson  
Email: Steve@sfthompson.com

**Bulletin Team**

Ingrid Tavkar, Editor  
Editorial Team:

Stella Fakiyesi, Margaret Perry,  
Janna Williams, Erich Wagner

Layout: Ingrid Tavkar

Tel: 020 8455 0162; Email: RHUCbulletin@yahoo.com

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*"Our religion is a spiritual journey and each one of us is an explorer.  
Reason is our map and conscience is our compass.  
Loving kindness is our way in the world"*