



Open Mind

The Bulletin of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel

March 2014

March Services

Sunday 2 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Annual General Meeting Sunday
Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching
'Circles, Semi-Circles, and Foursquare:
The View from the Pulpit

Our minister gives his annual report as a sermon today. Come hear what our Chapel community has been about this past year and what we might yet accomplish. Come discover if you are a circle, semi-circle or foursquare, from the perspective of the minister. Come join us for worship today...and bring a friend along.

Sunday 9 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching
'All Things Bright and Beautiful:
Confessions of a Pantheist

".... I believe that all good things are one thing. That is what I'm feeling now every hour of the day. All good things are one thing. Sunsets, schools of philosophy, babies, constellations, cathedrals, operas, mountains, horses, poems. One thing is always walking among us in fancy-dress, in the gray cloak of the church or the green cloak of a meadow....The Greeks and Norsemen and Romans saw the superficial wars of nature and made the sun one god, the sea another, the wind a third.... They were not thrilled, as some ancient Israelite was, one night in the wastes, by the sudden blazing idea of all being the same God...." *G.K. Chesterton*
Come join us for worship today!

Sunday 16 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching
'Pride and Prejudice in A Multi-Cultural Society'

... if your own experience has never included the first-hand encounter with hatred and bigotry because of the mere color of your skin or the faintest accent of your family's native language or the religious background of your family's heritage ... if you really cannot imagine the insult to one's soul that comes with ethnic slurs or stereotyping of any kind – then today's sermon may hold very little for you. Or it may be especially important for you. Come join us for worship today!

Sunday 23 March (11.00am)

Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching
'Are You In the Right Church? Three Ways to Tell'

This morning our minister offers three simple ways to tell if you're in the right church for you. It's a model that is not dependent on any one theology, for the truth is that theology is only rarely the most important criterion in one's choice of religious community. Indeed, many people seem content belonging to churches where the formal theology itself is often incomprehensible and mystifying. But there may be other measures to consider when weighing how satisfying one's church is. Come join us for an interesting morning!

Sunday 23 March (7.00pm)

'Ostara/Spring Equinox Celebration'

Ostara, also called Spring Equinox or Vernal Equinox, celebrates the arrival of spring. Ostara marks the day when night and day are equal and balanced, hence the term "equinox" which means 'equal night'. Ostara is a Celtic festival of fire, light and fertility. The service will be participatory and led by our 'Wheel of the Year' group.

Sunday 30 March (11.00am & 7.00pm)

Guest Preacher Matthew Smith
'Listening and dialogue as spiritual practice'

Matthew will be looking at how we can make life better for one another by becoming better listeners. As it is also Mothering Sunday there will a time of reflection on that theme too.

*'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.'*

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 **April** issue of 'Open Mind' is **Wednesday 19 March 2014**.

From the Editor

"Spring" - a time of hope, with visible promise of new life all around us.

Let us work with the vernal forces, flow with the tide of renewed life, and do our utmost to meditate harmony and balance into our lives, our Chapel community and into the greater life of the human collective.

In March we celebrate the arrival of spring, the renewal and rebirth of nature. We celebrate St Patrick's Day, Mothering Sunday and Spring Equinox, when light and darkness are in balance.

So, let us balance the rational aspect of reason and intellect with the poetry of story and the heartbeat of personal experience.

May these words be an inspiration to us all:

*In this time of anticipated spring
let us allow ourselves to extend the anticipation --
to value the time of budding before blooming,
of seeding before sprouting.*

*This is a time of revelation -
the revealing of that which is eternal,
which we see every year,
but still need to be reminded
to see it in a new way.*

*There is also the revelation of that which is new.
Every spring we encounter something
never before seen.*

*It is that very newness which embodies hope
and potential for the wholeness,
which is yet to be.*

*Let us allow spring to unfold slowly
so that we may appreciate the true mystery
of rebirth and renewal.*

(source: 1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection)

Ingrid Tavkar

PLEASE NOTE!

This month's edition of Open Mind is a slim-line version mainly due to time constraints.

You will find essential information about events and activities in our Chapel..



PO'Nderings

From our Minister
Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

I'm sure some people must be confused by the contortions we've had to go through to satisfy the UK Border Agency requirements for my visa renewal. When I arrived here three years ago, the congregation voted to offer me a contract with the expectation that I would stay "about five years or so." Unfortunately, the Border Agency visa provision for non-EU clergy working in England is limited to three years, renewable at the Agency's discretion for an additional three years only. Fine and good. Except that the Agency then decided that for my visa to be extended, the congregation was required to open the ministry position anew here to applicants from UK and EU before offering me a continuance.

So the Chapel Board was required to appoint a new "Search Committee" and advertise the position as "open" and I had to re-apply for the job I currently hold. The position was duly listed, no other applicants applied besides myself, and therefore the congregation is asked to vote once more to call me as their minister.

Once that is done (a rather big assumption, eh wot? with our own by-laws requiring a 40% quorum of said congregation present and voting at an SGM called specifically for said purpose...) Patricia and I surrender our passports to the Agency for their renewal or rejection for another three years. Exactly how long the Agency keeps our passports while they make their decision remains to be seen, so please don't plan any trips in the meantime, thank you. The current visas expire in August.

Are you with me so far? The whole bureaucratic rigmarole makes one dizzy. I would complain except that I know that European citizens applying for work visas in the US now go through equally exasperating red tape. Alas, the days of fluid exchange between even the free countries of the world are no more. We clergy are a suspect lot who need to be closely scrutinized, after all.

I want you to know that Patricia and I like living in London, and I am proud to be minister of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel. I'm hoping that things go smoothly with this whole process and that you feel we can do some good things together over the next couple of years. April 20th marks the 35th Anniversary of my ordination to the Unitarian ministry. I fully expect this will be my last posting and I'm glad that I chose to come here. I just hope UK Border Agency allows us the opportunity to write a final chapter at our own pace. Cheers!
See you in Chapel....

....Po'n

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

2 March - Special General Meeting & Annual General Meeting at 12.30pm.

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

6 March & 20 March - Questing Groups meet at 7.00pm in the Chapel – a Religious Education programme for adults, led by our Minister Rev Patrick O'Neill.

7 March at 7.30pm - Following their successful evening last year Rosslyn Hill Chapel Choir will be singing more songs from the shows. Tickets £12 to include a hot meal.

13 March (1.00-3.00pm) & 27 March (7.00pm-9.00pm) - Stitch & Stories Groups meet to knit and crochet for various charity projects, and to share personal stories. The group is open to anyone who would like to learn to knit or crochet as well. Everyone is welcome.
For more information contact: Ingrid Tavkar (Tel: 020 8455 0162; email: ingridtavkar@gmail.com)

11 March - Social Action Committee meets.

13 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 please contact Kerry Reid (Chair) ahead of time as a courtesy.

21 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

30 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 or make a financial contribution (£2.50 minimum). We look forward to seeing you there.

MARCH DIARY

(* = further details elsewhere in Bulletin)

Sunday 3 March

11.00am – Morning service – *'Circles, Semi-Circles, and Foursquare: The View from the Pulpit'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

12.15pm – Chapel SGM & 12.30pm – Chapel AGM

7.00pm – Evening service – *'Circles, Semi-Circles, and Foursquare: The View from the Pulpit'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Tuesday 4 March

7.00pm – Poetry group meets*

Wednesday 5 March

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

Thursday 6 March

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

Friday 7 March

7.30pm – More Songs from the Shows*

Sunday 9 March

11.00am – Morning service – *'All Things Bright and Beautiful: Confessions of a Pantheist'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Sunday 9 March

7.00pm – Evening service – *'All Things Bright and Beautiful: Confessions of a Pantheist'*
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Tuesday 11 March

7.30pm – Social Action Committee meets

Wednesday 12 March

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

Thursday 14 March

1.00 – 3.00pm – Stitch & Stories Group*
7.00pm – Management Board meet

Sunday 16 March

11.00am - Morning service – *'Pride and Prejudice in A Multi-Cultural Society'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - *'Pride and Prejudice in A Multi-Cultural Society'**
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill

Wednesday 19 March

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

Thursday 20 March

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

Friday 21 March

7.30pm – Book Group meets*

Sunday 23 March

11.00am - Morning service – *'Are You In the Right Church? Three Ways to Tell'**
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 26 March

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

Thursday 27 March

7.00 – 9.00pm – Stitch & Stories Group meets*

Sunday 30 March

11.00am - Morning service – *'Listening and dialogue as spiritual practice'**
Led by Guest Preacher Matthew Smith

12.30pm – Pot Luck Lunch*

7.00pm – Evening service – *'Listening and dialogue as spiritual practice'**
Led by Guest Preacher Matthew Smith

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The Unitarians - Nurturing faith, celebrating life, embracing differences