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# Open Mind

The Bulletin of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel

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October 2012

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*Love is the spirit of this community, and service is its prayer.*

*Acceptance is its sacrament.*

*This is our great purpose:*

*To seek wholeness for all beings*

*To strive for justice and equality*

*And to join our hands in pursuit of unity and peace*



## October Services

**Sunday 7 October (11.00am & 7.00pm)**

**Special 150th Anniversary Celebration Sunday!**

*Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching*  
*"The Temple in the Heart"*

Come join us, one and all, for a very special Sunday in the life of the Chapel as we celebrate the 150th Anniversary Sunday of the building of our Sanctuary in 1862. We've invited old members and friends, Unitarians from greater London, and interfaith friends from around Hampstead to come celebrate with us in our venerable Chapel. Dr O'Neill's sermon will touch on the generations before us who have gathered here for worship, for celebration, and for service. By all means, bring a friend to Chapel this week!

**Sunday 14 October (11.00am)**

*Guest Preacher Matthew Smith*  
*"Barbarians, Barriers and Beyond".*

This is a service about our reactions to the outsider and whether we need to question how tolerant or otherwise we are, and what we might do about it. Led by Matthew Smith (Ministry Student)

**Sunday 14 October (7.00pm)**  
*"Barbarians, Barriers and Beyond".*

We will draw on Matthew Smith's sermon from the morning, reflecting on it and sharing our thoughts.

**Sunday 21 October (11.00am)**

*Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching*

*"The Spirit in Mid-Life, Part 1: The Face in the Mirror"*

This week we present the first of a two-part sermon on the inherent tension of the Mid-Life passage and its challenges. Exactly when "Mid-Life" begins and when it ends is, of course, arbitrary and relative. Mid-life is where the first half of life and second half of life meet. It is the territory that must be safely crossed if we are ever to claim a full life for ourselves. Mid-life, for some, is a time when the compass points suddenly disappear from all our most treasured maps. However else it might be described, mid-life is often a spiritual crisis of the first order. But it can also be a time of open doors and new opportunity. Come join us for an interesting Sunday!

**Please Note:** We're asking everyone to bring non-perishable goods to church today - these will be donated to a charity as part of our annual Harvest Celebration!

**Sunday 21 October (7.00pm)**

Please see notice inside about our Evening Service discussion this evening!!

**Sunday 28 October (11.00am)**

*Rev Dr Patrick T. O'Neill preaching*

*"The Spirit in Mid-Life, Part 2: Unfinished Business"*

In truth, history rings with stories of great men and women who did not begin to find their personal peaks until the second half of their lives. The point to remember is that all of life's most significant doors do not suddenly slam shut at any single age in life! New doors open for those willing to embrace their time of life. New satisfactions, new accomplishments beckon, new levels of love and grace and wisdom are offered to us if we stay open to life. Ramakrishna wrote "all our lives we live continually in the winds of grace-- we have only to lift our sails." Come worship with us this Sunday!

**Sunday 28 October (7.00pm)**

*"Samhain Celebration"*  
*(pronounced sow-inn - also called Halloween)*

A time to honour our ancestors and to say farewell to those that have passed this last year. The service is participatory and one of the eight great Celtic celebrations during the "Wheel of the Year". Led by members of our "Wheel of the Year" group

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 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

## From the Editor

*"Autumn to winter, winter into spring,  
Spring into summer, summer into fall.  
So rolls the changing year, and so we change;  
Motion so swift, we know not that we move."*  
( Dianah Murlock Craik)

Autumn marks the transition from summer into winter – a time for thanksgiving ceremonies and harvest festivals. In September, some of us celebrated the fruits of harvests and the changing seasons at the Autumn Equinox with reflection, poetry, and music.

Harvest is a time of year when we reflect on what we have to be thankful for – we focus on the abundance we have in our lives and count our blessings. Hopefully, this should make us want to share with others who are not so fortunate. In the words of Francis of Assisi – *'it is in giving that we receive'*.

Now in October, we have several opportunities to practise 'giving'. We may decide to increase our financial contribution to our Chapel community; we can support choir members in their sponsored 'Chapel Clean-Up' (see p. 6); we can volunteer with the 'Cold Weather Shelter' (see p. 5); we can get involved with 'SimpleGifts' (see p. 11) - just a few suggestions to start with.

We prepare ourselves for the stillness in the dark, reaching into the deep places of regeneration within and bringing back the treasures of creativity and spiritual knowledge.

Autumn is a time of rest and introspection, and a time of planning – planning for 'springtime'!

*"As we enter the dark seasons of the year,  
May the starlight and firelight  
continue to show us the way home.  
May hugs and smiles continue to warm us  
And may the voices of our friends  
surround us with love"*

**- Ingrid Tavkar**



### **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 November issue of 'Open Mind' is **Wednesday 17 October 2012**.



## PO'Nderings

From our Minister  
Rev Patrick T. O'Neill

Several people have asked for copies of the piece I read in Chapel on 16 September. It has long been a favourite of mine.

It was written some years back by the famed Unitarian preacher, John Wolfe, who was many years minister of All Souls Unitarian Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, one of the largest Unitarian churches in the world. It is entitled "Why Join a Unitarian Church?"

*"There is only one reason for joining a Unitarian church and that is, to support it. You want to support it because it stands against superstition and fear. Because this church points to what is noblest and best in human life. Because it is open to women and men of whatever race, creed, colour, place or origin, or sexual orientation.*

*"You want to support a Unitarian church because it has a free pulpit. Because you can hear ideas expressed there which would cost any other minister his or her job. You want to support it because it is a place where children come without being saddled with guilt or terrified of some "celestial peeping-tom," where they can learn that religion is for joy, for comfort, for gratitude and love.*

*"You want to support it because it is a place where walls between people are torn down rather than built-up. Because it is a place for the religious displaced persons of our time, the refugees from mixed marriages, the unwanted free-thinkers and those who insist against orthodoxy that they must work out their own beliefs.*

*"You want to support a Unitarian church because it is more concerned with human beings than with dogmas. Because it searches for the holy, rather than dwelling upon the depraved. Because it calls no one a sinner, yet knows how deep is the struggle in each person's breast and how great is the hunger for what is good.*

*"You want to support a Unitarian church because it can laugh. Because it stands for something in a day when religion is still more concerned with platitudes than with prejudice and war. You want to support it not because it buys you some insurance policy towards your funeral service, but because it insults neither your intelligence nor your conscience, and because it calls you to worship what is truly worthy of your sacrifice. There is only one reason for joining a Unitarian church. To support it!"*

Have you been attending our Chapel for a while now and been wondering if you should take the step of declaring yourself a member here? We love for you to make it official. Give me a call if you'd like to discuss it. See you at church!  
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.

### October Activities and Meetings

4 October - **Management Committee** 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.

9 October - **Social Action Committee** meets

16 October - If you like to read and /or write poetry, the **Chapel 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))

25 October - **The Book Group** will meet at 7.30pm at the Magdala at 2a South Hill Park in Hampstead. We will discuss the works of William Ellery Channing. For further information contact: Bill Ellington (Tel: 020 7354 0397, email: [Ellingtonbill@aol.com](mailto:Ellingtonbill@aol.com))

28 October - **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



## 150th Anniversary - A Year of Celebration

In 1862 the first service was held in Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel's new building. Rev Thomas Sadler, who was minister for 45 years, conducted it.

**Sunday 7 October 11.00am - Service of Thanksgiving and Ingathering.** Rev Patrick O'Neill leads this celebration of the Chapel's 150th anniversary taking as his theme 'the Temple in the Heart'. There will be participation by members, a song from the children and a congregation of members and friends of the Chapel from local Unitarian churches, the GA and LDPA, as well as other denominations. Service followed by a time of fellowship and refreshment (with birthday cake!).

**Friday 12 October 7.30pm - Anniversary Soiree.** An evening of words and music with supper - commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Chapel's use of our present building.

**Wednesday 7 November (pm)** - Joint concert by Rosslyn Hill Chapel Choir and Channing School Chamber Choir performing 'Jubilate Deo', composed by James Drew-Edwards to mark the 150th anniversary.

Celebrating the Anniversary Year  
continues up to June 2013!

So far we have enjoyed several celebratory and fundraising events, with an accent on the fun. Of course, they didn't just happen. Due to the kind generosity of the individuals sponsoring and organising these events, they were planned and paid for in advance. Dates were confirmed, publicity was organised, fees paid, attention paid to issues of security and the usual 'housekeeping'. Volunteers were welcomed and the welcoming face of Rosslyn Hill Chapel was shown to the world.

Do you have the resources to take on the entire sponsorship of an event with all it entails? Or perhaps you could offer to pay performance fees or the cost of printing publicity and tickets? It would be good if the costs of sponsoring successful fundraising events might be shared. May we all share a wider vision of the future together!

If this idea appeals to you, or you have a particular idea for a concert of other fundraising event, please contact Janna Williams (j.williams16@virginmedia.com) or Ingrid Tavkar (ingridtavkar@tiscali.co.uk)



### A Prayer of Dedication for a Meetinghouse

*Out of wood and stone, out of dream and sacrifice,  
the people build a home.  
Out of the work of their hands and hearts and minds,  
the people fashion a symbol and a reality.*

*May this house be truly a place of meeting:  
meeting in warmth and joy and openness;  
meeting in courage and love and trust.*

*May all who enter here trust one another so surely  
that they may share the deep fires that burst into anger  
as much as the sweet spring waters that swell into laughter;  
the slow erosion of wounded tears as much as the soaring song.*

*May these walls know silence as a hundred hearts search inward,  
each for its own small spark of hope that might otherwise be snuffed out  
in the noise.*

*May these rafters hear the voice of the child as surely  
as that of the orator and the sound of the lute and the clack of the typewriter  
and the swish of the broom and know that all are as holy as the shout of a million stars.*

*May the rain fall lightly on this house and the sun shine warmly  
and the winds blow softly and bless it as a place of joy and peace.*

Source: 1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection; altered

## OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



### Whither Our Evening Worship?

For a number of years now the Chapel has offered an alternative evening Worship Service on Sunday nights at 7.00pm. These evening services tend to be contemplative in style, attended by a small circle of anywhere from 8 to 20 people, usually about a dozen or so, and most often facilitated by the minister. There are a number of regulars who attend, and some visitors.

The Worship Group, in discussions with the minister, is now weighing ways in which we might re-envision the structure and style of our evening services. For this reason we wish to set aside our evening gathering on Sunday night October 21 for a group consideration of whether we wish to make any changes in our Sunday evening worship format. Any and all members of the congregation are invited to join in our discussion. Worship Group Chair Gordon Jackson and Rev O'Neill will lead the evening.

### Cold Weather Shelter



Once again we are running a cold weather shelter in our hall on Friday nights throughout November, December and the first two weeks in January for those who find themselves homeless. The guests share a dinner and conversation with volunteers, spend the night in the hall and then have breakfast before going on their way.

This year we are working with a college who will provide volunteers for the evenings and overnight, but we do need help with breakfasts, preparing food and donations to cover our expenses. The shelter costs around £100 a week to run as we are feeding around 25 people dinner and breakfast (guests plus volunteers).

So when the chill winds start to blow and you are cosy and warm in your home, please spare a thought for those less fortunate and consider how you might help. **Leighton Cole**

For more information visit C4WS website: [www.coldweathershelter.org](http://www.coldweathershelter.org)



### Thank you from the Flower Group

The Flower Group would like to thank all those who gave donations for flowers for the 150th Anniversary & Harvest Celebration and Funeral Service for Ann Finer. The group relies on these donations to finance the chapel flowers for these special events as well as Sunday services. There are also a number of Sundays that still need sponsorship. Please consider honouring a special person or an event for £20. For a sponsorship form please contact the Chapel office or email [admin@rosslynhillchapel.com](mailto:admin@rosslynhillchapel.com).

The Flower Group always welcomes new members to help with Sunday flowers in the Chapel. If you would like to make a floral arrangement (assistance given if needed) or are able to put flowers in a vase and join our happy band of Flower Group people, we would be very pleased to welcome you. No experience is needed as help will be at hand, or if you would like to come and watch when an arrangement is being made, please get in touch with Helene (Tel: 077 7817 6425 – email: [Helenehow@aol.com](mailto:Helenehow@aol.com)).

# OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



## The Choir/Chapel Clean-Up

In an ingenious scheme to raise funds to pay choir expenses, such as soloists fees and the cost of music, as well as to help to make our chapel a more welcoming environment, most members of the Choir have volunteered to give a couple of hours to clean the chapel interior on Sunday 14 October at a sponsorship rate of £5 per person per hour. Other choir members have agreed to sponsor them.

Please join our efforts by becoming a sponsor and/or by collecting sponsors for us. Sponsorship forms will be available in chapel on Sunday mornings.

### Clean-up will include:

- Polish all the wooden surfaces
- Polish all the brass
- Clean window ledges and walls either side
- Clean, sort and mend the kitchen cupboards
- Clear out and defrost the fridge
- Sort out/throw out and wash tea-lights and holders
- Clean stonework
- De-wax where needed
- Wash the floor tiles
- Wash sculptures
- Clean and polish the font.

**Sally Somerville** (email: [songspots@gmail.com](mailto:songspots@gmail.com)) & **Alice Whieldon** (RHUCC & SAC)

## Helping Hands

### Stewards

7 October	Kieran Seale & Camino Eguren
14 October	TBA
21 October	Britta & Jim Burtles
28 October	TBA

### Worship Assistant

7 October	James Chiriyankandath
14 October	Leighton Cole
21 October	Julia Reid
28 October	Zoe Gerrard



### Other events in the Chapel

**Saturday 13 October (8.15pm)** - Cello & Piano Recital - Selina Gellert

**Friday 19 October** - Lunchtime Concert – John Campbell (Trumpet)

**Saturday 20 October (10.00am – 4.00pm)** – ‘Ikebana’ Workshop in Chapel

**Saturday 27 October** - Concert by David Power



## In Memoriam

Words spoken by Ken Levy at a  
Service in celebration of  
Ann Finer's Life.

### My Darling Ann

I did a very clever thing. But I can't pretend that I knew it. I took you to the intended place of my burial. I wanted your opinion. It was a chilly April afternoon last year. I sent you a formal invite the day before. So, enacting the instructions – the procession of two of us alighted from the train at the nearest station and then proceeded on foot down the road.

We paused on the way for words and reflection outside house number 82. You had to listen to me making a melodramatic speech about the few months I had stayed in the property before going to live abroad. You played the part of the interested mourner so well, pretending to take in every silly word. (Not that you've had much practice of anything, Ann – just twenty-three years of having to listen to the million and one scripts swimming around in my head that I would fire at you like cannon balls the moment they were loaded and ready!)

Five minutes later we were met by the cemetery manager in her office and ceremoniously (well you anyway, me hanging on in the front for dear life) driven by her in a buggy to the spot I had in mind for what I had always referred to (to you and only you) as "my sleep of a million years".

A few weeks later I told you that inscribed on my memorial bench facing the plot will be these words: "Darling Ann, let's sit down here together and talk". Of course I was assuming that I'd go before you. How could a mud hut outlast the Tower of London?

Ann, we're riding on a buggy again. It's early July this year and we're at Euston Station. We're going to Anglesey. You booked the holiday to visit an unwell neighbour from your time living on the isle many years ago. Without knowing, you had chosen the only week in July I could commit to. I'm going to say 'Divine Providence'. (After all, look where we've been coming for all those 23 years). It turns out to be our last holiday of so many wonderful holidays.

You've arranged buggies and wheelchairs at stations, taxis to and fro. I'm having a great time. Looking out over Cemaes Bay from our hotel balcony, doing a crossword with you. But Ann, I'm getting very worried, we walk a hundred yards and you're in such discomfort. In pain! Bearing your pain. But your visits to the neighbour do her so much good. That's why you're here – and I'm there too – Oh, lucky man.

So Ann, it's a date - My memorial bench. You know exactly where it is. Unexpectedly I'll be the one who's late. Oh, and bring Dickie with you. That wonderful cat you had a number of years that featured in all those three-way conversations.

I won't have changed. I'll still be cursing a world that never acknowledged my brilliance. You won't have changed. You'll be radiant light shining above and beyond me. And again I'm going to hear that wonderful voice. That voice that instantly lifts the spirit and gladdens the heart - even if someone only ever heard it once, because 'once' would be enough for that person to know how special you are. They'd want to meet you again.

Which means I didn't really do such a clever thing, Ann. Because after my invitation inscribed on that bench for you to join me, I added two more words: "All welcome." They'll be trampling over me to get to it - everyone that ever met you, even if it was only for half an hour. The cat will do a runner as they always do. It'll be the most crowded bench in history, but wherever I am in the throng – my heart will be so happy. Just to be near you – to be near you again, my Darling Ann.

*Into the freedom of wind and sunshine - we let you go.  
Into the dance of the stars and the plantes - we let you go.  
Into the wind's breath and the hands of the star maker - we let you go.  
We love you, we miss you, and we want you to be happy -  
Go safely, go dancing, go running home.*



## News from the Management Committee

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 4 October 2012\* at 7.00pm in the Chapel (in the Cottage basement Science room).

Meeting held on Thursday 13 September 2012  
James Chiriyankandath in the chair.

**Minister's Report:** The Minister, Rev Patrick O'Neill, had attended the week long Annual British Unitarian Minister's Retreat at Great Hucklow. There had been a 'rich course' on Spiritual Directing and he had met a number of new colleagues. He and Patricia had enjoyed holiday breaks in Ireland and Edinburgh. As had been reported, Charlotte Illingworth, director of the Children's Chapel resigned to attend a full time course in needlework. Charlotte had been thanked with a presentation and refreshments on 2nd September. The Children's Programme Committee were keeping Children's Chapel going at present. In addition, Sholto Kynoch, the Chapel's organist, had resigned, owing to pressure of work. He had written to him, expressing his regret. He spoke with sadness of Ann Finer whom he had visited during her last illness.

**Worship Group report:** Gordon Jackson (chair) had circulated his report. At the evening service on 21st October there would be a chance for people to review the evening service, think about what draws people to the service, ask what its purpose is and look to the future. Visiting worship leaders would be taking services on the following Sundays: 23 Sept. David Darling; 14 Oct. Matthew Smith; 18 Nov. Rev Rob Gregson; 20 Jan Rev Bill Darlison. **Stewarding:** Hillary Ratna was helping Chris Mason with this.

The Minister expressed his gratitude to the WG, it was a 'great committee' and Gordon 'an excellent chair'.

**150th Anniversary:** The Minister reported on plans for the Anniversary Thanksgiving service on 7th October. Local Unitarian ministers, members of the GA and LDPA, and others had been invited. The theme for the service was to be 'The Temple in the Heart', connecting with the tradition the Chapel represents. Members would contribute memories and the children would sing. A birthday cake would be shared after the service. Other 150th events are listed in Open Mind. The anniversary year was being celebrated from June 2012-June 2013. All ideas for new events welcome!

**Property Sale Group:** Negotiations were continuing. These were complicated and time consuming, but Paul ver Bruggen reported that progress was being made.

**Administrator's report:** Sharron Conduit highlighted a number of items from her long report.

**Caretaker:** Mr Leaver (Huggie) was working as temporary caretaker/handyman. The position would be advertised in the new year.

**Stained glass windows:** Two windows had been repaired by a stained glass specialist. A third window was in urgent need of repair. The Board agreed this should be put in hand.

**Damp:** Major work had to be undertaken in the Basement Cottage office because of a serious damp problem. Two walls would be treated for damp and a damp proof membrane laid. Much of the expense of the repair would be paid by the Academy School.

Damp was also a problem in the Chapel where water had come in during a storm. Plaster would be removed so the wall could dry out. Difficult decisions had to be taken as to what work should be done on the roof/gutters given that the whole roof would have to be replaced at some point.

**Piano and Organ:** Both needed expensive repairs but were up to the standard musicians expected, at the moment.

**Treasurer's report:** Jane Crispin circulated her report and the cash flow sheet for the month. Revenues from the schools, following the start of term, would boost income. She was scrutinizing all the Chapel's expenses and sources of income. She talked about the need for significant fund raising. She was, with the Board's agreement, having a preliminary talk with an architect about the refurbishment of the Hall.

When refurbished, the Hall could be used for more events such as concerts and wedding receptions.

**Long Term Finance Group:** Members of the Board had met informally on 1st September to discuss the report from the LTFG. John Lawrence (chair) had presented the findings and recommendations of the Group. Following the discussion of the report, John had prepared a presentation for the SGM. Jane saw the need for a Finance Committee to be set up as a standing committee of the Board to carry out the recommendations of the LTFG and to manage the money brought in by the sale of the Willoughby Road site. The Board agreed that such a committee be convened.

**Social Action Committee:** The SAC were preparing, Leighton Cole (chair) reported, for Cold Weather Shelter at the Chapel over weekends in November and December, and planned a Book Day in the spring. The Board thanked Leighton for the report.

**Membership:** Kate Buchanan had reported on the review of membership that was taking place. A questionnaire had been circulated to members and around 50 had replied. A wide range of views on every topic had been expressed and these would be very helpful.

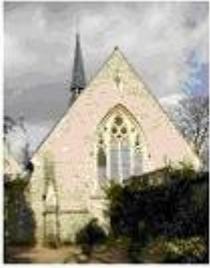
The Board expressed its gratitude to Kate for conducting and reporting on this comprehensive survey.

**Elders Report:** Will Hopper said the Elders had nothing to report.

**Special General Meeting 16 September:** The Board felt that this was a very important meeting. As regards finance, the more self-supporting the Chapel could be, the better. A greater sense of ownership, the idea Rev O'Neill had talked about at the February SGM, would bring this goal nearer.

The motion to approve the Chapel applying for a licence to conduct civil partnerships of same-sex couples would, it was hoped be warmly supported by members. Cross Street chapel in Manchester already had already obtained a licence. A press release had been drafted for circulation to the local papers and Unitarian periodicals after the meeting.

\*Next meeting: Thursday 4 October.  
Please note change of date, October only.



## OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY

### Feedback from the SGM - 16 September 2012

The congregation voted almost unanimously (one abstention) for the Boards recommendations on member contribution at the SGM recently.

The background briefly: at the AGM in February, the meeting decided it needed to have a better understanding of chapel finances and in particular to see if the congregation could pay its way as far as the costs of running the chapel. At the moment, the congregation is heavily subsidized by income from property leaving no funds to maintain the fabric of the buildings. Rev O'Neill gave an address to the meeting that it was important for members to fully support the Chapel.

A group was set up to study the issue - the Long Term Finance Group – and all members should have received a copy of the report. The group concluded the congregation covers about 45% of its costs and the Board recommended a three part strategy for the congregation to cover its costs:

- (1) Increase membership to 200 in the next 3 years;
- (2) Increase member subscriptions to at least 1% of gross salary per member including all current plate donations to be incorporated into a standing order;
- (3) Increase revenues from ceremonies and events.

The combination of these three strategies will enable the congregation to be self-supporting, and allow surplus from property either to refurbish the property, build reserves to pay for a new roof when it is needed and to scale up on social action project to the more needy.

On the increased subs, the Board felt that 1% of gross income was a good starting point and it guides people to give according to their means. Ministerial dispensation will be available on an annually renewable basis.

The Board will be communicating with you all in the next few weeks to suggest how best you can help with these 3 initiatives and Sharron Conduit will be sending out guides for how to calculate what you currently give in subs and plate contributions and how to develop a new standing order.

If you would like more information, please ask for a copy of the report or of the meeting minutes from Sharron or contact a Board member or Rev O'Neill to see how you can help.

**John Lawrence**

## ASSISTED DYING



A small group of us gathered recently to consider whether or not Rosslyn Hill should, or could, develop a useful opinion on the subject.

Principal conclusion: Unitarians should be in favour of choice in this matter. However, we were neither authorised nor qualified to speak on behalf of the Chapel. The rest of the congregation must have the opportunity to express their views before we can come to any conclusion, make any proposals or recommendations.

Caveats: The bill will need to be carefully worded but that is not unique to this particular legislation. Those who are outspoken against this idea seem to be constrained by dogma and blind faith rather than concern or sympathy for those who may be affected. They say this might be the beginning of a slippery slope but aren't they already stuck at the foot of their own slippery slope of dogma, prejudice, intolerance and misunderstandings?.

The way forward: possibilities include a survey; informal meetings; a themed service and sermon; a series of workshops, debates or discussions. What do you think?

A useful, factual overview is available from <http://www.unitarian.org.uk/info/assisted-dying-discussion-pack.shtml>. Jim Burtles

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## OUR CHAPEL COMMUNITY



### Interview with Mrs Barbara Elliott of Channing School

Through an unusual connection in 2010, Mrs Barbara Elliott, headmistress at Channing School, found herself travelling in Transylvania visiting a Unitarian school and several churches. The visit came about following a reunion of 'old girls' at Channing for those who had attended in the 1960s or earlier. One woman named Barbara Szivos had been at the school for five years in the late 50s. At that time there was a scheme where the Hungarian communities of Unitarian churches in Transylvania (now part of Romania) gave scholarships to daughters of Unitarian ministers to attend Channing School in Highgate.

When Barbara Szivos met Mrs Elliott at the reunion in 2010, she spoke to her about the time she spent at Channing and her experience of the school. Barbara Szivos said that she now lived in London, but was returning to Transylvania in May and invited Mrs Elliott to accompany her. During the trip Mrs Elliott visited a Unitarian school in Tirgu Mures. Sadly there were no teachers during her visit as the Romanian government had withdrawn funding from the school. It was now up to the churches to support the school and so the school was having difficulties.

She did visit three Unitarian churches and met their ministers. One particularly lovely church was in Szekelyderzsi where frescoes from the medieval period have recently been uncovered. Mrs Elliott was fortunate enough to also travel with Smaranda Enache, a politician who has campaigned in Romania on behalf of ethnic minorities.

Although Romania is a country in transition facing many of the economic challenges due to the world recession, it is a country full of promise and has a good standard of education. Mrs Elliott told of one dinner she attended with Smaranda, her husband and mother, and Barbara Szivos where they had a total of 6 languages between them. The dinner table conversation was in French as that was their common language.

The Channing School in Highgate was founded in 1885 by Emily and Matilda Sharpe, two daughters of a Unitarian minister and is the only Unitarian secondary school in the UK. It is named after the famous Unitarian, William Ellery Channing, whom the women admired. It still reflects the Unitarian ethos of liberal education, tolerance, freedom, inclusion and social action. Leighton Cole.

*(Copy edited and approved by Mrs Elliott 19 September 2012)*

On **Wednesday 7 November** Rosslyn Hill Chapel Choir will be taking part in a concert with Channing School Choir. We hope that this will be the beginning of more collaborative events with Channing School.  
(details elsewhere in Open Mind).



*“Do not train a child to learn by force or harshness; but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.”*

*(Plato)*

*”Every mind was made for growth,  
for knowledge,  
and its nature is sinned against  
when it is doomed to ignorance”.*

*(William Ellery Channing)*

## Our Larger Unitarian Movement



On behalf of the SimpleGifts: Unitarian Centre for Social Action Board, staff, volunteers and all those who enjoy our Tuesday afternoon Tea and Homework Help initiative, a terrific "Thank You!" to Rosslyn Hill Chapel for their generous donation of (£466.02) the Sunday collection in August. The generosity of Unitarian individuals and congregations like Rosslyn Hill is our primary means of support and we make every penny count as we build a liberal presence and outreach into the Mansford St. Estate. As one of the primary backers of the original Mansford St Chapel and Mission in the late 1800s it is especially gratifying to receive renewed support from Rosslyn Hill Unitarians and friends today.

Please keep us in your hearts, prayers and best intentions going forward  
and once again - our and my personal heartfelt thanks.

Gratefully,

Rob Gregson, Programme Director, SimpleGifts website: [www.simplegiftsucsa.org.uk](http://www.simplegiftsucsa.org.uk)



### Important Safeguarding Training (London)

**Saturday 13 October 2012**

Every congregation is now compelled by law to have a trained Safeguarding Officer and Policy. A training day including important information about safeguarding and a session on volunteering will take place at Essex Church, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, Notting Hill Gate, London W8 4RT. Please arrive at 10am for a prompt 10.30am start. Contact: Local Leadership Strategy Group – email: [unitarianLLSG@gmail.com](mailto:unitarianLLSG@gmail.com), tel:0164 278 2219.

“An Afternoon of Liberal Christian Worship,  
Fellowship and Dialogue”

### Unitarian Christian Association Autumn Meeting

**Saturday 27 October 2012**

The Brighton Unitarian Church  
New Road, Brighton, BN1 1UF  
[www.brightonunitarian.org.uk](http://www.brightonunitarian.org.uk)

**ALL WELCOME!**

If possible, do indicate your interest in attending to: UCA Events  
Officer, Jeff Gould on [jeffreylanegould@btinternet.com](mailto:jeffreylanegould@btinternet.com) or 01625 403509



**OCTOBER DIARY**

(\* = further details elsewhere in Bulletin)

**Wednesday 3 October**

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

**Thursday 4 October**

7.00pm – Management Committee meets\*

**Saturday 6 October**

10.00am-12.30pm – Harvest Decorating in the Chapel

**Sunday 7 October**

11.00am – Morning service - “The Temple in the Heart”\*  
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - “The Temple in the Heart”\*  
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

**Tuesday 9 October**

7.30pm – Social Action Committee meets\*

**Wednesday 10 October**

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

**Friday 12 October**

7.30pm – “Anniversary Soiree”\*

**Sunday 14 October**

11.00am – Morning service – “Barbarians, Barriers and Beyond”\*  
Led by Matthew Smith (Ministry Student)

2.00pm-6.00pm – Choir clean-up in the Chapel\*

7.00pm – Evening service –

“Barbarians, Barriers and Beyond”\*

**Monday 15 October**

7.00pm – Poetry group meets\*

**Wednesday 17 October**

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

**Sunday 21 October**

11.00am - Morning service – “The Spirit in Mid-Life, Part 1: The Face in the Mirror”\*  
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

7.00pm – Evening service - “Whither Our Evening Worship?”\*

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill & Gordon Jackson

**Wednesday 24 October**

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

**Thursday 25 October**

7.30pm – Chapel Book Club\*

**Sunday 28 October**

11.00am - Morning service – “The Spirit in Mid-Life, Part 2: Unfinished Business”\*  
Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

Led by Rev Dr Patrick T. O’Neill

12.30pm - Potluck Lunch\*

7.00pm – Evening service – “Samhain Celebration”\*  
Led by the Wheel of the Year group

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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”*