



Brighton
Unitarians

October 2018 Newsletter

Sunday Services

Please note: services are at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

We would be grateful if you would switch your phones to airplane mode before the start of the service.

7th October - A service celebrating volunteering at our Church.
Caroline Drijver and Jef Jones, Brighton Unitarians
Pianist Pamela Nickels

14th October Rev Maria Curtis, Horsham Unitarians
Pianist Joe Ward

21st October Jef Jones, Lay Leader, Brighton Unitarians
Pianist Stuart Deeks

28th October Stephen Crowther, Lay Leader, Hastings Unitarians
Pianist Kathy Pitt

Quiet Reflection 7-8 pm, 11th October

Welcome from Jef

Welcome to our Newsletter for October. September has been a lively month for our church and October and November promise to be just as busy.

First of all I'd like to thank Fanny and Ann for organising our Vigil for World Peace Day on 21st September. Sitting in stillness in our church throughout the night was a challenging and positive experience. At 5am we walked through Brighton to the Peace Statue to lay a garland there. Fanny had created this - a lovely and symbolic spray of rosemary for remembrance, lavender for healing and an olive branch for peace.

Many thanks also to Trisha Purchas and her family for providing a terrific lunch following our Autumn Equinox Service. It was a feast really, and offered in honour of Trisha's late son Gavin. It marked the second anniversary of Gavin's death and was very much a celebration of his life.

Our service on 7th October will celebrate volunteering at our church. Of course our church is dependent on a wide range of tasks and roles undertaken by our volunteers. Caroline Drijver, our membership secretary, and I will be leading this service together. Also this month on the afternoon of Sunday 28th October our member Rev Jennifer Sanders will lead a special service of remembrance and gratitude for the 12 step recovery programme. As Jennifer says the 12 Step Movement began as a solution for alcoholics, and became a worldwide programme for people struggling with a broad range of addictions. It is a deeply spiritual movement and a blessing for so many people. Details are below.

This month sees the return of Kathy's very popular Curry and Quiz Night. Everyone is welcome and again details are below.

Looking forward, do please keep 6pm on Saturday, 24th November free in your diary for the grand re-opening of our Portico. This will mark the completed restoration of the front of our building - a major achievement for our church community.

Finally I'd like to thank everyone for your birthday wishes, and for my very welcome gift of Amazon vouchers. Turning 60 turns out to be not so bad! Cheers everyone!

Jef Jones

Brighton Unitarian Church Committee Election Call for Nominations

Do you know a church member who you think would be good as a committee member, or would you like to become a committee member yourself?

Brighton Unitarian Church would like to encourage its members to please consider becoming a member of the Church Committee or to think about nominating someone else. Nominators and nominees need to have been a member of the church for at least a year.

If you would like more information about what is involved in being a committee member then do speak to any of the current committee members who would be happy to talk with you.

For nomination forms please go to the website or pick one up from the foyer in the church.

Paper and online nominations are both welcome, with a preference for an online nomination if possible.

Please submit your paper applications in an envelope to the Church Office, for the attention of Katherine Malthouse, the Elections Manager this year. For online submissions, just follow the instructions on the website.

Please submit your nominations forms by 13th December 2018. The election will take place at our next Annual General Meeting on Sunday 27th January 2019 after the service.

Peace Vigil

A silent candlelit vigil took place through the night on Friday 21st September - holding the church as a place of peace and contemplation. Unitarians have been witnesses for peace for many generations.

Michael Antram, Rest in Peace

Most of our members will have heard by now the sad news that our much loved and respected member Michael Antram died recently.

Michael was a deeply thoughtful and honourable man, a person of great spirit. His spiritual journey was a long one, and it had led him, in the later years of his life, to become a committed Unitarian. He was always engaged with what he heard at our services, and always concerned with our church, both its history and its future. He will be much missed.

We send all our love and kind thoughts to his wife, Ann, and to the Antram family.

Portico Rescue - Fundraising

Work on the iconic columns and steps at the front of the building should be completed by the end of October. The Contractor is still hoping to strike the scaffold by the 19th October with the only remaining work being the repairs to the flagstones at the base of the Portico. This is a massive achievement bearing in mind all the additional work that has been undertaken and is testament to the hard work and dedication of the team of builders we have on site.

Our fundraising efforts must, however, continue. The generosity of our members, friends and the people of Brighton has been tremendous and we cannot thank them enough BUT we have to have one last push to raise the required money to pay all the bills!

If you have not already done so, please take a look at the short film we have made about our Portico Rescue Appeal <https://vimeo.com/284934892> and see for yourself the extent of the damage and why we are asking for help.

It is very easy to donate, just go to our website: www.brightonunitarian.org.uk and click on the **Just Giving** button.

Or, if you prefer, you can send a cheque, made payable to "Brighton Unitarian Church", to BUC, New Road, Brighton BN1 1UF.

Thank you.

New Chairs for the Hall

We are lucky enough to be in receipt of a very generous donation from a member of the church community who has expressed a wish that the money be used for the purchase of new chairs for the church hall. The chairs we have chosen are light and easy to set out and pack up and will make a really big difference to the work the volunteers do on Sunday mornings in preparing for the church service. We are once again indebted to the kindness and consideration of our friends.

From the Lay Leader

*Buwaib, oh Buwaib.
Bells of a lighthouse lost at the bottom of the sea.
Water is in the pots and the sunset is in the trees.
The pots ooze bells of rain, their crystal melts in the wailing.
Buwaib, oh Buwaib.
Sympathy for you, Buwaib, darkens in my blood,
Sad like rain, Oh my river,
Buwaib, oh Buwaib.*

from *The River and the Death*, Badr Shakkir Al-Sayab, 1924-1964.

Although I read quite a lot of poetry sometimes something will happen to remind me just how much poetry there is in the world, and what a small fraction of it one person can ever know about, let alone appreciate or absorb. This September I challenged myself to read one new poem every day, and to try to read outside of my comfort zone. Sometimes this has meant reading from books I've bought but not read, and sometimes I've looked around online for authors I've not come across. One poem however came to me via a rather circuitous route.

The American artist Donald Glover is gifted, to say the least; he's a musician, actor, writer and director. His acclaimed series, *Atlanta*, has been showing on BBC2. It's a comedy-drama about the Atlanta rap scene: Glover created, wrote and directed it, and played one of the lead roles. He appeared this year in *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, the latest film in the sci-fi franchise and next year he will voice the part of Simba in a remake of the *Lion King*. So he's big news in film and television but his music has had a truly global impact. It cannot really be categorised, but much of it is a sensitive and soulful take on rap and funk, often with social messages woven throughout. Glover records under the name Childish Gambino and his last album *Awaken My Love* is knowing, stylish and steeped in Afro-futurist funkiness.

Recently Childish Gambino released a single called *This Is America*. You may have

already come across it online, or you might have read about it in the press, because it was released with a music video like no other. At the time of writing, this video, directed by film-maker Hiro Murai, has had over 400 million views on Youtube. If you haven't seen it yet you should know that it is very much not for the faint-hearted; it pulls no punches in its depiction of the violence, poverty and police brutality visited on African-American people in the U.S. It is not in any way gratuitous, although it does have a kind of bitter and brave wit, which make it layered and uncomfortable, as the truth often is. Among other things it is a music video about music videos. At the beginning Glover seems to contort himself, as if he is trying to fit into the role of an entertainer, flickering between sorrow, rage and dignity. At the very end we see him terrified and running for his life. *This Is America* is one of the most righteous, subtle and powerful pieces of art I've come across.

This Is America has been a world-wide event in its own right and artists from around the world have created their own versions of it. They have used the song and some of the tropes in the original video to lament and protest injustice and poverty. There is a *This is South Africa*, a *This Is France*, *Nigeria*, *Brazil*, *Greece*, *Vietnam* and so on. Some of these are more successful than others but perhaps the most haunting is *This Is Iraq*, performed by the Dubai rapper, I-NZ. It's at least as hard-hitting and haunting as the original, depicting in just a few minutes some of the the brutal nature of everyday life in Iraq since the American invasion. It begins like *This is America* with a musician being shot dead. However at the end of *This Is Iraq* we see that elderly musician and I-NZ himself standing together in a pool of blood, as the musician recites a poem, *The River and The Death*, by Badr Shakkir Al-Sayab.

Of course I'd never heard of the Iraqi poet Badr Shakkir Al-Sayab but it turns out he was one of the Arab-speaking world's most celebrated modern poets, known for his free verse and for expressing great depth of feeling with lyrical simplicity. He does so in *The River and the Death*, a poem about the Battle of Buwaib fought in 634 between a Muslim army and Persian forces. The poem's deep and tender sadness works perfectly in the closing frames of *This Is Iraq*. All of this put me in mind of our beautiful hymn *Song Of Peace*, and LLoyd Stone's lovely lines:

*My country's skies are bluer than the ocean,
and sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine:
But other lands have sunlight, too, and clover
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine.*

It is one thing to know in theory that other lands have poets too, of course they do, but another to encounter examples of their writing in a powerful and moving context. I can't find any further information about I-NZ but I'm grateful to him and Childish Gambino for unwittingly leading me to the work of a great poet.

Fundraiser Friday

Pinocchio Restaurant, New Road would like everyone to come along and dine at their restaurant for either lunch or dinner. The proceeds from this day will then be

donated to the Church and its building appeal. So mark Friday 9th of November in your diary - you will not only get a great meal but be contributing to a worthy cause.

Quiet Reflective Circle

On the second Thursday of each month we gather for candle lighting and quiet reflection. This starts at 7pm and lasts no longer than an hour. There will be readings, time for candle- lighting, stillness and a few simple closing words.

If you've been having a busy week, and could do with some stillness, do come along. If you're looking for a time and place to reconnect with your spirit, do come along. If you'd like to sit quietly in a sacred place, please do come along. All are welcome!

Shadowing the Setting Up Volunteers

We always need more volunteers to set up the church for services on Sunday mornings. It's a vital contribution to our church community. If you're interested in this but are not quite sure then you might think about shadowing one of the current volunteers. Please contact Jef on buc@brightonunitarian.org.uk.

Unitarian Women Who Made A Difference

As part of our Heritage Awareness Project - to raise awareness of the heritage of the building and its history - Chief Officer, Derek McAuley kindly agreed to speak on the subject of "Unitarian Women Who Made a Difference". For those who missed the lecture, or would like to hear it again, just click here <https://youtu.be/N9xcbAJoQQ>

Curry and Quiz Night 27th October

Tickets are on sale for Kathy's Curry and Quiz Night on 27th October and the rules are changing: teams of 6 will be allowed! Everyone is welcome and all proceeds to the Building Appeal Fund.

Advance Notice of Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be on Sunday 27th January 2019 after the service.

Friday Luchtime Concerts - October

05th: Chamber music written in the aftermath of the First World War: Works by Elgar, Myaskovsky and Korngold performed by the Brighton Chamber Ensemble.

12th: Pianist Joe Ward. 'En blanc et noir': One hundred years after his death, a celebration of the gorgeous and varied styles of Debussy's piano music, along with pieces by Bach, Gershwin and others.

19th: Pianist An-Ting Chang will play a 'fantasie' programme with Chopin's Fantasie

op.49, Gibbon's Fantasie, Schumann's Fantasie Op. 17 and Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet Fantasie Overture.

26th: Lyndsay Jeffery (clarinet) & Nick Andrews (piano) perform a selection of light clarinet classics perfect for an Autumnal lunchtime, including Finzi's Five Bagatelles & Six Studies in English Folk Song by Vaughan Williams.

Doors and coffee from 12 noon.

Concert 12.30 – 1.15 p.m.

Tickets £3.50 on the door.

Remembrance and Gratitude Service

Sunday 28th October, 2.30 p.m. Lead by Rev. Jennifer Sanders

Having started as a spiritual solution for Alcoholics in the late 1930's, the 12 Step recovery programme is now a worldwide multi fellowship providing hope for people suffering from alcoholism and other addictions.

This gratitude and remembrance service, now in its 2nd year, is an opportunity for anyone who has connections with a 12 step fellowship, whether that be personally or through a friend, colleague, family member or loved one to come together in a reflective space to give thanks for recovery and the 12 step program.

There will be candle lighting and an opportunity to remember those who have been in fellowship but are no longer with us.

We will also remember those that have died from addiction either not having entered recovery or struggled with recovery.

FUSE 2019

FUSE is an annual three day festival of Unitarianism in the South East of England. Fuse 2019 will be at the Chatsworth Hotel in Worthing 15th-17th February. Registration opens in October this year. There is no website yet for Fuse 2019 but for information about registering please contact dje173@mac.com or for information about bursaries revdmart@aol.com. www.facebook.com/FUSEfestival/

Dates for Your Diary

Saturday 27th October, Quiz and Curry Evening. One of Kathy's legendary quiz nights to raise money for our Portico Rescue Project.

Sunday 28th October, Gratitude and Remembrance Service. 2.30 p.m. Lead by Rev Jennifer Sanders.

Friday 9th November, Fundraiser Friday. Pinocchio Restaurant, New Road would like everyone to come along and dine at their restaurant for either lunch or dinner. The proceeds from this day will then be donated to the Church's building appeal.

Saturday 10th November, doors 7.30 p.m. Concert 8 p.m. The One World Orchestra Comes Home to Brighton. The 18 piece One World (jazz) Orchestra plays music for Brighton. Donations bar in aid of BUC's Building Appeal Fund.

Sunday 11th November, Tea Dance. All proceeds to BUC's Building Appeal Fund.

Saturday 24th November, 6 p.m. Grand Re-Opening of Brighton Unitarian following the completion of the restoration of the portico.

Friday 30th November, Fundraising concert by the Brighton Gay Men's Chorus Ensemble. 7.30 p.m.