

## Our Mission Statement

Brighton Unitarian Church provides a caring environment, with spiritual depth, without dogma, offering a community resource to diverse groups in congruence with our values, promoting a diversity of Unitarianism nationally, and with a concern for a more compassionate world.

## BUC Newsletter July 2023



*Part of marine plastic mural in North Berwick*

In this newsletter you will find:

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Thank you to all contributors this month

## Thoughts from Minister Elect, Jennifer Sanders

I am writing this on Monday with a rather cooler temperature of 22 degrees and fluffy white things in the sky which we haven't seen for a while!

In my previous life, this Monday often signalled the end of Glastonbury, a rich weekend of music theatre dancing singing and community. These days some of us watch this from the comfort of our sofas in our shorts tapping our toes and singing along to our favourite tunes. It is a remarkable event, some of you may have tales to tell about your adventures in Somerset or even photos!

The hard work and dedication that goes on to make this a worldwide known event is quite staggering. There are of course the headliners in their sparkly numbers treating us to songs we have known for years and relative newcomers who are debuting on smaller stages. Either way there is something about this annual event that brings a rich diversity of talent to a few fields in the West of England that is tradition.

I used to work at Glastonbury for many years and often the highlight was just before the gates opened. The set was ready all the prep had been done and there was a moment before the site filled up of almost a sacred pause. To sit on the hill and look out over the site and what so many had created was truly a majestic sight. This year I attended a wedding blessing and celebration in a small field outside of Steyning. Again, I was struck by the most amazing community of people that had brought flowers food, drink hay bales, music and a garland of popcorn to create a beautiful backdrop for the blessing of a couple. And in it all a very simple blessing of two women with an eclectic mix of words from Brene Brown to Rumi. In all the glory and sparkle of the day, there was a few moments of silence, reflection, and what we would call prayer to honour not only the love of this couple but also the huge effort that everyone had made to ensure all were catered for.

When there is a purpose people come together to create the most extraordinary things. And this is the same in our church. Even in my short time with you I have witnessed the gathering, the preparing, the creating, the cleaning, the speaking, the praying, the singing, the crying, and the reflection that make our community so rich. We have people who have been coming for years and those who have just set foot inside our doors. We all have different experiences: some like us to sing traditional hymns while others like more contemporary music. Some of us love the quietness of reflection and heart-centred worship

and others enjoy a weighted philosophical service. Some like to get stuck with helping and others are very quiet about their contributions but slowly people find their way and their place.

Like Glasto, I believe we have the potential to open our doors to a wide range of believers and non-believers who can find a sacred space to pause, rest, and discover safety in the knowledge that whoever they, are and whatever their belief, they will be accepted and welcomed into this community.

From those that attended Glasto, all kitted out with sun cream, bedding, money, first aid and sensible shoes, to those that had absolutely no idea what they are in for and turn up with only a wallet, we seekers of a spiritual path are similar. Some of us are prepared with knowledge of the divine, God, a higher power, and others come through the door with trepidation, confusion or questions.

Either way, my hope as we work together to build and grow our community, is that there will be something for everyone at BUC.



# Sunday Services

**Please note: services are at 11 a.m.**

2nd July<sup>th</sup> - Stephen Crowther, BUC Member

9th July- Jennifer Sanders, BUC Minister Elect

16th July- Brian Bell, BUC Member

23rd July- Jennifer Sanders, BUC Minister Elect

30th July - TBC

6th August - Jennifer Sanders, BUC Minister Elect

Do check the website for updates.

## BUC News

Barbara "Babs" Lowe - Finalist in National Housing with Care Awards



Our wonderful cleaner Barbara/Babs was recently nominated as one of just eight finalists in the inaugural National Housing with Care Awards for her work as a housekeeper at The Foyer on Pelham Street. The awards celebrate exceptional work in housing with care, and the impact it has on residents' lives,

with finalists being recognised for excellence in their field.

Her nomination read:

“Domestic Goddess' Barbara Lowe has been shortlisted for her dedication to housekeeping at Brighton & Hove Foyer young people's service, where she is highly-regarded and fondly known as 'Babs'. She is a worthy contender for the Housekeeper Award, for displaying exceptional professionalism and customer service whilst working hard to defeat dust and manage mess – and always with a smile.”

Barbara enjoyed an all-expenses paid trip to London with an overnight stay in a Mayfair hotel when she attended the award ceremony. She didn't win the overall award, but she had a wonderful time along with other colleagues from The Foyer and its parent organisation, the Sanctuary Housing group.

#### Contributors wanted for Congregational Service - July 16th: 'Help along the path'

Brian Bell, who'll be leading the service on July 16th, has asked if any members would be happy to contribute to the service which will have the theme of what has helped us on the spiritual path - this could be reflections on a particular spiritual mentor, an inspirational book they'd like to talk about, a particular piece of writing or poem, a transformative experience or spiritual practice... anything that the contributor has found deeply helpful on their spiritual journey that they'd be happy to share during the service. This can be pre-written or just shared spontaneously - it's up to the contributor!

Please let Brian know if you'd like to contribute by emailing him at: [brian\\_hanover@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:brian_hanover@yahoo.co.uk)

#### BUC irregular choir

The choir will meet again on Sunday, 23rd, July at the usual time of 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.. This will be the last before an August break.

Everyone is welcome. Please contact Stuart if you'd like to come so he has an idea of numbers.

Stuart, 01273 502875 [sdstuartdeeks@gmail.com](mailto:sdstuartdeeks@gmail.com)

### Fundraising

There was to be a fundraising meeting after the service on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July which has had to be cancelled. A suggestion for another date will be sent out by email when this has been decided.

In the meantime, if you would like to be part of a group to come up with ideas and plans then please email Cat Stead, our administrator, so that Cat can let Trisha know.

### Card-making workshop

There will be another card-making workshop on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, straight after we have finished socialising after the service. Do come along if you can and do keep bringing in your cards for upcycling. Just drop them in the office with a note for Cat.

### How Green is Our Church?

Not quite green enough, according to an audit I recently filled in with Eco Church - a multi-denominational learning community of churches who support each other to take practical action in caring for God's earth.

We have recently joined them and through this audit there are many things that we need to look at if we are to achieve a bronze award.

We are at the start of this journey and already have replaced all our cleaning products with more ethical and environmentally friendly ones. You may have noticed the new soap dispensers in the toilets!

Our boiler is getting a little old and we really need some help to look and research into alternative heating sources. Our little outside space attached to the kitchen could be improved and used as a growing space and even a home, via bird nesting boxes, for the next generation of birds in the city. It is small but has huge potential.

There are other ways in which we can help develop the church with a keener environmental eye and I would really like to get a small team of like-minded people from the congregation together to help so  
If you would like to join this team please do get in touch.

Jennifer [jennifersanders@brightonunitarianchurch.org.uk](mailto:jennifersanders@brightonunitarianchurch.org.uk)

## Lunchtime Concerts for July



The concerts begin at 12.30. Doors open 12noon for tea and coffee and Trisha's knitted and crocheted temptations.  
Suggested donation £5.

**July 7<sup>th</sup>** – Ukrainian pianist **Anastasia Tolstonog's** thoughtful and expressive interpretations have captured the hearts of audiences worldwide. Her programme for this concert will include works by V. Kosenko, J.P. Rameau, F. Chopin and M. Ravel.

**July 14<sup>th</sup>** - BUC regular, **Nick Andrews** (piano) is joined by his great friend **Dan James** (cello). There will be Bach and Beethoven. Beautiful music, lovely Chaps!

**July 21<sup>st</sup>** - **The LIPS Quintet** are very pleased to return to BUC, bringing some sultry wind quintets to match hoped-for sunshine. Come and enjoy a concert of effervescent and melodious murmurations.

**July 28<sup>th</sup>** - **Jaga Klimaszewska** (violin) & **Mateusz Rettner** (piano). The subtle lyricism and clarity of the early Schubert masterpiece D.574 contrasted with the drama of the early 20th century work by Szymanowski. Join us for this intriguing pairing of two great sonatas for violin and piano and a short set of four miniatures by Anton Webern in between.

**There will be no Friday Lunchtime Concerts in August. Concerts resume on Friday 1st September 2023.**

## BUC-related Dates for the Diary

Women of Note Summer Charity Concert, Saturday 22nd July, 3pm



This is the ladies choir that Cat Stead, our Church Administrator, sings in and they are going to treat us to an hour of beautiful music in multi-part arrangements, spanning a wide range of styles and genres, followed by tea and home-made cakes. The concert is free entry with a retiring collection and the monies raised will be split equally between the church and the choir's chosen charity of the year, The Trussell Trust ([www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)) which supports a nationwide network of food banks. The choir last performed at the church in July 2019, when their chosen charity was Rise. They had planned a summer concert here in 2020 which had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, so are delighted to be returning.



## Harp Haven concert, Sunday 30th July, 3 pm



"Pre-eminently thoughtful and compelling, she draws sounds of deep soulfulness and will-a-the-wisp rattlings. Her Lever Harp sings sweetly." BBC Music Magazine

Sunday 30th July ~ 3 pm  
**Brighton Unitarian Church**  
New Road, Brighton, BN1 1UF

Ticket price £6.50  
school children free with an accompanying adult

Tickets available online [bit.ly/HarpHavenBrighton](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/harp-haven-brighton) & on the door



Harpist and composer Lauren Scott presents an hour of scintillating music for the soul played on a lever harp, with the church receiving a 50/50 split of the ticket sales. The programme includes music by Monika Stadler, Bach, Opperman, Fiona Rutherford, John Lennon, Gary Carpenter and Lauren herself. Volunteers Marion Bance and Cat Stead will be on the door and providing tea/coffee. Tickets from £6.50 (school children free with accompanying adult) are available on the door or in advance from Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/harp-haven-in-brighton-tickets-608753296497>

### Friday, June 30th at 7.30 p.m.- Music for violin and piano

Johann Sebastian Bach - Sonata in A

Joseph Haydn - Sonata in G

Bela Bartok / Joseph Szigeti Hungarian Folk melodies

Jean Sibelius - Sonatine

Peter Williams Piano

BUC member Stuart Deeks - Violin

£ 10 (or a donation) at the door

Inquiries to Stuart Deeks 01273 502875

Friday, July, 28th at 7.30 p.m- Sonatas for flute, violin, cello, and harpsichord

Georg Philipp Telemann and Johann Sebastian Bach  
Pavans by Henry Purcell

Robert Goodman - Baroque Flute  
BUC member Stuart Deeks - Violin  
Ben Hess - Cello  
Nicholas Houghton - Harpsichord

£ 15 (or a donation) at the door  
Inquiries to Stuart Deeks 01273 502875

## Wider Unitarian Community

### FUSE 2023



Recently a large contingent of the Brighton congregation travelled to The Friars in Aylesford, Kent, a 13th Century Carmelite priory, for Fuse, the Festival of Unitarians in the Southeast. This is an annual gathering of Unitarians from our district who come together to attend workshops, worship, and connect with old and new friends. Like so many retreats the conversations that happen outside of the schedule were as rich as the plan for the weekend itself.

The Friars in Aylesford is a beautiful, tranquil place steeped in historical tradition and faith and provided the backdrop for the first 'in-person' FUSE for three years. This 13th Century Carmelite priory was built on the medieval Pilgrims' trail to Canterbury and offered an environment rich in spirituality, contemplation, nature and creativity The theme of the weekend was 'Building

Paradise', based on the book written by Stephen Lingwood, a previous minister of Bolton and Cardiff.

The following is a taste from several participants of what they gained from attending FUSE. Many thanks for these contributions.

Jeannette

This was my 2nd attendance at Fuse and once again I had a lovely weekend of connection, enjoyable workshops, good company, and good food. It was lovely to see members from other congregations I hadn't seen since before Covid. The location this year was beautiful. I was initially uncomfortable at the idea of communion but have to admit that Susie and Stephen created a lovely Unitarian version

Susie

What an absolute joy to be able to meet for three days in person with friends from our church and others around the Southeast that we know, or had the opportunity of getting to know. And this year in particular for me - worshipping in the sacred space of the Friars Monastery was a particular high point. Like others, I had prepared for the keynote speaker by joining the book group and studying Stephen's words. I also had the privilege of time with him as we shared our ideas around a love feast communion bringing in our understanding of Jesus' and Mary Magdalene's teachings and gifts. I loved how we were offered free rein to lead the service and I would like to thank Jim Corrigan for his trust and support.

For me listening to the keynote speaker Stephen was the most inspiring time. I found the session where he answered our questions really moving and reflective.

For me, it has sown a seed that we can explore in our church, potentially. His enquiry about our mission, and how we grow as a church - or even do we grow, are questions I went away continuing to ask myself. In addition, how do we integrate this early legacy of Christianity when there is a potential and understandable challenge to it from members who do not feel Jesus' teachings speak to them? A big question that I took away from an inspiring weekend with friends

Jo

This was my first time at FUSE and it was interesting to meet Unitarians from other places, with all their different perspectives. I mainly took part in the workshops with a creative perspective and particularly enjoyed the conversation I had in Eleanor's session about Hinduism, and the very Unitarian take on communion that our Susie and her co-minister Stephen Lingwood lead us in on Saturday night.

Francis

I would like to say that I came to FUSE with no preconceptions, but in reality, I already knew that I would encounter views with which I would disagree. I had read Stephen Lingwood's book, *Seeking Paradise*, and had attended the series of Zoom discussions on it run by Jim Corrigan. There is much in Stephen's writing that I like, but I have a problem with the concept of seeking paradise. It is, in my view, precisely because paradise is not to be found that we need religion.

However, the Carmelite serenity of the Friars at Aylesford compensated for any discomfort, physical or spiritual, I might have felt. It was the perfect environment in which to realise even more clearly what it is that I don't believe. That's already enough to have made FUSE a really rewarding experience.

Add to that the companionship, the exchange of views with so many others, the chance to talk to some of our own members at leisure, and the opportunity, when the need came, to go for a walk through beautiful countryside, and you have the recipe for a perfect weekend.

Fanny

The whole weekend was just what I needed.

The location and hospitality were terrific; Stephen Lingwood was a positive surprise; and the special treats for me were:

- Spending time with people from BUC, and a few from elsewhere
- Stuart Coope's workshop and evening entertainment
- Susie and Stephen's communion, with which I initially felt some inner resistance, but quickly blew me away!

Jennifer

With such an intense and unexpected start to my ministry at Brighton FUSE came at the right time providing an opportunity to draw breath, reflect and connect.

It was certainly a different experience from previous Fuse events which I have attended as a daily guest. There is something much more immersive by staying on site and taking advantage of those evening conversations.

As well as seeing such a large group from Brighton. I always appreciate the opportunity to listen and engage in workshops both from a personal view and with a notebook of future ideas for ministry.

These events enable the to letting go of the diary and to-do lists to be present to what truly is in the moment and there were many rich moments so  
Thank you all at FUSE

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Contributions for the newsletter are welcome and need to reach me by 23rd July. Please send them to [caroline.drijver@gmail.com](mailto:caroline.drijver@gmail.com) with Newsletter as the subject

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