



*Brighton*  
**Unitarians**

## April Newsletter

### Sunday Services

Please note: services are at 11 a.m. unless otherwise stated.

Everyone is welcome.

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

07th April - Jef Jones, Lay Pastor, Brighton Unitarian Church  
Pianist Kathy Pitt

14th April - **Service at 6 p.m.**  
Francis Clark-Lowes, Member, Brighton Unitarian Church  
Organist Maurice Rigby

21st April - Easter Service,  
Jef Jones, Lay Pastor, Brighton Unitarian Church  
Pianist Pamela Nickels

28th April - Stephen Crowther, Lay Pastor, Hastings Unitarian Church  
Pianist Stuart Deeks

Quiet Reflection Circle 7 - 8 pm, Thursday **18th** April  
See below for more information.

### Welcome from Jef

Welcome to our Newsletter for April. You'll see some changes to our usual monthly schedule. Our service on Sunday 14th April - led by our member Francis Clark-Lowes - will be at 6pm in the evening. Our Quiet Reflection Circle this month will be on April 18th - a week later than usual - because on April 11th for our Heart and Soul gathering we'll be showing *A Celtic Pilgrimage*, a documentary featuring the late Irish priest and mystic John O'Donohue. Our member Stephen Crowther has kindly offered to bring his projector and show this film which follows John O'Donohue on his journeys around Ireland, exploring its mystical traditions and wisdom. I find so much of value and depth in John O'Donohue's work- I'm very much looking to seeing this film. Please do come and join us on April 11th at 7pm

With all best wishes, Jef Jones, Lay Pastor

## From the Lay Leader

When I was in my teens I loved Jesus for that cry of anger and despair howled at God from the cross: *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani; my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* These are the only words of Jesus in the whole New Testament which are quoted in Hebrew. This is a clue that what sounds spontaneous has a history. Jesus is quoting from Psalm 22 in the Old Testament which says *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why thou so far from saving me, so far from the words of my roaring?*

Later in that Psalm 22 we hear the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me, *they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture.* The psalm was written by King David, and in the Easter narrative Jesus uses it to rebuke the scribes and elders who have connived to have him killed. They have just sneered at him saying *If he be the king of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.* (Matthew, 27:42)

When Jesus says *Eli, Eli, lamma sabachthani* he is invoking a revered King of the Jews, who wrote precisely of his own abjection and bitterness. It is a kind of scholarly throwdown to the scribes and elders.

In his teachings Jesus does this repeatedly. He challenges the religious authorities who condemn him by quoting their scriptures back at them. For example he accuses the Pharisees of *teaching as doctrine the commandments of men.*

In other words: don't confuse your particular laws with the universal, with the divine. Again the phrase *teaching as doctrine the commandments of men* comes from the Book of Isaiah. In all the fog of debate about Jesus and the meaning of his story we might miss this about him: as a scholar and wordsmith he is brilliant.

And for me this brilliance is one of the meanings of Easter. At the heart of the story is a deeply thoughtful challenge to established religious practices that ultimately results in the rebirth of faith itself, not its demise or rejection. Religion is too beautiful, too powerful, too real to be left in the wrong hands. In the spirit of Easter let's return it to its origins in kindness, awe, gratitude and wholeness. I wish you a Happy Easter.

Jef Jones

## Heart and Soul Gatherings in April

This month's Heart and Soul gatherings are as follows:

7pm, Thurs 4th April: theme to be confirmed

7pm, Thurs 11th April: A Celtic Pilgrimage with John O'Donohue: a film featuring the Irish mystic and poet – see above for details.

Heart and Soul gatherings are an opportunity for us to come together as a congregation during the week. There is a time of reflection and stillness and we go on to explore different aspects of our spiritual lives together. Refreshments are available from 6.30 pm and the meetings start at 7pm. Everyone is welcome! If you would like to lead a gathering of Heart and Soul, or suggest a topic for discussion you are also welcome.

**There is no Heart and Soul on April 25th due to a previous booking.**

## **Quiet Reflective Circle**

Thursday, 18th April, 7pm

For April we will gather for candle lighting and quiet reflection on Thursday 18th April. As always 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!

## **Pride Brighton and Hove**

Members of the church are delighted to announce that we will be walking in the Brighton Pride parade on Saturday 3rd August 2019. We are hoping to be joined by our Unitarian friends in the South East and maybe beyond.

Would you like to march or be involved in the planning of this really exciting celebration? We'd love to hear from you! Please contact Jennifer by email [jensanders300@hotmail](mailto:jensanders300@hotmail)

Regular updates will come via the newsletter.

## **Tea and Toasties - a lunchtime cafe at BUC**

We have been looking at ways in which we can offer support to Brighton's homeless and rough sleepers. There is a lack of resources at the weekend across the city and having visited Holland Rd Baptist Church in Hove, who provide a monthly cafe on a Saturday lunchtime we are keen to offer something similar at the BUC.

The cafe would run on a Saturday lunchtime for a couple of hours providing a simple hot lunch of cheese toasties, tea, cake in a clean safe and friendly environment offering a chance for a chat and support.

How can you help Tea and Toasties?

Be part of the working party to get this idea up and running - we already have the support of

Holland Rd Baptist Church and Greg Headley who is the local co-ordinator for homeless provision across the city

Become a volunteer for the cafe by:

Offering time on a Friday eve or sat morning to help prepare sandwiches and set up the cafe

Being a volunteer at the cafe to help take orders or serve tea coffee and toasties

Help clear up at the end of the session

Offer to make some cake or biscuits

Do the shopping at the cash and carry

In the first instance we are hoping to run this as a pilot for 3 months . This is a wonderful opportunity to support vulnerable people in our community for a few hours each month. Please get in touch with Jennifer Sanders if you can offer some time or would like to know more. (jensanders300@hotmail)

Thank you

## **WaterAid**

Dear BUC,

Thank you so much for once again supporting the Brighton and Hove WaterAid Local Group in hosting our recent SpringFest – this year in conjunction with Books for Amnesty. Your support is as ever greatly appreciated and helped to make it such a successful event.

Through our Local Group, we're able to raise money and awareness for WaterAid's work. Work which we support because in bringing resources to communities across the world WaterAid enables local people to access and maintain their own water supplies and sanitation and enhance their essential hygiene education provision.

Access to such facilities is a basic human right as defined within the UN Sustainable Development Goals and we are able to raise money and awareness of these basic needs through our local activities such as SpringFest

Many, many thanks again for your support. This year SpringFest raised more money than ever before, as well as being a very lively and successful awareness raising event.

Best wishes,

Ian Hextall (on behalf of the Brighton and Hove WaterAid Campaign Group)



## April

05th: Pianist Jon Byrne returns to the Unitarian lunchtime concert series with a programme to include Mozart, Ravel and Rachmaninov.

12th: Flautist Karen Rash, accompanied by Nicola Grunberg on the piano: French Flute Fancies and a Chaminade Sandwich.

19th: Zoe Peate - soprano, Bryony Prior - horn, Paul Newton - trumpet, Gary Prior - piano. Four musicians with classical, light and jazz backgrounds join together to perform Mozart, Vivaldi, Saint-Saens, plus original arrangements for horn, trumpet, voice and piano.

26th: Piano and Cello Recital. František Brikcius (cello) and Ermanno Bemporad De Stefani (piano) perform Johannes Brahms: Sonata No 1 in E minor for Cello and Piano, Op 38; Irena Kosíková: 1918 for Cello and piano - Brighton premiere; David Popper: Ungarische Rhapsodie for Cello and Piano, Op. 68 and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy: Lied ohne Worte für Cello und Klavier, Op. 109

**Doors and coffee from 12 noon.**

**Concert 12.30 – 1.15 p.m.**

**Ticket £4 on the door.**



## **Friday 3rd May to Sunday 2nd June 2019**

We have a really exciting programme of events booked for this May - Brighton Fringe, The Great Escape and lots of independent arts and music performances, plus our regular Friday

lunchtime concerts. All the details are on our website <http://www.brightonunitarian.org.uk/may-festival.html>

## Dates for Your Diary

Sunday 7th April, 2.30 p.m. Matthew Sear, Classical Guitar Recital. This is a fundraising concert for our church. Please do come along. It is really important that we support Matthew.

There will be tea and cake. If you can make or bring in a cake please let Helen Lee or Jeannette Webb know in advance. Thank you.

Thursday 25th April, 6.30 p.m. Pergolesi: Stabat Mater - Timi Mohai (soprano), Jean-Pierre Brzechwa (counter tenor) and the Beaufort String Quartet. Donations to BUC's Building Appeal Fund.

Friday 26th April, 7.30 p.m. A Night of 21st Century Folk Music. Fundraising concert for the Peter Tatchell Foundation. Tickets £16 from Resident Records or on the door.

To keep up-to-date with all that is happening at Brighton Unitarian visit our website [www.brightonunitarian.org.uk](http://www.brightonunitarian.org.uk) or follow us on:

Twitter: @BrightUnitarian

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BrightonUnitarian/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/brightonunitarianchurch/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT1m35I-Urvbyg2AsRRsF9g>