



Brighton
Unitarians

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 November 2023



In this newsletter you will find:

A message from Jennifer Sanders, Minister Elect

Sunday Services

BUC News

Lunchtime Concerts

Wider Unitarian Movement

A Poem

Thank you to all contributors this month. Contributions for the December newsletter should reach me by Monday 20th November. Reflections, stories, poems, and so on are welcome. Please email me at caroline.drijver@gmail.com

From Minister Elect, Jennifer Sanders



Early Saturday morning (21st) I was startled by what sounded like a cannon. It marked the start of the bonfire season. Billows of smoke rose from the fires and sparkles of light illuminated the darkened sky later that evening.

Lewes is preparing to celebrate the 5th November as dozens of bonfire societies descend on the town

marching with banners and effigies igniting firecrackers whilst remembering the history of the gunpowder plot. It truly is a remarkable sight as Lewes seals itself off from the outside world whilst the streets become alight with fire and the sky with exploding colour. It's a beacon in the darkness for some and yet for others a cruel reminder and trauma trigger of war.

As reporting across the globe reaches into every living room, phone and media device, we are being faced with such tragedy, brutality, pain, bloodshed, and inequality and it may feel hopeless as we continue to be enveloped in darkness of hatred.

In just over two weeks the nation will stand still to remember those that have fallen in war. The solemnity of such services reminds us to never forget. and its poignancy at this time is not lost on any of us.

There is a powerlessness we feel in war like no other. Regardless of our political persuasion, religious beliefs or personal connections, it's hard to see the light.

As I look out of my window on such a beautiful autumn day I am witnessing what looks like a steady stream of gold being dripped onto a nearby tree as its leaves die. Soon they will fall away leaving behind skeleton branches and we are left with the starkness of winter, trying to remember its former majesty.

Like many other cultures, with the turning of the seasons, we enter a period of remembrance which may prove difficult along with the fading light outside our windows.

I invite us all to hold both the lightness and the darkness in our reflections: the war and the peace, the light and the dark, the celebrations and the remembering.

Even in the darkest of times, our Unitarian faith helps us to see the light of hope and reconciliation, the light of justice, the light of forgiveness, the light of memory, and

the light of healing.

I leave you with this from Henry J M Nouwen- You're the Beloved - A Book of reflections - November 3rd

People who have come to know the joy of God do not deny the darkness but they choose not to live in it.

They claim that the light that shines in the darkness can be trusted more than the darkness itself and that a little bit of light can dispel a lot of darkness. They point each other to flashes of light here and there and remind each other they reveal the hidden but real presence of God. They discover that there are people who heal each other's wounds forgive each other's offences share their possessions foster the spirit of community celebrate the gifts they have received and live in constant anticipation of the full manifestation of God's glory

Whatever our path of spiritual questioning looks like and whoever God is to you may you all be blessed with the light of love this November.

Jennifer

Sunday Services

29 October - Jennifer Sanders (BUC Minister-elect)

5th November - Fay Barrett, Interfaith minister

12th November - Jennifer Sanders (BUC Minister-elect) As this is Remembrance Sunday the service will start by observing the two minute silence. Please arrive a little early for this.

19 November - Ann Howell (Social Action Officer at the General Assembly)

26 November - Jennifer Sanders (BUC Minister-elect)

3 December - Rev Jim Corrigan (LDPA District Minister)

Do check the website for updates.

BUC News



Prayer and Meditation

**A new 6 Week course
Every Tuesday 6.45pm – 8.30pm
Starting 31st October 2023
Brighton Unitarian Church
10 places**

This course, led by Jennifer Minister Elect, is for anyone who would like to explore and develop a prayer and meditation practise within a safe and small supportive group.

We will be trying out different forms of prayer and meditation including Two way prayer, Lectio Divina, Guided Meditation, Naming, knowing, listening and loving Prayer and Loving kindness meditation.

Please email Jennifer at jennifersanders@brightonunitarian.org.uk

or call 01273 696022 to sign up.

We look forward to welcoming you on this journey together



Pulpit Rota

As from January 2024, Kathy (Pitt) is taking over responsibility for the Pulpit Rota. If you have any feedback about our Service Leaders that you'd like to give, or any ideas for new people to invite, please can you contact her - either at a Sunday service or by email (kathy.pitt@btconnect.com)? Thank you!

Susie hands the baton over to Kathy and myself for 2024, so I firstly wanted to thank Susie, Jen and Trisha who have managed this hugely important role so beautifully in what was a very difficult time with Jef's retirement and COVID. Filling 52 slots is no mean feat so on behalf of us all at BUC - Thank you so much for all your hard work and diligence.

As some of you have noticed and responded to, there have been some new additions to the pulpit rota and I wanted to take the opportunity to reassure you going forward.

With Stephen's departure at the end of the summer, there were several gaps in the rota that needed to be filled quite quickly, hence 3 new people appearing on a Sunday.

Vince Mcully - This gave us an opportunity to meet The President of the General Assembly of Unitarians and Free Christian Churches. We hope we will be able to accommodate the president which changes each year.

Kieran Mardle Moss- He has begun his studies at the Unitarian College and I would like us to support upcoming ministers during their studies so they can experience leading worship in areas other than their home congregation.

Rev Julio Torres - Minister at Lewisham Unity - As the diversity of our congregation grows at BUC it's important to reflect this in who takes our services.

I am very happy to hear your comments about these three service leaders and we are hoping that Rev Julio will join us again in 2024.

Change is never easy especially when we are used to certain people delivering services and I am aware that there have been a number of service leaders that have assisted in keeping a full pulpit these past two years.

Kate Whyman in Plymouth has expressed a wish to step away from leading services via Zoom at Brighton and Jane has suggested we call on her only in an emergency.

I hope that for the main delivery we can have live service leaders and will only use Zoom for those that cannot travel or for an emergency to cover sickness or leave.

We look forward to welcoming Eleanor, Fay, Susie, Brian for our congregational services, John Naish, Francis Clarke Lowes, Rev Julio Torres, and Rev Winnie Gordon in 2024, along with some new names.

Do let Kathy or myself know if there is someone who you would like to invite to Brighton and maybe one of you out there thinking you would like to take a service, take a reading or prayer or get involved in some way with our Sunday Worship.

Do get in touch with Kathy at kathy.pitt@btconnect.com or myself at jennifersanders@brightonunitarian.org.uk

I hope this has settled any fears or concerns about Sunday Services

Warm wishes and blessings , Jennifer

Trisha's Magical Creations



Trisha has raised £70 for the church by selling her whimsical crocheted creations at recent craft fairs. They are popular with young people for whom crocheting has become a bit of a thing! Amazing. Well done, Trisha.

From Our Friend, Susie

Dear Brighton Unitarian friends,

It has been somewhat of a surreal week for me. After the trauma of emergency surgery, I came to recuperate in the peaceful surroundings of my sister's in Suffolk. No sooner had I arrived than a bloody war broke out in the Middle East with the suffering of men, women, and children. Difficult to bear. I am sure you have been praying together and giving each other solace at this most difficult of times, and I miss your presence in my life, and think of you often. I have been blessed, however, by the kindness of my family, the warmth of the autumn sun, and the wonderful

restorative and healing garden - the fragrant roses still in bloom, a favourite tree, and the gentleness of the natural world - butterflies and squirrels that accompany my recovery.

I am back in Brighton now and look forward to seeing you all soon. If you are interested in the medieval mystic Julian of Norwich - thought I would let you know about this! - Melvyn Bragg was discussing her life on 'In Our Time' on Radio 4 and you can catch this [here](#). During the horrendous time of the plague, as she witnessed so much death and suffering, Julian was nevertheless able to sustain a belief in the goodness of the world. She can shine a light for us in these dark times. As she put it herself, so beautifully -
'All will be well. All manner of things will be well. '

Many blessings to you all
Susie

Irregular Choir

The irregular choir will meet again on Sunday 5th November after the service until 2.15. All are welcome.

If you'd like to come or know more then contact Stusr
at sdstuartdeeks@gmail.com or just turn up.

Craft Fair Saturday 28th October

The Sussex Cancer Fund invites you to join them for a delightful day of creativity and compassion at their highly anticipated Craft Fair. Taking place on Saturday, October 28th, this event promises to be a haven for art enthusiasts, craft lovers, and supporters of a great cause. Join them at [Brighton Unitarian](#) Church to celebrate the spirit of community, while raising funds to make a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer.

Embrace the Spirit of Creativity: At the Sussex Cancer Fund Craft Fair, creativity takes centre stage. As you stroll through the bustling aisles, you'll discover an array of talented artisans showcasing their unique creations. From handmade jewellery and intricately designed pottery to beautifully knitted scarves and exquisite paintings, the fair offers a wealth of inspiration and a chance to take home one-of-a-kind treasures. Whether you're an avid crafter or simply appreciate the beauty of handmade goods, this event is a must-attend.

Lunchtime Concerts



27th October

Nicholas Buxton (tenor) has specialised in opera and recitals throughout Europe, and presents some of his favourite songs and arias in five different languages, accompanied by pianist Zhanna Kemp-Dashkovskaya.

3rd November

The Kelleth Piano Trio (Rachel Ellis, Siriol Hugh-Jones and Stephen Carroll-Turner) present a programme of neglected works by female composers including, among others, Emilie Mayer and Melanie Bonis.

10th November

Polish violinist Izabela Stocka and pianist Hanzhi Zhang perform sonatas by Eugène Ysaë, Debussy and Brahms, and Ravel's rhapsodic Tzigane.

17th November

A CHANGE TO OUR PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED PROGRAMME

Merlin (clarinet) and Polina Shepherd (voice/piano) are internationally acclaimed performers in the Klezmer and Yiddish world. Drawing from their Jewish and Slavic roots, they weave together a unique music that moves the listener physically, emotionally and spiritually.

24th November

Acoustic bassist supremo Nigel Thomas and Geoff Hearn, shakuhachi*, explore spontaneous melodic improvisations to evoke an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity in what promises to be a truly original musical event. *The shakuhachi is an ancient bamboo flute used as a meditation tool by Japanese Zen Buddhist monks.

1st December

Evelyn Harrison (clarinet), Lyndsay Jeffery (clarinet) and Zhanna Kemp-Dashkovskaya (piano), perform a unique arrangement of Mozart's sublime Kegelstatt trio K498, as well as the Concert Piece No. 2 by Mendelssohn written for two clarinets and piano. This performance will be a perfect way to enjoy your lunch break and an opportunity to listen to a newly formed ensemble.

8th December

Italian concert pianist Simone Alessandro Tavoni returns with a programme of music by Bach, Mendelssohn and Chopin

There was a lovely review written of one of our Friday lunchtime concerts (Neil Crossland piano - 22 Sep)

<http://fringereview.co.uk/review/brighton-year-round/2023/neil-crossland-piano-recital/>

WIDER UNITARIAN COMMUNITY

SOCIAL ACTION

Ann Howell is our Social Action Officer for Unitarians in UK, and she is coming to lead a service in Brighton on 19th November.

To access a link to a podcast in which Ann talks to Unitarians and friends about their passions and ideas, use this address:

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/peoplesobold/episodes/Citizens-UK-e2a2flv>

A poem

'Fall, Leaves, Fall' by Emily Brontë

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;

Lengthen night and shorten day;

Every leaf speaks bliss to me

Fluttering from the autumn tree.

I shall smile when wreaths of snow

Blossom where the rose should grow;

I shall sing when night's decay

Ushers in a drearier day.