

April
2021



richmond + putney unitarians

the flame

April Is a Promise That May Is About to Keep

“April is the kindest month. April gets you out of your head and out working in the garden” – Marty Rubin

I have spent much of this winter lockdown on my own at home. As you may imagine, especially during bad weather days, there has been plenty of time for reflection. On the blustery days, there have been opportunities to focus on establishing good routines and to make plans for the when the weather and Covid restrictions improve. I can remember when we first went into lockdown in March 2020, the roads fell silent, there were no planes flying overhead, the birds began singing and the natural world seemed to reassert its power. My need to engage with the natural world to retain mental balance became very clear. A habit was established ... a regular saunter in nature.

The restriction of remaining in one's local area during this last lockdown, combined with the less comfortable weather for walking, saw that habit diminishing bit by bit, and then I noticed something. As my sauntering times diminished, my anxiety levels increased. So the beginning of spring has been a welcome reminder to reconnect with nature. One of the plans to facilitate this, a kind of halfway house on the road to liberation, has been to sort the garden out for when my family visits this upcoming summer. While I am currently unable to socialize, get a much-needed hair cut or do many of things I would associate with 'normal' life, the practicalities of getting plant pots and hanging baskets ready for planting, re-oiling garden furniture and painting fences has been a welcome change.

I have moved from being almost entirely in my own thoughts, for good or ill, to the practical problem-solving associated with the tasks at hand. In winter, photosynthesis slows, respiration slows, growth stops and so it has felt quite natural to be a little thoughtful and withdrawn. Now I still only have myself for company, but in recognizing the processes of natural cycles, the flow of the seasons not only around but within me, I find a sense of hope in spring. In that hope there is an increased lightness of being that moves me to be more active and engaged with the world. The winter's reflective quietness is now diminishing to give way to what needs to be done. For me, April is the kindest month, as she shows through the blossoming of flowers and trees, that better, sunnier and, hopefully, freer times are on the way. April has got 'me out of my head and working in the garden' ... work that will, I trust, bear the fruit of connection and freedom that I crave.

Simon





APRIL | services

(Services will be mixed: Zoom (and in church as well from 18 April onwards). The Zoom login link is given below.)

Sunday Services at 11-12 a.m.

URL for Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/101828528>

Sunday 4 April 2021 – Life, birth and resurrection: a perennial tale

The themes and motifs of the Christian story at Easter are timeless themes that discuss what it is to be human. What do these stories have to teach us about the human odyssey and condition?

Sunday 11 April 2021 – Asking the right questions

Within a community that places emphasis on person freedom and responsibility, active seekers after truth are faced with more questions than answers. But what are the right questions?

Sunday 18 April 2021 – Returning to normal ... with joy

This is the first Sunday back at church! To be able to spend time with one another again is a cause for celebration and a welcome break from the old routine!

Sunday 25 April – Selling mirrors in the City of the Blind

Kabir, the author of the above words, uses the theme of mirrors to explain a spiritual process of becoming. In this service, we will look at how many faith traditions use the simile of mirrors to better understand ourselves.

Volunteers needed – As we move back into church on 18 April, I will need helpers to assist me in setting up the church in accordance with Covid restrictions.

APRIL | what's happening

Thursday 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 | 6-7 pm
Meditation (Zoom only)

There is no need to be a Zen master for this practice and practical guidance will be given to help you improve your meditation practice.

Contact : Rev. Simon Ramsay / minister@rpuc.org.uk

URL for Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/205074902>

Sunday 4 | 2-3.30 pm
Reflective Journaling Group (Zoom only)



We meet monthly on Zoom, usually the first Sunday of the month, with open minds and open heart for a time of shared reflection on our lives as they are unfolding.

If you are interested to know more please text or call Kitty Lloyd-Lawrence on 07976 615586.

Thursday 1 | 9-10.30 am
Spiritual Companions Interfaith Group (Zoom only)

We meet monthly on Zoom, usually the first Thursday of the month. We base our reflections and shared experiences on 'Your Spiritual Health Programme', which is free to download from <https://spiritualcompanions.org/>.

If you are interested to know more please text or call Kitty Lloyd-Lawrence on 07976 615586.

Tuesday 13 | 5.30-7 pm
Management Committee meeting (Zoom only)

As is our tradition, these meetings are open to all to attend, unless a sensitive agenda item is tabled. The meeting will be on Zoom - if you wish to attend, contact info@rpuc.org.uk for the login details.

Contact : David Watson / info@rpuc.org.uk

For further information about any of these activities, please email info@rpuc.org.uk.

See also our website at: www.rpuc.org.uk



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We are a radically inclusive community of open hearts and open minds, where individuals are free to trust their conscience in matters of spiritual inquiry, and the inherent worth and dignity of all humankind is celebrated, irrespective of race, social status, gender or sexual orientation.

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For more information on activities at RPUC
visit our website:

www.rpuc.org.uk

Find us

We are ten minutes' walk from Richmond Station (Southwest Trains, London Overground and District Line) and two minutes' walk from the bus station. Cars can enter Ormond Road one way only (from the Richmond Bridge end).

<https://goo.gl/maps/cTtbX8acyY12richmond>

