

October
2021



richmond + putney unitarians

the flame

‘It’s easy to play any musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself’

Johann Sebastian Bach

I can remember the first time I went to the Unitarian General Assembly’s annual service in Chester Cathedral a number of years ago. As this was my first annual meeting, there were a number of surprises. Firstly, that the Bishop of Chester had agreed that we, Unitarians and non-conformists, could hold our annual service in such a prestigious building. Secondly, that even though we are a relatively small religious movement that we filled the venue and, thirdly, how the Unitarians present at that service sang with such reckless abandon. The volume (though not necessarily the technical skill) was something to behold!

Many of us hold different opinions about hymn singing or singing in general. Covid restrictions have meant that singing together has been impossible. For some of us, this has been a blessing and relief as singing takes us out of our comfort zone. For others, it has been a terrible imposition, as singing is central to the expression of our spirituality.

Beginning in October, we are going to reintroduce singing to some of our services. We are fortunate to be led in this regard by our musical director, Margaret Lord, who will guide us through this first step back to normality. I always say of myself, with my tongue firmly in my cheek, that what I lack in technical skill in singing I make up for in volume, a philosophy that seemed to be to present at the above-mentioned annual service.



It is said that the human voice is the original instrument, and so all we need to do is to follow the wisdom of Bach, ‘by singing in the right key at the right time’, but I rather think that we may be following the words of Morcambe and Wise, where, ‘We sing all the right notes, but not necessarily in the right order!’ Whichever way we sing, whether it be making a joyful sound unto the Creator or just a noise for each other’s ears, it will be great to further return to a sense of normality, which for me is singing with loud enthusiasm – and if no one can hear me!

Simon

OCTOBER | services

Services will be both in church and on Zoom, unless otherwise stated. The Zoom login link is given below. Please continue to wear a face covering if you are attending church.

Sunday Services at 11-12 a.m.

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



Services marked with this symbol are singing services. As face coverings may be removed for singing, we encourage those who wish to sing to take a lateral flow Covid-19 test before coming to church. Anyone with concerns about singing who do not wish to participate may move to the back of the church or leave the room during hymns.

Sunday 3 October: Gandhi Jayanti



In India the work and place of Mahatma Gandhi within Indian society is celebrated. His life, however, according to some biographers, was not without controversy. In this service we will look at his life, his philosophy and his legacy.

Sunday 10 October: Community service online

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/101828528> Meeting ID: 101 828 528



Sunday 17 October: Death and Dying: Part 1

In this service I hope to begin our community's discussions about one of the most universally taboo subjects; death and dying. How has death affected you? How does your own death shape your own life in the present? In this service we will also look at how different cultures approach the theme of death.

Sunday 24 October: Milad UI Nabi – A Celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's Birthday

There are many ways of conceiving the life of the Prophet Muhammad, but what is it that we know about the man? Considering that he was born on 8 June 570 Common Era, quite a lot. In this service will look at a variety of sources to get a better idea of who Muhammad really was.

Sunday October 31 2021: Samhain – Death and Dying (Part 2)

The festival of Samhain is the pagan celebration of the turning of the year. The wheel of the year is seen to start at Samhain. Pagans celebrate death as part of life. This is not a time of fear, but a time to understand more deeply that life and death are part of a sacred whole. This service is a continuation of the themes discussed on Sunday 17 October.

OCTOBER | what's happening

Sunday 3 | 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.

Wednesday 6, 13, 20, 27 | 2-3 p.m.

Coffee with the Minister

Come along for a coffee and a natter at Tide Tables, the cafe just below Richmond Bridge. I will be there and it will be great to see you!



Thursday 7 | 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.

Thursday 7, 14, 21, 28 | 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/81523477909>

Wednesday 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>

