

November
2021



richmond + putney unitarians

the flame

‘Happiness isn’t something you experience; it’s something that you remember’
– Oscar Levant

As we move through to November this year, I wonder if I’m beginning to agree with the words of Oscar Levant (an actor, concert pianist, composer, conductor, television and radio show host and comedian, as famous for his mordant wit and character as for his many gifts). I feel a little cheated by the quality of the summer we have had. I’m sure the meteorological statistics would say that we had an average season, or that I am completely wrong and we have had the hottest summer ever . . . but it doesn’t feel that way to me. Through all the ups and downs and uncertainties that we are all facing at the moment, with rising fuel prices, supply chains breaking down, and Covid-19 beginning to raise its head once again for winter, I find that happiness is less something that I am experiencing, but increasingly something that I remember. It seems so very long ago when I had the luxury of taking those pre-Covid carefree times for granted!

It seems to me that November not only shows us that the summer months are over but it also provides a gateway to winter. It is a month of remembering. Traditionally, All Souls Day (on 1 November) and Armistice Sunday (on 11 November) are observed at this time of year. This kind of remembering is often tinged with sadness. However, November being the gateway to winter isn’t without its charms. In the natural world, it’s a time of berries and soft-coloured foliage, for pruning, cutting back and clearing up for winter . . . an essential aspect of the turning of the seasons. Moreover, when we remember those who went before and are able to move beyond our sadness at separation, we can

more freely give thanks for the lives they lived and celebrate the gifts they have handed down.

There are a number of things that we are doing in RPUC this month that will help with the process of ‘Novembering’ (my new coinage). Firstly, we have our new district minister, Jim Corrigan, visiting us on Sunday 7 November. The theme of his service will be ‘Memories’, marking the traditional date of All Souls Day, and then later in the month, I am going to run an evening ‘lit labyrinth’ session as a way of working through and letting go of the things we no longer need.

On reflection, I don’t completely agree with the words of Oscar Levant above. I think that, given the right conditions and opportunity, you can make room for happiness, and that it *is* both something we can experience and also something that we can remember. In this, we need not be alone. In our community, we can share both the seasons of the natural world and the seasons of our life together.

Simon

P.S. As mentioned in my editorial letter, towards the end of November, I would like to run a lit labyrinth session. When we did this a couple of years ago, I was astounded by its beauty and power. However, I would like to have volunteers to help me set it up. It takes around three hours to do so and involves time bending over or on your knees to set out the labyrinth. If you would like to help, please contact me.

NOVEMBER | 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 7 November: A service about memory – Rev. Jim Corrigan, District Minister

Today our District Minister, Jim Corrigan, will be coming to lead the service.

It's a great opportunity to meet him, and those who aren't able to attend the service in person can, of course, meet him on Zoom!



Sunday 14 November: Remembrance Sunday – Swords into ploughshares

This day is Armistice Sunday. We will begin the service at 10.50 so we can hold the silence at 11 sharp. The theme of the service will reflect upon armed conflict in the world and the need for us all to support organizations that promote peace.

Sunday 21 November: Community Service (Online only)

(Details to follow)

Sunday 28 November: Hannukah

At this time of year, the Jewish community celebrate the festival of Hannukah. In this service we will look at the story of Hannukah, and the meaning behind its associated candelabra, the Menorah. What makes the 28th of November such a special time in Judaism?

NOVEMBER | what's happening

Thursday 4, 11, 18 | 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>



Sunday 7 | 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.

Tuesday 9 | 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

Wednesday 10, 17 | 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!

Tuesday 16 | 5.15-6.45 pm

Spiritual Companions Interfaith Group (Zoom only)

We meet monthly on Zoom, usually the third Tuesday evening 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.

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>

