

January  
2022



richmond + putney unitarians

the flame

‘Life must be understood backward, but it must be lived forward’  
Søren Kierkegaard

During the course of my life thus far I have discovered a number of quotations which have stuck in my mind. The above quotation by Søren Kierkegaard, a Danish theologian, philosopher, poet, social critic and religious author who has been widely considered to be the one of the first existentialist philosophers, became part of my lived wisdom through my relationship with Kitty (a member of our community and former management committee chair) as we were working together for both our community and ourselves. As we move from 2021 to 2022, it is quite natural to reflect on what has gone on before and, according to Kierkegaard, this kind of reflection is an ongoing activity which is essential in finding meaning for our life. With this in mind, is there any one thing that you could learn from the past year and another you could let go of ahead of 2022?

For myself, I know that at any given time the understanding of my life has never been definitive, but it always gives way to ever deeper ways of perceiving the gift of

life. That being said, there should be a limit to the analysis of our lives. We must live life forward! Another piece of Kierkegaard’s wisdom is that he states “Life is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be lived”. It is important to balance our plans for the future against the revelations of the past, and not to forget to be fully present to what this moment has to offer us. So it is my wish, for myself and for you, that we may have the wisdom to hold this kind of balance. The path is the goal.

Happy New Year!

*Simon*



# JANUARY | 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 2 January: Letting Go and Holding On



In this service we will have a fire ceremony to let go of things of the past and to affirm the things that we would like for the future. Please bring a pencil and paper . . . and weatherproof clothing!



## Sunday 9 January: 'Gratitude is heaven itself.'

These words of William Blake present an approach to life to us. A life lived from a loving heart rather than a fearing mind. Can you remember a time in your life when love broke through your fears? If so, what would be an appropriate response to such a time . . . gratitude, perhaps?

## Sunday 16 January: Community Service (online only)

## Sunday 23 January: Smiley Faces

This week is reputed to be the most difficult in the year for mental well-being. In this service we are going to look at the positive news stories from around the world . . . in sum, we're going to attempt to 'fake it till we make it!' Please come with your own good news story.

## Sunday 30 January: Pure Land Buddhism

Pure Land Buddhism is a broad branch of Mahayana Buddhism. Its basic take on spirituality is that the earth, as we experience it, is corrupt and can never provide solace for the world-weary wayfarer. What it does do is offer an alternative plane of existence called the 'Pure Land'. In this service we will look at the themes within Pure Land Buddhism for use on our own spiritual journey.

# JANUARY | what's happening

**Sunday 2** | 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 5, 19, 26** | 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. Please contact me first to let me know you are coming, especially if the weather is poor.

*Contact* : Rev. Simon Ramsay / [minister@rpuc.org.uk](mailto:minister@rpuc.org.uk)

**Thursday 6, 20, 27** | 6–7 p.m.

## **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](mailto:minister@rpuc.org.uk)  
URL for Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/81523477909>

**Wednesday 12** | 5.30–7 p.m.

## **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](mailto:info@rpuc.org.uk) for the login details.

*Contact* : David Watson / [info@rpuc.org.uk](mailto:info@rpuc.org.uk)



# richmond + putney unitarians

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>

