

June
2022



richmond + putney unitarians

the flame

‘It’s Time to Celebrate, Let Love Shine’ – Madonna

Unitarians in the UK have long supported and celebrated the right of all people, including the LGBTQIA+, to make partnerships and to marry. In 2012 our movement made history when Cross Street Chapel in central Manchester became the first place in the country to register for civil partnerships, and during the same year the Ullet Road Unitarian Church in Liverpool conducted the first religious service to celebrate a same-sex civil partnership in the UK. When the law changed in 2014 to allow same-sex marriages, many Unitarian congregations were the among the first to register to offer them too, including Richmond. To see the relief on a couple’s faces when they find a place that can honour their love in a meaningful ceremony has to be one of the most satisfying aspects of my work as a minister.

Our acceptance of an individual’s right to full rights in our community, irrespective of colour, sexual orientation, nationality or belief has been in our community for as long as I can remember, and rightly so. At present there seems to be a Zeitgeist of thought emerging which mirrors our own. Just last year, at the annual meetings of the Methodist church, the largest body of Christians outside of Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism, overwhelmingly voted in favour of same-sex marriages. The

Methodists changed their definition of marriage to become “a life-long union in the body, mind and spirit of two people who freely enter it”, which, of course, I strongly applaud!

However, I fear that there is a long way to go on the journey for equal rights and the fight against prejudice for the LGBTQIA+ communities. Their journey (and their struggle) continues. This is why you will see art installations of the rainbow all over London during the month of June. You may well have seen some already. I have; there’s a rainbow crossing on Twickenham High Street which brightens up the place considerably. It also reminds me that there is so much work yet to be done.

On 2 July there will be the UK’s biggest Pride March here in London. I have already signed up to attend and you will most welcome to join me! It is a great chance to support the LGBTQIA+ community and also a good way to celebrate the open-minded, open-hearted Unitarian approach to life.

Simon

P. S. I will be on annual leave from 8 June until 14 June.



JUNE | services

All services are by Rev. Simon Ramsay and will be both in church and on Zoom, unless otherwise stated. The Zoom login link is given below.

Sunday Services at 11–12 a.m.
URL for Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/101828528>

Sunday 5 June – Flower Ceremony

On 4 June 1923, Norbert Capek, founder of the Unitarian Church in Czechoslovakia, introduced a special service to his community which he called a flower communion. It was intended to be a service that celebrated all kinds of different flowers and people; one that was inclusive to all. In this service, we will have a flower ceremony and learn more about the fascinating story behind it.

N.B. Straight after the service, at about 12, we hope to be having *two* special general meetings. The first one will be to explicitly to change our *existing* church rules to allow those online, as well as those physically present, to vote in meetings. This will require a quorum of ten people to pass.

Please come in person if your circumstances allow it!

The second meeting will consider motions relating to our application to become a CIO.

Sunday 12 June – Being of Service

This will be led by Leslie Schipa.

Sunday 19 June – Father's Day

Father's Day is a relatively recent phenomenon in British society. It started to be celebrated shortly after the Second World War, and according to the historian Steve Roud, there was substantial opposition to it. What aspects of 'fatherhood' do you think it important to celebrate?

Sunday 26 June – Unitarian Pride

In this service we will look at the journey that the Pride movement has made since the Stonewall riots in New York in 1969. As a community we can whole-heartedly agree with and work towards the vision expressed by Peter Tatchell when he said, 'We want to get to a situation where no one cares what sexuality you are; where we accept the person and their right to love whoever they wish – male, female, both or neither.'

Please feel good-heartedly encouraged to wear something in one colour of the rainbow (N.B. Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain), and perhaps we will manage to make a rainbow all together – or, if your wardrobe allows it – fully rainbowy!

JUNE | what's happening

Wednesday 1, 15, 22, 29 | 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

Wednesday 1, 15, 22, 29 | 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

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

Sunday 5 | 12 p.m.
Two Special General Meetings

The first meeting requires 10 people physically present in church to pass a new rule allowing both those who are present or on Zoom to vote in meetings. This will take 5 minutes or less. The second meeting is to consider and vote on motions to support our application to become a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO). Please refer to the copy of the newly amended constitution which you were sent previously.

Sunday 5 | 2–3.30 p.m.
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 7 | 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 for the login details.

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

Tuesday 28 | 6–7 p.m.
Evening chat with the minister (Zoom only)

Many of you can't make it to Coffee with the Minister at Tide Tables on Wednesday. So this is another chance to have a chinwag and reconnect on Zoom.

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

URL for Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81000731823>

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.

Contact

Minister

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Minister's Availability

Our minister is available at the following times. Please do not contact him outside of these hours except for an urgent matter.

Monday	N/A
Tuesday	10 am–8 pm
Wednesday	12–8 pm
Thursday	12–6 pm
Friday	10 am–5 pm
Saturday	N/A

or at or after the church service on Sundays.

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).



Richmond and Putney Unitarians,
Ormond Road,
Richmond TW10 6TH

For more information on RPUC visit our website:

www.rpuc.org.uk