



IMPULSE

Promoting Unitarianism
in London and the South East



**January - March
2012**

FUSE DETAILS

PLUS

District Seeks New Treasurer

First Neighbourhood Dinner at Bethnal Green

Inside this issue:

<i>District Minister's Letter</i>	3-5
<i>District Minister attends ICUU meetings in the Philippines</i>	5
<i>Heart & Soul of Worship Gilbert & Sullivan evening</i>	6
<i>Last call for Olympic Hosts District AGM/Spring Quarterly</i>	7
<i>Magical Mystery Tour through Colour</i>	8
<i>Council Seeks new Treasurer Pastoral Leaders Meeting</i>	9
<i>What We Say About Ourselves</i>	10
<i>Youth Sunday</i>	11
<i>Census Returns show Overall Growth New Constitution Proposed</i>	12
<i>FUSE - Festival of Unitarians in the SouthEast Timetable</i>	14-15
<i>General Overview</i>	13, 16
<i>Description of some of the Workshops on offer</i>	17-19
<i>Tribute to Dr Roy Smith</i>	20-21
<i>Review of Art Lester's new book</i>	22
<i>General Assembly Annual meetings in Keele Neighbourhood Dinners</i>	23
<i>Induction Service - Rev. Patrick O'Neill Karen Armstrong Lecture</i>	24
<i>Council Contact Details</i>	25-27
<i>Dates for your Diary</i>	Back page

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Dear Friends,

Hang on to your hats! 2012 is going to be a big year. Not only are the Olympics coming to town, but big changes are apparently in the air.

I have a young friend in the United States who has become very interested (I would say, obsessed) with the Mayan calendar prophecy that in a year's time, the Winter Solstice of 2012 in fact, we will enter into a new age and there will be seismic shifts in human consciousness and our relationship with the planet. He has been bombarding me with information about it, most of which I have long since stopped reading. Art Lester's comic take on such things notwithstanding (see elsewhere in IMPULSE), I have no interest in such prophecies of doom.

Who knows, maybe my young friend is right. Perhaps the fact that an ancient calendar from a largely now-forgotten civilisation runs out on 21st December 2012 does portend a great change in human consciousness, and we will all wake up that morning to a different world, or at least a different perception of the same old world. I suppose it is not impossible. But then, history is littered with such prophecies. Nostra Damus has taken a back seat lately, but twenty or so years ago he was the currently fashionable harbinger of doom, and it was hard to turn around without hearing someone making reference to his supposedly accurate predictions. Various self-proclaimed prophets periodically seek out the

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headlines with their forecasts for the end of the world. We were confidently told by an idiot pastor in the United States that it was all going to end on May 12th, 2011. He soaked up the attention of the world for his allotted fifteen minutes of fame, May 13th came, and he slipped back into the obscurity he deserves.

There are certainly real dangers hanging over us. Thirty years ago, I was a member of The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. It was a time when the West was engaged in an all-out show-down with the USSR, with each side committed to the insanity that the total destruction of the world was a worthwhile price to pay for the sake of petty nationalist pride. It is an insanity to which this Government remains wedded, although mercifully the immediate threat of nuclear meltdown has receded. The new global threat is Climate Change. Scientists continue to issue their dire warnings, and politicians and the public remain impervious. Better, it seems, to drive a monster SUV now than worry about the world of tomorrow. Twelve years ago, Millennialists were predicting chaos as computers around the world crashed. And lo! nothing happened. January 1 2000 was pretty much the same as every new year's day in history.

But what to make of prophecies of doom when they are religiously motivated? They are a curious phenomenon. What is it about the human psyche which seems to relish the anticipation of doom and which wraps it up in apocalyptic dread. I have only one response. Ignore them. Laugh at them. Dismiss them for the nonsense they are. Not only are they bad science, in the sense that they never materialise. Much worse than that, they are bad religion. Within those strands of Christianity which are fascinated with the End-Time, they foster a narrow self-interest in one's own salvation which is antithetical to everything I understand to have been the teachings of Jesus. How can you claim to love your neighbour as yourself – an unambiguous commandment - if you delight not only in the prospect of eternal damnation for that neighbour but the satisfaction of witness that damnation from your own place of righteous safety. The very idea is deeply offensive to all that is best about the Christian tradition, and to the moral and religious teachings of Jesus.

Long ago in the seventeenth century, Blaise Pascal decided it was prudent to believe in God on the basis of placing a bet. He said it

made good sense, because if you don't believe and you are wrong, then you will suffer eternal torments as a consequence. On the other hand, if you do believe and you are wrong, all you have lost is a few Sunday morning lie-ins. Of course, Pascal seems to overlook the difficulty that the supposedly all-knowing God being believed in would have seen through such cynical and self-serving calculation and rendered the wager null and void.

Perhaps in a year's time I will have egg on my face. Perhaps the world will change dramatically on the Winter Solstice next year. But I think not. In fact, I am willing to place a bet on it.

See you in church!

David



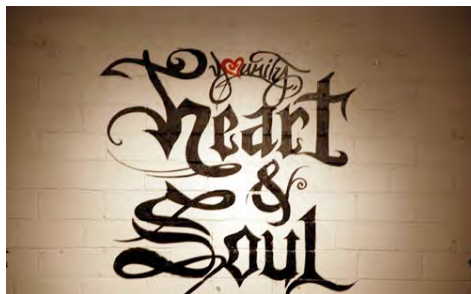
International
Council of
Unitarians and
Universalists

District Minister attends ICUU meetings in The Philippines

David Usher will be attending meeting of The International Council of Unitarians & Universalists (ICUU). These will take place near Dumaguete City, February 7 – 12. There will be travel days before and after. David was the founding President of ICUU, serving from 1995 to 1999, and continues his occasional involvement with the organisation which brings together Unitarians from around the world. Aided by the internet, there has been a spectacular explosion of interest in Unitarianism in countries where it had never been imagined it might flourish. There are now active groups in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Congo, Cuba, Finland, France, Iceland, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands, Singapore and Uganda, with individuals in other countries wanting help in establishing congregations. The more established ICUU member groups are Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, European UUs, Germany, Hungary, India, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Romania, South Africa, United Kingdom, and United States.

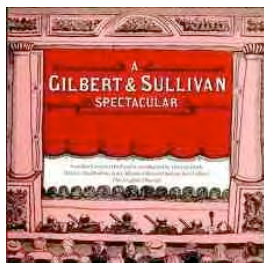
The Heart and Soul of Worship

Eleven people gathered in the Richmond Church on November 26 for this Workshop, led by Rev. Linda Hart and Rev. David Usher. The day was devoted less to the practicalities of how to prepare and present worship, and more to considering what worship is, why we do it, and how we make it an authentic expression of faith for both the worship leader and the congregation.



Two workshops in Spring explore worship further

Linda and David will be leading a two session follow-up course in the Spring, these focussing more on how to prepare a service and write a sermon, plus how to present it. These will be held on March 31 and April 14, again at Richmond Unitarian Church, Ormond Road, Richmond TW10 6TH. We will gather at 10.30 with coffee and end at 4.00. Those who did not attend the first session in November are most welcome to attend these workshops, but the expectation is that participants will attend both. Cost is £20 in total, cheques payable to LDPA and sent to David Usher at his postal address.



Gilbert & Sullivan

Friday 10th February - 7:30 - 10:00 PM

Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead, London

Rosslyn Hill Choir invite you to a fun filled evening of gourmet dining plus Gilbert & Sullivan. Audience participation encouraged! This is a fund-raising initiative of the Choir.

For more information, please contact 020-3227 1066

Last Call for Olympic Hosts



If you have not yet offered to host an international visitor during the Olympics, please do so as soon as possible. We have several Unitarians from North America who would appreciate home hospitality and are willing to pay for it. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to welcome fellow Unitarians to the city during this major international event, and to make some money for our church and ourselves. Please inform Danielle Wilson by the end of January. It would be a shame to have to tell prospective guests that we do not have hosts for them.



District Annual General Meeting/ Spring Quarterly Meeting

When: Saturday 24th March, 1.30 – 4.00pm

Where: Unity Church, 277 Upper St, Islington N1 2TZ

What:

- Worship led by Rev. Daniel Costley (Sevenoaks)
- Council will present its work over the past year, and preview what it aims to focus on in the coming year.
- Election of new Council (if you would like to serve on District Council, be sure to get your nomination in on time)
- Time to meet with fellow Unitarians from throughout the District
- Refreshment for the body, mind and spirit

A Magical Mystery Tour through Colour

A day workshop with the Art and Spirituality Network



Saturday 14th January 2012
10:00 AM - 4:30 PM
At Golders Green Unitarians

Explore the imaginative and emotional qualities of colour with art-making, movement, gentle creativity and ritual.

A workshop led by Angela Schutz and John Harley.

Cost: £25 (includes art materials and drinks – reductions available if needed, £15 to members of Golders Green Unitarians) – advance booking essential. Bring some lunch to share.

For booking form and further information go to www.artandspirituality.net

Living for today

Look to this day.

For it is life, the very life of life.

In its brief course lie all the verities and realities of your existence: the bliss of growth, the glory of action, the splendour of beauty.

For yesterday is but a dream and tomorrow is only a vision, but today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.

Look well, therefore, to this day.

- The Sufi



Council seeks new District Treasurer



Phillida Simpson has served with distinction as District Treasurer for the past three years, in addition to being Treasurer at Brighton, her home congregation. She now wants to have more time for other interests, and so has already resigned as Treasurer at Brighton and has announced her intention to stand down as District Treasurer at the AGM in March.

The job has recently been divided into two separate functions. The role of Treasurer is an honorary position as an elected member of Council, and entails the supervision of the accounts. The role of Book-keeper involves the day-to-day keeping of records, for which a modest honorarium is paid. Phillida has been doing both jobs, but it is possible that the two functions can be split between two people.

If you are interested in either position, speak first to District Chair, Miriam Lahage.



Pastoral Leaders meet

The ministers and other pastoral leaders in the District will meet on Thursday, 19th January at Essex Hall, when the District Minister will lead a discussion on Crossing Borders – what we in Britain can teach to and learn from our fellow Unitarians around the world.

What we say about ourselves



Below is a selection of what we say about ourselves in our church newsletters/websites:

Our church welcomes all who seek the meaning of life. We believe that religion is wider than any one sect and deeper than any one set of opinions. Whilst having deep respect for Christian tradition, we seek exploration of all possible truths from all possible sources. Our open community encourages freedom of individual thought and belief. We look to offer a spiritual home within the context of a loving community. A place to share your joys, find comfort in times of need, and enjoy the warmth of friendship. Through our open and inclusive attitude, we hope to promote understanding, reason and tolerance within the wider community. (Horsham)

We are united in fellowship and not by any fixed creed. We hold that religious belief is a matter for the individual and that such belief should be held in the light of reason and may change with new knowledge. We meet seeking greater awareness of the divine, in the spirit of freedom and in fellowship with all who seek truth. (Richmond & Putney)

We are a spiritual community who seek to promote a free and enquiring non-dogmatic religious outlook. We do this through the celebration of life, the service of humanity and respect for all creation; and through learning from the spiritual, cultural and intellectual insights of all humanity. We aspire to be a truly open congregation: a church without walls, open to mystery, responsive to need, with compassion and acceptance for all... a church of the questing, hungering human spirit: in awe before the miracle of consciousness, the mystery within and the mystery beyond. (Golders Green)



Youth Sunday 29th January 2012

In the next few days all secretaries of congregations and fellowships will be receiving special worship packs written and prepared by children, young people and youth leaders. It is hoped that this material can be used, either wholly or partly, to make the service on Youth Sunday accessible and engaging for children, teenagers and indeed people of all ages. Alternatively the material can be used to help prepare worship on any day of the year. If a congregation has no children or young people attending then some of the themes covered by the packs can be explored and/or topics such as human rights of children, childhood, child labour, children in wars etc can be explored. The Youth Programme has set up this new initiative in order to:

1. encourage and assist congregations in promoting child and youth friendly worship and;
2. to raise the profile of the Youth Programme and to publicise youth events.

Congregations are invited to donate a proportion of their collection towards the work of the Youth Programme, though this is not the chief purpose of Youth Sunday. Any donations will be gratefully received and will help the Youth Programme continue to deliver youth events up and down the country.

Any feedback after Youth Sunday about the packs and about the concept of the initiative would be welcomed.

Links to online packs:

Junior Pack - http://www.unitarian.org.uk/docs/publications/2012_JuniorPack.pdf

Senior Pack - http://www.unitarian.org.uk/docs/publications/2012_SeniorPack.pdf

John Harley jharley@unitarian.org.uk

Census returns indicate overall increases in attendance

Census returns have now been received from all but one congregation, which decided that the questions were intrusive and declined to co-operate. Comparisons with the figures for 1998 and 2000 found by Alan Ruston show some a variation in average attendance from 18.5 in 1998 to 14.2 in 2000, and up to 21.5 in 2011. Some allowance needs to be made for the fact that not all congregations reported for all three years. For the fourteen congregations for which numbers are available for each of the three years in question, the numbers still show an encouraging trend. For those congregations, the average overall attendances were 14.5 in 1998, 14.6 in 2000, and 20.5 in 2011. Eleven congregations show an increase from 1998 to 2011, and four a decrease.



Warm thanks to all who submitted their congregation's attendance numbers. The District will repeat the exercise in a few years' time to assess the trends in attendance.



Council to propose a new Constitution

Following the vote at the 2011 AGM, Council commissioned a Working Party of Leigh Engeham (Newington Green), Kieran Seale (Hampstead) and Rev. David Usher (District Minister) to draft a new District Constitution. In due course that draft will be circulated to all congregations prior to the 2012 AGM. Congregations are invited and encouraged to consider that draft so that their delegates can be as informed as possible for the discussion and vote at the AGM.



FESTIVAL of UNITARIANS in the SOUTHEAST

This weekend will be one of the most exciting and ambitious in the history of the LDPA. Don't miss it.

Set in a beautiful seaside hotel/conference centre, FUSE is packed with workshops, inspiring speakers, spiritual practice, worship, opportunities for connection, and fun. FUSE is open to all Unitarians from throughout the country and beyond, and bookings are coming in steadily.

When: **3-5 February 2012**
Where: **Chatsworth Hotel, Worthing**

- £145 for a shared room
- £195 for a single room
- £115 for children & youth
- £115 non-residential rate (including all meals except breakfasts)
- £47 day rate (not including dinner) -
- £66 day rate (inc. dinner)
- £25 Pre-FUSE Preaching Workshop



FUSE offers the natural beauty of the seaside, the comfort of a premium venue, and extraordinary spiritual and intellectual content - all at a reasonable inclusive price.

Capacity is limited to 160, and already we are more than half full, with registrations received from all over the country. Generous bursaries are available to the unwaged and others on the basis of need, with limited additional discounts offered to those who volunteer to help during the weekend (first come, first served).

.....cont'd pg 16.....

Time	Friday	Saturday			
		Worship	Cong health	Spirituality	
08:00		Tai Chi (JD-E)	Spiritual Practice TBC	Morning Devotion	
08:30					
09:00		Breakfast			
09:30					
10:00		Meditative Worship	Future of spiritual community (SP&SL)	Meisner Communication (JH)	
10:30					
11:00		Break			
11:30	Pre-conference Advanced Preaching Workshop Patrick O'Neil	Prayer/lectio divina for Unitarians (YA)	Stewardship (JB)	Intro to Ignatian spirituality (JC)	
12:00					
12:30		Lunch			
13:00					
13:30			Effective music in worship (JH)	Creating Mission Statements (SL)	enneagram (JS) part 1
14:00			Group-led Worship	Congregational visibility (MM & AM)	enneagram (JS) part 2
14:30					
15:00			Break		
15:30		Storytelling in worship (LH)	How to be a leader (KB)	Atheist Spirituality (WS)	
16:00					
16:30					
17:00	Arrivals	Keynote talk- Robin Ince			
17:30					
18:00					
18:30					
19:00	Dinner	Dinner			
19:30					
20:00					
20:30	Opening event	Main FUSE Worship Patrick O'Neil preacher			
21:00					
21:30					
22:00	Late Fun Event	Fun Event			
22:30					
23:00					

JH = Jen Hazel	AB = Amy Burns
YA = Yvonne Aburrow	JS = Josephine Seccombe
AP = Andy Pakula	KB = Kate Buchanan
LH = Linda Hart	DU = David Usher
JC = Jim Corrigan	AS = Amy Shannon
AJ = Ashley Jones	JD-E = James Drew-Edwards
SG&RO=Sheena Gabriel and Rob Oulton	WS = Wendy Sudbury

ABLE

Worship	Sunday Cong health	Spirituality
Spiritual Practice TBC	Kundalini Yoga (AJ)	Morning Devotion
Breakfast		
Contemporary worship (AP)	Engaging in social Justice (AH)	Writing as spiritual practice (LH)
Break		
Contemporary Worship	Integrating newcomers(AP&AB)	12 steps to spiritual health (DU)
Lunch		
Muscle of the Soul (JJ)	Serving Young Adults (AP)	Meditation (SG&RO)
Closing Event		

Key

workshop
Meal
Special event
Lecture
Spiritual practice
worship

e	JJ = Jo James
	AH = Ann Howell
	JB = John Bates
	SL = Stephen Lingwood
	MM = Meredith Moss
ards	AM = Angela Maher

.....cont'd from pg 13....

Highlights include:

- Keynote speaker Robin Ince delivering the show that he is touring the country with. We will be his private audience.

More than 20 workshops focused on spirituality, congregational health, and worship (see pages 14-15):

- Traditional, contemplative, youth, and contemporary worship to inspire and enliven
- A special main worship service led by Rev. Patrick O'Neill
- Evening times for fun and connection
- A pre-conference advanced preaching workshop on Friday, led by Rev. Patrick O'Neill
- A programme led by Rev. John Harley for children from 6-12 years during the day. Youth 13 and older are welcomed and encouraged to attend the event as full participants in any and all of the general programming



To fit all the workshops and worship services, the conference will be arranged into three parallel tracks: Spirituality, Congregational Health, and Worship. There are three events to choose from in every hour-long session. You can stay with one track or switch as much as you like, or follow your own path.

Workshop titles can be found on pages 14-15 of this issue of IMPULSE. Descriptions of some of the workshops are found on pages 17-19.

Register on-line now at www.fusefest.org.uk, or to the District Minister or District Administrator (addresses on page 3)

Cheques payable to LDPA

Deadline for registrations is 15th January. Don't miss out!

This is a sample of the exciting and diverse workshops being offered at FUSE. Many more will also be on offer to challenge your mind, soothe your spirit, flex your muscles and loosen your larynx.

Worshipping Godot: Atheist Spirituality

led by Wendy Sudbury

The playwright Samuel Beckett is angry with God for not existing! I sympathise. In rejecting the beliefs of a formal religion we leave behind the spaces, rituals, comforts and meaning that we learned to associate with spirituality. What (if anything) should replace it? What is 'spirituality' for an Atheist? How to avoid replacing the old God with another (e.g. Gaia, Music, or Reason)? In this workshop I present some ideas and words that speak to me (drawn mostly from literature and anthropology). Then we break into smaller groups for discussion, with topics chosen by participants. We might look for definitions, for more examples, or just for inspiration.

Wendy Sudbury came to Unitarianism nearly twenty years ago, looking for a space and a ceremony that would express the joy and commitment of getting married. She is a member of New Unity congregation. In her professional life she is a management consultant and also teaches for the Open University.

Contemplative Prayer and Lectio Divina

led by Yvonne Aburrow

Because many people do not believe in a personal God or in miraculous interventions, we find it difficult to pray. But prayer is not just about asking for things. It can be contemplative. It can be about communing silently with the universe, or self-examination, or holding loved ones in your thoughts, or increasing mindfulness. This workshop will look at different types of prayer, and invite you to create your own prayers, as well as spending some time practicing contemplative and centering prayer. We will also look at Lectio Divina, a mystical Christian practice which involves contemplation of a text. It has four phases: reading, meditation, prayer, contemplation. Please bring a short section from sacred writings such as the Psalms, the Tao te Ching or poems. Choose something new or a piece that you have loved for a long time; a new meaning may come to you.

Yvonne Aburrow has been a Unitarian since 2007 and a Wiccan since 1991. She studied MA Contemporary Religions and Spiritualities at Bath Spa University. She has written four books on the mythology and symbolism of trees, birds and animals.

Twelve Steps to Spiritual Health

led by David Usher

The Twelve Step Programme has long been the basis of Alcoholics Anonymous and other related organisations. The concept of Twelve Steps has been borrowed by many others, most recently Karen Armstrong and her Charter for Compassion.

This workshop will introduce the twelve steps I am developing into a systematic programme, but what would be your twelve steps towards Spiritual Health?

Rev. David Usher is the District Minister for Unitarians in London and the South East. He has ministered for more than thirty years, in the UK and the USA, and is the author and presenter of LifeSpirit, the on-line programme sponsored by The Hibbert Trust. He has a master's degree in Philosophy and Theology from the University of Oxford, and a Doctorate of Ministry from Andover Newton Theological School.

A gentle introduction to Ignatian Spirituality

led by Jim Corrigan

Ignatian Spirituality is the mystical path developed in the early 16th century by the founder of the Jesuits, Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius created what have become known as the 'Spiritual Exercises', a structure for meditation and contemplation that encourages self-examination in the light of finding God 'in all things'. The Exercises have become widely popular in recent years, attracting a variety of spiritual seekers, from Christians to pagans.- *Teilhard de Chardin*

Jim Corrigan is a final-year Unitarian ministry student at Harris Manchester College, Oxford, and is also studying Spiritual Direction with the (Anglican) Diocese of London. He is a member of Golders Green Unitarians.

The passionate love of growth

It has become fashionable today to mock or treat with suspicion anything that looks like faith in the future. If we are not careful this scepticism will be fatal, for its direct result is to destroy both the love of living and the momentum of mankind (sic)... A passionate love of growth, of being – that is what we need. Down with the cowards and the sceptics, the pessimists and the unhappy, the weary and the stagnant.

- Teilhard de Chardin

Divine Numbers and Deadly Sins: 1 & 2

led by Josephine Seccombe

The Enneagram, which means model of nine, has been described as a map of the world faith traditions at a contemplative level. We do not know its origins, but the diagram was probably drawn by Pythagoras. Down the centuries people have spoken about how they see the world they live in. If we listen we can begin to appreciate how different we are, one from another, and why this is so.

The first step is to identify to which of the nine types I belong: then to appreciate the differences between myself and the eight others. This leads to greater understanding and so, to more empathic communication.

This workshop session will aim to help participants find their place on the circle and start to realise how this can be useful, both 'in Love and Work'

Josephine Seccombe qualified as an Enneagram facilitator in the Narrative Tradition in 2000 and has worked with organisations in the communication industry, voluntary organisations and multi-faith groups. Since moving to Oxford four years ago her work is mainly focused inside the Oxford Anglican diocese and with lay/ordained teams and groups.

Freeing Imagination: Tips and Tools for

Storytelling in Worship *led by Linda Hart*

They may forget the main points of the sermon and won't know what hymns they sang by mid-afternoon, but a story well told will stay with them for months. Build and enhance your storytelling skills in this workshop which will include opportunities to experience your inner storyteller and resources for finding the right story for worship.

A lifelong Unitarian Universalist, Linda has been in ministry for nearly 30 years and has served Richmond and Putney Unitarian Church since 2007. Outside of ministry, she keeps busy with her family and knitting.



Dr. Roy Smith dies unexpectedly

It is with great sadness that we report that Roy Smith, Lay Leader of Tenterden Unitarian Church, former General Secretary and Honorary Member of the General Assembly, died suddenly on 12th December. He was 75 years old. His funeral will be held at Tenterden Unitarian Church on Friday 30th December at noon, after which guests are encouraged to have refreshments at The White Lion Hotel on the town's High St. Those who wish may then go on to Charing Crematorium for a brief committal. The funeral will be conducted by Roy's long-time friend, the Rev. Eric Jones, assisted by Rev. David Usher.

Roy was born and raised in Leicester, the eldest of four children. He had to leave school at sixteen to help support the family finances, and got his first job in one of Leicester's premium department stores. At seventeen, rather than being called up, he enlisted with the Royal Air Force for 3 years. Always an avid reader, while posted in Germany he happened to pick up a copy of The Inquirer from a friend, liked what he read, and found his way to the Croydon Unitarian Church where his friend lived. So began an association which was to last for the rest of his life. He met his future wife, Carole, when he knocked on her door looking for her piano-playing father to ask if he would play for a church entertainment. At the tender ages of just 23 and 20, Roy and Carole married, and on the 26th of December this year they would have celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary.

After a few other clerical jobs, Roy started work as Deputy Secretary at Unitarian Headquarters in London in 1961, a post he held with distinction until 1974 when he left to work for the National Association of Probation Officers. However, five years later he was enticed back as General Secretary, the position he held until he took early retirement in 1994. Roy was the first layperson to hold the position of General Secretary, and as such he encountered opposition from some

ministers. However, no-one could have done more to promote the interests of ministers and ministry, being tirelessly conscientious in all aspects of his support for ministers. During his Secretariat Roy was also keenly interested in the work of The International Association for Religious Freedom, and after his retirement served that organisation as President. His service to Unitarianism was recognised in 1984 when Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago awarded him an Honorary Doctorate. It was a distinction of which he was justly proud, having left formal education at the age of only sixteen.

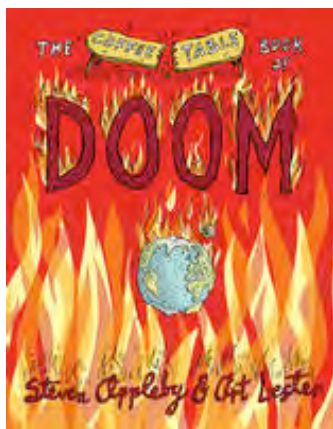
Roy filled his retirement years with volunteering and then becoming an employee at the Primary School where Carole had become Deputy Head Teacher, working particularly with special needs children and helping them learn to swim. He formally qualified as a Life Guard, all of his fellow students being teenagers.

Ten years ago, Roy and Carole moved to Ashford and began attending the charming church in nearby Tenterden when they quickly became key members of the congregation. Four years ago, the congregation being without pastoral leadership, Roy offered his services as Lay Leader, an offer gladly accepted. He brought energy, compassion and imagination to that position, and with Carole's help and encouragement, he forged strong new links with the town. The congregation grew in numbers and confidence. Roy had signalled his intention to retire as Lay Leader in March of next year, but his loss will be grievously felt by everyone in the congregation and beyond.

Apart from his family and his dedication to Unitarianism, Roy had two other passions. The first was music. He had a vast collection of music and an encyclopaedic knowledge about it. For several years he had offered his Roy's Music-go-Round programme, playing and talking about different styles of music. Those presentations drew large and enthusiastic crowds. His second great love was cinema. From boyhood he had kept detailed notes on every single film he had seen, all written in his lovely hand.

Roy is survived by Carole, his beloved wife of almost fifty two years, their three children, Graham, Philip and Lisa, eight grand children, and one very new great grandchild. Roy was a devoted father and grandfather, and took great delight in them all. His three younger siblings, Carol, Yvonne and Michael, also survive him. Their loss is the greatest, but everyone who knew Roy will be touched and saddened by his death. He was a truly kind, gentle and good man.

We congratulate Rev. Art Lester on the publication of his new book, The Coffee Table Book of Doom.



Written with the cartoonist Steven Appleby, it was released on 3rd November. *The Coffee Table Book of Doom* will now be available in most bookstores and online.

Here's how the publisher, Random House, describes it: "...a brilliantly funny yet erudite compendium of all the 27 doom-laden horsemen we need to worry about - personal doom, gender erosion, asteroid impact, pandemics, super storms, sexual ruin - and much more besides."

Co-author Steven Appleby is a well-known British artist and cartoonist, whose work has appeared in most leading newspapers, on Radio 4 (BBC), on television (in the animated series, "Captain Star"), and in more than 20 books. Time Out Magazine called him "probably the best comic illustrator in Britain".

The book is funny and serious at the same time—something they thought couldn't be done. We can't guarantee saving you from all the perils of 2012, but we promise to make it more fun.

To order in the UK:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Coffee-Table-Book-Doom/dp/0224086952>

In the US:

<http://www.amazon.com/Coffee-Table-Book-Doom/dp/0224086952>

And while you're at it, why not visit our blog on:

<http://doomwatchers-doomwatchers.blogspot.com/2011/09/something-to-worry-about-today.html>

Art Lester

Worship is the mystery within us, reaching out to the mystery beyond.
It is an inarticulate silence yearning to speak;
It is the window of the moment open to the sky of the eternal

Jacob Trapp

General Assembly to meet in Keele



The 2012 General Assembly will meet at Keele University, April 3 – 6. Congregational secretaries will soon receive official mailings, but put the dates in your diaries now. The preacher at the Anniversary Service will be the Rev. Celia Cartwright of Kendal. Lis Dyson-Jones will be installed as President, and the Rev. Bill Darlison has been nominated as Vice-President. London District will be holding a workshop during the meetings.

Social Action Group holds first Neighbourhood Dinner

The District Social Action group launched its first programme on December 10 – a free Neighbourhood Dinner at Mansford St Mission, Bethnal Green. It hosted the pasta dinner for local residents with the twin aims of bringing them together as a community following the summer riots and to provide a nourishing pre-Christmas meal. Fewer residents turned up than had been hoped, but those present enjoyed the good food and conviviality of the occasion.



The organisers and helpers enjoy a quiet moment together.

Two more Neighbourhood Dinners are being planned for January 21 and February 18, with ideas to make them more successful than the first. Warm thanks to Rob Gregson and Ann Howell as the principal organisers and workers, plus Julian Meek, Matthew Smith and Pip Usher and others who turned up on the evening to help.

Hampstead installs new minister

The congregation of Rosslyn Hill Chapel will celebrate the induction of its 37th minister, Rev. Patrick O'Neill, on Saturday 7th January at 3.00pm. The service will feature Patrick's fellow London ministers – Rob Gregson, Linda Hart, Feargus O'Connor, Sarah Tinker, Andy Pakula and David Usher – with additional contributions by members of the congregation, local and denominational dignitaries, and members of Patrick's family. Patrick started his ministry at Rosslyn Hill in September, coming to London from a distinguished thirty year career in the United States, most recently in Brooklyn, New York.

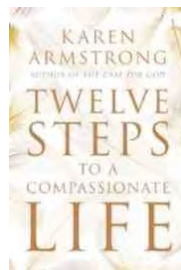
The service will be followed by a reception in the Hall.

Everyone is invited to attend, but please notify the Rosslyn Hill Administrator, Sharron Conduit, in advance at admin@rosslynhillchapel.com or 020 7433 3267

PULSE Unitarians attend Karen Armstrong lecture

Unitarians from throughout the District comprised a substantial part of the audience which heard Karen Armstrong deliver the Younghusband Lecture on 7th December.

Her lecture, The Core of Religion, was based largely on her most recent book, Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, which has led to the formation of the international movement, The Charter for Compassion. The lecture was held at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue in St. Johns Wood, and was sponsored by The World Congress of Faiths.



Many congregations in the District are running discussion and study groups based on Armstrong's book, and one minister has described their group as "The most important such work I have ever done." The District Council has formally associated itself with the Charter, as has the national General Assembly.

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Published by

Rev. David Usher

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"We Unitarians value the freedom of thought, to explore and understand faith from each individual's perspective. Therefore every word spoken and written ultimately reflects the thoughts and beliefs of the person speaking or writing. We welcome your responses in the spirit of mindful discussion and debate."

What's On 2012

January

Saturday 7th

3:00 PM Induction service, Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead

Monday 9th

6:00 PM District Council, Essex Hall

Saturday 14th

10:00-4:30 PM Art & Spirituality Workshop - Golders Green, London

Sunday 15th

Deadline for FUSE registrations

Thursday 19th

Pastoral Leaders meeting, Essex Hall

Saturday 21st

Neighbourhood Dinner, Bethnal Green, London

Monday 23rd

7:00 PM Canterbury Fellowship, Friends' Meeting House, The Friars

Tuesday 24th

Deadline for February ePulse

Sunday 29th

Youth Sunday

February

Friday 3rd

2:00 PM Preaching Workshop Chatsworth Hotel, Worthing

Friday 3rd

6:00 PM FUSE @ Chatsworth Hotel, Worthing

Monday 6th

District Minister attending ICUU meetings, The Philippines

Friday 17th

District minister returns from The Philippines

Saturday 18th

Neighbourhood Dinner, Bethnal Green, London

Tuesday 21st

Deadline for March ePulse

Monday 27th

7:00 PM Canterbury Fellowship, Friends' Meeting House, The Friars

March

Monday 12th

6:00 PM District Council, Essex Hall

Saturday 24th

1:30 PM District Annual General Meeting, New Unity, Islington, London

Monday 26th

7:00 PM Canterbury Fellowship, Friends' Meeting House, The Friars

Tuesday 27th

Deadline for April-June IMPULSE

Saturday 31st

10:30-4:00 Heart & Worship Workshop, Richmond

Looking Ahead

Tuesday 3rd-Friday 6th April

General Assembly Annual Meetings, Keele University

PULSE: Supporting and inspiring Unitarian communities in London and the South East, now and for future generations

