



PULSE e-Bulletin

PROMOTING UNITARIANISM IN LONDON & THE SOUTH-EAST



JUNE 2011

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Calling Hosts for London Olympics

Last October it was announced that PULSE would act as home hospitality co-ordinating centre for hosts and guests during the London Olympics next year. This will be an excellent opportunity for London-based Unitarians to make some money for themselves, their congregation and the District by offering their spare bedroom (or perhaps even their whole house) to Unitarians from elsewhere in the country or around the world. Already enquiries are being received from Unitarian Universalists in North America, and as the Games get closer we can expect more and more enquiries to come in. The proposal is that hosts will keep one third of the rental income, one third will be donated to the host's congregation, and one third to the District (which will absorb the administrative costs).

If you would like to host a Unitarian from elsewhere, please contact the District Administrator, who is keeping a database of all enquiries and in due course will match guests with hosts. What a shame it would be if this great sporting event were to come to London, and we did not take full advantage of it to introduce visitors to Unitarianism in the capital. Contact Danielle now.

Plans are afoot for other ways in which the District can participate in the Olympics, including offering a Chaplaincy, a Drop-in Centre, or working on some of the social justice issues raised by the Games. We tried to be part of the Inter-church organisation, More Than Gold, but were told we were not welcome on theological grounds. So let's make our presence felt in our own right.

Attendance Census

For the past three years, membership records have been kept of all congregations within the District so that we can monitor progress towards one of our five year goals – a 50% numerical growth in membership. (So far, we have achieved 12% growth). Unfortunately, the only data we can use is the membership reported to the General Assembly each year for the purposes of assessing congregational quota payments, and these figures are notoriously inaccurate. Not only that, but congregations have very different standards for what constitutes membership and how well they keep their records.

To get a more accurate measure of the health of our congregations, Council is undertaking a census of attendance during the coming month of October. Each congregation will be asked to keep an accurate record of attendances for all of its Sunday services during that month, and then to submit those numbers to the District Minister.

Further information will be sent to all congregational secretaries, ministers and recognised lay leaders, but everyone is asked to ensure that their congregation participates in this venture, the point of which is to gain a much more accurate picture of our institutional health.

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

Summer Quarterly Meeting Meadrow Chapel, Godalming

18th June 2011 at 1:00 PM

Meadrow Unitarian Chapel
Meadrow
Godalming GU7 3JB

<http://www.unitariangodalming.org.uk>

Please let Adie Wilson know in advance if you plan to attend: 01483-421 095 or adie@adiewilson.co.uk



Come to the enchanting Meadrow Chapel, Godalming GU7 3JB, on Saturday 18th June for our summer quarterly meeting, which will also be an opportunity to enjoy some of the local attractions of the area.

The afternoon will start at 1.00pm (please note the earlier time) with a 45 minute service led by Rev. Martin Whitell, minister of John Pounds Memorial Church in Portsmouth and Convenor of the General Assembly Executive Committee.

Following the service there will be opportunities for us to get to know each other a little better, and then we will have an early tea at 2.30.

At 3.00 pm, there will be a variety of activities for people to choose from including visiting Winkworth Arboretum, Loseley House, and a ramble along the River Wey.

Winkworth Arboretum (National Trust) Hascombe Road, Godalming, Surrey GU8 4AD

Established in the 20th century, this stunning natural landscape houses more than 1,000 different shrubs and trees, many of them rare. There is year-round colour, with the most impressive displays being in spring, when the magnolias, bluebells and azaleas flower, and autumn, when the colour of the foliage is stunning. In summer this tranquil place is ideal for the family to explore and picnic. Entrance £5.60 (free for NT members). Closes at 5.00pm.

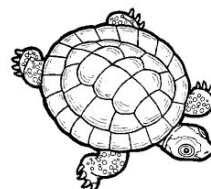
Loseley House Gardens, Loseley Park, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1HS

Comparable with gardens considered national treasures, the Walled Garden covers 2.5 acres and is divided into 'rooms' each with its own unique planting scheme and personality. There's the Rose garden with over one thousand bushes, the Flower Garden with its maze of pathways and hidden corners and the White Garden that contrasts spectacular, showy, blooms with lush yet subtle silver and grey foliage. There is also an extensive Herb Garden, Organic Vegetable Garden with its unusual varieties and a wildflower meadow – a haven of calm and tranquillity. Entrance £3.50 Closes at 5.00pm.

Guided Walk along banks of River Wey

The River Wey runs along the back of Meadrow Chapel, and offers a delightful walk into the town less than two miles away. A chance to view narrowboats and learn something of England's navigable inland waterways.

"Behold the turtle: He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out." James Bryant Conant



American Minister to spend month in London

Rev. Victoria Weinstein is a Unitarian Universalist minister currently serving a congregation in Massachusetts. She is also on the Adjunct Faculty of Andover Newton Theological Seminary on the outskirts of Boston, where she teaches a very popular course in Worship. She will be in London for a month, July 8 – August 10, staying in the manse flat at Bethnal Green. In addition to taking services in London churches (Newington Green/Islington on July 10, Hampstead on July 17 and 31, and Kensington on July 24), she will lead three workshops and a residential retreat for ministers.



Monday 11th July - "Conversation with Christian Unitarians", 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm start. Golders Green Unitarians. This conversation will address how we nurture our spiritual lives as Christians within the Unitarian church. See below.

Sunday, 17th July - "Moving Through the Liturgy" This will take place at Hampstead from 2.30 – 5.30pm, with the participants then leading the evening service at 7.00pm. An evening meal will be shared between the workshop and the service. Publicity about this is being sent to all Lay Worship Leaders in the District.

Saturday, 23rd July - "Nurturing a Ministry of Activism" This will take place at Unity Church, Islington from 1.00 - 5.00 PM. This workshop will address the challenge of involving congregational members in the work of social activism.

Monday 25th – Wednesday 27th July - "Moving through the Liturgy: A Workshop for Worship Renewal" This will take place at The Emmaus Centre, West Wickham, Kent. This workshop will explore the minister's roles as teacher of tradition, mediator between the sacred and the mundane, and manager of communal energy.

UUA minister to hold 'conversation with Christians'

Victoria Weinstein has suggested the Conversation could focus on: how we nurture our spiritual lives as Christians within the Unitarian church; serving a Unitarian church when one has a fairly high Christology; and how to lead Bible study with Unitarians.

Rev Weinstein has quite a 'high Christology' herself. She has written:

"Who is Jesus Christ to me? He is both a teacher of the Way, and the Way itself. For one who has always had a hard time grasping the concept of God ... Jesus both points me toward a definition of God and then lives that definition ... Jesus is my soul's safety from all harm. He is the avatar of aloneness, a compassionate and unsentimental narrator of the soul's exile on earth, and proof of the soul's triumphant homecoming at the end of the incarnational struggle ..."

"I call myself a Christian because I am a disciple of Jesus Christ—not just Jesus-that-great-guy-and-teacher-with-the-long-hair-and-sandals but Jesus the living avatar of the great God and Jesus the Christ of Easter morning ..."

This essentially mystical approach to Jesus has become an important trend among UU Christians. Of course, many Hindus and Buddhists share this attitude to Jesus. It could also be a growing trend among Christians in our diverse denomination in the UK, but perhaps difficult to acknowledge for fear of being labelled 'not Unitarian'.

The event is organised by the London District Liberal Christian Affinity Group. Do come and join the conversation!

Victoria Weinstein in Conversation with Christian Unitarians. When? Monday 11th July, 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm start. Where? Golders Green Unitarians, 31 ½ Hoop Lane, London NW11 8BS. The church is 5 mins walk from Golders Green tube station (Northern line, Edgware branch). For directions see:

www.ggu.org.uk



Rev. Daniel Costley appearing live on BBC1



Rev. Daniel Costley will be in the live audience for the BBC1 programme, The Big Questions, being screened on Sunday, 29th May at 10.00 am. One of the Big Questions will be the existence or otherwise of Heaven, following the recent comments of Stephen Hawking. We congratulate Daniel on this media success, and look forward to watching and hearing his contributions to the debate.

'Cycle for Youth' Bike Ride - Saturday 11th June

On Saturday 11th June a small group of youth leaders will be cycling from London to Brighton - a journey of around 50 odd miles. These superfit sportspeople (er...well that challenge in order to raise funds for the more funds they can raise, the easier it will charges low for all families and the more across the country. They are encouraging Team, rather than an individual - in order to GB!). So far the Olympic-style outfit are Liz Harley and others. If you would like to jharley@unitarian.org.uk or contact any of Unitarian Church at 9am and finishing point greater power/inner power willing) with a rest If you are a young person aged 14 and above or a youth leader connected with the Youth Programme and you would like to cycle with them, do let John Harley know. Or if you would like to help on the day with marshalling, organising, first aid, refreshments etc, do get into contact with him.



determined (or reckless?) young people and Brighton - a journey of around 50 odd miles. remains to be seen) will be taking on this Unitarian National Youth Programme. The be for them to keep their youth weekend they can develop and widen their initiatives people to sponsor the whole Cycle for Youth highlight that this is a team event (like Team Hills, Annabel Kramer, Lori Winters, John sponsor the team let John Harley know at the team. The starting line will be Croydon will be Brighton Pier (at around 5pm - God/ along the way at Ditchling Old Meeting House.

World Congress of Faiths (WCF)



ANNUAL MEETING - Wednesday 1 June at 5pm at the London Interfaith Centre, 125 Salusbury Rd, London NW6 6RG

Joint Day Conference

The Alister Hardy Society & World Congress of Faiths

Saturday 11th June 2011 at Essex Church - 10 AM to 4:30 PM
Dr. Marcus Braybrooke, World Congress of Faiths
Dr. Gregory Barker, Alister Hardy Religious Experience Centre
Eley McAinsh, Living Spirituality Network
Cost £25 - Students £12
Contact: John Franklin, 21 Park Vista, London SE10 9LZ
020 8858 4780 email johnfranklin@hotmail.com

Introducing Rainbow: the new support group for LGBTQI Unitarians

The first meeting of Rainbow, the Affinity Group for the GLBTIs within the District, had been scheduled for 18th June, but has been postponed because it would have clashed with the District's Summer Quarterly Meeting in Godalming. Details about the re-scheduled inaugural meeting will be announced in due course. For more information, contact Alex Warleigh-Lack at Alexwarleighlack@gmail.com



"The best compliment to a child or a friend is the feeling you give him (sic) that he has been set free to make his own enquiries, to come to conclusions that are right for him, whether or not they coincide with your own."

Alistair Cooke

"Conviction is worthless unless it is converted into conduct."

Thomas Carlyle

Ministry Student to spend the summer in London



Aimee Downes is a student for the Unitarian Universalist ministry in the United States, and will be spending three months this summer as part of her preparation for ministry. She will be sponsored by the District but will work primarily with Rev. Andy Pakula and his congregation at Islington and Newington Green. If you see her at any District event, please welcome her warmly.

Church Officers Appreciation Dinner Saturday 4 June 2011

The London District cordially invites all Congregational Chairs, Secretaries and Treasurers to a Dinner in appreciation for the work you do in maintaining the Unitarian witness of your congregation. The Dinner will be professionally catered. Gathering at 3.00 pm, there will be presentations on developing the skills needed by a church officer followed by the dinner:

- How to be a Church Treasurer - Rev. Jim McClelland, former District Treasurer
- How to be a Church Secretary - Mr Jeff Teagle, former General Secretary of the General Assembly

Please RSVP to David Usher no later than 28/5/11 and advise of any dietary requirements.

District Minister to attend General Assembly of American Unitarians

David Usher will be attending the General Assembly Meetings of the Unitarian Universalist Association, to be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, June 19 – 26. While there, he will also participate in training for District Executives and the UU Ministry Days.



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Unitarianism is a liberal religious faith.

Unitarians are religious people, heirs to a historical tradition of over 400 years, who recognize and seek wisdom in all the world's great religious, philosophical, and artistic traditions.

Unitarian congregations offer weekly worship services that draw upon the breadth of these great sources of inspiration.

Unitarians believe that each individual is on their own spiritual journey, but that together we can journey toward wholeness.

The LDPA (Pulse) serves the 28 Unitarian congregations in Southeast England, including 9 congregations in London. For more information please go to www.ukunitarians.org.uk/pulse or www.unitarian.org.uk

Calendar



June

- Wednesday 1** - 5.00 Annual Meeting WCF, London
- Saturday 4** - 3.00 Congregational Leaders' Workshop & Dinner, Sevenoaks
- Saturday 11** - 9.00 'Cycle for Youth' Bike Ride to Brighton, start point Croydon
- Saturday 11** - 10.00 Joint Day Conference WCF, Essex Church, London
- Saturday 18** - 1.00 Summer Quarterly Meeting, Godalming

Advance notice

July

- Monday 11** - 7:15 Conversation with Christian Unitarians, Golders Green, London
- Sunday 17** - 2.30-5.30 Liturgy workshop, Rosslyn Hill, Hampstead, London
- Saturday 23** - 1.00-5.00 Activism workshop, Unity, Islington, London
- Monday 25-Wednesday 27** - Liturgy workshop (residential), Emmaus Centre, Kent

To subscribe to the e-bulletin, e-mail daniellewilson@ldpa.org.uk with the word "subscribe" in the subject line. Requests to unsubscribe can be sent to the same address with the word "unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Contributions are welcome.

PAGE 6

"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."