

# Horsham Unitarian Newsletter

## February 2023



### Sharing Our Friendship

*Friendship is the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words.*

– George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) 1819-1880, novelist and member of Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel, Hampstead.

We all appreciate friends. People with whom we can talk and feel safe. People with whom we share good times and bad. Making friends is easier for some than others of course, and friendship can be instantaneous at times. However, at other times, making friends, or even being friendly, can take a lot of effort. We might need to overcome our own prejudice for example, or communication may be difficult, or perhaps we just struggle with someone who we don't feel we like very much.

Some people might question the need to make an effort to befriend others. The easy thing to do would be to stick with those we like best, and who's company we enjoy the most. But that doesn't make for a very friendly community! If we all took that approach, we might end up with rival cliques, and some would end up lonely because they struggle with personal relationships. Friendship, if it is something we value, must surely be something we try to share. Something we want for everyone.

In our church community, our need to make the effort is both among ourselves and with those outside. I'm not saying it's our duty, or our faith demands it, but consider if too many of us are unsociable or even unfriendly, what then do we stand for? When someone first walks through our church door, we need to welcome them as friend, and not be indifferent. We can't be the best of friends with everyone, but we can be friendly with most people.

Friendship means accepting difference. That others may have characteristics that irritate us a bit, or that they may sometimes say things we don't agree with, but we can still treat them with kindness and care. In doing so, mutual understanding may emerge, and trust may develop over time. Occasionally we may be let down, but this shouldn't deter us from continuing to meet others in friendship where we can.

I think Horsham Unitarians do friendship pretty well, however we shouldn't be complacent! It's easy to leave things to a trusted few, but we all need to get involved. We all need to make sure that we continue to offer welcome and hospitality, to those who we know and to the visitor or stranger. Offering each other the chance to speak of our joys and concerns, and that we listen too! Listening is such an important gift we can offer to one another.

When we face difficulty, it is comforting to know we are among friends and can share our pain. It is also important that we look out for one another, that we let people know we are there if they need us. This is how a healthy community should work, I think.

Continued overleaf

## Sharing Our Friendship (continued)



In friendship  
*Duncan*

So don't feel afraid to talk and if you think it would be helpful, please be assured that I am always available.

You can talk to me in confidence, and I will be happy to meet with you at church or somewhere else. You could even write to me if you would find that easier. Just reach out if you need to.

*All are welcome to call in for coffee and chat at our Unity Café mornings (10.00am to 12.30pm every Wednesday in February)*

# This Month

## Proposed for Introduction February/ March

### New Elements in Our Worship and Activities

At our Ministry Review of 25<sup>th</sup> January it was proposed that several new elements be introduced into our services and church activities. Amongst these were:



**Words of Welcome:** That church members, taking turns at lighting the chalice, should also be encouraged to say some words of welcome to the congregation, and especially to any visitors.

**Meeters and Greeters:** That we reintroduce the system of church door "Meeters and Greeters" for services, welcoming people as they come in, and handing them the appropriate hymn books and orders of service. It was agreed that the Deacon on duty could ask someone to take on this task on the morning of the service.

**Intercessory Prayers:** That the concept of intercessory prayers should be introduced and that a box or basket and pens/pencils and prayer cards be provided. The Minister could then refer to these cards to lead such prayers as part of the service.

**Single-session discussions and Film Nights:** Also discussed was the idea of occasional one-session discussions on particular topics, not involving expenditure on books, and action to revive our previously successful church film nights.

**Pastoral Care:** Duncan wished to ensure that everyone was aware that he was always available to provide pastoral care whenever requested. In sensitive cases where a member was aware that another member was in need of pastoral care but had not themselves approached Duncan, it was felt that the concerned member should speak to Duncan as that conversation would always be in strictest confidence.

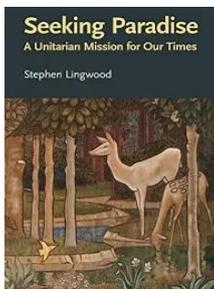
## Response to December Special Collection

### Letter of Appreciation from Homelessness Charity

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of this month we received a letter from Sue Harris, Community Fundraiser for Turning Tides, acknowledging and thanking us for the sum raised by special collection at our Christmas Carol Service. The letter specifically acknowledges the £162.13 raised at that service but, in conversation with Ms Harris, it emerged that individual personal donations had also been received in response to the information and addresses provided by Duncan in January's newsletter.



The original of the letter from Turning Tides will be found on the main notice board in the Church Hall.



**1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday Evenings, February to May**

## **Zoom Book Reading and Discussion Group**

As announced in the latest IMPULSE, our District Minister Rev Jim Corrigan is facilitating a Zoom study group on Stephen Linwood's book 'Seeking Paradise' – the theme of our FUSE gathering in early June. The book can be ordered from Essex Hall by email: [alonghurst@unitarian.org.uk](mailto:alonghurst@unitarian.org.uk) (price unstated, but £10.89 at World Books). To join the group, email our District Administrator Helen White: [administrator@ldpaunitarians.org](mailto:administrator@ldpaunitarians.org).

# ...and for your diary

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2.30pm Zoom Event**

## **LDPA AGM Online**

The proceedings of this year's LDPA Annual General Meeting will be available to all on Zoom and congregations can have two delegates present.

The link to access the meeting is not available at time of going to press but will be sent separately to Horsham congregation members as soon as available.



**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 11.45am approx.**

## **Our Horsham Church AGM**

Our Horsham church Annual General Meeting, traditionally held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in March, will follow morning service and coffee break in the Church Hall.



**Friday to Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> June**

## **Festival of Unitarians in the South East**

Being held at the historic Pilgrim's Trail Carmelite priory -- the Friars, Aylesbury, Kent -- this year's FUSE is on the theme of BUILDING PARADISE, with Stephen Linwood, author of 'Seeking Paradise' as theme speaker.

Fees for children are being heavily subsidised this year and all details and booking are on the website [www.ldpaunitarians.org/fuse2023](http://www.ldpaunitarians.org/fuse2023)



## **Our February 10.30am Services**

Sunday 5th	Rev Feargus O'Connor – Golders Green
Sunday 12th	Minister -Rev Duncan Voice
Sunday 19th	Rev Martin Whitell
Sunday 22nd	Rev Duncan Voice
Sunday 26th	Minister - Rev Duncan Voice

## **Our Website QR Code**

