



What's on this month:

Saturday 4th July, 10.00am
Walking Group: Lee Valley Meeting at Liverpool Street

Sunday 5th July, 11.00am
"Life in the Slow Lane"
Led by Jo Ridgers

Tuesday 7th July, 7-9pm
Creativity Group:
'Field for Essex Church'
led by Sarah Tinker

Thursday 9th July, 2-5pm
'Freestyle Felt'

Sunday 12th July, 11am
"A Flower Communion"
Led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

Sunday 12th July, 2-3pm
Nia Dance
Led by Sonya Leite

Sunday 12th July, 3.30-5pm
'Songs and Silence for the Soul'

Thursday 16th July, 2-5pm
'Freestyle Felt'

Thursday 16th July, 7-9pm
RE: 'Exploring Prayer'

Sunday 18th July,
Outing to Ely Stained Glass Museum

Sunday 19th July, 11am
"The Web of Life"
Led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

Thursday 23rd July, 2-5pm
'Freestyle Felt'

Thursday 23rd July, 7-9pm
RE: 'Exploring Prayer'

Wednesday 22nd July, 7-9pm
Reading Group: 'Artemis Fowl' by Eoin Colfer
led by Michaela von Britzke

Sunday 26th July, 11am
"Our Chalice Flame"
Led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

Wednesday 29th July, 7-9pm
Committee Meeting

Thursday 30th July, 2-5pm
'Freestyle Felt'

Thursday 30th July, 7-9pm
RE: 'Exploring Prayer'

A Message from our Minister...

The 'Rumba Rapids' of Life

It might not be an ideal congregational day out, but I recently spent a fun packed day at Thorpe Park, along with sixty 15 year olds and their teachers. They like to tease me about being a minister and the joke of the day involved seeking potential sermon material in various theme park rides. My favourite ride was the Rumba Rapids. This involved standing in a queue whilst listening to jazzy Latin American music, at last taking your seat with other people in a large rubber tyre and setting off round the rapids.



The water flowed speedily, the tyre swung round, there were sudden drops and dark places, and ever so often water would cascade over you from above or from the side, its arrival impossible to predict. The pupils mocked us teachers for our squeals of excitement. For them this was one of the tamer rides; its similarity to white water rafting illusory.

In fact, so slow were the 'rapids' at times that potential sermons could still be discussed. The 'ups and downs of life' was a bit too obvious an analogy. But an ideal theme emerged when one of the more observant students pointed out that the ride was far less random than it appeared. Each tyre bounced against the walls at the same point, became stuck in the same eddy, circled round the rocks in exactly the same way as the tyre it was following. 'I've got it!' she shouted at last. 'We're on wires that are guiding the tyres round the rapids.'

But none of us could see the wires in the water. Were they invisible? Was something hidden really keeping us so effectively to our course? And that's when it came to us – the perfect link. What if there are secret wires that can keep us on the straight and narrow, helping us find our path over life's tough sections and unfortunate blockages? What might such wires be? This July we are starting a new course here at Essex Church called Exploring Prayer. I have come to think that a regular prayer or meditation practice is one of the better ways to steer a course through life and to be assisted through the trickier stretches. It needs to be practiced regularly so that the method is there when you need it most and can be relied on to work for you in both smooth and rough waters. So why not join this course and see if you discover some useful hidden wires of your own.

And look out for future links with candy floss, merry-go-rounds and those irritating games where you try to throw hoops over bottles, but they rarely land properly – for indeed, all life is there.

Rev. Sarah Tinker

In this month's newsletter...

- * Spiritual Bookshelf: 'Way of the Peaceful Warrior' Recommended by Angela
- * 'Behind the Scenes on Sunday Mornings' by Jane
- * 'Visiting Bangor Unitarians' by Patricia Walker
- * 'The Grand Old Duke of York...' by Juliet Edwards
- * 'How I Came to Essex Church' by Susan Smith
- * Swaziland Education Project News
- * Walking Group Report: 'Denham Country Park' by Will Lyons
- * and much more...

Kensington Unitarians

At Essex Church (founded 1774), Notting Hill Gate

We are here to share experiences, to learn from each other, to explore our diverse faiths, to welcome spiritual seekers and offer companionship on life's journey.

We meet for worship each Sunday at 11.00am. The format of the service varies, and usually includes music, singing, meditation, an address, an opportunity to share joys and concerns, and a programme for children. Our activities also include religious education and spirituality workshops, engagement groups on a variety of themes, meeting for fellowship, a regular chanting session, and quiet meditation. All are welcome to come and join us.

Contact our minister to discuss our unique ceremonies, including child naming services, weddings, blessings, and memorials, which are available to all. Many other groups share our church building. If you are interested in hiring one of our rooms for your own organisation or event please contact our warden by phone or email.



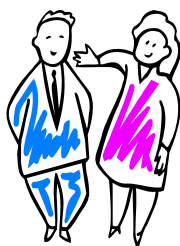
Kensington Unitarians at Essex Church
112 Palace Gardens Terrace
Notting Hill Gate
London W8 4RT

Office Telephone: 020 7221 6514

Email: info@kensington-unitarians.org.uk

Web: www.kensington-unitarians.org.uk

Stewarding and Coffee



Stewarding:

5 th July:	Will Lyons
12 th July:	Carole Grace
19 th July:	Howard Hague
26 th July:	Jo Tye

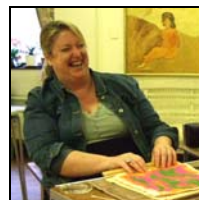
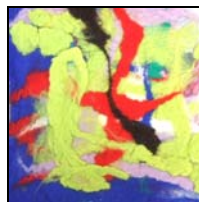
Coffee:

5 th July:	Mary Spurr
12 th July:	Julia Alden
19 th July:	Gill Hague
26 th July:	?????

Please speak to Christine Joshi if you are willing to help!

'Freestyle Felt'

Community Arts Workshops at Essex Church
Six Thursdays from 9th July 2009, 2-5.00pm



A series of textile art workshops will be held at Essex Church starting on the 9th July 2009. All are welcome – no prior knowledge or experience is required – there will be a chance to get some basic instruction in feltmaking at each session.

These workshops will provide an opportunity for beginners and more experienced feltmakers alike to experiment with the craft at their own pace. Participants will be able to make small felt panels, as artworks in their own right, or for use in greetings cards. More adventurous participants may wish to work towards making 3D items such as a felt hat, bag, jewellery, or even a pair of slippers.

There will be no charge to attend the sessions; however, donations to help cover the cost of materials are appreciated, and we suggest £3 / 6 / 9 per session according to your income. Please email the group facilitator, Jane Blackall, on arts@kensington-unitarians.org.uk or telephone 020 7221 6514 to reserve a place.

Summer Newsletter Deadline



The deadline for submitting items for the forthcoming summer double issue (August/September) is **Sunday 12th July**. Please send items (such as poems, quotes, articles, notices, etc...) to Jane Blackall or any of the committee members before this date.

Thank you!!!

Grand Old Duke of York Gets Second Prize



The Grand Old Duke of York was wedged diagonally into my car to travel to Pembridge where he was to take part in a scarecrow competition. When we arrived he was given a space in a sunny garden next to Mary, Mary quite contrary and Dr. Foster who was on his way to Gloucester. Across the road was Old Mother Hubbard who was searching for a bone for her dog. There were sixteen scarecrows altogether and the visitors to the flower festival were invited to say which they preferred. The Duke of York was popular because of his bright red jacket and stylish hat.

I wasn't present at the closing service when the awards were given out, having gone to the Hay Festival for the day and on my return I was told that Mother Hubbard had won first prize and the Duke had taken second (£3, which will go into the Creativity Engagement Group's funds). I heard that folk were very impressed that he had been brought all the way from London. The Duke has decided to stay in my friend's garden where there are both children and birds for him to watch and I was quite glad to have my car to myself again on the journey back, though I'm afraid there's still some straw on the floor!

Juliet Edwards



'Exploring Prayer'

A New Adult RE Course for the Summer



**Six sessions on Thursday Evenings
from 16th July to 27th August, 7.00-9.00pm
(please note: no meeting on 20th August)**

This new adult RE course will run for six sessions, meeting weekly on consecutive Thursday evenings (7.00-9.00pm), from 16th July to 27th August (excluding 20th August). It is not essential to come to all of the sessions but we would appreciate it if you let us know in advance if you plan to attend... and it would be even better if you could commit to coming to at least four of the six nights.

The sessions will be partly based on the book 'Simply Pray' by Unitarian Universalist minister Erik Walker Wikstrom. During the course, we will focus on four types of traditional prayer which are shared by all the major world religions: naming, knowing, listening, and loving. It is our intention that the course will also provide opportunities for everyone to directly experience various different forms of prayer. There will also be plenty of time for your own personal reflection on the theme and chances to share your views and your own experiences of prayer with the rest of the group. We hope that the course will help each participant to find a way to pray that is authentic to them and their sense of the Holy.

We are still in the early stages of planning for this course and would particularly like to hear from anyone who has their own prayer practice and might be willing to come to the sessions and tell us about it. Please leave a message on 020 7221 6514 or email education@kensington-unitarians.org.uk.

There is also a tentative plan to start up a new regular weekly meeting at Essex Church in the autumn – some form of open, prayerful, quiet group-led space – to be held in an early evening slot. We have some preliminary thoughts about how this might work but the precise details will be shaped in part by feedback from participants in the summer prayer course.

Jane Blackall and Jenny Moy





This is the mission of our faith:
To teach the fragile art of hospitality,
To revere both the critical mind and the generous heart,
To prove that diversity need not mean divisiveness,
And to witness to all that
we must hold the whole world in our hands.

Bill Schulz

An Event from the Art and Spirituality Network

'Windows Into Ourselves'



Finding Insights through Being With Art
Saturday 4th July 2009, 11.45-4pm
The Courtauld Gallery, Somerset House,
Strand, London WC2R 0RN

An afternoon of quiet reflection with time to make personal and deep connections with this fine collection of art. There will be opportunity for silence, art making, time for ourselves and sharing with others.

Please bring your own food, drink and £4 (entrance fee). Art materials will be provided but you are welcome to bring your own (dry material only).

Arrivals from 11.45 for 12pm lunch in the quad followed by workshop in gallery. In poor weather, we'll start the workshop at 12pm and have lunch later at 2.30pm.

The Art and Spirituality Network is a loose network of artists and those of no artistic experience which aims to provide a supportive and challenging space for people to find spiritual fellowship and nourishment through making art. The Network has been running workshops and retreats for over ten years in a range of venues.

Led by John Harley and Tomo Williams.
Please let the leaders know if you are coming.
John – 07985 600 935 / Tomo – 07828 290 362

Freebies on Friday

Concerts at the National Gallery



There are many free attractions in London and I think one of the most pleasant evenings can be spent 'for nowt' at The National Gallery. Each Friday at 6pm there is a free classical music recital (the Belle Shenkman Music Programme) given in Room 18 by students from the Royal Academy of Music. This is followed at 7pm, if you wish to attend, by a one hour free guided tour and exposition on some of the paintings by one of the Gallery's experts.

Will Lyons

An Art and Spirituality Network Event

'Walking Creatively'

Living in the Wilderness, Experiencing the Elements and Exploring a Sense of the Spirit



Thursday 27th – Monday 31st August
Marsett Barn, near Bainbridge, North Yorkshire

A creative retreat with opportunities for walking the landscape, drawing, watercolour, clay, pastels, cooking, gentle body movement, ritual, storytelling and journaling.

Led by Judith Bromley Nicholls and John Harley

Cost per person: £120 includes
4 nights' accommodation, food, art materials.

For more information see: www.artandspirituality.net
or call John Harley on 07985 600 935



“Don't think. Thinking is the enemy of creativity. It's self-conscious, and anything self-conscious is lousy. You can't try to do things. You simply must do things.”

Ray Bradbury

Creativity Engagement Group Clay Figures: 'Field for Essex Church'

Tuesday 7th July , 7.00-9.00pm



Back in the 1990s artist Anthony Gormley worked on a community arts project in various places around the world. People were given a ball of clay and asked to create a simple human figure. When placed together in their thousands these figures were quite captivating.

Gormley wrote of them: “Here are the spirits of the ancestors and the spirits of the unborn. You are the conscious layer in this stratification of mind that we call human being – what are you going to do about it?”

Well, one thing you could do is come and join the creativity group this July and help us make our own 'Field for Essex Church'. We can model ourselves, those who have died or moved away, those who have yet to be born or to find us. All are welcome and a lack of modelling skills may be a distinct advantage for this particular project. As always the creativity group gives us chance to be together and if this project does not appeal then just bring something to work on as we spend the evening together.

There is no charge for this evening but it would help if you could let us know you plan to come along. Clay can be dirty so don't wear your best clothes. Phone 020 7221 6514.

Please note that the Creativity Group is now going to meet on the first **Tuesday** of each month in the **hall**.

How I Came to Essex Church



I've lived in North Kensington since my marriage 31 years ago. I've passed by Essex Church for as many years so I have been aware of 'your' existence for a very long time.

My spiritual journey to Essex Church has been even longer. I was baptised in a Congregational Church in 1948 but my church experience began when I was 8 years old, attending the local Church of England Sunday school. I remember enjoying the bible stories in a very large, dark and cold church, despite it being summer!!

Regular attendance at church, throughout my teenage and early adult years included taking communion and being a choir member. (Be assured my singing voice never has been, and never will be of a reasonable standard). Friendships were established, at this time, which have endured until today.

In my mid twenties I travelled a little, living on a Kibbutz and then with a Muslim family in Tunisia; these were experiences that broadened my cultural and spiritual awareness and began my own exploration about my 'personal' faith.

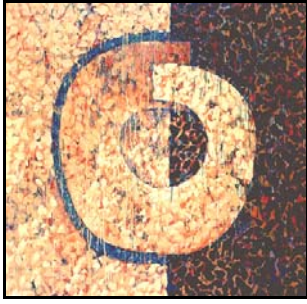
As the years have chanced by Anglican worship has become less relevant and meaningful to me and I have found my solitary experience of God through prayer, reading and music suited me very well (too well) but - there is always a BUT - spiritually I knew I should be trying to engage in the collective experience. To try and make inroads I began an evening course at a local Anglican church but was not inspired and I really don't know why I searched Unitarian on the internet, but I did, and now I am enjoying my visits on a Sunday very much.

First Impressions: When I walked into the room where the service takes place the ceiling reminds me of the Cemberlitas bath house in Istanbul!! I like the fact that there is no altar and no kneeling. The inclusive way the chairs are arranged is very welcoming.

I come away from the service feeling spiritually rejuvenated but I'm not sure that I could actually call it a service of worship; more a service of celebration and renewal. I do feel the spiritual togetherness of the group, which I think is quite remarkable, and probably facilitated by the smallness of the congregation.

I think the leadership and the organisation of the church is of a very high standard and clearly demonstrated at the recent AGM.

Susan Smith



Begin where you are. Now.
If you slip and stumble,
don't spend too much time in anguished regrets
and self-accusations but begin again.
Don't grit your teeth and clench your fists and say.
"I will! I will!" Relax.
Take hands off. Submit yourself to God. . . .
Let life be willed through you.

Thomas Kelley



Sarah says: "June's Midsummer Sun service included references to sewn in ground sheets on camping holidays and this story from an earlier era..."

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. After a good meal, they lay down for the night and went to sleep.

Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend.

Holmes said: *"Watson, look up and tell me what you see"*.

Watson said: *"I see a fantastic panorama of countless stars"*.

Holmes: *"And what does that tell you?"*

Watson pondered for a moment:

"Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets.

Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo.

Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three.

Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant.

Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow."

"Why? - What does it tell you, Holmes?"

Holmes was silent for a moment then spoke:
"It tells me that someone has stolen our tent."

Our Warden's Column

What's On in Our Busy Building...



The first half of July we're very busy with Music Board exams again. They took every date we offered them for this session. We also have a lot of bookings from different departments in Kensington & Chelsea Council, for whom we're becoming a very popular venue – because of our central location in the borough and accessibility by public transport, I think.

We have a new regular booking in the Library once a month on a Wednesday evening. It's a good cause, supporting people caring for troubled teenagers, and they run from 5.30-7pm so they fit in before most of our regular evening bookings start. So hopefully that will work out well for all of us.

I'm still very much enjoying how the front garden is unfolding this year (though it's growing much faster than I can keep up with at the moment). The poppies and foxgloves are more or less over now, but the rose bed is in full flood and the crocosmia and agapanthus look ready to burst any second. I'm also very hopeful about the trailing nasturtiums in the bottom bed, which I transplanted from my tubs where they'd self-seeded.

The back-garden also looks gorgeous, and there's a brand new bench from which to admire it. Our neighbour in Palace Gardens Mews has been having an extension built for the last month or so, but luckily this hasn't yet impacted us very much. We may need to let them put scaffolding up later to render the wall that borders our property.

Because of our ongoing issues with rough sleepers, it was agreed at the last trustees meeting to fence off the area under the entranceway as a buggy store for the nursery. They have applied for a grant towards the cost of this, and the work should go ahead in August.

Finally, re the "toilet project", Mark our builder has been back to do a few finishing touches to the kitchen before the grand opening. Most notably, we now have a tea-towel holder to the left of the sink. The next big step forward should be toilet-roll holders – watch this space!

Jenny Moy

Songs and Silence for the Soul

Chanting and Stillness at Essex Church



**Sundays 12th July, 9th August,
13th September, 11th October
from 3.30 to 5.00pm**

Suggested Donation: £2.00

We've been running this monthly Songs and Silence group here at Essex Church for over two years now and one of its delightful features is how the group varies from month to month, depending on who comes along.

We always meet on the second Sunday of each month from 3.30 to 5pm. We sing a wide range of chants from the world's faith traditions and sit together in candlelit silence. It's a gentle and healing, group-led space in which everyone is welcome to join. No particular singing skills are needed.

Phone Sarah via the church office on 0207 221 6514 or email sarah@kensington-unitarians.org.uk if you would like more information.

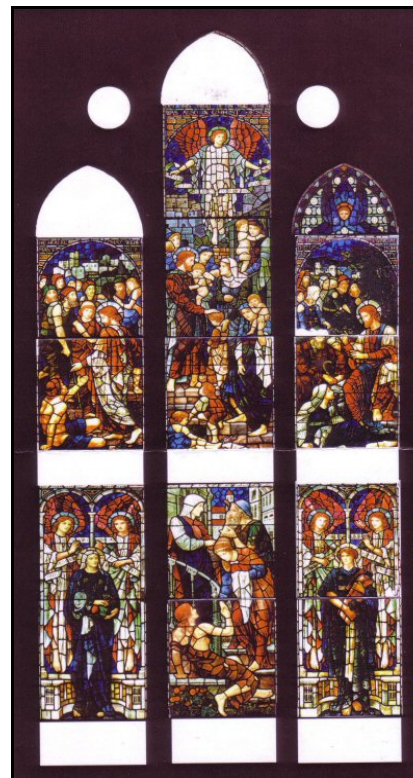


"I think prayer is, for the most part, a simple daily reminder of your deeply held principles and convictions. I, myself, repeat certain Buddhist verses every morning. The verses may look like prayers, but they are actually reminders. Reminders of how to speak to others, how to deal with other people, how to deal with problems in your daily life, things like that. So, for the most part, my practice involves reminders - reviewing the importance of compassion, forgiveness, all these things. And, of course, it also includes certain Buddhist meditations about the nature of reality, and also certain visualization practices. So, in my own daily practice, my own daily prayers, if I go leisurely, it takes about four hours. It's quite long."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Visit to Ely Stained Glass Museum

Saturday 18th July 2009



We will be having a summer outing to the Ely Stained Glass Museum which houses one of the famous Henry Holliday stained glass windows from the old Essex Church.

The Museum regards Essex Church's window as one of its finest pieces and they are delighted that we are paying them a visit, especially as we were also able to donate £250 recently towards their costs in mounting some of Holiday's preliminary sketches.

We will be travelling there by train from Kings Cross station. Meet at Kings Cross station at 10.30am by the ticket office (or at the church at 9.45am). Full price day return rail tickets cost £24.50 but we are finding out about possible reductions and some people have railcards.

The Museum will not charge us for our visit but we will probably also go on a tour of Ely Cathedral, which will cost £5.50 / £4.00.

Please let us know that you are planning to come on the trip so we can let the Museum know the numbers to expect. It is a ten minute walk from Ely Station to the Cathedral and there are some steps in the Museum. Bring your own lunch or buy something there.

Related Event: There is a talk on Friday 17th July at St Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate, London at 5.30pm (cost £5.00 / £6.00) on 'The Victorian Stained Glass of Henry Holiday'.

Civil Partnerships Petition



The following resolution was passed at the 2008 Annual Meetings of the Unitarian General Assembly:

“That this General Assembly of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches, mindful of the need for marriages and civil partnerships in England and Wales to be placed on an equal footing, and the need for full compliance with the spirit of the Human Rights Act, calls upon H M Government to introduce relevant legislation permitting ceremonies for civil partnerships to be performed in any place of worship or other premises in England and Wales licensed for the celebration of marriage. In addition this General Assembly of the Unitarian and Free Christian Churches calls upon the Scottish Executive to introduce legislation permitting religious celebrants to officiate at partnership celebrations in Scotland.”

We have currently become aware of an online petition relating to this issue and thought we would draw it to your attention:

<http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/gayfaith/>

Here is the background information provided: Currently civil partnerships are not permissible in religious buildings or buildings used primarily for religious purposes. Some faith groups (including our own Unitarian movement, of course) are open to civil partnerships but are unable to perform legal partnership ceremonies under the current restrictions. This provides the churches the freedom to decide for themselves.

The text of the petition itself simply states:

“We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to Amend the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to allow faith groups to perform civil partnerships within their religious buildings.”

The deadline to sign up for this petition is 30 October 2009. There were 1010 signatures as of 21st June.

Multifaith Calendar

✿ 7th July – Asalha Puja / Dhammacakka Day / Turning of the Wheel of Teaching – Buddhist

This is a Theravada Buddhist celebration of the First Proclamation by Gautama to five ascetics in the Deer Park near Benares. He taught about the Middle Way, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths.

✿ 18th July – Chokhor – Buddhist

A Tibetan and Nepalese summer festival that commemorates the Buddha's first Turning of the Wheel, the first teaching concerning the Four Truths. Statues of the Buddha and copies of the scriptures are carried around with music and festivities, to symbolise the spreading of the Buddha's teaching. The whole community joins in the processions and picnics that follow.

✿ 19th July – The Prophet's Night Journey and Ascension (Lailat-ul-Isra' Wal Mi'raj) – Muslim

In the tenth year of his prophethood, Prophet Muhammad journeyed from Makkah to Jerusalem and through the heavens to the presence of God, all in one night. The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem marks the rock from which Muhammad ascended. On the journey the Prophet received the command to pray five times a day.

✿ 30th July – Tisha B'Av – Jewish

Tisha B'Av is the saddest day of the Jewish calendar. A full day fast is held at the conclusion of three weeks of mourning and reflection, focusing on the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem, and other tragedies in Jewish history.



Visiting Bangor Unitarians

Jane and I had the great good fortune to spend the weekend of Friday, 12th June to Monday, 15th June on the island of Anglesey. It was essentially a 'working weekend' to finalise the details of this year's Hucklow Summer School. However, we took Sunday morning off to go to church. We attended the 7th meeting of a newly-formed Unitarian gathering just on the outskirts of Bangor, Wales. It is such a new group that they haven't even decided on a name yet. But what a delightful and moving experience! This group rents a small village hall just beside a church and as we turned in at the gate we gasped with pleasure. Such an attractive building surrounded by trees. The building itself had a warm welcoming atmosphere. A vase of flowers and candles in the centre and a circle of chairs and all was set for worship.



As we sat down and the service began I was overwhelmed and very moved (tears flooded to my eyes) to sit in that warm and friendly circle which included 6 children! This was the first time they had been able to include children and one of the other visitors pointed out that 6 was the total number of adults who would be attending at her own church that morning!



The service was taken by the Rev. Elizabeth Birtles and the theme was how we are spoiling our world and what we can do about it. The children sat in and participated in the first part of the service and then left for their own activity. They came back at the end to show us the paintings they had done.

We knew we were going to meet up with Rita, a former member of Essex Church, and were looking forward to that. We wanted to catch up on how her new life on Anglesey was suiting her and we gave her news of her friends at Kensington Unitarians.

All this is a preamble to telling you how exciting and moving it was to be in a blossoming group of Unitarians. We were excited to be there and they were excited to be at their own meeting and to be including the children. It was just a tremendous experience. There are many of us who worry about where the Unitarian movement is going and how to make our congregations grow and here was a new group, thrilled to be expanding in just seven months. Congratulations to them and may their gathering continue to grow.

Patricia Walker





Behind the Scenes on Sunday Mornings...

If you are a relative newcomer to this community then you may not be aware of how much goes on behind the scenes at Essex Church on Sunday mornings to ensure that everything (usually) runs smoothly. I thought it was about time that we explained a little more about what goes on... as you can see there are numerous opportunities for you to get more involved and help out!

Worship Leader: Most (approximately $\frac{3}{4}$) of our Sunday services are led by our own Rev Sarah Tinker who knows exactly what is going on and has a regular routine so everything generally runs quite smoothly. Occasionally the service will be led by a member of the congregation or a visiting preacher from elsewhere. On these occasions the worship leader will have received a sheet of 'Information for Service Leaders' so they will know more-or-less what to expect but they are more likely to need a bit more practical support and proactive involvement from members of the congregation on the day. Jane and Patricia are currently responsible for booking worship leaders to cover when Sarah is off-duty and this is usually done several months in advance. Let Sarah know if you are someone who is happy to be given a reading to do in the service when you arrive on a Sunday morning or if you would like to be involved in worship but with a bit more notice. We're lucky to have so many congregation members actively involved in leading worship here at Essex Church and there is always room for more.

Musicians/Choir: Our music is coordinated by Harold Lorenzelli, who you will often see singing in the choir on Sundays, along with Margaret Marshall. Harold arranges for us to have a pianist each week (most often Peter Crockford or Sandra Smith) and organises music to fit the theme of the service wherever possible. The musicians generally arrive at church around 10am and will be rehearsing in the church until about 10.45 so we ask people to congregate in the hall until they have finished practising.

Outreach Officer: Service sheets and hymn sheets are usually produced by our outreach officer, Jane Blackall. The worship leader provides the order of service in advance and Jane prepares and prints the sheets to bring by 10.15 on Sunday mornings.

Tea/Coffee Maker: The person making tea/coffee should arrive quite early (by about 10.30am) to get the cups and saucers out of the cupboard and start preparing for the inevitable rush for refreshments which will come straight after the service. Since we committed to being a 'Fairtrade Church' we take care to stock up on fairly traded tea, coffee, and biscuits, and we generally buy these in bulk to ensure there are always supplies in the cupboard. The only thing that the tea/coffee maker needs to bring along on a Sunday morning – unless you are feeling particularly keen – is some fresh milk (and you can claim back for the cost). It is usually a good idea to slip out of church during the final hymn to put the kettle on so you are ready for the stampede... After coffee-time you finally need to wash up (hopefully with a little help from your friends) and put everything away before you go. If you would be willing to take on the tea duty from time to time please speak to, or email, Christine Joshi (joshi.ce@mac.com). Training can be provided and it is possible to allocate a 'buddy' to guide you through the process first time around if that helps.

Greeter: Those of you who came along to the Essex Church AGM back in May will remember that as part of our congregational growth project we had a discussion about the idea of 'greeters' who would take particular responsibility for welcoming newcomers and visitors on Sunday mornings. At a recent committee meeting we decided to take this idea a bit further and from July we will be experimenting with an extra rota – currently being organised by our minister – to have a named 'greeter' on duty each Sunday. Of course we will all still need to play our part in making newcomers feel welcome but hopefully this new venture will help us to be a bit more intentional as a congregation about looking out for the well-being of our visitors and guests. Amongst other things, the greeter will make sure that the front door is opened by 10.30am, and will stand in the foyer to welcome people. The greeter might usher people into the hall where people gather to chat before the service. If visitors are entirely new to Unitarianism then the greeter might offer some leaflets or a copy of our newsletter to help them get a sense of who we are. It will probably take us a little while to sort out quite how this new role works but hopefully this gives a flavour of what's planned. Let Sarah know if you would like to join the rota of greeters in the coming months.

5th July: Mary Spurr

12th July: TBA

19th July: TBA

26th July: TBA

Behind the Scenes *(continued)*

Steward: The role of the steward has slowly evolved over the years and, especially with the advent of the new 'greeter' role, this seems like a good moment to clarify what the job entails. The steward should usually arrive quite early (by 10.30am at the latest) to ensure that the chairs in the church are laid out properly, the sound system is plugged in and switched on, and that the seasonal wall-hangings at the front of the church are all neat and tidy. The steward also makes sure that one of the office keyholders (i.e. Sarah, Jane, Juliet, Howard, Caroline or Patricia) has brought the chalice up to the church and places it on its stand. The candles for joys and concerns need to be brought out of the cupboard and the steward also ensures there are matches/tapers available.

As people start to arrive, the steward hands out service sheets and hymnbooks, which is the most visible part of the job. The steward is responsible for helping latecomers to come in quietly and find a seat (and also brings extra chairs in from the hall if the church is unexpectedly full!). It is also useful if the steward can keep an eye on the foyer in case anyone comes in and wanders about during the service. Finally, the steward hands round the offertory bags during the collection, and counts the loose cash collection after the service. We keep a record of how much is received and also count how many people are attending each week as these statistics are an important part of the congregational growth project (all recorded in the 'Steward's Blue Book'). The money is handed to Juliet, Sarah, or a member of the committee to put away for safekeeping. The steward has quite a lot of little tasks to remember... but we will soon put a steward's checklist in the church for future reference!

If you would be willing to take on the stewarding role from time to time please speak to, or email, our rota coordinator Christine Joshi (joshi.ce@mac.com). Training can be provided and it is possible to allocate a 'buddy' to guide you through the process first time around if that helps.

Other Roles: Of course there are many other people who play their part in making Sunday services happen and run smoothly – directly and indirectly – not least our warden and cleaner who look after the building, Christine who organises the stewarding and tea/coffee rotas, and all those who get involved whenever we have a congregational lunch after the service. And there are countless other ways you can help out on a Sunday... maybe you could help with watering the plants, be prepared to be handed a reading at the last-minute, pitch in with the washing up, or some other role we've not even considered yet. Do get in touch if you are willing to help in any way or have some ideas about ways we can further develop our congregation and our worship.

Jane Blackall

News from the Management Committee



1. We are delighted to welcome Louisa Bird and Angela Gasparetto to the Church Committee.
2. Work is in progress to improve the audibility of services, with better microphones. We do recognise that the Church space, though lovely, is rather poor acoustically. There is a loop system, though it will only work if hearing aids are correctly adjusted to it, which may not be possible with all hearing aids.
3. We are asking Chappell's to assess the condition and value of the Church organ, which has not been used for a very long time.
4. Unfortunately the damp continues to penetrate the Church walls. Various people that we have consulted have failed to get to the bottom of it, and for the last year we have focused on the new toilets and kitchens. We will continue to try to get answers.
5. Sarah, Jane and Jenny will soon be re-vamping the foyer to make it more attractive and to make the various noticeboards and leaflet displays clearer and easier to use.
6. Margaret (in our choir) has a daughter who is a textile designer, and who has offered to help us obtain beautiful cushions and curtains at cost price.
7. Rather reluctantly we have decided to put plastic covers on the new purple hymn books as they are already displaying greasy marks.
8. We are also going to top up the supply of drinking glasses before we reach the situation where the congregation has to share one glass.

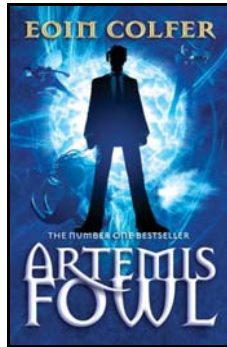
Caroline Blair

The next meeting of the management committee will take place on Wednesday 29th July at 7.00pm.

Reading Engagement Group

“Artemis Fowl” by Eoin Colfer

Wednesday 22nd July, 7.00-9.00pm



The reading engagement group's next conversation will be about “Artemis Fowl” by Eoin Colfer. This book was chosen by Michaela von Britzke and will be the focus of our next group on **Wednesday 22nd July**.

Information from Amazon UK:

“Eoin Colfer, author of Artemis Fowl, describes his creation as ‘Die Hard with fairies’. He’s not far wrong. Artemis Fowl is the most ingenious criminal mastermind in history and with his trusty sidekicks, Butler and Juliet, in tow he hatches a cunning plot to divest the fairyfolk of their pot of gold. Of course, he isn’t foolish enough to believe in all that “gold at the end of the rainbow” nonsense. Rather, he knows that the only way to separate the little people from their stash is to kidnap one of their number and wait for the ransom to arrive. But when the time comes to put his plan into action he reckons without Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon (Lower Elements Police Reconnaissance) Unit and her senior officer, who will stop at nothing to get her back. Fantastic stuff from beginning to end, Artemis Fowl is a rip-roaring, 21st-century romp of the highest order. The author has let his imagination run riot by combining folklore, fantasy and a fistful of high-tech funk in an outrageously devilish book that could well do for fairies what Harry Potter has done for wizardry. But be warned: this is no gentle frolic so don’t be fooled by the fairy subject matter. Instead what we have here is well written, sophisticated, rough and tumble storytelling with enough high-octane attitude to make it a seriously cool read for anyone over the age of 10.”

All are welcome to join the book group. Please do try to read the books before the meeting if you’re planning to come along. It would also aid discussion if you pick out favourite passages to share. Regular members of the reading group take turns in choosing books so we read a wide variety of material. Please check the church website or pick up a flyer listing our forthcoming book choices.

“The terms *Fast* and *Slow* do more than just describe a rate of change. They are shorthand for ways of being, or philosophies of life. *Fast* is busy controlling, aggressive, hurried, analytical, stressed, superficial, impatient, active, quantity-over-quality. *Slow* is the opposite: calm, careful, receptive, still, intuitive, unhurried, patient, reflective, quality-over-quantity. It is about making real and meaningful connections – with people, culture, work, food, everything. The paradox is that *Slow* does not always mean slow. Performing a task in a *Slow* manner often yields faster results. That is why the *Slow* philosophy can be summed up in a single word: balance. Be fast when it makes sense to be fast, and be slow when slowness is called for. Seek to live at what musicians call the tempo giusto - the right speed.”



Daniel S. Brosier

‘A Shropshire Lad’

I had a sudden urge recently to read again the poems of A.E. Housman. They are usually doom-laden with references to gallows and young men dying in battle but this extract illustrates that time passes but people do not really change

Submitted by Will Lyons

Verse XXXI

On Wenlock Edge the wood's in trouble;
His forest fleece the Wrekin heaves;
The gale, it plies the saplings double,
And thick on Severn snow the leaves.

'Twould blow like this through holt and hanger
When *Uricon the city stood:
'Tis the old wind in the old anger,
But then it threshed another wood.

Then, 'twas before my time, the Roman
At yonder heaving hill would stare:
The blood that warms an English yeoman,
The thoughts that hurt him, they were there.

There, like the wind through woods in riot,
Through him the gale of life blew high;
The tree of man was never quiet:
Then 'twas the Roman, now 'tis I.

The gale, it plies the saplings double,
It blows so hard, 'twill soon be gone:
To-day the Roman and his trouble
Are ashes under *Uricon.

* Uricon – present day Wroxeter.

'Heidi Ferid Art' Website



Our very own Heidi Ferid has recently revamped her art website with a number of brand new paintings (including 'Sierra Sunset', pictured above, and many more).

Take a look at the new site: www.heidiferidart.co.uk.



Sunday 19th July – Events Across the UK



The Big Lunch is a new initiative being run by the Eden Project, aimed at bringing communities together. The idea is that once a year, on 19 July, as many of the 61 million people in the UK as possible will simultaneously sit down to lunch together, with their neighbours, in the middle of their street, as a simple act of community.

At the time of compiling this newsletter the nearest events to Essex Church were in the Westbourne Grove and Maida Vale areas (more specifically, Alexander St, Admiral Walk, Edbrooke Road, Barnsdale Road). You can put your postcode into the site to find out if there is an event near you.

Lots more people have registered their interest in getting involved if more local events were to be planned nearby. We found out about this a bit late to do anything this year but wouldn't it be nice if we could be involved in 2010?...

Swaziland Education Project Update



Library picture from SOS Children's Villages

Much thanks to everyone who donated money to the Swaziland project. We have sent the grand total of £700 to SOS Children's Villages. This will sponsor one child, and also help the village as a whole with health and education projects; desperately needed in a country where AIDS infections are the highest in the world, and there is no free schooling.

SOS Children's Villages will shortly be sending us details of 'our' child, and of the other work in the village that our money is helping with. In August Jim is hoping to visit the village and, if possible, to meet our sponsee. Look out in the September newsletter for further details.

Caroline Blair



World Congress of Faiths 'Beacons of the Light'

**Thursday 9th July, 5.30pm
at Essex Hall, London, WC2R 3HY**

Marianne Rankin and Marcus Braybrooke will present the new book by The Rev. Dr. Braybrooke, 'Beacons of the Light: 100 Holy People who have shaped the History of Humanity' (www.o-books.net).

Marcus Braybrooke, WCF President, has produced over 20 books of interfaith understanding including 'Pilgrimage of Hope: 100 Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue'. Marianne Rankin is Chair of the Alister Hardy Society and author of 'An Introduction to Religious and Spiritual Experience'.



‘Sharing the Spiritual Journey through Diverse Group Activities’

**24-Hour Engagement Groups Training:
16th – 17th October 2009**

**For Facilitators, Would-be Facilitators,
and Engagement Group Participants**

Luther King House, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 5JP

This 24-hour gathering is intended to bring together facilitators of small groups from across the country, to make connections, share experiences, and build confidence. Through practical workshop sessions and experiential activities we will consider some simple principles that everyone can learn to make a success of small group ministry. Join us to explore the wonders of small groups in which our spiritual potential can unfold.

Speak to Jane Blackall for more information.

Cost: £25 per person (cost is subsidised by the ETC)
Cost includes accommodation, meals, and conference fee.

Website: www.unitarianengagementgroups.org.uk

‘PULSE’ eBulletin of District Events



The LDPA (our Unitarian district association) has recently launched a new e-mail Bulletin. This is a monthly publication, available only by email, which contains news, information and articles relevant to Unitarians in the South East.

If you would like to receive this monthly update, simply send an email with the word "subscribe" in the subject line to pulse.bulletin@yahoo.co.uk.

Universal Spiritual Gatherings



Run by graduates of the Interfaith Seminary these monthly Spiritual Gatherings are worship with a difference and this year feature guests from particular faiths. Hosted here at Essex Church, it is lovely to see our beautiful worship space put to such good use, with chanting, silence, music, prayer and inspiration.

Friday evenings 6.35 for 6.45 to 8.15pm

10th July – ‘Radiance’ with Jason Chan
Master Taoist Sacred Arts

14th August – ‘Female Face of the Divine’

11th September – ‘Healing the World’

‘Our Father: A Prayer for Justice’

Wednesday 22nd July 2009 at 6:00 pm
JustShare, St Mary-le-Bow Church, EC2V 6AU



This is the 4th lecture in the JustShare Christian Social and Political Thought Lecture series. The series aims to explore how the concept of 'justice' has been interpreted historically and what it might mean in the City and more widely today.

The speaker, Timothy Radcliffe OP, was formerly Master of the Dominican Order worldwide. He will look at the ‘Our Father’ to suggest how central to our relationship with God is justice and peace. JustShare draws its vision and values from the Christian faith but is open to people of all faiths and none who are committed to working together for a better world.

All are welcome to this lecture. It will conclude by 7pm but will be followed by free Fairtrade wine.

Walking Group: Lee Valley Country Park

Saturday 4th July, meeting 10.00am at Liverpool St Station (for 10.28 train)

Our next walking group outing will take place on Saturday 4th July. We will be exploring a small section of the Lee Valley Country Park which is a great place for birdwatching (if you have a pair of binoculars it might be a good idea to bring them). I have it in mind that we will go for a circular route of approximately 4 ½ miles from Cheshunt station but this could be altered depending on various factors (such as the weather conditions and the energy levels of those who turn up on the day). It would be a good idea to bring a packed lunch but it is possible that we will make it as far as the café at Hayes Hill Farm for a cup of tea and a bun later on. We will take the 10.28 train from Liverpool Street. Please let me know if you're planning to come along.

Jane Blackall

Forthcoming Walks:

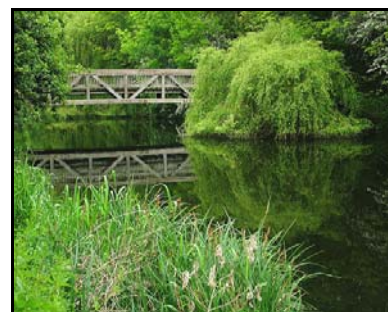
Saturday 1st August – Chelsea

Saturday 5th September – route TBA

We are in the process of planning our programme of walks into the autumn... please let us know if you have a favoured route.

Report of June Walk – Denham Country Park

June's walk was at Denham, Buckinghamshire. The group and was Will. Carole and Deborah and we met at Marylebone Station for the short journey to Denham railway station on the former Great Central Line ('The Final Link'). This was the last main line to be built in this country.



Arriving at Denham opposite the Golf Club we entered the woods and walked down to the lovely clear waters of the River Colne, one of many waterways in this area. Buster, our Labrador, loves to swim here but today we had left him at home because the forecast was for rain and it's no fun with a wet Lab on public transport!

Eventually we left the woods and gained the towpath of the Grand Union Canal which runs from London to Birmingham. There are many canal boats moored along the canal here around Denham Lock. We paused to help a boat owner navigate the lock. Then off the the towpath and into Denham Country Park and the Visitors Centre, passing the huge metal sculpture of a heron in flight (although we have seen them on the canal on previous visits, we didn't see any this trip). Near to the Visitor's Centre is a Roman well dating from 300 AD (This is a mock-up – the actual well was discovered on the site of the nearby stone quarry).

After refreshments (home made oat cookies!) we carried on to Denham village. The house just next door to the (Saxon?) church carries a plaque to its former inhabitant, the film actor Sir John Mills. Denham at one time had its own film studios.

Will Lyons



"The task of those who care about faith is... to make religious life so vibrant as to make others want to join in. We can start by learning from football fans and doing three things:

First, greeting others who are sitting around you, even those you hardly know, and not letting them go away unnoticed at the end, but chatting away, asking if they thought today was a victory or a flop, if the minister was on form or not. It is the presence or absence of human camaraderie that determines whether people come back next week or not.

Second, by joining in the prayers and songs even if you do not feel like it at first, because getting stuck in helps create a sense of involvement, which then engulfs others too, so that you end up feeling that you are on the inside and not looking on from afar.

Third, in between attendances, reading up on the facts, mastering the customs, laws and history, so that next time you come you feel part of the team spirit - that you not only matter as much as everyone else, but that without you they are not fully complete.

At the Kop, Liverpool supporters know that you never walk alone. Hopefully those entering a place of worship can be made to feel the same."

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain in the Guardian

London District Family Fun Day



**Sunday 5th July, 11.00am
Hastings Unitarian Church**

Join other Unitarians from throughout the District on July 5 for a fun family day at the seaside. We will start the day with a service at 11:00 at Hastings Unitarian Church, South Terrace, TN34 1SA.

The service will be co-led by Rev. John Harley, General Assembly Youth Officer, and Rev. David Usher, District Minister, and with music provided by the excellent Hastings organist, Stephen Page, plus Horsham folk guitarist, Stuart Coupe.

After the service we will enjoy a fish and chip lunch on the front, followed by the afternoon to enjoy the seaside at Hastings before returning to the church for tea and an epilogue.

This day out is for everyone, so bring your bucket and spade and knotted handkerchief and plan to come along. Ample parking is available in the car park opposite the church (only £1 all day on Sundays) and there is a good train service from Charing Cross, Waterloo East and London Bridge. The day is for all ages.

Greetings Card Stall Planning for Christmas Fundraiser

We have decided not to hold an art and craft fair this year but instead we are hoping instead to have our own card stall at the church from mid-November until Christmas as an alternative fundraising scheme.

If you are willing and able to make some cards to be sold on behalf of the church then we would appreciate it if you could start stockpiling over the next few months.

Please contact Caroline Blair if you would like to get involved in making or selling cards or if you have any questions about this project.

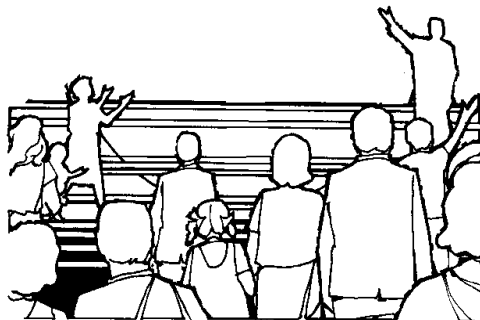
LDPA 20-30 Something Group Becomes: 'Urban Unitarians'

The 'London Unitarian 20-30 Something Group' have recently changed their name to 'Urban Unitarians'. They have a new blog and meet-up group where you can find out more about their activities:

Blog: www.urbanunitarians.blogspot.com
Meet-up Group: www.meetup.com/Urban-Unitarians
Contact: urbanunitarian@gmail.com

Their website says: This is a social group for inspiration and discussion in the Unitarian spirit of tolerance, sharing and hope for the contemporary world.

District Growth Initiatives



An online group (the 'PULSE GN1' Google Group) has been set up for the discussion of issues relating to congregational growth in London and the South East. There has been some quite in-depth exploration of the subject amongst group members recently – a recent strand entitled "Consider the Newcomer in All Things" has been particularly thought-provoking – and I would recommend that anyone who is interested in these matters should sign up to join the group. If you would like to know more about this initiative, please contact me on education@kensington-unitarians.org.uk.

Rev Jane Dwinell, who came to visit the district back in April to advise us all on issues of congregational growth, has written two articles about her experience of working with Unitarians in the UK. She says: "I had a lovely time meeting people from all over the country, having tea with them (lots of tea!), and listening to their stories, their history, and their commitment to Unitarianism. It was a pleasure to help them move forward and give them a few ideas, but mostly let them know they are not alone in their struggles and challenges. Their society may not be as religiously-oriented as American society, but that doesn't make Unitarianism any less relevant."

You can access copies of Jane Dwinell's e-newsletter for small congregations, 'Small Talk', and subscribe for future updates on her website: www.spiritoflifepublishing.com.

Jane Blackall

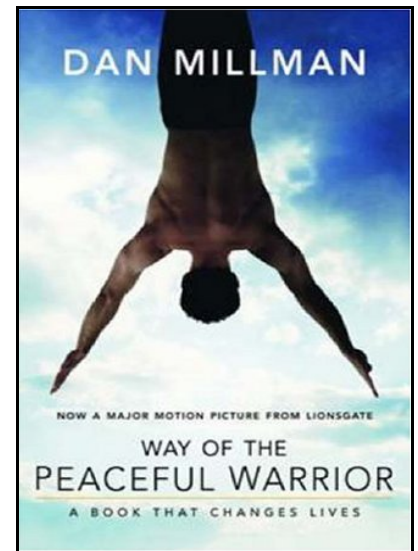
The Spiritual Bookshelf

#6: 'Way of the Peaceful Warrior' by Dan Millman (chosen by Angela Gasparetto)

This is the sixth of a new series of articles in the newsletter where members and friends of the congregation tell us about a spiritual or religious book which has special meaning or value for them. Look out for book recommendations throughout the course of 2009.

Way of the Peaceful Warrior is a book that I read in my early 20s and for some reason, in the last month, it popped into my head again and I went out directly to get myself a copy.

The book is written by Dan Millman and is about Dan Millman - a fictional novel, but based on his true story. It follows the story of the character, Dan, a high-achieving university gymnast, who reluctantly embarks upon his own spiritual journey when a teacher, late-night gas attendant and spiritual warrior, Socrates, comes into his life.



Admittedly, when writing the above short description, it sounds quite far out there and perhaps a bit corny. But, it isn't. I don't believe this is a masterpiece of fine writing, however it is a joyful read that is accessible, at times delightful, always mindful and for me, inspiring and personally challenging. Through a fictional approach the reader is offered the opportunity to watch Dan be confronted with, avoid, return to, suffer through and (eventually) embrace lessons that he, (and perhaps all of us) needs to learn.

The book is filled with philosophies and words of wisdom that are obvious, but I think perhaps due to their simplicity, are easily forgotten. Each time Dan is reminded, questioned or challenged in his story, I found myself as the reader doing the same. Because of this, the book both inspired and challenged me with reminders, thoughts and perspectives that fed/ feeds my own journey.

"If you don't get what you want, you suffer; if you get what you don't want, you suffer; even if you get exactly what you want, you still suffer because you can't hold onto it forever. Your mind is your predicament. It wants to be free of change, free of pain, free of the obligations of life and death. But change is a law, and no amount of pretending will alter that reality." – Socrates

For me, this excerpt states a huge, spiritual life guideline or principle – and the book is full of them. These lessons aren't necessarily original. The content of the above excerpt can be probably located in many, many spiritual and religious writings. However, unlike some books I have read that fall under Spiritual or Personal Growth, where a lesson is dropped down on the page and explored with a "self-help" approach that functions like a manual, this book drops them on the page and lets them sit there, for you to take in and experience creatively through Dan's story. We see and feel Dan struggle - he doesn't find immediate answers or ways to find or follow these spiritual and life principles. We see him resist, work, stumble and grow.

At one point, Socrates sends Dan out to sit on a rock outside the gas-station and not come in until he has something of value to tell him. Dan struggles through a night and a day sitting on that rock – trying to think deep and meaningful thoughts that were of "value". A couple of attempts of well-structured, spiritual reflections, see Socrates redirecting Dan back to the rock ("Not bad. Back to the rock."). Until finally Dan finds the following simple phrase – 'there are no ordinary moments' – and he is allowed to rest his bones on the sofa in the gas station. Not revolutionary, not a statement that would tantalize those who love big conceptual phrasing, however, a phrase of potential truth for us all. A truth, perhaps, that would help us be in the present moment and appreciate what that moment is. Not rocket science, not original, but clear and as Dan discovers it, joyful – a personal revelation for him, and thereby, even if only for a moment, for the reader.

Way of the Peaceful Warrior's subtitle is, "A Book that Changes Lives" – a bold statement, but I can understand why it is there. Supported by personal statements by readers all over the world (it has been translated into 29 languages), the book is moving. To what degree, of course depends on each individual and their search or path, however, I believe that the universality of the lessons encountered by Dan through gas attendant Socrates, are fodder for all. This book isn't a guide to self-discovery, nor does it promise to get you to a higher level of existence. However it does offer a story that takes you on a journey, and that journey may be one that finds its way into your journey, and therefore it just might change your life, a part of your life, or perhaps a moment of your life. As for me... I have just bought his book, No Ordinary Moments – I might be hooked.

For more information on Dan Millman – his books, workshops and life – view his website at www.danmillman.com.

Angela Gasparetto

'The TreeHouse Gallery' in Regents Park

Open from 13th July – 6th September



Our warden, Jenny Moy, hopes to be performing with some other contact dancers as part of the grand opening of the TreeHouse Gallery project on Sunday 12th July.

The TreeHouse Gallery is a collaborative project that will take root in London's Regents Park throughout July and August, re-imagining one of the great outdoor public spaces of the city. The site, situated on the banks of the Boating Lake, will form an array of tree-top structures that will act as a catalyst to ignite the collective imagination, encouraging adults and children alike to explore a variety of creative responses to nature. Both the aesthetics that inform The TreeHouse Gallery's construction and the community it gives voice to will grow from the surroundings of the parkland and the city's material and social fabric.

Over the course of this two-month period the site will be host to a diverse programme of stimulating exhibitions, performances, workshops, spoken word events and debates, all of which explore the myriad possibilities found through local and creative solutions and forms of reflexive individual engagement with natural cycles. The project will give both artists and participants a free and innovative platform in central London to actively engage with art, while in turn drawing a diverse mix of people and ideas to the park.

In tune with the project's ethos and the surrounding environment, the TreeHouse Gallery will be built predominantly from naturally sourced materials and reclaimed city waste. All timber and building materials are being donated to the project and are guaranteed lightweight, un-pressure treated and free from chemicals that corrupt the soil. The gallery will be fuelled by onsite renewable energy and transport will be kept to a minimum, where possible taking the form of bicycle and other alternative modes of transportation. Furthermore marketing materials and waste produced on site are being reused through specific art workshops and installations that reinvent the discarded. Also, importantly, this large-scale project will be entirely self-funded, self-sufficient and participation is free and open to all!

For more information see: www.thetreehousegallery.org

General Assembly Chief Officer to be Recruited

At its meeting on Monday 15th June, the Executive Committee began the process of recruiting a new Chief Officer to replace the role of Chief Executive. The Committee has taken external advice and, in reconfiguring the role and drawing up a new job description, has focused on the need for effective management, coordination of our voluntary effort and delivering our strategic vision. The salary will be from £50,000.

The draft timetable for recruitment is:

Now	Preparation of job description; person specification and recruitment pack
W/c 10 July	Post advertised both within denomination and externally.
August 10	Applications close
W/c 17 Aug	Shortlisting
W/c 3 Sept	Interviews

During the period until the Chief Officer is in post, the Executive Committee is seeking to provide additional support for the staff at Essex Hall. We would like to thank them again for their forbearance and their very considerable efforts to ensure that services are maintained.

Peter Soulsby
Convenor Executive Committee

Kent Garden Party

Saturday 8th August 2009 from 3.00pm



From the London district newsletter... For many years, David and Maureen Embry (of Dover Unitarians) have hosted a Garden Party at their beautiful home in Kent. David is a noted artist, and Maureen breeds exotic rabbits, and there is much to see and do through the afternoon.

They invite fellow Unitarians from the South East to join them again this year from 3.00 pm onwards on Saturday 8th August. Their home is Lyndhurst Farm, High Halden, Ashford, Kent, TN26 3JP. Telephone 01233 850384 to let David and Maureen know if you are planning to attend.



A Fitness Fusion of 9 Movement Forms Sessions led by Sonya Leite

**Second Sunday of the Month from 2-3.00pm
(12th July, 9th August, 13th September,
11th October, 8th November)**

Mondays from 11.00am-12 noon

An hour of whole-body conditioning, done barefoot to diverse music. Delivering a cardiovascular workout for any level of fitness. Specific routines allow you to experience - the power of the martial arts, the stillness of the healing arts and the joy of movement through the dance arts.

Cost £7 (£5 to Essex Church members)

Contact: Sonya Leite on 0207 371 1674

Charlotte Illingworth Artist's Residency

6th -10th July 2009, 10-2pm

**Rosslyn Hill Unitarian Chapel
Pilgrims Place, London, NW3 1NG**

Charlotte Illingworth is an artist and member of the Hampstead Unitarian congregation who also took part in our recent 'Fabric of Diversity' community arts project. She will be holding an artist's residency at Rosslyn Hill Chapel in early July.

For more information about this residency please call Charlotte on 07808 553 641.

'The Idea of Justice'

LSE Space for Thought Lecture Series

Monday 27th July 2009, 6.30pm

Sheikh Zayed Theatre, London WC2A 2AE



Amartya Sen explores the ways in which, and the degree to which, justice is a matter of reason, and of different kinds of reason.

It is in the nature of reason, says Sen, that it does not allow all questions to be settled from first principles; not everything is in principle resolvable; and different people regard different positions as just. But these pluralities are not a disadvantage. Why this is so, and how we may think about justice in a world where one tradition is no longer dominant. Sen's work is grounded not in idealised justice, but what can be made to work practically, in the real world. He argues that a philosophy of justice should require the agreement not just of the community which is making the laws, but of important outsiders also.

This event marks the launch of Professor Sen's new book 'The Idea of Justice'. Amartya Sen is Lamont University Professor at Harvard and an honorary fellow of LSE. He won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998 and was Master of Trinity College, Cambridge 1998-2004. His books include 'Development of Freedom', 'The Argumentative Indian' and 'Identity and Violence', and have been translated into more than 30 languages.

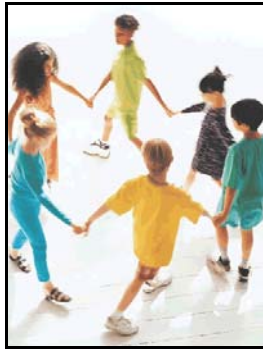


"Neither the coarse feeling of unpleasantness nor the agitated feeling of pleasure, equanimity is, the Buddha said, one of the highest kinds of happiness, beyond compare with mere pleasant feelings. Superior to delight and joy, true equanimity remains undisturbed as events change from hot to cold, from bitter to sweet, from easy to difficult. This neutral feeling is so subtle that it can be difficult to discern.

Equanimity is steady through vicissitudes, equally close to the things you may like and the things you do not like. Observe when the tendency to move away from what you do not like ends, and the tendency to hold on to what you like is equally absent. Personal preference no longer dictates the direction of attention. Equanimity contains the complete willingness to behold the pleasant and the painful events of life equally. It points to a deep balance in which you are not pushed and pulled between the coercive energies of desire and aversion. Equanimity has the capacity to embrace extremes without getting thrown off balance. Equanimity takes interest in whatever is occurring simply because it is occurring. Equanimity does not include the aversive states of indifference, boredom, coldness, or hesitation. It is an expression of calm, radiant balance that takes whatever comes in its stride. . . ."

Shaila Catherine

STOP PRESS!!! Children's Group



We're hoping to have a children's group up and running here at Essex Church soon. We've found some possible leaders who are fully CRB checked and trained. Now we're contacting parents who've been here in the past and making a list of people who would be prepared to lead occasional sessions for children when the main leaders can't be with us.

There has been a thriving children's programme here before and with a bit of planning and effort we could make our church really welcoming to young families once again. So thanks to everyone who has already offered to help and do get in touch if you want to add your name to the list.

Sarah Tinker

Essex Church Summer Pub Lunch Social



Essex Church has been a busy place lately with more people coming along on Sundays, particularly younger folk! We thought it would be nice to have a trip to the pub for a lunch one Sunday in July, (and perhaps hit a nearby park after, if the sun is beaming down that day!), for the younger folk of the congregation to have the chance to get to know each other a bit more and just to enjoy the afternoon!

If you would like to be kept posted on this lovely summer outing (or just know that you want to come!), drop an email to social@kensington-unitarians.org.uk and let us know that you want to be put on the Pub Lunch e-list. You can always talk to anyone of us as well if you see us in church.

Angela, Louisa & Mark

Sunday Services at Essex Church



5th July – “Life in the Slow Lane”

Service led by Jo Ridgers

Our very own Jo Ridgers will be leading the service on Sunday 5th July. Jo says that her theme will be “a spiritual approach to my journey with ME/CFS and back to wellness”.

12th July – “A Flower Communion”

Service led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

Norbert Capek, a Czech Unitarian minister, was killed by the Nazis in 1942. In this service we will honour his memory by holding our own version of his famous flower communion. Bring a flower with you if you can.

19th July – “The Web of Life”

Service led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

The interdependence of all life on earth is sometimes described as a web, in which each part is connected to all others. In this service we will celebrate these links and consider what message such an image holds for us individually and collectively.

26th July – “Our Chalice Flame”

Service led by Rev. Sarah Tinker

Each week we light a chalice as a symbol of our world wide Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist community. Come and find out more about the history of this symbol and the various meanings that it has held throughout the centuries as well as now in the present day.

