

Effra Road Chapel, Brixton

Founded 1839

HONORARY MINISTER:

Julian Smith, FRSA, Barrister
minister@brixtonunitarians.org

ACTING ASSISTANT PREACHERS:

Alexander Villanueva-Gordon
Holly Welsh

MUSICAL DIRECTOR:

Chris Dann

CLERK TO THE TRUSTEES & MAIN CHAPEL CONTACT:

Administrator: Sue Young
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THE TRUSTEES

Chairman: Andrew Leonard
Treasurer & Secretary: Sue Young
Warden: Stephen Cowley
Richard Bennett
John Bradford
Victoria Hurst
Edwin Lerner
David Medhurst
Cynthia McPherson

CO-WORKERS:

Ecumenical, Interfaith & Social Action Representative: Bruce Bebington
Principal, Brixton Annexe, Lincoln's Inn Fields Chambers: Julian Smith
Gardening & Grounds: David Medhurst. Foodbank Coordinator: Sam Jones

EFFRA ROAD CHAPEL

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*Brixton Unitarian Christian Church
Churches Together in Brixton
Lambeth Faiths Forum*

General Assembly of Unitarian & Free Christian Churches

Newsletter

January 2016 (Late Edition!)

JANUARY

Sun 03 10:30
Sun 10 10:30
Sun 17 10:30
Sun 24 10:30
Fri 29 12:30
Sun 31 10:30

Communion & Foodbank Coll'n (FBC) Julian
Rev Ashley Hills (J in Sri Lanka) Lewisham
Rev Martin Whitell (J in Sri Lanka) District Minister
Assistant Preacher (J in Sri Lanka) Holly
For 13:00: Fish & Chips Lunch (£5pp) Julian
Minister Julian

FEBRUARY

Fri 12:30
Sun 07 10:30
Tue 09
Wed 10 18:30

for 13:00: Fish & Chips Lunch (£5pp) Julian
Communion & FBC Julian
Shrove Tuesday
ASH WEDNESDAY (Lent Begins) Julian
Lentern Reflections & Supper 1
7 Windmill House, Windmill Walk
Waterloo, London SE1 8LX

Fri 12 12:30
Sun 14 10:30
Tue 16 18:30
Fri 19 12:30
Sun 21 10:30
Tue 23 18:30
Fri 26 12:30
Sun 28 10:30

Please advise Julian of attendance
for 13:00: Fish & Chips Lunch (£5pp) J / S
Lent 1 & St Valentine's Day Julian
Lentern Reflections & Supper 2 Julian
for 13:00: Fish & Chips Lunch (£5pp) J / S
Lent 2 & Trustees' Meeting 12:00? Julian
Lentern Reflections & Supper 3 Julian
for 13:00: Fish & Chips Lunch (£5pp) J / S
DAVID BOWIE MEMORIAL SERVICE Julian

MARCH

Tue 01 18.30
Sun 06 10:30
Tue 08 18:30
Sun 13 10:30
Tue 15 18:30
Sun 20 10:30
Thu 24 18:30

Lentern Reflections & Supper 4 Julian
MOTHERING SUNDAY & FBC Julian
Lentern Reflections & Supper 5 Julian
Lent 5 & Trustee's Meeting 12:00? Julian
Lentern Reflections & Supper 6 Julian
PALM SUNDAY Julian
MAUNDY THURSDAY Julian
Communion & Agape Meal Julian
Good Friday March of Witness, Brixton CTB & Julian
EASTER SUNDAY Communion Julian
Lunch, The Ship, Kennington (£20pp)* Julian
Please advise Sue of attendance

Fri 25 TBA
Sun 27 10:30
12:30

* £10pp for Seniors etc

The Bright Field

R.S. Thomas, 1913 - 2000

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that
had the treasure in it. I realize now
that I must give all I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying

on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

The poet teaches that the Kingdom of God of which Jesus speaks, which he anticipates in his miraculous meal, and for which he teaches us to pray, is present amongst us in elusive and powerfully immediate ways for those who have eyes to see; eyes which are on the look-out for glimpses of the Divine. Nature is a rich vein for such glimpses. There is something truly blessed about sunrises and sunsets, for example; so many skies, in fact, including the grey and bleak and rainy, and of course the stormy. My eyes turn to my sitting room windows in all weathers. Tonight the background of this London, Winter sky is aquamarine, and populated with large, heavy, stretched-out, ragged-edged and fast-moving rain clouds. The overall effect is of a foreboding sky; oddly, all the more exciting for it. This is not to say that all challenges are welcome. But if evil and suffering must come our way, as it must in this world, then we should not exactly welcome them, but decide that we will do all we can to bring God to them so that there may indeed be a silver lining to them and so that God may be glorified thereby. May God help us in this, so that His and our joy might be enhanced further. I say 'further', for are we not much blessed already. Are we not undeservedly showered with spiritual and temporal treasures? Does not everybody in our community enjoy a loving family and friends, a comfortable home, and much more besides? Are not most of us more or less blessed with good health, happiness at work and enough money? Are not our loved ones departed ever in our minds leaving us feeling grateful and hopeful? Is not Jesus alive in you and me and between us so as to make us truly care for those less fortunate than ourselves wherever they may be. So how will we love not only God, but man in this year? Let those who have eyes truly see; and then let them 'do', *energetically and with grace*. Amen!

Many apologies for the late newsletter. Julian is entirely to blame! But we hope you'll forgive us. After all, wasn't Christmas great? The **Carols' Service** celebrating both the Chapel's 175th anniversary and Julian being our longest-serving Minister with 23 years service since 1992, was a great success. We had a full house and were pleased to be joined by local church and faith leaders and by the GA's Chief Executive, Derek McCauley, and our District Minister, Rev Martin Whitell. The service was followed by a lovely Christmas Party, much enhanced by **Chris and Ms Jaylee Small** who had so beautifully participated in the service. And weren't the English Swordancing Group fantastic, who performed in both parts of the evening too? And what about Merrybox Afro-Caribbean Food, Amnanda's huge 175th cake, and Julian's hand-selected wines? We have had nothing but compliments since. We will do all we can to replicate this particular success in future years. **Andrew** enjoyed his first Carols' Service catering night off in 23 years! You will be pleased to learn that £436 was raised for the Send a Child to Hucklow charity. And there's more good news. As most of you know already, **Bruce and Joan** are engaged to be married later in the year. Bruce has been a much loved member of our community for many years now and, in more recent times, Joan has become a much valued regular visitor. We send them our hearty congratulations and pray for their lasting happiness. **Bruce** has also become a grandfather, thanks to his daughter Emma and her hubby. Our best wishes to all the family on this new arrival. There's a possibility that the **Chapel's premises might be redeveloped**. Andrew and Julian have appointed a Trustees' Development Advisory Group (TDAG) to examine two at least superficially very attractive offers, involving the creation of a new equally large chapel and hall, new domestic residences, and a significant sum for our coffers. **Julian has therefore taken a sabbatical from the Bar to oversee these negotiations and complete his MA Human Rights at Buckingham University at the Reform Club**. Julian's Course Director and Tutor is Professor Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, who was lead counsel in the successful prosecution of Slobodan Milosovic at The Hague for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. Julian is focussing on the right to justice, in the form of the right of those in developing countries to bring tortious claims in UK courts against UK-based corporations. We wish him well and pray for his success. He hasn't come-up with his draft thesis title yet, and has to produce a minimum of 20,000 words by September! **Julian, Andrew, Sue and Ali(son)** went on a pilgrimage to the sites of ancient crusaders in Northern Cyprus and to Early Church sites in Turkey, including Hierapolis which was incredibly stunning by all accounts. Julian was away again, taking service for Basel Unitarians in Switzerland in the Autumn. Julian will be leading a tour to Cappadocia in late 2016 and to Transylvania in 2017. Further details will be available in the Summer. In the meantime, we have our annual day away. This year we're off to Hastings. Further details to follow. And now let's get serious for Lent, the better to celebrate Easter.