

EFFRA ROAD CHAPEL, BRIXTON

www.brixtonunitarians.org

Founded 1839

Honorary Minister

Julian Smith, LLB (LSE), ADBTS (Oxon)

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Organist & Pianist

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Main Contact: Administrator: Susan Young

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Chairman: Andrew Leonard

Warden: Stephen Cowley

Bruce Bebington

John Bradford

Edwin Lerner

Cynthia McPherson

Incorporating

Effra Road Chapel Community Hall

Youngsue102@gmail.com

www.brixtonunitarians.org

Brixton Legal Centre

www.brixtonlegalcentre.com

Chapel Close Residential Accommodation

www.grapevineletting.com

Chapel Carparking SW2 1BZ

www.yourparkingspace.com www.justpark.com

BRIXTON UNITARIANS' NEWSLETTER

www.brixtonunitarians.org

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MAY

Services Cancelled due to Covid-19 Restrictions Since 22.03.20

JUNE

Services Cancelled due to Covid-19 Restrictions Since 22.03.20

Sun 21 10:30 Private Prayer for 9 Bookings Julian

Sun 28 10:30 Private Prayer for 9 Bookings Julian

JULY

Sun 05 10:30 Public Prayer for 9 Bookings Julian

Sun 12 10:30 Public Prayer for 9 Bookings Julian

Sun 19 10:30 Mindfulness Service Julian

Sun 26 10:30 Service & Foodbank Collection Julian

AUGUST

Sun 02 10:30 Service with Communion Julian

Sun 09 10:30 Public Worship for 9 Bookings Julian

Sun 16 10:30 Public Worship for 9 Bookings Julian

Sun 23 10:30 Mindfulness Service Julian

Sun 30 10:30 Service & Foodbank Collection Julian

SEPTEMBER

Sun 06 10:30 Service with Communion Julian

Sun 13 10:30 Public Worship for 16 Bookings? TBA

Sun 20 10:30 Mindfulness Service Julian

Sun 27 10:30 Public Worship for 16 Bookings? Julian

OCTOBER

Sun 04	10:30	HARVEST FESTIVAL / DISTANCED BRUNCH?	Julian
..
Sun 11	10:30	Public Worship for 16 Bookings?	Julian
Sun 18	10:30	Public Worship for 16 Bookings?	TBA
Sun 25	10:30	Mindfulness Service	Julian

OTHER KNOWN DATES

01.11	Wade takes the Service?
08.11	Full Remembrance Service
..	All Saints & Souls, inc war dead and victims of Covid 19
13.12	Carols Service & Christmas Buffet? at 18:00 (no 10:30am service)

MINISTER'S LETTER

In the **last newsletter**, I gave thanks for our good fortune in having each other, and church premises, ministry and outreach all our own, and looked forward to our next adventure in faith together at the beginning of not just a new year, but a new decade. It felt very auspicious, at least for me: at the end of that period I'll have passed what was the statutory retirement age of 65 and I'll probably be looking at retirement from whatever I'm then doing; and if the last 56 years are anything to go by, these will be eventful years which will pass in a flash and I'll be 66 sometime next week. Feeling a little fretful, **Covid-19 struck** and I was taken out of myself, but for a continuing fear for my health on account of my problematic asthma. Like you all, my concern has been with those in poorer health and otherwise less fortunate, especially amongst our community, and it's been a privilege to pray, discuss, meet-up and work with you all during the height of lockdown which saw the chapel physically closed for longer than at any other time in her 180 year history. Not even the Blitz of WW2, which saw our old chapel reduced to rubble, kept us closed for so long; and we cannot guarantee that there won't need to be further closure/s – **Covid-19 is still with us as a highly contagious killer**, there is no herd immunity, it can be caught twice, there is no cure, and treatments and vaccines are still under development / scaling-up. Like you I didn't count on all this. Neither did the state and business, despite knowing as we should have done that events like this are not only possible, but highly likely in one form or another. So it's been a quite surreal time for us all, and **downlock's proving equally surreal** to those of us with a proper sense of the continuing threat of Covid-19 and or self-shielding and self-isolating. Not many of us feel like being out and about as we once were. I enjoyed a trip to my 'local' recently on its first day of reopening, with our local curate Lisa and our partners. It was lovely to catch-up with staff and locals

and get a little merry. But I left before it got any busier and after I'd noticed more than a few people not taking the safety arrangements seriously. As compared to our arrangements at chapel, it felt like the Wild West! I counsel you all to take similar heed and remain alert at all times, and to make the most of your social bubbles virtually and safely in-person as our world attempts to return to something like normal. Andrew, Sue, Stephen and I who have worked on our risk assessment / opening plan and its operation, have been left in no-doubt as to how important it is to carefully manage contact with those outside our own homes, and I believe our arrangements at chapel usefully underline and illustrate how it should be done. **So let's get you all coming back ASAP.** It's been, especially for Chris's family as you know, a tough time, difficult times lay ahead for sure, and chapel helps us to regain our bearings, pick ourselves up, brush ourselves down, and to take-up the journey of life again, ever onwards and upwards towards the celestial light and awaiting the next adventure in life and faith and standing together in the face of less welcome challenges, taking turns to lead the way or be brought up from the rear. So in all this we're finally getting **new roofs** for the hall and the administrative block which connects it to the chapel, the better to weather the real, as well as the metaphorical, storms of life. But here's to better weather at last!

EFFRA ROAD CHAPEL & UNITARIANISM

Today the Chapel houses **London's most central Unitarian congregation.** Our first chapel on this site was opened in 1839 to provide **a place of worship and fellowship for South London's religious liberals and freethinkers.** We are still rooted in the forward-looking, radical Judeo-Christian and Humanist traditions and also share our forebears' interest in world religions, mysticism, spirituality generally, the arts and sciences, scholarship, and what life has to teach us next. **Our worship is inclusive and outward looking.** We cherish all persons and ask them to join us in the our quest to enhance humility, the appreciation that one has much more to learn than to teach, a respect and concern for others, and a gratitude to and love for something within, between and over and around us which gives comfort, reassurance, inspiration and true fullness of life, and which has traditionally been called 'God'. Thus we uphold what we believe to be the religion of, and not the religion about, Jesus; a faith shared with consecrated souls of all faiths and none whom we uphold with him and seek to be inspired by and follow. **We have an interesting history,** not least in our membership, including our major initial patron, the tallow-chandler and art collector Elnahan Bicknell, and the sugar magnate and art collector Sir Henry Tate ...