



Brighton
Unitarians

May 2018 Newsletter

Sunday Services

Please note: services are at 11 a.m. All are welcome.

We would be grateful if you would switch your phones to airplane mode before the start of the service.

6th May - Jef Jones, Lay Leader - Festival Service.
Pianist Joe Ward

13th May - Interfaith Minister Rev Anthea Ballam
Pianist Pamela Nickels

20th May - Interfaith Minister Rev Susie Courtauld
Pianist Peter Mansfield

27th May - Jef Jones, Lay Leader
Pianist Kathy Pitt

Quiet Reflection 7-8 pm, 10th May led by Frances Tulley

Quiet Reflective Circle

On the second Thursday of each month we gather for candle lighting and quiet reflection. This starts at 7pm and lasts no longer than an hour. There will be readings, time for candle-lighting, stillness and a few simple closing words.

If you've been having a busy week, and could do with some stillness, do come along. If you're looking for a time and place to reconnect with your spirit, do come along. If you'd like to sit quietly in a sacred place, please do come along. All are welcome!

Parking and Access to the Church

Due to scaffolding at the front of the church there will be no parking until further notice. Entrance to the Church will be via the two side passageways.

Welcome from Jef

Welcome to this month's newsletter. You'll probably know by now that the repair work has started on our portico. We have been working toward this moment for several years now and it seems a good time to congratulate our volunteers and staff who put so much time into the Heritage Lottery Grant Application and our own in-house fund-raising. Thank you everyone for what you have achieved.

The month of May of course brings the Brighton Festival and behind the hoarding and the scaffolding our church as usual will be hosting all kinds of performances and events- check out our website <http://www.brightonunitarian.org.uk/may-festival.html> for details.

Finally another thank you to Dr Geoffrey Mead and Dr Sue Berry for their fascinating lectures on the history of our church and its builders. We are grateful to them for generously sharing their in-depth knowledge and research.

From the Lay Leader

I've been watching a documentary series from 1969 on the BBC i-player; *Civilisation: A Personal View by Kenneth Clark*. Its thirteen one-hour episodes explore the history of art, ideas and philosophy in Western Europe since the Middle Ages. The BBC recently broadcast *Civilisations*, a kind of follow-up, with three presenters and a more global, diverse perspective. Today's *Civilisations* is an implicit improvement on 1969's *Civilisation*. David Attenborough, who commissioned the original series, has said "*Society has changed. We have an international society, a multi-ethnic society. You can't just do it in the way we did it.*"

I vaguely remember the first series - I was eleven - and before I started watching I also vaguely remembered that even in 1969 Sir Kenneth Clark had seemed rather old-fashioned. I was right: his speaking voice is rather clipped and he stands around in all kinds of palaces and galleries looking debonair in a suit and tie. And frankly it's wonderful!

Kenneth Clark was more than just a bit posh. Although he is best remembered today for *Civilisation* we should perhaps be grateful to him for his work as instigator and chair of the War Artists Advisory Committee. He was the Director of the National Gallery in the late 1930s and as war approached he could see that artists would struggle to make a living. Galleries and art schools were closing and private commissions were becoming rare. Between 1939 and 1945 the Committee commissioned work from hundreds of artists and sculptors. It sponsored exhibitions both in the UK and abroad. Artists such as Eric Ravilious, Paul Nash, John Piper and Graham Sutherland received full time salaries, and many more were given short-term contracts. WAAC commissioned Henry Moore's famous drawings of Londoners sheltering from the Blitz in Tube stations and Evelyn Dunbar's celebrated paintings of the Women's Land Army. However the legacy of the Committee was not just an excellent artistic record of the war, it saved many artists from serving on the front line.

One of the things I'm enjoying about *Civilisation* is indeed Kenneth Clark's rather urbane personal style. Unlike many of today's presenters he is not desperate for our attention. He doesn't gesticulate or jump about much; mostly he keeps his hands in his pockets. He informs more than he performs and this allows us to have good long looks at the art and architecture itself.

Far from reactionary Kenneth Clark comes across as a moderate liberal, with respect for the divine and a steady, inquisitive passion for culture and ideas. He is confident in what he knows and wants to share it. One can imagine him being very interested in the current series

and approving of its broader canvas.

Sometimes he does seem to speak directly to 2018. Expounding on his distaste for the Palace of Versailles he says *A margin of wealth is helpful to civilisation but for some mysterious reason great wealth is destructive.* And from another episode comes this expression of his principles: *I believe that order is better than chaos, creation better than destruction. I prefer gentleness to violence, forgiveness to vendetta. On the whole I think that knowledge is preferable to ignorance, and I am sure that human sympathy is more valuable than ideology.* Nearly fifty years later one can only pray that values like these will prevail.

Legacies to BUC

Our church completely hidden in scaffolding and hoarding is now undergoing the longed-for restoration of its portico. We were delighted to be awarded a grant by the Heritage Lottery to help with this work. The grant award is for 58% of the costs, so we are funding the remaining 42%. How are we doing this?

- Through some grants from Unitarian and other charities. Sussex Historic Churches Trust has promised £10,000 on completion of the work.
- Through vigorous and sustained fund-raising activities by church members
- Through legacies to the church

The largest of these, and what really made funding the repair work possible, is a legacy of a little over £100,000 which came to us in 2008 and has been invested since then.

There are not many of us who could contribute this sort of sum but I think it worth noting that during the last 15 years much of the repair and restoration work within the church, for example the extensive repair of two of the south windows, has been made possible through other legacies left by past members. One of these was the result of a clause in a will stating that “5% of the value of my house when sold after my death” should come to the church for work to maintain the building.

Now there’s an idea which we might consider when drafting a will, or adding a codicil to an existing will. 5% of a property in Brighton would be a substantial sum, leaving a valuable 95% for the benefit of one’s heirs.

In 2020 we shall be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the building of the church, and will be able to do this thanks to the generosity of many past members; those who loved the sacred space, as many of us do now.

May it continue restored, strong and safe for generations to come.

"Snaps on the Steps" Photographic Exhibition

Over the past year Tony Tree has documented the richness and celebrated the diversity of the life of Brighton Unitarian Church and New Road. His vibrant and colourful photographs are on display on the hoarding which now covers the front of the building.

Badge Sunday May 6th

Sunday 6th May will be Badge Sunday. Once a year as people arrive at the service we invite them to wear a sticker with their name on it. We've been doing this for a long time and it helps people get to know each other better. Stickers will be provided at the door!

April Heritage Awareness Lectures

Two lectures took place in April. Both were attended by very enthusiastic audiences who not only learned about the heritage of the building, the history of the church and congregation, but its architects and their work in and around Brighton.

Our thanks to Dr Geoffrey Mead and Dr Sue Berry for their most successful contribution to our Heritage Awareness Project.

May Festival at Brighton Unitarian

Despite the building works there will be lots going on during the festival. We have a very nice programme of events scheduled. Do have a look at the May Festival page of the website to see more details <http://www.brightonunitarian.org.uk/may-festival.html>



May

04th : Pianist Madelaine Jones presents an eclectic programme, juxtaposing well-loved Baroque repertoire with works by 19th century female composers. The programme will include works by J.S. Bach, Clara Schumann and Louise Farrenc.

11th: "Living Songs". As part of an ongoing performance project programming songs written in the 21st century alongside more well known repertoire, Jessica Summers

(soprano) and Jelena Makarova (piano) will perform music by Debussy and songs by Stuart MacRae ("One of the most exciting and expressive composers working today") and Tom Barnes (part of this year's Old Vic 12).

18th: No lunchtime concert.

25th: Pianist Michael Leach playing Bach's 1st Partita and Tchaikovsky's "Seasons" - 12 short "character" pieces, one for each month of the year.

Doors and coffee from 12 noon.

Concert 12.30 – 1.15 p.m.

Tickets £3.50 on the door.

Data Protection Act

We are working hard to ensure our compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which come into force on the 25th May 2018. We very much hope that you will wish to stay in touch, but as our old consents will no longer be valid we will need to sign everyone up anew.

We will be sending out consent forms to church members and friends to make it as easy as we can to ensure that those who wish to continue receiving our newsletter and updates about events and activities at the church can do so.

You may unsubscribe at any time by clicking on the unsubscribe button at the bottom of each newsletter. You may also ask for your details to be deleted from the mailing list by emailing us on buc@brightonunitarian.org.uk

Please understand that if we do not receive consent from you by the 25th May 2018 we will be unable legally to send you future editions of the newsletter.

If you would like to know more, BUC's data protection policy can be found on our website www.brightonunitarian.org.uk

Safeguarding

Brighton Unitarian Church is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.

We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological and discriminatory abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.

We recognise the personal dignity and rights of children and vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures will reflect this.

We believe all adults and children should enjoy and have access to every aspect of

the life of Brighton Unitarian Church.

We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

Please contact our Safeguarding Officer, Ann Woodhead, via the church email address buc@brightonunitarian.org.uk if something has happened at Brighton Unitarian to make you feel unsafe or uncomfortable or you are worried about someone else's safety or feel that they are in danger.

Dates for Your Diary

Wednesday 23rd, 12.30 p.m. Pergolesi: Stabat Mater. Free entry. Donations to BUC. Timi Mohai (soprano), Jean-Pierre Brzechwa (countertenor), Joe Ward (piano)... Composed in 1736 in the final weeks of his life, this *Stabat Mater* by Pergolesi is a sentimental and highly ornamented masterpiece. We are delighted to bring alive this exquisite oratorio in a venue with extraordinary acoustics. <https://soundcloud.com/user-257006482/sets/stabat-mater>

Thursday 31st, 12.30 p.m. John Bruzon Piano Recital. £3.50 on the door. John Bruzon plays solo piano works by Bach, Scarlatti, Beethoven and Liszt.

To keep up-to-date with all that is happening at Brighton Unitarian visit our website www.brightonunitarian.org.uk or follow us on:

Twitter: @BrightUnitarian

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BrightonUnitarian/>

Share images of your experiences in our beautiful building using the following hashtags. #bucpeople #brightonunitarians