

EFFRA ROAD CHAPEL, BRIXTON

www.brixtonunitarians.org

Spiritual Home to Brixton's Freethinkers Since 1839

Senior Member of the Congregation: Cynthia McPherson

Honorary Minister: Julian Smith, LLB (LSE), A/DBTS (Oxon), FRSA
Sunday Services; Spiritual Enquiries; Namings, Weddings, Funerals; Pastoral
minister@brixtonunitarians.org

Musical Director: Jason Taing, MusB (Manch), PGCE, LTCL, MISM

Administrator: Susan Young

General Enquiries including Hall Hire; Authorised Person; Safeguarder
<https://www.brixtonunitarians.org/contact>

Chairman & Assistant Administrator: Andrew Leonard

Senior Service Warden: Stephen Cowley; *Remaining Trustees:*
Bruce Bebington, John Bradford, Edwin Lerner, Cynthia McPherson

Incorporating

Effra Road Chapel Community Hall

www.brixtonunitarians.org

Brixton Legal Centre

www.brixtonlegalcentre.com

Chapel Community Carparking SW2 1BZ

www.yourparkingspace.com www.justpark.com

Chapel Close Residential Accommodation

www.grapevineletting.com

*Unitarians UK. Unitarian Christian Association.
Lambeth Faiths Forum. Churches Together in Brixton.*

BRIXTON UNITARIANS' NEWSLETTER

www.brixtonunitarians.org

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**FROM 08.11.20 OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER ACCOMPANIED BY LIVE
READINGS & LIVE MUSIC EACH SUNDAY**

Confirmed Booking Required via: minister@brixtonunitarians.org

NOVEMBER

Sun 01	10:30	TRADITIONAL SERVICE & Foodb'k Coll'n	Wade Miller-Knight
Sun 08	10:30	FULL REMEMBRANCE PRIVATE PRAYER	
Julian		All Saints; All Souls (inc Covid-19 Victims); & Victims of War.	Julian, Jason, & Felicity Cliffe on Oboe
Sun 15	10:3	Private Prayer	Julian
Sun 22	10:39	Private Prayer	Julian
Sun 29	10:30	ADVENT SUNDAY PRIVATE	
		<i>Our spiritual countdown to Christmas begins with readings, music and reflection designed to clear out the clutter from our souls and leave us with a clearer and more blessed space within which to lose our needless fears, savour our blessings, and be filled with such gratitude and kindness that by Christmas we will to some degree embody the true spirit of Christmas, blessing others as well as ourselves.</i>	

DECEMBER

Sun 06	10:30	Private Prayer	Julian
Sun 13	12:00	PRIVATE PRAYER WITH READINGS & CAROLS	Julian
		<i>Another musical feast from Jason & Co, including the ancient, a bit of kitsch and a dram to see you on your way!</i>	
Sun 20	10:30	Private Prayer	Julian
Fri 25	NS	CHRISTMAS DAY	NS
		<i>Julian and Andrew deliver greetings and festive treats to all our London members and regulars at home.</i>	
Sun 27	10:30	GOODBYE 2020 PRIVATE PRAYER	Julian

JANUARY

Sun 03	NS		NS
Sun 10	10:30	EPIPHANY & HELLO 2021 PRIVATE PRAYER	Julian
Sun 17	10:30	Private Prayer	Julian
Sun 24	10:30	Private Prayer	Julian
Sun 31	10:30	Private Prayer	TBA

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY IN 2021 SO FAR

Practically every Sunday, including:

21.02	10:30	First Sunday in Lent <i>With a weekly midweek reflection until Easter TBA, by conference call and or online via Zoom.</i>	Julian
28.02	10:30	Visiting Worship Leader	TBA
14.03	10:30	Mothering Sunday	Julian
28.03	10:30	Visiting Worship Leader	TBA
01.04	18:00	Maundy Thursday Communion Service	Julian
04.04.	10:30	Easter Day Service with Jason & Co	Julian
03.10	10:30	Harvest Festival Service with Jason & Co	Julian
14.11	10:30	Full Remembrance Service with Jason & Co	Julian
12.12	12:00	Carols Service with Jason & Co	Julian

MINSTER'S LETTER

This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes
Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,

Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning

John O' Donohue, *Benedictus Book of Blessings*

This is indeed 'the time to be slow and lie low to the wall until the bitter weather passes', as the second wave of Covid-19 draws in along with the dark nights. But for all we must retire physically from the world awhile again, we must 'try, try as best [we] can [spiritually], not to let the wire brush of doubt scrape from [our] hearts all sense of [ourselves] and [our gentle inner] light.'

How can we 'try, try as best [we] can [spiritually]' to do this? For O' Donohue here its to remain 'generous'. This puts me in mind of the Hindu proverb which says, 'Help thy brother's boat across and lo! thine own has reached the shore.' So it is that Elaine Lipworth says, 'If you're looking for meaning, looking for an opportunity to be useful to someone else may be your best bet.' It necessarily takes one out of oneself, it helps one to see things in one's own life from a better perspective, and above all leaves one feeling useful and worthwhile. Thus it has the power to turn the giver into a recipient; even the major one.

Covid-19 offers opportunities galore for all of us to be generous and to make this a more bearable and shorter time for others and ourselves. As Michelle Obama says, 'You may not always have a comfortable life. And you will not always be able to solve all the world's problems all at once. But don't ever underestimate the impact you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.' So let us be done with worrying *overmuch* about Covid-19 and take *reasonable courage* for others as well as ourselves. Maya Angelou reminds us that we spend too much time living in unreasonable fear, when 'it would be wise to use that time adoring our families, cherishing our friends and living our lives.'

The Chapel continues to support you in this quest. We kept going during Lockdown 1 with remote reflections each week and walks out; we opened to Covid-19 safety compliant private prayer as soon as possible; within two weeks of that to services without hymns, but with live Music; recruited a talented Musical Director in Jason to make the most of the added emphasis given to music in Chapel; and we're now open to accompanied private prayer and by Zoom. Make the most of it. It'd be a terrible waste not to! Amen.

