

GREETINGS FROM EMMANUEL ROAD, 25TH SEPTEMBER 2021, SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESTARTING OF FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS ON SUNDAY MORNINGS IN THE UNITARIAN CHURCH ON 3RD OCTOBER, AND A NOTE ABOUT THE WEDNESDAY EVENING CONVERSATIONS: “UNIVERSALISM 101”

Posted on September 25, 2021 by Andrew Brown

Greetings.

Please note that this Sunday, 26th September, the Sunday Morning Service of Mindful Meditation will ONLY be on Zoom. It starts promptly at 10am and will finish at about 10.50am. As usual, a time of conversation will follow (more details at the end of this email). As usual, the link for this will be sent later on today by our Chairman, Andrew Bethune.

Sunday 3rd October will see the start of the new form of morning service (incorporating the Service of Mindful Meditation in its entirety). Please see the attached pdf for an outline of this. This service will be conducted in the church (please wear a mask) AND also streamed live on Zoom. It will start promptly at 10.30am and the mindful meditation section will start at approximately 10.40/10.45am. The whole service will end at about 11.40/11.45am.

A time of conversation will then follow and there will be two or three computers available on the church premises in order that those online and those attending in person can still meet one another in some fashion. Please be patient with us as we iron out all the inevitable problems that will arise as we move to this new way of doing things.

Thank you to those who attended the very enjoyable and fruitful Evening Conversation on Wednesday 22nd September. The next one will take place on 6th October and I will send the Zoom link out for that next week.

The free-flowing conversation explored various aspects of the history of our unique liberal religious tradition and we ended up centring particularly on the Universalist strand of it. The Universalist movement began in the sixteenth-century Radical reformation of Europe and Britain before moving to the United States in the early eighteenth-century where it eventually became a distinct denomination in 1866. The Universalist Church of America <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universalist_Church_of_America> was dissolved in 1961 when it and the American Unitarian Association merged to form the present-day Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

To help frame our conversation over the next three Wednesday Conversations (6th October, 20th October, 3rd November, 7.15 for 7.30pm) I propose to work through Richard Trudeau's very short and succinct book "Universalism 101: An Introduction for Leaders of Unitarian Universalist Congregations". As the sub-title reveals, Richard wrote it particularly for the North American situation but the general points he makes speak relevantly to us here in the UK. In the conversation itself, I will in any case be able to introduce you to the British and European elements of the story that don't get explored by Trudeau.

This book is available for Kindle at only £2.69

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Universalism-101-Introduction-Universalist-Congregations-ebook/dp/B01IK9DX7Y/ref=tmm_kin_title_sr?encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=> and new physical copies can also be bought via the same link. Alas, second-hand copies seem only to be available from the USA. Anyway, I'd strongly encourage people to get their own copy but in the event you cannot obtain one before the 6th October conversation please be in touch with me directly so I can give you temporary access to the text.

It may (or may not . . .) be of interest to you that in 2007 I wrote a prayer book with an American colleague, John Morgan, that is firmly located within this Universalist tradition. During the pandemic, the Unitarian Christian Association here in the UK kindly made the text available for free at the following link. It won't be congenial to everyone on this email list but might be to a few . . .

<<https://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/christian/pdfs/DaybreakandEventide.pdf>>

Please remember that if you would like to speak with me during the week simply be in touch and we can arrange a suitable time to talk properly either by telephone, Zoom or on a socially distanced one-to-one walk/talk.

For those interested in reading my blog and/or listening to the associated podcast please follow the links below my signature here.

A reminder that the church now has a SLACK site to help us share together useful information, thoughts, ideas, photos etc.. For more information about how to join that please be in touch with me directly.

And, lastly, as always, if on reading this you decide you would like to join us for the Sunday morning service of mindful meditation and time of conversation following and do not have the necessary Zoom link then please either reply to this email or contact our Church Secretary, Brendan Boyle, via the contact page of our website. Just look through the dropdown tabs to find "Secretary":

<<https://www.cambridgeunitarian.org/contact/>>

Please log in between 9.45am and 10am. The meditation starts at 10am sharp, and finishes at about 10.50am. There will then be a short break to allow you to stretch your legs, compose your thoughts, or put the kettle on. The 'Time for Conversation' will start at about 11am, and if you aren't taking part in the meditation, feel free to sign in during the break for the conversation.

To get the most from the meditation, you will find it helpful to either print out the order of service, or display it in a second window. Here is the link:

Order of Service for the Mindful Meditation:

<<https://www.cambridgeunitarian.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Evening-Service.pdf>>

You might also wish to have a small candle or tea-light to hand to light at a certain point during the meditation.

A representative recorded version of the service is available for download via my podcast site here:

<<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1378024/7314817>>

A homespun video introduction to the service can be found on YouTube at this link:

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfmVH34meck&t=904s>>

With love and best wishes as always,

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Other stuff . . .

<http://andrewjbrown.blogspot.com/> (Blog)

<https://footprints.buzzsprout.com> (*Making Footprints Not Blueprints* Podcast)

<https://twitter.com/caute> (Twitter)