

# WEEKEND GREETINGS FROM EMMANUEL ROAD, JUNE 2020

*Posted on June 20, 2020 by Andrew Brown*

Greetings to you all once again and, as has now become customary to ask, I trust that you have all had as good a week as is possible under the present circumstances? Please remember you can always call me on either of the numbers below if you need to speak to me directly during the week.

As with previous weeks I've written a new piece for you which, should you be minded to read it, can be found at the following link. It picks up on the theme of the event organised by Janet Toye for the local Quakers called *Refugees: creating a humane not hostile environment* and which our Chairman, Andrew Bethune, advertised in his email of last week.

**[Embracing and welcoming the figure of the migrant Being also a meditation on the need to let go of the God of Monotheism and embrace an Ontology of Motion](#)**

During the lockdown, because of a major ingress of water into my study during December, I have been using the Common Room (where we usually have coffee) as my temporary place of work. This has meant that I have had both the space and opportunity to get out and open up a couple of boxes of "stuff" I inherited when I became the minister here twenty years ago and which had not seen the light of day since. Most of what they contained is of little general interest but just yesterday I came across an account and photographs of the opening of the church in January 1928. **[I've scanned them into a single pdf and you can read it at this link.](#)**

I ask all you all to take time to read though it carefully because it will give you a very summary of the hopes, dreams, fears and concerns of those who gifted us both a formally established Unitarian congregation (in 1904) and some very fine buildings (in 1923 the hall and, in 1927/28, the church).

It's important to read this because the COVID-19 event means that, as a congregation, we (along with just about every other secular and religious organisation) suddenly find ourselves in a new and unexpected place and at a clearly critical moment in our life cycle in which we all know that things are not going to go back to how they were any time soon, if ever. The event also, more positively, allows (or perhaps forces) us to ask the very interesting (if very challenging) question of whether we even want to go back to how things were before, even were that to prove possible. As the old adage goes, we should never let a good crisis go to waste.

But to do this thinking properly it is extremely important to orientate ourselves in relation to the historic hopes, dreams, fears and concerns of our forebears. In doing this I want to stress that the idea is not to get us to decide exactly where we hope to end up in some ideal future (an always impossible and fruitless task in my opinion) but, instead, simply to help us to articulate a better, shared sense of our current, desired **general direction of travel**.

Now, as all good navigators know to do this we need to engage in a bit of triangulation and the attached document provides us with one of the two required known points ( [the other known point is the statement found on the front page of the current church website](#) ).

[In the pdf](#) you will be able to get a reasonably good sense of our forebears own triangulation points and also where they thought they were heading. Only once we've got a sense of this firmly into our heads and hearts can we meaningfully ascertain whether we still share the same fears and concerns as them and/or whether we want to continue to pursue some, all, or none of their hopes and dreams, or even their general direction of travel? Perhaps we will choose to make a major tack and head in a wholly different direction entirely . . . or perhaps not. In my weekly addresses over the last twenty years you can find my own developing opinions on this matter but in this message I refrain from making them explicit in the hope that our forebears' words will elicit from you some of your own, clear preferences about this. I look forward to receiving/hearing some of your preferences by email, in the comments section of my blog or in conversation, either individually over the phone or in our shared time of conversation on a Sunday morning.

Lastly, I hope to see some of you tomorrow morning on Zoom at 10am for the service of

mindful meditation and/or at 11am onwards for the time of conversation. If you would like to join us and do not have the necessary link then please contact our Church Secretary, Brendan Boyle, via the contact page of our website. Look through the dropdown tabs to find "Secretary":

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

Love and best wishes as always -- and don't forget you can always call me on either of the numbers below should you feel the need to shoot the breeze about life, the universe and/or anything else that is pressing upon you.

Andrew

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