

# Cambridge Unitarians

## Monthly Newsletter - October 2015

### For your diary

**Sun 4 Oct** : Services 10.30am and 6.30pm. Bring & Share Lunch.

**Sun 11 Oct** : Services 10.30am and 6.30pm.

**Sun 18 Oct** : Services at 10.30am and 6.30pm

**Wed 21 Oct** : 7.30pm : Life of the Church meeting (open to all)

**Wed 28 Oct**: 12noon-2.30pm. Lunch Club. Offering companionship, good food and an opportunity to talk about a particular issue that is relevant to the well-being and happiness of retired people or those planning retirement. A donation of £2.50 is suggested to cover the cost of the meal.  
Contact: 01480 432284.

**Wed 28 Oct** : 7.30-9.30pm : *Religion after the death of God* (see article in right hand column)

**Sun 1 Nov** : Services at 10.30am and 6.30pm. Bring & Share Lunch.

### Eastern Union AGM -26 September

The meeting supported the motion that the Executive Committee calls an Extraordinary General Meeting to wind up the Eastern Union, and approved that on the same day, immediately following the EGM, there is a conversation about how best to network our congregations in East Anglia'. The EGM will be on 12 March in Ipswich.

James Barry addressed the meeting on the use of technology and how we should embrace it if we want to let the public that we exist. In the case of Cambridge he was talking to the converted, as in the past year we have set up a wonderful website.

### Summer Tea Parties

'Thank you' to Sylvie for inviting us to her house and garden for our September summer tea party.

Picture: Sculpture at Aston University. Photo by A Bethune.

## Cambridge Festival of Ideas 2015



For the first time, our church will be hosting an event during this annual festival.

On Wednesday 28 October, 7.30-9.30pm, our minister, Andrew Brown, and Green Party politician and academic, Professor Rupert Read, will introduce an evening conversation on 'religion after the death of God', chaired by Professor Stephen Watson.

In 1882, Friedrich Nietzsche announced 'the death of God', signalling that an important change was occurring in the religious and philosophical form of life that had prevailed across Europe for centuries and, today, we know that for many people foundationalist conceptions of God have become increasingly implausible.

This evening is an introduction to the possibilities that have opened up for religion as a result of this process. As Mark Wrathall notes in his introduction to *Religion after Metaphysics* (Cambridge University Press 2003 p. 1), 'the loss of belief in a metaphysical god that is the ground of all existence and intelligibility, and even the loss of belief in a creator God who produced the heaven and the earth is not a disaster' and that the 'absence of foundational God opens up access to richer and more relevant ways for us to understand creation and for us to encounter the divine and the sacred. Thus, the death of the philosopher's God may have provided us with new and more authentic possibilities for understanding religion that we blocked by traditional metaphysical theology (or onto-theology)'.

Rupert Read's book *Philosophy for Life* (Continuum, 2007) in part explores the associated subject of religion without belief.

<http://www.festivalofideas.cam.ac.uk/events/religion-after-death-god>

## Life of the Church meeting: Wednesday 21 October: 7.30-9.30pm

All members and friends of the church are invited to an open 'Life of the Church' meeting on Wednesday 21 October. Our minister is taking a sabbatical next year and we need input from the congregation. The evening will be a chance for the church committee to outline their ideas for the sabbatical, and how members of the congregation can be involved. What suggestions for themes, visiting preachers, or activities do you have for the 4 months when Andrew is away?

The Unitarian movement in the UK is quite small and its future may seem rather uncertain. Believe it or not, we are one of the larger congregations. It's been said that 'Small is beautiful', but small can also be problematical.

We need to ask ourselves what is our vision for our religious movement, both here in Cambridge and throughout the UK. Our General Assembly published *Vision for the Future* which brings together some ideas for the future of our movement. There are short contributions from Unitarians all over the UK, including our minister emeritus, Frank Walker. On 21 October, we hope to have a conversation about our individual and communal sense of vision for our church. *Vision for the Future* can be read online at: <https://www.unitarian.org.uk/news/vision-our-future>

We have a few printed copies for those who don't have internet access.

## Church Questionnaire

Thanks to everyone who has completed the questionnaire. It will take us a few weeks to analyse the data but we'll report back to you when we can.

## Concert 10 October

Mifune Tsuji (violin) and Yukie Smith (piano), who occasionally play for our Sunday services, will be giving a concert at Gonville & Caius College on Saturday 10 October, starting 6.30pm. The programme includes works by Nimrod Borestein, Graham Lynch, Elgar, Rodion Shchedrin and Guillaume Lekeu. Tickets £15/£10 conc/£5 child on the door or by online booking at [www.neweurope.org.uk](http://www.neweurope.org.uk)

## Penal Affairs Panel (PAP)

PAP is a social responsibility effort of the Unitarian movement striving to bring Unitarian views to the British legal systems, especially those involving imprisonment or civil detention. This includes the needs of asylum seekers. PA issues occasional bulletins, and you'll find some recent issues on the notice board inside the church hall. Bulletins can also be viewed online, and you can sign up to receive bulletins by email.

<https://www.unitarian.org.uk/pages/penal-affairs-panel>

## 2016 General Assembly

Next year's GA will be from 30 March to 2 April at Birmingham Hilton Metropole Hotel.

## About our church

This church belongs to a liberal Christian tradition which welcomes the loving, critical and enquiring spirit. It is founded upon an 'open trust' which imposes no doctrinal tests upon its minister or members. We meet in the spirit which is exemplified in the life and utterances of Jesus, for the worship of God and the service of humankind.

**Minister:** Andrew J Brown 01223 576952  
[minister@cambridgeunitarian.org](mailto:minister@cambridgeunitarian.org)  
<http://andrewjbrown.blogspot.com>  
@caute @CamUnitarian

**Church address:** Memorial Church (Unitarian),  
5 Emmanuel Road, Cambridge CB1 1JW  
[www.cambridgeunitarian.org](http://www.cambridgeunitarian.org)

**Minister's visits:** Please let Andrew Brown know of any cases of sickness or if you would like him to meet with you or someone else.

**Minister's Rest Days:** Mon, Tue

**Minister Emeritus:** Frank Walker  
01223 874460

**Chairman:** Andrew Bethune 01480 387883

**Vice-Chairman:** Tony Burns 01480 432284

**Treasurer:** Shirley Fieldhouse 01223 426514

**Secretary:** Sabrina Lewins 01223 476237

**Committee Members:**

Katie Burns 01480 432284

Brendan Boyle 01480 387883

Sue Tombs 01223 844454

**Hall Bookings:** Marie Paisley 07527 890164  
[roombookings@cambridgeunitarian.org](mailto:roombookings@cambridgeunitarian.org)