

Café-style Service (Are you being served?) Sunday 28th May

- **Opening music 2 minutes.** *A Dream is a Wish your Heart Makes* (Disney's Cinderella) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vMhL0-gwUc>

- **Opening words**

Always ask yourself if what you're doing today is getting you closer to where you want to be tomorrow.

Paulo Coelho -Brazilian author from their book *Brida* (1990).

- **Welcome**

Hello everyone – what a glorious day weather-wise we are blessed with here in Plymouth. I hope the sun is with you – if not physically then perhaps your spirit is beaming brightly. If not, we send warmth to you however you are.

Happy Whitsun or Pentecost today – from the Christian calendar – if you celebrate or honour the day.

- **Lighting of the chalice**

Our lit chalice signifies our commitment to support one another in our personal quests for wisdom and understanding.

As we share our experiences, hopes and dreams during our time together.

May the dancing of the chalice flame remind us to likewise shine with sensitivity, respect, honesty, generosity, and love to all gathered here today whether online or in person.

I would like to invite you now to stand to sing if able - we sang it a couple of weeks ago, but the lyrics are exactly what I wish for us today.

- **1st hymn = P33 *Enter, rejoice and come in***

Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Open your ears to the song.
Open your ears to the song.
Today will be a joyful day;
Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Open your hearts everyone.
Open your hearts everyone.
Today will be a joyful day;
Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Don't be afraid of some change.
Don't be afraid of some change.
Today will be a joyful day;
Enter, rejoice, and come in.

Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
Enter, rejoice, and come in.

*Louis Ruspini – words from her book *Journey to Freedom**

- **Introduction of service theme (Are you being served?)**

Today we are having a café-style service – I'm excited as I haven't led worship in this format before. Rather than having an address we will spend some time pondering together.

You may have been here for our last café-style service back in April. Rev. Kate Whyman asked us what we are here for (here as

in the church/the congregation, not so much for wider existential here, though perhaps the reason is the same for you).

In addition to being asked what we are here for, we spent time finishing the sentence *The place to be...* with a word or words which express what we saw our church community as being the place for. For example, three people wrote, *The place to be happy*.

Our time together today will be a continuation of that service – I have what we wrote back in April to share with you and we will be considering today's title, **Are you being served?**

Let me now welcome Gav to read a poem entitled *Some go to church to...* by Job Elletson

- **Poem**
Some Go to Church to ... by Job Elletson

Some go to church to take a walk,
Some go there to laugh and talk.
Some go to church for observation,
But some go there for speculation.
Some go there to meet a lover.
And some go there a fault to cover.
Some go there to meet a friend,
And some go there their time to spend.
Some go there to sing a sonnet.
But some go there to show their bonnet.
Some go to church oppressed with grief.
Some go there to find relief.
Some go to hear a grand oration,
Some go to glorify the nation.
Some go to hear about the war.
Some go to show how good they are.
Some go repentant and repenting,
But some go hardened, unrelenting.
Some go to praise, to pray and weep.
But some go there to lounge and sleep.
Some go to better their condition,
Some go to gain a good commission.

While some go there to doze and nod.
There's many go to worship God.

Rev. Kate kindly typed up our thoughts from April for us before they went on sabbatical – for those of you online, I will pop a link in the chat in PDF and Word format so you can select whatever version suits your set-up.

There will be a couple of minutes to look at them. Then there will be an opportunity to share any thoughts you have after reading them.

- **Reflection time over April service comments**/place to be and then invited to share any thoughts on reading...after sharing.

In a while I will be inviting you to consider the question *Are you being served?* How are we as a church, as a community achieving your or purpose? We can consider what we are doing well, what is working and serving your needs? Also, we can ask ourselves what is not maybe working for us.

First, let us sing together and have a time of prayer. Please join me in singing *I dream of a church*, no 68 in the purple book.

- **2nd hymn = P68 *I dream of a church***

I dream of a church that joins in with God's laughing
As she rocks in her rapture, enjoying her art:
She's glad of her world, in its risking and growing:
'tis the child she has borne and holds close to her heart.

I dream of a church that joins in with God's weeping
as she crouches, weighed down by the sorrow she sees:
she cries for the hostile, the cold and no-hoping,
for she bears in herself our despair and dis-ease.

I dream of a church that joins in with God's dancing
as she moves like the wind and the wave and the fire:

a church that can pick up its skirts, pirouetting,
with the steps that can signal God's deepest desire.

I dream of a church that joins in with God's loving
as she bends to embrace the unlovely and lost,
a church that can free, by its sharing and daring,
the imprisoned and poor, and then shoulder the cost.

God, make us a church that joins in with your living,
as you cherish and challenge, rein in and release,
a church that is winsome, impassioned, inspiring;
lioness of your justice and lamb of your peace.

Kate Compston – used by permission.

- **Prayer**

We are here – Unitarian Cliff Reed

We are here - frail, flawed and far from perfection – yet we are here.

We are here to worship you - the source of all that we know to be true and holy - by whatever name we call you, whatever we - with darkened minds - conceive you to be.

We are here to celebrate the life that you have given, the universe you have made, the miracle of human personality wherein you have manifested yourself.

We are here to give thanks for those you have spoken in, those whose lives have revealed your life.

We are here to build community, to create with you a universe of love, enfolding all that lives, all that is.

We are here to build this church, to build it with the gifts of your Spirit, for the hope and salvation of humanity.

We are here. You are with us. Help us to know it.

Amen

- **Are you being served interaction/activity**

The quote I opened our time together with is from Brazilian author Paulo Coelho – I will just repeat it now:

Always ask yourself if what you're doing today is getting you closer to where you want to be tomorrow.

I think this is good advice. It is so easy to coast along on autopilot for miles. Having dedicated time to check-in with ourselves, our relationships, work and even our church community is healthy. It keeps things relevant – are we doing what we want with our time, our resources etc.

We are the authors of our stories, we are this church, this community. In April we reflected on what we saw our church's purpose being.

Let us now consider how we the church is achieving that purpose for us.

There are post-it notes on the tables and pens for those of you in church, for those of you in church, please use the chat-box or I will pop my email address into the box in a second and you can email me direct.

We will now have a few minutes to jot down the following: -

- What is serving you?
- What is not serving you?

Another way of phrasing it could be what is working for you or what makes your soul sing – however you phrase it, what is working for you as a vital part of this community. There is no right or wrong answer.

I will let you know when we are half-way through so you can ensure you spend time on each question.

Would anyone like to share their thoughts?

We are well into the season of growth – you will have no doubt noticed the luscious greenery appearing in abundance this month.

This will continue throughout the summer and hopefully having this service today may encourage you to continue this activity too now that the seed has been planted.

You could reflect on other areas of your life – work, exercise, diet, hobbies – all can benefit from a bit of scrutiny every now and then. Just consider a particular aspect and ask yourself: Are you being served? It can be tough; we are of course creatures of habit and change can be daunting and challenging. I am certainly not going to tell you it isn't easy – but I will say, it is worth it.

Change is necessary and essential for growth – our time and life are precious. The world contains so much beauty and sources of joy, so find what feels good!

You may recall that our current 3-year-strategy includes the signpost *Increase Active Engagement* which includes to plan a programme of events whilst adopting a “rule of yes” for new initiatives. The “rule of yes” means that if you proposed an idea which fits our general ethos and you had help from others to run it then would be told yes to trialling it **and** could be offered £50 start-up costs if they were needed.

When I was reflecting on our celebrations to share at our annual meeting last month, I was inspired by all our community had accomplished. We do so many things for others whilst also having fun together during worship and social events. I believe there exists untapped potential and strength in our community. We all have something to offer and with support and encouragement I am sure we can continue to grow as a community. I would like us to plant seeds as a community for our community.

How would you like us to grow? Do you have any ideas or dreams for the church? Perhaps you have ideas about things we could do differently or events or activities we could introduce?

Maybe you have something you'd like to share, a hobby, skill or passion – maybe there is something the community used to do or that you'd like to see reintroduced. Together we achieve amazing things.

Please now jot down anything your heart suggests – it can be a small thing or something outlandish, if we don't plant the seed, it isn't likely to grow.

Those of you online – again, feel free to share in the chat or email me.

Whilst considering what seeds you'd like proposed we will have a minute or two of silence followed by a minute of Gregorian chanting by the Monks of Buckfast Abbey.

- **Reflective music 1 minute, 4 seconds.** Gregorian Chanting by the Monks of Buckfast Abbey
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdopEI1Q_SA&list=RDJdopEI1Q_SA

- Time to add to what you think and to share – now, if anyone would like to share their thoughts you are welcome. BUT – this, our seeds of change box will be popped out each Sunday for the next 5 or 6 weeks for people to pop any ideas they have in. Those of you online, please feel free to email them to be. When Rev. Kate is back from her sabbatical then we can share them with her.

- **3rd hymn = G192 *A new community***

We would be one as now we join in singing
Our hymn of love, to pledge ourselves anew
To that high cause of greater understanding
Of who we are, and what in us is true.

We would be one in building for tomorrow
A greater world than we have known today;
We would be one in searching for that meaning
Which binds our hearts and points us on our way.

We would be one in living for each other,
With love and justice strive to make all free;
As one, we pledge ourselves to greater service,
To show the world a new community.

Samuel Anthony Wright – used with permission.

- Thank you for your singing, for your sharing and for considering what serves you. After our closing words a video will play*** – the song is called *Feel Good* and the lyrics and video just made me smile and seemed to be about coming together and singing which in case you don't know, I for one am a fan of.

- **Closing words/Benediction**

May the power and the mystery go before you,
To show you the way,
Shine above you
To lighten your world,
Lie beneath you
To bear you up,
Walk with you
And give you companionship,
And glow and flow within you
To bring you joy.
Unitarian Judith Urquhart (ur -kit).

- **Closing music 3 minutes, 31 seconds.** Rend Co. Kids
Feels Good (Upbeat Song)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJxVHzARMmE>

Lyrics:

When we live in harmony, when we stand as one
It makes us stronger, stronger
When we see our differences as a work of art
The world is brighter, brighter
What we all really need right now
Is an upbeat song to sing
An upbeat song to sing

It feels good when we're together
It feels good when we belong
It feels right when we're united
No divides livin' life as one
Tell me why we're fighting,
can't we just get along
Cos we are brothers, sisters
Nothing strong as family, nothing breaks us apart
Cos life is better, together
What we all really need right now
Is an upbeat song to sing
An upbeat song to sing
Brothers Sisters Brighter Stronger
Brothers Sisters Better Together

About Rend Co. Kids: Rend Co Kids is part of Rend Collective's ministry creating music that both kids and adults will love and be encouraged by.

*** Music video was not played due to technical sound issues – I read out some of the lyrics and then we voted in church and we replayed the Gregorian chant video to close instead.