

Oscailt

September 2022

IRELANDS UNITARIAN MAGAZINE

Vol.18 Nº 9





Oscailt since January 2005 has become the monthly magazine for Irish Unitarians. Originally it was the calendar for Dublin but due to popular demand by non members this new format was born and continues to grow and flourish.

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Our magazine title, **Oscailt**, is inspired by the account of the **Healing of the Deaf and Mute Man** in St. Mark's Gospel, Chapter 7. Jesus commands the mans ears to open up with Aramic word "Ephphatha" - open ! The Irish word *oscailt*, (from the verb *oscail*, to open), means an opening, or, metaphorically, it could mean a revelation or a beginning.

***“God is not a Christian;
God is not a Jew
or a Muslim
or a Hindu
or a Buddhist”.***

“God is not a Christian; God is not a Jew or a Muslim or a Hindu or a Buddhist”.

The words of the Anglican bishop John Shelby Spong and lest there be any confusion; God is not a Nonsubscriber or a Unitarian either.

Within the Christian family there are just over 33,000 different churches, it's a huge number. They range from the biggest and the most universal found in almost every town and city to small local churches high in the Andes mountains of Latin America and the vast plains of Africa. They range from the ultra-conservative to the pro-gressive and liberal.

They all claim as the source for their belief, the Word of God as expressed in the Bible and the words and the teachings of the man we know as Jesus. And yet there is a huge divergence of views on just about everything; because that's the thing about religion, the experience is different for everyone. It was never meant to be the same, culture, heritage and just the wonderful diversity that makes us human means it could never be.

Religion expresses who we are, it express and not always perfectly our understanding and our experience of and our journey with that we call God, it expresses our hopes and dreams and offers comfort in times of hardship and loss. It seeks to help us make sense of life, to seek both a meaning and a depth.

Our churches in some way reflect who we are, our values, our ideals, it expresses the world as we would like it to be.

Today, we are, thanks to the nuns for whom this is

home, gathered in a chapel built by a Unitarian to honour the memory of his late wife, a chapel now owned and in the care of an order of Roman Catholic nuns for whom this has been home for past 102 years.

Today has been for us a day of enjoyment, of pleasure, a day to enjoy the breath-taking surrounds of this most wonderful abbey, a day to be thankful for the hospitality of our hosts, in a sense it has been a pilgrimage. But it is also a day to gather in this chapel to worship God mindful of the words of John Spong. And yes, whatever church we belong to, we have our differences, we have different opinions and these we should hold dear because they reflect our journey with the mystery that is God. We do not claim ownership of God but be we Christian, Jew, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist, we do claim our right to express our understanding of this life's greatest mystery.

And yes, we should always and must seek a common ground and that common ground is God by whatever name, the energy that lives and breathes in each of one of us. But as we acknowledge whatever differences there may be among the world's religions, let them be held within an open mind, an open heart and an open hand.

Address by Rev. Mike O'Sullivan

Minister Cork Unitarian Church.

at the visit to Kylemore Abbey, 21 August 2022

Visit to Kylemore Abbey

Members of our denomination from all over the island of Ireland gathered on Sunday 21st August 2022 in the neo-Gothic Church on the grounds of Kylemore Abbey. It was built by the Unitarian, Mitchell Henry, in remembrance of his wife Margaret Henry. We were welcomed by members of the Benedictine community who have called this beautiful place home since 1920.

The community seek to 'bring us deeper in touch with nature and beauty which speak to them of the loving Creator of the earth and humankind'. Prayer is at the centre of Benedictine life and together, we prayed. The final blessing of the service given by Rt.Rev.Lena Cockcroft asked God to 'surround us, encourage us and encounter us wherever we go'.

When the time came to leave, I decided not to. I hadn't seen all of the walled garden or the oak trees the nuns planted some years ago. So I walked back from the neo-Gothic Church to wander again through the grounds of the Abbey. On my own, I was struck by how our lives are woven together by invisible threads. What is the source of this mysterious thread - for some it is a god, a creator or just simply the air we all breath. Rev.Mike Sullivan said in his address that there are divergences within the

Christian tradition: 'we have our differences, we have different opinions, and these we should hold dear because they reflect our journey with the mystery that is God...we should always and must seek a common ground and that common ground is God by whatever name, the energy that lives and breathes in each one of us...let our differences be held with an open mind, an open heart and an open hand'.

Kylemore is simply beautiful. It certainly brought this





Unitarian 'deeper in touch with nature and beauty which speaks of the loving Creator of the earth and humankind'.

Thank you Rev. Bridget Spain for making it happen. Thank you to those from Cork, Dublin and Ballymoney who contributed music and readings. Thank you Benedictine community. This day was

a first I am sure -where else would you have had non-subscribing Presbyterians, Unitarians, Benedictines come together in prayer? That is a holy thing. We should do this again; to encourage and encounter each other more.

Gavin Byrne
Dublin Unitarian Church

August 2022

Dublin Unitarian Church



112 St. Stephens Green Dublin 2.

Service 11.00a.m.

Sunday Services and Rota September 2022

4th Sept Keith Troughton "Connect"

Reader Janet Mulroy
Welcomer Frank Kelly
Flowers Frank Kelly
Coffee Andy Pollak, Doireann Ni Bhriain

11th Sept. Will O'Connell "Help Thanks Wow"

Reader Kevin O'Hara
Welcomer Michael Robinson
Flowers Máire Bacon
Coffee Catharine Cook, Patrick Rogers, Madeline Stringer

18th Aidan O' Driscoll "Love's austere and lonely offices"

Reader Jeanmarie Hill
Welcomer Malachy Hevehan
Flowers Paula Mills
Coffee Malachy Hevehan, Paula Mills

25th Tony Shine "Rosh Hashanah"

Reader Gavin Byrne
Welcomer Mary O'Brien
Flowers Gavin Byrne
Coffee Michael Robinson, Patrick Rogers

**Services are broadcast live from the church each Sunday at 11a.m on our WebCam,
click and connect at www.dublinunitarianchurch.org**

**Lunch-time meditation service every Wednesday from
1.10 to 1.40 p.m.**

DUBLIN UNITARIAN CHURCH

112 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin D02 YP23, Ireland.
Unitarian Church - Dublin Registered Charity Number 20000622

Service: Sunday at 11a.m. Phone: Vestry 01-4780638

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Tony Shine; Andy Pollak; Peter White; Will O'Connell;
Paul Murray; Madeline Stringer; Gavin Byrne; Tony Brady.

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Recordings of the church services are available on the church website.



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