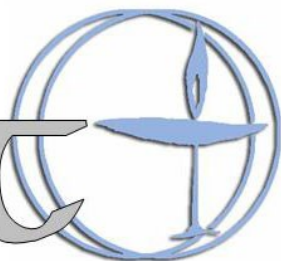


# Oscailt



November 2023

IRELANDS UNITARIAN MAGAZINE

Vol.19 Nº 11



# Managing Committee Notice

Annual Registration of Voting Members (2024)

*For the Attention of Members*

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If you are a Member of the congregation (*that is, if you signed the Membership Book during any year up to and including 2022*) and you wish to have your name included as a **Voting Member** on the **Register of Voting Members** for **2024**, you should complete and return a **Voting Registration Form** by not later than **31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**.

Voting Registration Forms are now available for collection in the church. If you are a Member who can't attend church often, or who usually listens in online, a form can be sent to you on request by post or email.

Requests for **Voting Registration Forms** should be sent to  
(*by post*)

The Treasurer  
Unitarian Church  
112 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin D02 YP23.

or

(*by email*) [treasurerunitarianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerunitarianchurch@gmail.com)



**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.

**Oscailt** is Published by the  
**Dublin Unitarian Church**  
112 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin D02 YP23.

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**Cork Unitarian Church**  
Princes Street, Cork.  
Minister: Rev.Mike O'Sullivan

Editor: Paul Spain

#### **To Subscribe**

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Cheques and PO should be made payable to: *Dublin Unitarian Church.*

#### **Deadline**

The deadline for articles to be included is the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month.  
Unsolicited articles, news items, letters, poems, etc are always welcome, however there can be no guarantee of publication. Copy should be sent by e-mail or at least typed, photographs should be 300dpi.

e-mail: oscailtmagazine@gmail.com

#### **Advertising**

Advertising rates available on request. e-mail: oscailtmagazine@gmail.com

**Front Cover:** Five memorials to those who died in WWI, that are in the church.

(photo P.Spain)

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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 *os-cail*, to open), means an opening, or, metaphorically, it could mean a revelation or a beginning.

# Remembrance Sunday 2022

Remembrance Sunday the day when we remember young men of this congregation who died in the First World War. These youths were part of a volunteer army who left school, college, or work to fight for “King and Country” and for the “freedom of small nations”. In 1914 Western Europe had been relatively peaceful for many years; the military on all sides were restless for a war. It was believed that the war would be a quick affair- the troops would be home for Christmas. As ever young men were anxious not to miss an adventure they could boast of in old age. They were also deceived by the lie that “this war would be the war to end wars”.

We know the carnage of that war that is now called the “Great War”. History has revealed that after a pause of twenty one years the fighting resumed in World War Two. There were of course hundreds of wars leading up to the twentieth century. These two wars stand out for the number of casualties and for their exceptional barbarity. Estimates for deaths in both wars are between 65 and 82 million deaths. That number does not include casualties. The human brain is incapable of making an emotional connection with such statistics. We need to hear stories to bring home to us the barbarity and the waste of life caused in those wars.

This morning I want to share two of these stories. They speak of how cheaply life was valued but they are uplifting. They are testament to the greatness of the human soul. No matter how dark the circumstances there are always individuals who manage to retain the nobility of the human soul. There will always be people who out the dictates of their faith – no matter what the personal cost. The accounts of their lives outshine the darkness of the times in which they lived and died. Both individuals were from the Christian tradition one was an Anglican and one was Unitarian.

The first account is from the First World War- her name is Edith Cavell. On the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1915 Edith Cavell was shot by a German firing squad at the National Shooting Range in Belgium. She had been tried and found guilty of “War Treason” and despite worldwide pressure for clemency the death sentence was carried out.

Edith was the eldest child of an Anglican Minister; today the Church of England commemorates her in its calendar of Saints on the 12<sup>th</sup> October each year. Edith was born in Norfolk, she trained as a governess; and worked for a time with a family in Brussels. When her father became seriously ill she returned home to nurse him. When he recovered she trained as a nurse. In 1907 she returned to Belgium where she led a training program for nurses. When war broke out she was in England but returned to her work in Brussels.

She quickly became part of a group that sheltered wounded British, French and Belgian soldiers. They organized their passage across the border into the Netherlands. She nursed the wounded from all sides of the conflict without question- this included German soldiers. In August 1915 she was betrayed, arrested and charged with "War Treason".

When she was arrested she made a frank admission of her activities. At her trial It was argued that mitigating circumstances where, her honesty, the fact that she had nursed and so saved the lives of German soldiers, her age and gender should also gain clemency from the death penalty. This argument was met with the comment from one General " I only regret that I don't have three or four old English women to shoot".

Days before her execution she told her chaplain. " I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone". She was shot by firing squad at 7.00 a.m. on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1915 she was aged forty nine at the time.

When the war ended her body was repatriated to England. This was an exceptional privilege. The death count for United Kingdom personnel in the Great War was almost 900k Edith Cavell is only one of three bodies taken home for burial. -The other two were a Charles Fryatt and the Unknown Soldier.

Norbert Capek was a Czech national. He was born into the Roman Catholic Tradition; at the age of eighteen he became a Baptist and was ordained as a Minister. During the First World War his outspoken Christian views brought him into conflict with German authorities and in 1914 he emigrated to the United States. While in America his religious views became increasingly- liberal and he was twice tried for heresy by the Baptist church. He resigned from the church and joined the Essex County Unitarian church in New Jersey. He and his wife were both ordained as

Unitarian Ministers.

In 1921 they returned to Czechoslovakia and with financial support from American and English Unitarians they founded the Unitarian church in Prague which still exists to-day. Many Unitarian churches celebrate what is called “flower communion”. It was Norbert Capek who created this ceremony.

At the outbreak of the Second World War his wife returned to America; he and his daughter Zara remained in Prague. His outspoken views came to the attention of the Gestapo and he and Zara were arrested. He was seventy one years of age at the time of his arrest; the charge against him was “Listening to foreign broadcasts and High treason”. His sermons were cited in evidence against him. He was sent to Dachau and housed in the camp for clerics of all denominations who had spoken out against the Nazi regime. He was tortured. His name appears among prisoners sent on an invalid transport on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1942 to Hartheim Castle in Austria, where he died of gas poisoning. Two weeks ago was the eightieth anniversary of his death. His daughter Zara was sent into forced labour in Germany.

Edith Cavell, Norbert Capek two wars two deaths. Both were idealists. Cavell lived out the teaching of Jesus that my neighbour is not limited to one particular nationality. She cared for the sick, she tended to everyone in need; without reference to nationality. Her words “Patriotism is not enough; I must have no hatred or bitterness for anyone” are inscribed on a monument in her name.

Norbert Capek followed his heart to find a faith he could live with honestly. He preached freedom of conscience. His constant refrain was that “religion must place truth above any tradition, spirit above any scripture, freedom above authority”. This was a message that threatened National Socialism.

Both Cavell and Capek could have taken the safe path. She could have remained in England he could have returned to the United States. Their decisions cost them their lives; yet, many years later their stories shine like bright stars in a sky that in their times was very dark. We salute their bravery.

*Rev. Bridget Spain*

Minister Dublin Unitarian church

Dublin 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022

# Sustainable Travel

Sustainable travel refers to eco-friendly travel behaviours which help to lessen the negative impacts of travel and tourism on the natural environment and local communities. When travel destinations are degraded through over-tourism local communities, cultures and biodiversity are diminished. Travel choices need to be balanced between personal enrichment and environmental and cultural sustainability.

Consider it on a spectrum. Some believe that ALL travel is completely detrimental. Others are oblivious to the possibility of environmental degradation and over-consumption problems. In between are people with very strong ideals about eco-travel or with some awareness of the need for mindful travel. Discussions about travel sustainability can lead to ethical disharmony. If one speaker admits to a complete abstention from personal travel the remainder of the participants can feel a sense of guilt or shame. The solution might be to inform and enable people through facts and encourage people to behave in a sustainable, responsible and mindful manner based on these facts. To arrive at this stage people need to:

- have factual information about the issue for example according to Impactful Ninja flying one mile on average emits 53 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- be aware of the need for sustainable travel consider benefits and challenges of a change in travel behaviour consider how to apply the information resolve to enact the sustainable travel actions chosen

## **How to plan eco-friendly travel**

Choose sustainable destinations and activities.

Book nonstop flights if possible. Take-offs and landings cause most of a plane's carbon emissions.

Explore alternative transport, such as trains or ships.

Use public transportation or bicycles or walk when feasible.

Stay in eco-friendly and sustainable accommodation

Seek sustainably sourced food options

Support local businesses.

Mindfully respect and appreciate the local culture lest local culture be diluted in favour of tourist-first policies.

Contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance through mindfully becoming aware of new cultures and values thereby increasing mutual understanding among people from diverse backgrounds.

Solidarity tourism aims to develop territories and help local communities. Volunteerism for eco-friendly conservation or peace projects is popular.

Be mindful of local water, energy and resource usage. Responsible tourism minimises environmental damage and carbon footprint.

Get connected with sustainable travel programs and organisations. Some may have received eco-tourism certification.

## **What would the world be like without travel?**

The scenario was in some way demonstrated during the pandemic. However a look at the historic reality of travel in an Irish context shows we were always on the move.

About 70 million people all around the world claim Irish heritage or ancestry. Migration and travel has played, and still plays, a significant role in the movement of people both in and out of the country. This movement includes explorers, pilgrims, job seekers, volunteers, sports people, students, holidaymakers, refugees and many other categories. The cultural, political, economic and compassionate advancement of Ireland and many other countries and communities has been enriched by this. Personal enrichment and enlightenment through travel is significant as is emotional wellbeing when people can visit a faraway relative.

A significant amount of historic travel would have taken place by ship much of it from Cobh, County Cork or from Dun Laoghaire or Belfast. The first transatlantic flight was achieved





A place of worship since 1717

## **UNITARIAN CHURCH**

Prince's Street, Cork.

Registered Charity Number 0000246

**Service: Sundays at 11a.m.**

*Minister:* -Rev.Mike O'Sullivan Telephone:023-8842800

e-mail:- osullmike@gmail.com Mobile 087-9539998

Further information from 087-9539998

**Treasurer :** Brian Cluer e-mail: bmcleur@gmail.com

**Secretary :** Colm Noonan : e-mail : colm.noonan@gmail.com

**[www.unitarianchurchcork.com](http://www.unitarianchurchcork.com)**

**Jazz Vespers,  
first Friday of the month @ 6pm.**

An ecumenical service with the Methodist church.

## **Please Note**

*If you are aware of any member of our community who is unwell, or who has suffered a bereavement, and who would welcome contact from others in the church, please e-mail Rev.Bridget Spain.*

Vestry 01 - 4780638

e-mail: revbspain@gmail.com

### **Childrens Programme - Sunday Club**

Takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month

For any queries about Sunday Club, or to volunteer as a leader, please email Denise at [sundayclubunitarianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:sundayclubunitarianchurch@gmail.com)

### **DUBLIN UNITARIAN CHURCH**

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

Each week Eileen Delaney sends an e-mail circular as to what is happening in the church and the other activities associated with the church.

If you would like to receive this information you should send your details requesting your name be added to the list to:-  
**[eileendelaney76@gmail.com](mailto:eileendelaney76@gmail.com)**



# Dublin Unitarian Church

112 St.Stephens Green Dublin 2.

**Service 11.00a.m.**

## **Sunday Rota for November 2023**

5 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>Well, what would you do in a war ?</i>
Service	Paul Murray
Reader	Máire Bacon
Flowers	Jane Nolan
Welcomers	Peter White, Peter White
Coffee	Jennifer Buller, Colette Douglas, Will O'Connell
-----	
12 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>Remembrance Sunday</i>
Service	Rev.Bridget Spain
Reader	Will O'Connell
Flowers	Colette Douglas
Welcomers	Orla Griffin, Grainne Carty
Coffee	Janet Mulroy, Michael Robinson, Madeline Stringer
-----	
19 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>Do things go bump in the night</i>
Service	Rev.Bridget Spain
Reader	Paul Murray
Flowers	Janet Mulroy
Welcomer	Janet Mulroy, Denise Dunne
Coffee	Sheila Hanley, Daniela Cooney, Chris Quinn
-----	
26 <sup>th</sup> November	<i>Beauty - Goodness - Truth</i>
Service	Rev.Brian Moodie
Reader	Colette Douglas
Flowers	Trish Webb Duffy
Welcomer	Michael Robinson, Janet Mulroy
Coffee	Trish Webb Duffy, Sheila Hanley, Grainne Carty

Services are broadcast live from the church each Sunday at 11a.m.  
On our WebCam, click and connect at [www.dublinunitarianchurch.org](http://www.dublinunitarianchurch.org)

Recordings of previous services are also available on the website.

LOVE IS THE DOCTRINE OF THIS CHURCH  
THE QUEST OF TRUTH IS ITS SACRAMENT  
AND SERVICE IS ITS PRAYER.

TO DWELL TOGETHER IN PEACE

TO SEEK KNOWLEDGE IN FREEDOM

TO SERVE MANKIND IN FELLOWSHIP

TO THE END THAT ALL SOULS SHALL GROW IN HARMONY  
WITH THE DIVINE

THIS DO WE COVENANT WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH GOD.

## **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**

**Managing committee:-** Chairperson: Denise Dunne;

Vice Chairman: Dennis Aylmer; Secretary: Trish Webb-Duffy; Treasurer: Rory Delany;  
Tony Shine; Andy Pollak; Peter White; Will O'Connell; Collette Douglas;  
Malachy Hevehan; Paul Murray; Madeline Stringer; Gavin Byrne.

[www.dublinunitarianchurch.org](http://www.dublinunitarianchurch.org)

e-mail: [hellounitarianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:hellounitarianchurch@gmail.com)

[oscailtmagazine@gmail.com](mailto:oscailtmagazine@gmail.com)

Minister: **Rev.Bridget Spain:** Telephone: 01 - 8388 808  
Vestry 01 - 4780638 e-mail: [revbspain@gmail.com](mailto:revbspain@gmail.com)

Rev.Bill Darlison (*Minister Emeritus*)

Chairperson: Denise Dunne:- Tel: 087-2450660

Secretary: Trish Webb-Duffy:- Tel: 087-9346720

e-mail: [secretaryunitarianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryunitarianchurch@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Rory Delany: 087-2217414,

e-mail: [treasurerunitarianchurch@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerunitarianchurch@gmail.com)

Musical Director: Josh Johnston :- 086 892 0602

Caretaker: Kevin Robinson

Telephone: 4752781

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

in 1919 with the arrival of a Vickers-Vimy biplane at Derrigimlagh, south of Clifden. Twenty-six years later in 1945 the country's first transatlantic airport was established at Shannon. Flying then was often accompanied by a sense of occasion, of awe and wonder and delight.

With sustainable and responsible travel the first question to explore is whether the journey is necessary at all. In modern times travellers can be enticed by cheap flights, which do not reflect the cost of air travel or its cost to the planet, and travel to destinations they may not have chosen otherwise. The next question might be whether the same outcome could be achieved in a more sustainable way. Stag parties and hen parties in modern times, when flights are relatively cheap, tend to set their sights on overseas destinations. It is estimated that 446,250,000 kg of Carbon Dioxide is created each year by UK stag and hen parties flying abroad. Maybe the hens and stags would equally enjoy a home venue. Work travel is another sector where the same outcome can be achieved without the heavy footprint of travel. With the increasing use of zoom and other online means of holding meetings, developed during COVID, high-frequency business travel has shown a big decline.

There is an increasing awareness of the negative impacts of over-tourism. Many local governments in tourist destinations are taking practical steps against over-tourism. Some destinations reported benefits of reduced tourism during the pandemic. Pre-COVID over-tourism was a burden on communities around the world. Mindful strategies are needed to avoid the pitfalls of over tourism and put the focus on the quality of the experience, not the quantity of visitors. Travel and tourism need to meet the criteria of a just, equitable, and responsible sector by promoting fair income distribution, boosting local economic benefits, advocating for workers and at the same time being mindful of safeguarding the planet and its biodiversity.

*Fran Brady*

Eco-Quaker Ireland Representative at Eco-Congregation Ireland Committee

# The Purpose of Life

For just a moment, allow your mind to quiet. Find that place within yourself where judgment is suspended, and the gifts of your imagination are freed to play.

Then taking a deep breath, recognize a flickering awareness of your true and only purpose on this earth. The answer as to why you were born emerges much in the way a day appears when the morning fog surrenders to the light of the sun.

It's so simple you find yourself thinking. How could I not have seen it before?

I've come here on this planet, at this time, in this exact place to plant a garden, a beautiful, flower filled, bountiful garden. My goodness, can it really be that simple?

Quell your questioning for just a bit and allow yourself to enter your garden. Go ahead, take in the vividness of what you have created. Revel the sight, the sounds and the fragrance of all you have birthed.

Kneel down and pick up a handful of the fertile soil. You created that soil over all the years by mulching together the unwanted and unneeded pieces of your life. Your mistakes, transgressions, hurts and injuries all blended in over your days to supply the manure for your garden. That rich loam is the compost of your past.

Your tears watered and your laughter gave sunlight to your masterpiece.

And oh, the little, sometimes odd shaped seeds you planted in your garden. Some grew, some didn't. The new growths always beginning as infants needing support and nurturing to become strong and mature. Some grew just as you dreamed. Others never got started and some died on the vine, just like so many of your projects and plans. Some needed to be trimmed and cut back in order to flourish and others matured without much attention at all.

Sometimes your garden was infested by varmints. Those creatures that chewed up the tender plants trying to become solidly rooted, or the blights that took over your best efforts. You know, the ones that turned plans in an unwanted direction. Reclaiming your control often required more of you than you thought you had. But you did it!

And yes, the seasons, the continual mandala of your life-garden. The frozen, seemingly death of winter which never failed to herald the newness and hope of spring. The sweet breath of spring which rebirthed the light and the hope of new plantings. Those plantings then blossomed with the warmth of summer, full and fruitful to be savored and enjoyed. Then fall came along to prepare the unused and unneeded to become the sustenance for the life of the coming year.

It's so simple really.

What if it's actually true?

How would I change, what would I alter if I accepted I came here to plant a garden; no more, no less, a sacred mission to be treasured and enjoyed?

Here is a tip I have just come across.

“To reduce the amount of energy used storing your old  
WhatsApp messages.

Press the three dots up in the right hand corner.

Choose how long you want them stored....  
they are deleted after the time of your choice”.

*Emer O'Reilly*



## Margaret Naylor of Ringsend

The years of centenary commemorations now upon us will test the truth of a cynical quotation, attributed to Stalin and others, that whereas the death of one man is a tragedy, the death of a million is just a statistic. But among the many stories that fall somewhere between the extremes of that grim spectrum, there can be few as poignant as that of John and Margaret Naylor, a husband and wife from Dublin who, at the outbreak of the first World War, were the parents of three children under six. A grocery shop porter in peacetime, John Naylor then joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. And he was to be one of those very unfortunate men who found themselves in the trenches at a place called Hulluch, in northern France, on April 29th, 1916.

It was the second day of a gas attack by Germans that sent hundreds of soldiers, including Naylor (and many of the Germans themselves, after the wind changed) to horrible deaths. Compounding this one man's tragedy, meanwhile, although he couldn't have known about





it, was an incident back in his native city earlier that same day.

Dublin was at war now too. And on the morning of April 29th, Margaret Naylor had risked the fighting on a mission to buy bread. Despite much speculation since, it is not known whether she was a victim of crossfire or a deliberate act. Nor, is it known which side fired the gun. In any case, crossing Ringsend Drawbridge, she was shot in the head and fatally

wounded. She was the first female casualty of Easter Week. And although she lingered for a couple of days afterwards at St Vincent's Hospital, she too must have gone to her death unaware of the tragic coincidence that united her with her soldier husband, several hundred miles away.

The couple had also had several children who died in infancy. So, if there's a consolation in the unhappy story, it's that the three daughters orphaned in April 1916, "Maggie, Kitty, and Tessie ", all survived. They were taken in by the dead woman's sister and lived for years over a shop in what is now Pearse Street, en-route to adulthood. The sad symmetry of their parents' deaths underlines a similarly poignant resemblance in the casualty figures between Easter Week and the atrocity at Hulluch.

In fact, somewhat more Irishmen died in the gas attack and associated fighting than did in Dublin during the Rising.

According to a recent report which incorporated new details released by the UK national archives, the Dublin Fusiliers lost 368 troops in the attack, and the Royal Inniskillings 263. This compares with the 466 who died on all sides during Easter Week.

John Naylor is today remembered on the memorial wall at Loos, where his name is listed with thousands of other war dead. He is presumed buried somewhere near the battlefield; the exact location of the grave now unknown.

Until two years ago, the whereabouts Margaret Naylor's grave was a mystery too, at least to some of her family. But Frankie McNamee, a son of Kitty Naylor, the middle one of the three orphans', has since taken it upon himself to resurrect a history that, wilfully or otherwise, had been forgotten.

Two years ago, he traced his grandmother to her final resting place, the British war cemetery at Grangegorm, where a handsome headstone now marks the grave of Margaret Naylor, nee Rowe, and unites her, in words on stone at least, to the tragic coincidence of her husband's almost simultaneous death in the trenches of France.

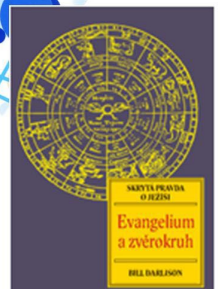
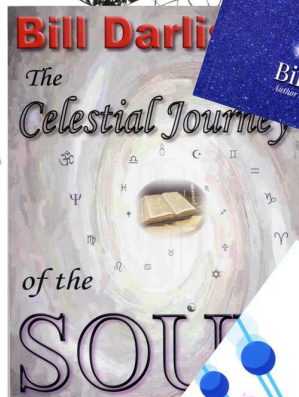
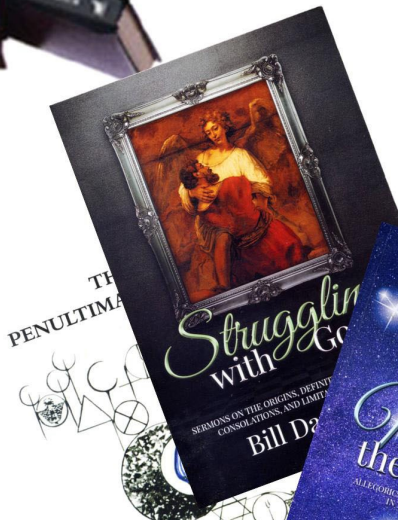
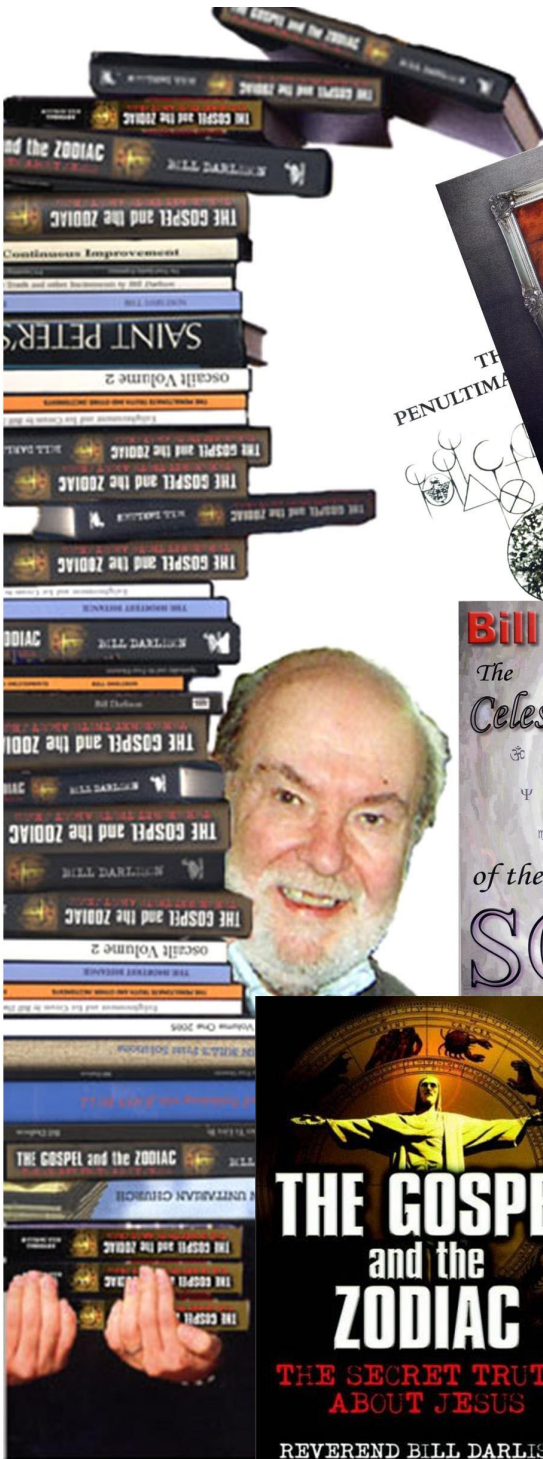
### *Frank Tracy*

MindTravels is a creative collaboration between Josh Johnston, our organist and director of music, and Rev.Mark Hutchinson, an English Unitarian minister. Together, they create guided reflections and what they call attentions, an opportunity to go deeper into the emotional core of a subject or a story. Mark composes and recites the words while Josh improvises on the piano. Through the pandemic, they created a series of video reflections via their Facebook page which was shared on ours. Since the new year, they have been sharing their reflections on a podcast series, simply called Mind-Travels. They released their debut album in August 2022.

Mind Travels will perform in the church on Saturday 11th November.

Tickets €10 – details for advance tickets to follow and tickets will be available at the door. The CD will be available at the concert.

Listen to the album on Spotify and Tidal, and catch the Podcast on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and TuneInRadio.



Czech Edition

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(watch the spelling)



L-R Rev.Bridget Spain, (minister Dublin Unitarian Church) New members  
Mr.John Joseph Eardly, Mr.Stephen Cleary, Mr.Dennis Aylmer (vice Chairman)