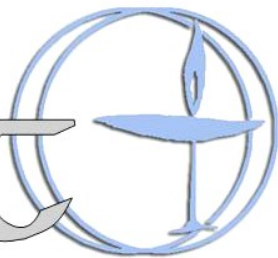


# Oscailt



June 2025

IRELANDS UNITARIAN MAGAZINE

Vol.21 Nº 6



## **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.*

Contact : - e-mail: revbspain@gmail.com      Vestry 01 - 4780638

### **Sunday Club - Childrens Programme Take 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 [sundayclub@dublinunitarianchurch.org](mailto:sundayclub@dublinunitarianchurch.org)

## **Childrens Educational Trust Funds The Damer and Singleton Trusts**

Our congregation has two funds dedicated to supporting the educational needs of our voting members' children.

For further information please contact any member of the committee if you want to know more,

or

write to Dennis Aylmer c/o [aylmerd@gmail.com](mailto:aylmerd@gmail.com)

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.

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



**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.

**Front Cover:** L-R:- Rev.B.Spain, Alison Claffey, and Trish Webb-Duffy, who organised the plant sale on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May for 'Christian Aid'.  
Over €700.00 was raised for Christian Aid. (photo P.Spain)

# Cracked, not Broken

The title of today's address is Cracked, not Broken and it is based around the Japanese art of Kintsugi. The word Kintsugi means "*golden joinery*," This is a technique that involves mending broken pottery with lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. It is an ancient practice and only does it restore the item but by highlighting the cracks and imperfections it also transforms the damaged piece into a work of art.

But Kintsugi is more than just a method of repair. The practice illustrates a philosophy that teaches us the beauty of imperfection and the value of resilience. And amazingly this approach can be applied to many different aspects of life. It begins with the idea of fixing broken objects. But we see that it can be also applied to the idea of recovery and personal growth. The Kintsugi principle has application in business. It has lessons for us when it comes to organising society. In our throw away world threatened by climate change we need to practice the art of Kintsugi. And it even has lessons for us when it comes to politics

So moving first beyond the minor matter of broken crockery notice how we see how in our daily lives, we often strive for perfection. We can come to believe that flawlessness is the key to success and happiness. But the philosophy of Kintsugi reminds us that imperfections are not only inevitable but also valuable. How many of our shelves and presses are occupied by set of crockery now missing cups and saucers and plates and bowls? And have any of us managed to hold on to an unbroken set of drinking glasses?

Cracks and breakages happen regularly in the case of cups and saucers. They also happen to us in the course of our lives. We could avoid breakages by doing absolutely nothing but where would that leave us? So looking at our own lives we can see that by accepting and embracing our flaws we can be helped in the practice of self-acceptance.

When a Kintsugi expert mends the crockery we see the golden lines in the repair. These visible lines add character and uniqueness to the object. In the same way our imperfections contribute to our individuality. They make us who we are. Life is filled with challenges and setbacks. These can leave us feeling broken and defeated. But the practice of Kintsugi reminds us that healing is possible and that we can emerge stronger and more beautiful because of our struggles. And just as broken crockery doesn't have to be thrown out we with our imperfections don't need to be written off.

Kintsugi also teaches us the importance of emotional connections and relationships. Just as a repaired piece of pottery holds a story and a history, our relationships are enriched by the experiences and challenges we all face. By valuing the "cracks" in our relationships, we can build stronger, more meaningful bonds with the people we know and love

The Kintsugi idea can be applied to business as well. Companies often face setbacks and failures, but these challenges looked at objectively can be used as opportunities for growth and improvement. Remember the story attributed to Thomas Edison? When discussing his many attempts to invent the electric light bulb, Edison reportedly said *"I haven't failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."* This quote illustrates his perseverance and his determination in the face of what might be seen as repeated failures. Amy Edmondson, a professor at Harvard Business School is a leading researcher on psychological safety in the workplace. She urges businesses to create an environment where employees feel safe to speak up, to draw attention to issues, mistakes, or potential risks without fear of blame or retribution. She emphasizes that when employees raise concerns early on, it helps organizations address problems before they escalate. It then becomes a matter of celebrating cracks rather than hiding the brokenness.

An attitude of Kintsugi for business where everyone is encouraged to draw attention to the cracks can save an organisation from disaster. How many times do we hear from people who have suffered an injury due to medical negligence? They frequently tell us that all they required was an apology and an acceptance of





what happened along with an assurance that steps will be taken to avoid a recurrence so that someone else won't suffer the same pain. In many cases compensation is way down the person's list of priorities.

The Kintsugi idea even has application to society in general. By embracing the beauty of imperfections, we can learn to appreciate the varied backgrounds and experiences of all the people who make up our communities. This mindset encourages a culture of acceptance and inclusivity, where differences are celebrated rather than judged or feared. The Kintsugi philosophy reminds us that it is okay to be different, it is OK to be imperfect. We learn that healing is possible and that healing is a beautiful process. By promoting this mindset, we can reduce the stigma surrounding things such as mental illness and we can encourage individuals to seek the help and support they might need. We can all benefit by being reminded that we are cracked, not broken .

The practice of Kintsugi also ties in with the idea of environmental sustainability. In our throwaway culture broken items are often discarded without a second thought. Kintsugi encourages us to repair and restore rather than click a button and replace. Isn't it great to see the idea of repair cafés taking hold? These are places where people can bring in broken items for repair. And we learn to appreciate the craftsmanship involved in carrying out repairs. In repair cafes there are volunteers who will carry out repairs where possible and people can be taught the dying art of carrying out their own repairs.

In the political sphere, the philosophy of Kintsugi can encourage transparent and accountable government. Isn't it refreshing when we see a government minister admitting that mistakes have been made and not hiding behind words and excuses?

The art of Kintsugi is believed to have originated in 15<sup>th</sup>-century Japan. The story goes that Yoshimasa, a military ruler sent a broken tea bowl to China for repair. It was returned - mended alright - but with unsightly metal staples (which seems to have been a common practice at the time). Yoshimasa was dissatisfied with this and he asked Japanese craftsmen to find a more aesthetically pleasing solution. They developed the art of Kintsugi, this technique of using lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum to repair broken ceramics. This approach not only restored functionality but it also enhanced the object's beauty by emphasizing its flaws. And now centuries later when we think of this idea of celebrating the fixing of brokenness we see that it has application not only to cups and saucers but to so many aspects of everyday life.

Kintsugi reminds us that nothing - and no one - is beyond repair.

*Tony Brady*

St Stephen's Green Unitarian Church, Dublin,

# The Election of a new Pope

After Benedict XVI resigned as ‘Pope in February 2013’ leading to the election of Pope Francis, I gave an address here in Blackpool on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2013. And now that Francis himself has died, and the electoral process repeats itself, I think there is benefit in repeating that, (slightly modified) 2013 address.

I should like to spend time today considering what our reaction as Unitarians should be to this. More broadly, beyond the specific event of papal succession, what judgment should we make on the papacy as a whole?

First, there is a practical and indeed non-religious level of assessment. Whether, for example, we like or dislike the political positions of the United States, or of China, it is of world interest, in view of these countries' size and influence, who in each case is leader. And *pari passu* the Roman Catholic Church has such a large following world-wide that, whether we approve or disapprove of it in religious terms, its head nonetheless inevitably commands international interest and attention. Moreover, the world is short of moral leaders, and someone like the Pope, or the Dalai Lama, or a Chief Rabbi, occupies an important position in trying to fill that void. It is also for some such reason, no doubt, that a few seats in the House of Lords are reserved for senior Bishops of the Church of England.

But these are matters which in the end have nothing to do with the religious aspects of having a Pope. And it is when we go on to examine the ‘religious aspects’ that the real and serious questions begin.

In his resignation statement Benedict observed that he felt himself unable any longer to bear the burden of “steering the barque of Peter”. The papal succession from Peter is a cornerstone of Catholic faith and practice, the lynchpin that guar-



antees the papacy. But what if that lynchpin is flawed from first principles? I wish in what follows to explore various hypotheses, or possibilities: firstly, that Jesus never appointed Peter to any position of primacy among the apostles; secondly, that Jesus in fact regarded his half-brother James as his natural heir and successor; thirdly, that there was in the earliest Church a much greater degree of tolerance and mutual respect for different positions than is allowed for by the Vatican system of concentration of power in the hands of one man; and, fourthly, that Peter was not, as it happens, the first Bishop of Rome. To achieve and sustain its ends, the Roman Catholic Church has skewed the historical evidence.

Before we go on to examine the four questions in turn, one over-riding point must be clarified. Too much, the religious status quo is justified and validated - and this is as true of evangelicals as it is of Roman Catholics - by unswerving allegiance to the concept of the Bible as a 'perfect text'. In fact this approach has been out of date for already the best part of a century. The Quaker Rufus Jones suggested in the early twentieth century that Church and Bible were now obsolete as centrepieces for living the Christian life; in their place, he suggested, we should 'pass over to a new centre', a 'third centre', strictly indefinable and incorporating elements of both Church and Bible although lying in fact beyond both. I examined the implications of this in an address 'The Three Centres' given here in Blackpool on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

Various subsidiary elements flow inescapably from the adoption of this position. The texts of the New Testament can no longer be viewed as a 'perfect entity'; rather they are a mixture of eternal spiritual truths and muddling or contaminating human agency. This in turn opens the way for a realistic estimation and valuation of Scripture outside the New Testament, Scripture that is routinely dismissed by those in the mainstream. It is important in this context to be aware that Essene Holy Scripture contains one strand that can be described as being at best somewhat sceptical of any absolute value attached to written records:

*Seek not the law in thy scriptures, for the law is Life,  
Whereas the scriptures are only words ...  
All living things are nearer to God  
Than the scriptures, which are without life...  
God wrote not the laws in the pages of books,  
But in thy heart and in thy spirit...  
The scriptures are the works of man,  
But life and all its hosts are the work of God.*

*(Gospel of the Essenes Book 3, ed. E. B. Szekely, 1979, pp. 146-147).*

While this approach is not itself imperative for us, we should nonetheless not veer too far in the opposite direction and regard Scripture as come kind of ‘ultimate truth’, to the exclusion of all else. That is what Rufus Jones at all costs wished to avoid.

This fluid, rather than absolute, view of Scripture leads on naturally, as a corollary, in parallel, to a fluid, rather than absolute, approach to the question of ecclesiastical power and authority – ‘Church’, as distinct from ‘Bible’, according to Rufus Jones’s definitions. And such a fluid approach lies in stark antithesis to the Roman Catholic system of power and authority vested in the Pope.

Let us return to the four ‘possibilities’ that I posed earlier. Firstly, “that Jesus never appointed Peter to any position of primacy among the apostles”. This appointment rests on words apparently spoken by Jesus to Peter in *Matthew* chapter 16: “thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ... And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven” (v v. 18-19). But G. D. Kilpatrick, in his ground-breaking 1946 book, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St Matthew*, painstakingly distinguished between older levels of the *Matthew* text and later additions. The Jesus-Peter episode of chapter 16 was one of these later additions, and thus no constituent part of the earlier *Matthew* Gospel, a text that has not survived as an independent entity, in that it has consistently been overlaid by the additions.

And the original, of which the episode in Matthew 16 is a

distortion, survives as *Gospel of Thomas* 13: “Jesus said to his disciples: ‘... tell me whom I am like’. Simon Peter said to him: ‘You are like a righteous angel’. Matthew said to him: ‘You are like a wise philosopher’. Thomas said to him: ‘Master, my mouth is wholly incapable of saying whom you are like’ ... And Jesus took [Thomas], withdrew, and spoke to him”. What exactly it is that is said between Jesus and Thomas is unclear, but one cannot read Saying 13 without being made aware that it is Thomas’s answer - whatever it was - that is special, and that Peter and Matthew say less important and less fundamental things.

The second of my four points was “that Jesus in fact regarded his half-brother James as his natural heir and successor”. And, when we look at the actual facts depicted in the New Testament, this succession is borne out - as I illustrated in an address “Who is the greatest of us?” delivered here in Blackpool on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2007 - by what is said, for example, at *Acts* 12.17, 15.13 and 21.16 . I am by no means the only person to have pointed this out; and, as I said in that earlier address, “It does not seem possible to understand these [references] as other than statements that James was at this stage in control in Jerusalem”.

And that this was in fact the situation that Jesus himself had wished for, and put in place, is corroborated by *Gospel of Thomas*, Saying 12: “The disciples said to Jesus: ‘We know that you will depart from us; who then will be our leader?’ Jesus replied to them: ‘In whatever situation you may find yourselves, you should go to James the Just’” - i.e. Jesus’s half-brother James.

The third of my four points, was: “there was in the earliest Church a much greater degree of tolerance and mutual respect for different positions than is allowed for by the Vatican system of concentration of power in the hands of one man”. My very first address here in Blackpool, given on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2004, was entitled “The Twelve Disciples - A Model of Pluralism in Action”. And in that address. I came to the conclusion that “the Apostles as a group actual-

ly typified pluralism in action, the notion of toleration of, and coexistence with, different ways of doing things, without any one particular way being declared superior or ‘the only way’. That was the true and original emphasis of Jesus himself, inherited ... from the ‘broad church’ that was the Judaism of his time. And the emergent institutional church, in moving to and adopting the principle of centralised authoritarianism, was - not to mince words - simply betraying the pluralist legacy of Jesus himself and those around him”. This position that I outlined in 2004 mirrors closely, and is completely compatible with, the suggestion of Rufus Jones mentioned earlier, that we need to move to new ground beyond the concept of ‘Church’ as traditionally understood.

And certainly this ‘new ground’ involves a position where papal supremacy within the ‘New Church’ is not a remotely possible or conceivable option. In origin the concept of ‘High Priest’ or *Pontifex Maximus* is owed to pagan Classical Rome; it ought never to have been imported into the religion of Jesus.

My fourth point is that “Peter was not. . . the first Bishop of Rome”. That honour belongs to Linus. The Jesuit priest and Bollandist Pere Hippolyte Delehaye admitted quite clearly, with regard to Linus, in 1926 that “All that can be said with certainty about him is that his name appears at the head of all the lists of the bishops of Rome”. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* 13<sup>th</sup> ed., Vol.16, p.736).

Addis and Arnold’s *Catholic Dictionary* of 1916 (revised by T. B. Scannell) gets round this difficulty very simply by omitting any entry for ‘Linus’ where it should appear (on p.525).

This is not the place for a long disquisition on the life of Peter from the 30s to the 60s. In brief, there are two rival theories. The Roman Catholic Church has sought to play down, if not discount, the priority of Linus by bringing Peter to Rome early - as early as the 40s -, in the attempt to establish him as a significant presence there over a twenty-year, or more-than-twenty-year, period.

The alternative view, favoured by Dr. Edwin Hatch among others (the Tübingen School of the late-nineteenth century) is that Peter came to Rome very late in his life, and was there only

briefly up to his death. He had been for much longer before then Bishop of Antioch in Syria, and came to Rome not as first promoter of the new faith which then rapidly grew there. Rather he came to a Rome where the faith had already become strong under the guidance of others, who included Linus, and where he himself, as an original disciple, was an important, but not initially a primary, figure. Time will in the end vindicate this latter view.

For all the reasons outlined, the election of a new Roman Catholic Pope has very little to tell us about the governance of the community which Jesus himself wished to put in place. And I only wish that Unitarians and other Dissenters were more vocal in the expression of their rational disagreement with what the Roman Catholic Church claims to be and how it chooses to organize itself.

*Dr. Martin Pulbrook*

Blackpool Unitarian Church

4<sup>th</sup> May 2025

The 69-year-old Cardinal Robert Prevost has been elected pope, on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025. He was born in Chicago and is the first American to be elected pontiff. He has chosen the name of '**Pope Leo XIV**'. When he appeared on the balcony for the first time he was dressed in the vestments that Benedict XVI chose to wear on that occasion.

# The Batch Loaf

Recently, some friends and I went on a short hike! Returning home, ravenous, some hours later, I invited them in for a quick cup of tea.

"I have a fresh batch loaf if you want something to eat," I said. "Ah no," said Friend No. 1. "I've to get home! A cup of tea would be lovely though!"

"I'm in a rush as well," said Friend No. 2. "And, besides, I never eat white bread!"

"Grand so," I said, "a cup of tea it is!"

The two of them sat down at the kitchen table while I put the kettle on. "I haven't seen bread like that in years," said Friend No. 1, eyeing the batch loaf in its red and yellow packaging on the kitchen worktop.

"It's for my brother who lives in England," I said. "It's what he always asks for when he comes home! That, and lots of butter!"

"Sure, I might as well have a slice, seeing as how it's here!" she said. I went and got some plates, knives, and the butter dish.

Friend No.1 took the batch loaf and began to peel open the grease proof paper wrapping. She opened back the fold, prised up the heel and eased out a slice. She laid the slice on her plate, picked up her knife and took the lid off the butter dish. "Oh, yum!" she said. "Real butter! Nothing like it!"

The scent of freshly baked batch loaf wafted around the table. "Have you any jam," she asked as she dug her knife into the butter and began to spread a large yellow dollop onto her slice.

Friend No. 2 watched all this with interest. Her eyes were transfixed on the knife as it spread the butter right up to the edges of the crust in neat circular swirls. "I don't eat butter either," she announced, apropos of nothing, but her voice didn't hold the same assertion it had when she told us she never ate white bread. It may even have held a hint of regret.

It really was only a matter of time.

The butter spreading complete, Friend No 1 cut the slice in two, unscrewed the lid from the blackberry jam and scooped out a large spoonful. This she spread on the curvy side of her batch slice, leaving the straight side jam free. She then cut each half slice in two, picked up one of them and bit into it. "Mmmm," she said, her teeth leaving a deep semicircular curve in the butter.



Friend No. 2 shifted in her seat and sipped her tea. By now, I was already buttering my own slice of batch loaf. As I bit into it, Friend No 1 was reaching for a second helping. That was when Friend No. 2 cleared her throat. “Have you any marmalade!” she asked. “It’s marmalade we had on it when I was a child!” She picked up her knife, reached for a slice, and with a sigh of deep resignation, began to spread it with butter.

A batch loaf may have a very distinctive scent. But, as with Proust’s Madeleine moment, it’s the taste that brings the memories flooding back. The bread man arriving to our street in his horse drawn van, the whinny of the horse, the clatter of the reins, the clip clapping of the hooves, the mothers rushing out in their aprons, the wooden trays sliding out to display mouthwatering chocolate eclairs, cream donuts, Viennese whirls. And joy, the batch loaves, lined up like miniature pillows, their crusts black brown, their insides soft as thistledown.

The bread man would pull the batch apart and place one loaf in my mother’s outstretched hands. She’d carry it like a trophy back into the kitchen, to be sliced there and then without delay, each of us children smothering it with thick yellow butter, and rushing back out onto the street to show off our bounty. The bread man’s van would barely have reached the end of the street, when all our batch loaf was gone.

“Did bread and butter always taste this good?” my two friends wondered, as we wiped the crumbs away. I assured them it did.

Nothing now remained of the batch loaf only the two heels, which nobody ever wanted anyway, and usually found their way into the toaster when the day old freshness had waned.

Ah, well, sure there was nothing for it only to go and buy another loaf. We couldn’t let my brother down now, could we.

*Maeve Edwards*

First broadcast on RTE’s Sunday Miscellany on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
St Stephen’s Green Unitarian Church, Dublin,

## Dublin Unitarian Book Club's choice for April 2025.

### The Firestarters

by

*Jan Carson*

‘This is Belfast. This is not Belfast’

This is the first line of this novel by Jan Carson. It should prepare you for her depiction of the city in 2014, 16 years after ‘the Troubles’ and might do if you are familiar with her magic realistic/gothic style of writing.

Carson grew up in Ballymena in a conservative Presbyterian household so it is not a surprise that religion and the Protestant experience of living in Northern Ireland feature in her writings. Carson is certainly a very good writer and her imagination knows no bounds as she intertwines religion and a magical world into the lives of ordinary people living in East Belfast. She says that ‘The imagery and language of the Bible have really informed how I write – the Bible is the prime magic realist text, full of the miraculous , of weird beasts coming from the sea- it’s what I cut my teeth on’.

In the first chapter we meet Dr. Jonathan Murray, who has a strange idea that his baby daughter Sophia , who he is caring for alone, is a danger to society as he believes her mother is a siren (mermaid) and that his daughter has inherited her mother’s enchanting ‘powers’. He believes that if her voice is unleashed on the world she will cause chaos and so he is obsessed with silencing her. This depiction of obsession and delusion is very tense and gives the reader a sense that something sinister is going to happen.

Jonathan’s childhood was one of being provided for materially , but he was unloved. His parents abandoned him at the age of 16 to boarding school, he becomes a doctor but lacks any form of empathy and is emotionally immature. But he desperately wants to care for Sophia his daughter and this aspect of the novel explores the responsibility of parents and their fears of what their children have inherited from them and what they may become.

Next we meet Sammy Agnew, an ex loyalist paramilitary who is still battling with his demons from his violent days during ‘the Troubles’.

It is now the hot summer of 2014 and the tension is increasing in the city as the Ulster Protestant people prepare for the celebrations of the

12<sup>th</sup> July. Bonfires are being built but the council has put a height restriction on them which causes some to feel that their civil rights have been infringed upon.

Now a rogue arsonist is starting fires around the city and posting videos and incendiary speeches on UTUBE on his activities. He is in disguise but Sammy recognises his posture and suspects that it is his son Mark who is the arsonist. Mark lives in the attic of Sammy and his wife Pamela's home and he rarely comes out, he is a ghost like malevolent character , hovering over Sammy and Pamela's lives.

Sammy fears that Mark has inherited his own thirst for violence and his rage at the world and he wrestles with what he should do about his son. Both Jonathan and Sammy are planning some kind of interventions to stop their children and the reader is filled with tense apprehension that they might follow through with their actions. (no spoilers)

The mental health of these two men is certainly problematic and no wonder considering their own traumas growing up. The reader also gets a sense that the people of Belfast have not come out unscathed from the legacy of the Troubles and there is a collective trauma there to be healed.

The third narrative in this disturbing yet enthralling novel is the stories of the *Unfortunate Children of Belfast*. They are children born with deformities giving them special powers. There's a girl with wings who is learning to fly, a boy with wheels for feet, a girl who is occasionally a boat. Jonathan becomes aware of these children when he treats the girl who is learning to fly but keeps falling and now has a broken arm. He finds out that there is a self help group for the parents of these *Unfortunate* children which he attends only once, after all, Sophia his daughter is really half a siren.

For me these magical children represent the children of any place that has experienced a war torn divided segregated society. Their scars are not always visible and parents fear that they may never heal. Jan Carson also works in the Community Arts Sector in Northern Ireland and sees how the Arts can bring people from both sides of the divide together. She sees that if people come together into a shared space , not segregated, then they can imagine the life of the 'other' and empathise with them.

The book club readers found this book disturbing but also intriguing. A very different take on the 'Troubles' and their aftermath. Carson is a very good writer but not everyones cup of tea but she is certainly worth reading.

*Alison Claffey*

St Stephen's Green Unitarian Church, Dublin,

# *Sundays at 2*

## Classical Musicians Network

**Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 2pm**

Music by:- Shari McDaid (*flute*) & Maja Elliott (*piano*)

**Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2025 at 2pm**

Music by:- **Amos Trio** Fergus Conaghan (*Oboe*),  
Shari McDaid (*flute*) & Melle Steringa (*clarinet*)

---

The Dublin Unitarian Church - - - - - Admission Free

---

RSVP's via Eventbrite.ie. Further information from Shari McDaid, [shari\\_hello@yahoo.ie](mailto:shari_hello@yahoo.ie)

### *Letter of Thanks*

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> April the arrival of two Gardai to our home, landed Paul and I into the nightmare of every parent. Our son, Ronan had died. He went to sleep and simply never woke up. The fact that we are still here upright, if rather battered, is due in large part to the love, care and support we have received from this community.

Right from the first panicked phone call to Gavin, through the funeral and memorial service we were and still are being supported with hugs, handshakes, letters, cards, phone calls and flowers. On a practical level, wonderfully kind people arranged refreshments for a very large group in the Damer Hall. Every small detail was arranged for us.

In this church we often speak of building a "Beloved Community" Over the past month our family has experienced this beloved community in action. Many people, first time visitors to our church have commented to us that they could feel the love within the church walls.

We are so proud of this church and this experience has reinforced in us how vital our message is. We are not tied to ancient creeds, instead we try to live the teachings of Jesus and all religious teachers "Love one another". We feel that love. Our heartfelt thanks to you all for your love and support.

*And keep up the good work!*

*Bridget & Paul*

St Stephen's Green Unitarian Church, Dublin,



# Dublin Unitarian Church

112 St. Stephens Green Dublin 2.

**Service 11.00a.m.**

## **Sunday Rota for June 2025**

1 <sup>st</sup> June	<i>St. Patrick or a Hymn Writer from Ohio?</i>
Service	Andy Pollak
Reader	Tony Roche
Flowers	Paula Mills
Welcomer	Janet Mulroy - Catharine Cook
Coffee	Janet Mulroy, Paul Murray, Paula Mills
<hr/>	
8 <sup>th</sup> June	<i>If You Want to Go Far, Go Together</i>
Service	Paul Murray
Reader	Trish Webb-Duffy
Flowers	Therese Fontana
Welcomer	Robin Ward - Margaret Leeson
Coffee	Gráinne Carty, Alison Claffey, John Leeson
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15 <sup>th</sup> June	<i>Sacred Listening</i>
Service	Gavin Byrne
Reader	Emer O'Reilly
Flowers	Valerie Shanley
Welcomer	Valerie Shanley - Daniela Cooney
Coffee	Jennifer Buller, Emer O'Reilly, Doireann Ni Bhriain
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22 <sup>nd</sup> June	<i>Listen to Socrates</i>
Service	Pamala McCarthy
Reader	Jennifer Buller
Flowers	Daniela Cooney
Welcomer	Alison Claffey - Jennifer Flegg
Coffee	Maeve Edwards, Gráinne Carty, Daniela Cooney
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29 <sup>th</sup> June	<i>Pride: Faithfully Queer</i>
Service	Gavin Byrne
Reader	Robin Ward
Flowers	Margaret Leeson
Welcomer	Paula Mills - Gráinne Carty
Coffee	Maeve Edwards, Alison Claffey, Therese Fontana

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.



The Plant sale raised over  
€700.00 for 'Christian Aid'.

Thanks to all the helpers.



When your plants grow and bloom, send a picture of them to fill this page.