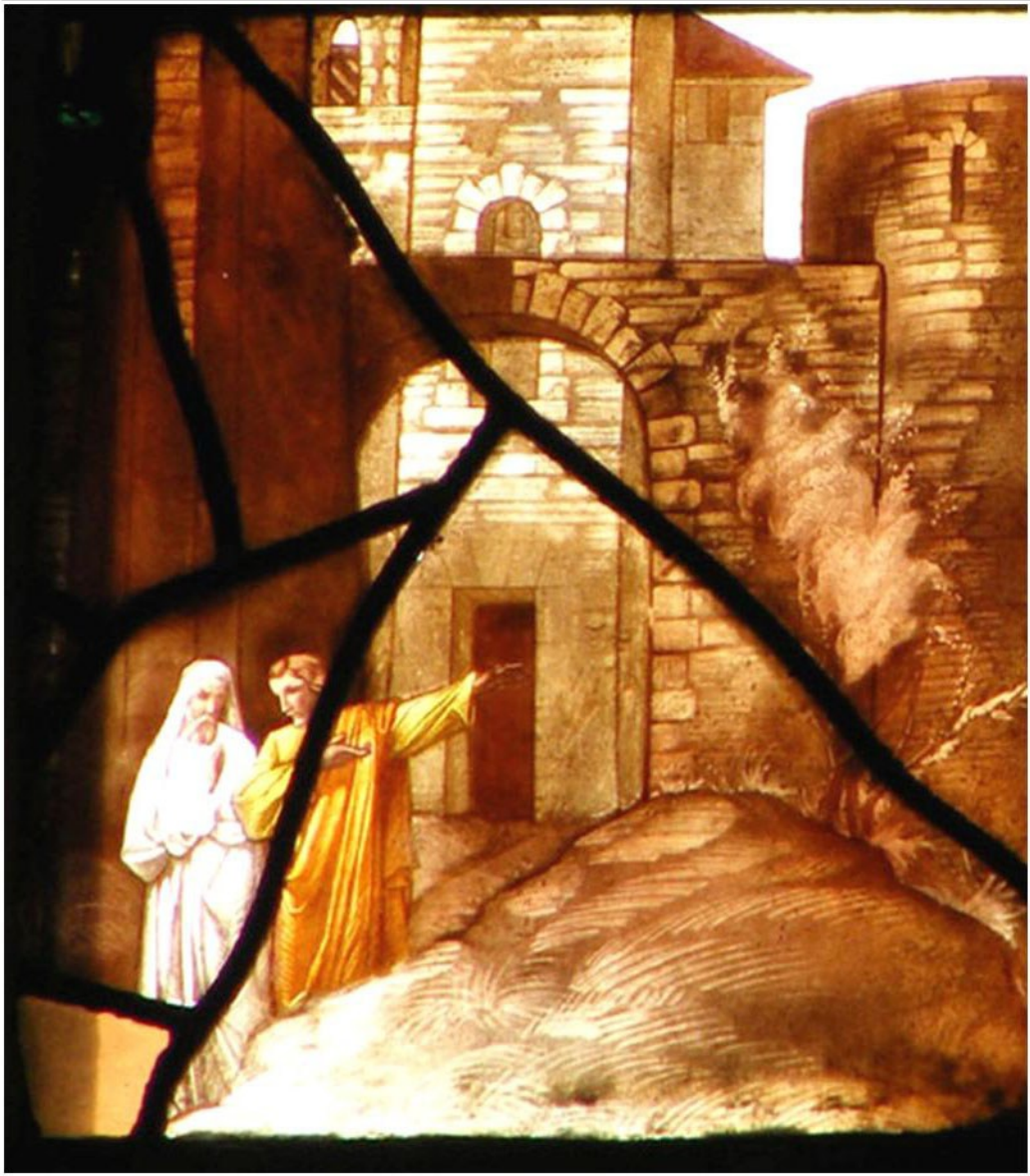
Oscailt

September 2026 **IRELANDS UNITARIAN MAGAZINE** Vol.22 Nº 9



Please Note

Anyone in the church in need of pastoral care should contact our minister, Rev.Gavin Byrne.

Rev.Gavin Byrne: ministryunitarianchurch@gmail.com | **086 041 6154**

also available is:-

Rev.Bridget Spain: revbspain@gmail.com | **086 718 0599**

Childrens Programme - Sunday Club

Takes place on the 2nd Sunday of each month
For any queries about Sunday Club, or details contact:-
sundayclubunitarianchurch@gmail.com

Childrens Educational Trust Funds
The Darner 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

The church distributes a weekly news bulletin by email, with the occasional extra email for urgent messages that can't wait until the next regular mail.
If you'd like to receive these, please send an email to weeklyemailunitarianchurch@gmail.com
(from the address you'd like to subscribe with)
with the word "subscribe" in the subject line.

DUBLIN UNITARIAN CHURCH

Lunch-time service every Wednesday from **1.05** to **1.35** p.m.

Oscailt

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

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Front Cover: Detail from the top of the Blessing of the children window.
(photo P.Spain)

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Oscailt

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.

Action Absorbs Anxiety

When we mention the word ‘health’ - to what are we referring to? We all have ‘health’ - we can describe it as good - I have good health, I am healthy. Or we may have bad health - suffering from a chronic condition or just the normal pains and aches. Here, we’re talking about physical health. We go to a physical health professional when we have pain. We go to a mental health professional when we are in pain. But there’s more to health.

What about our general ‘wellbeing’ .In my youth work career, I worked with a programme entitled Be Healthy, Be Happy. It focused on the four aspects of health: social, physical, mental and spiritual. The programme aims to engage young people in a process of exploring what impacts their health and wellbeing, with the hope that the process will help provide them with the tools they need to lead healthy, happy lives.

Writing in the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey says that finding balance in each of these four areas of health promotes growth and the ability to change - he encourages us to preserve and enhance the greatest asset we have - ourselves. We need to always have time to ‘renew ourselves’ ,he says - we need to ‘live in balance’ .Wellbeing is looking after your social, mental, spiritual and physical health. What we believe, is also crucial to getting the balance right. This is the Health Belief Model - if I believe that wearing sunscreen, eating a balanced diet, spending time with friends and family and refraining from harmful drugs are good and healthy actions or habits, I am more likely to adopt practices which will enhance my general wellbeing. And often, getting this balance simply requires small, intentional steps.

I titled this address, Action Absorbs Anxiety - according to numerous surveys in Ireland, it appears that anxiety is something more and more people are experiencing. If we don’t speak about it and engage with it, it could very well become a significant health issue for our society. Perhaps it already is. The roots of this anxiety are many: cost of living, housing and health, global conflict, and loss of connectedness. (Aware National Survey). And of course, for young people in particular, excessive internet use and social media

can negatively impact wellbeing in all four aspects of health. And in particular, increased instances of anxiety. Screen time is a solitary activity - a sedentary activity, with the result that physical interactions are reduced, real world connections are weak.

There is though, I believe a collective anxiety we all share - brought about by our feeling of helplessness triggered by major events like political instability, war, and the environmental crisis.

I am not in a position to talk about the crippling anxiety that has a negative impact on our mental health and general wellbeing. I am not referring to 'anxiety disorders') St Patrick's MHS), that require the healing skills of a mental health professional. I'm referring to that normal response to stressful situations.

Anxiety is built in to our physical make-up and it has its purpose. It's triggered by life - It's related to worry. 'Feelings of anxiety are your body's natural reaction to some stressful or dangerous situations. They focus your attention and can help you react. A healthy amount of anxiety is OK and can keep you safe' ,(that's according to a fact sheet published by the HSE). Anxiety is a natural and essential response to stress, (VHI on Stress).

Your anxiety is different from mine. What triggers your anxiety is different from what triggers mine. Anxiety lights up the amygdala (which is the brain's fear centre or the place in our biology which is always alert to danger) and it inhibits the prefrontal cortex (where rational thinking happens). It makes us ready to fight or flight. When we take action, dopamine is released - linked to motivation and reward. Then the next, more difficult step becomes, not easier, but more possible than before. This might be why we should allow children to play without too much cotton wool and excessive supervision…we are more and more encouraged to allow children enjoy free play with others rather than live sedentary lives; splashing in puddles, jumping, rolling, climbing, where they can learn how to manage and take risks in their lives. In other words, real world experiences and adventures away from screens and game consoles.

The HSE website, has a comprehensive guide to anxiety including tips to help with it. And it all relates to taking action. Be active, eat well, sleep well, avoid triggers, be mindful, breathe, talk, manage. I will add: make it your practice to 'examine, shape and care for <u>your</u> life, and the life around you, so you will achieve more

wholeness, satisfaction, depth and meaning' .Coping with anxiety as a spiritual practice. And we can help anxious people by helping them calm down, bringing them back to their best selves - all using our innate sense of kindness, empathy and connection. (Rev,Dr.Elizabeth Stevens).

Often we think - 'Don't be worried about that - you'll be grand' .You might be grand, but I'm not. What helps is not to tell someone, 'you'll be grand' ,it's often, inviting them to verbalise it. The simple act of talking can help absorb it. There nothing more holy than having someone listen to you, without judgement, without prescriptions or advice. 'What's on your mind?' A kin to Ruby in our story earlier. Bringing them back to their best selves.

In moments of anxiety, our brain predicts the outcome… often the worst case scenario. Hold on, mr brain. Deep breaths, to relax, and gently think it through. Predictions about the future are just that, predictions - the future is not yet known.

For me - I began to really understand anxiety, not when I didn't have my homework done, but brought on by my fears around my sexual identity. The anxiety related to being 'outed', 'found out' and all that would result in that. And at the time, it really was a rational fear but I catastrophised the outcome. I've spoken about this before. And I'd describe a serious bout of anxiety like this, I'm sure you know what I'm talking about - I felt it in my body - right in the centre of my body - a physical feeling and a hyper emotion - like a heavy ball dropping in the pit of my tummy. My brain lit up - I assume it was that my amygdala, lit up - and I was hyper alert - fear. Often, it would happen when you are about to fall asleep, a thought, a realisation would drop, uninvited into my thoughts - depriving me of a good night's sleep. This, I have thankfully and with grace, removed from my life. The continuing affirmation and respect from this community has played no small part in this. In short, I took action, I shared my anxiety, I sought out those I trusted. Other anxieties persist though - new and old ones arrive, just like for Ruby - but I'm learning how to live with them.

The anxiety related to the current cost of living crisis and global conflict - how do we cope with that? There are all kinds of issues that seem to be 'out of our hands' .I hear politicians and

pundits tell us that 'there's nothing we can do about, for example, the Strait of Hormuz; that's out of our control. So we're told, we have to live with the situation as it is. I don't wish to add to your anxiety but we face rising bills because one or two state actors start a war - some of us worry about how we will pay for that - others fear for their lives. And then we see the peacemakers, those seeking righteousness, the merciful, reviled for their efforts. Incidentally - to those who seek to use fear, raising our levels of anxiety for all kinds political purposes - to those who brandish a whole nation of people, people from a whole continent or members of a particular religion, as threatening our freedoms and sense of decency - please refrain. This time last year, I addressed the issue of Social Action - please have a look back at that for my thoughts about that. I might just add that when we bump up against bullying, fear, bias, disrespect, greed, indifference and something you care deeply about - one day we just might choose to engage, head-on. Rachel Reider is an American christian writer and she says: "The 'small' things matter. Our actions will multiply and ripple towards ends we'll never know. We're constantly making the world better or worse as we move throughout the day, because whether we notice or not, the way we live impacts others."

There's what I call 'the worry passage', in Matthew's gospel, Jesus is recorded as saying: "do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet God feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" Indeed, worrying won't add a single hour to your life - it will be, rather, an hour lost, never to be regained. It seems, Jesus is rather dismissive here. I'm inclined to take from this - that Jesus was not suggesting that you wait for God to somehow provide for you - he provides a possible answer - he goes on to say 'But seek first his kingdom'- not, an invisible place up there somewhere - the beloved community - look to each other - provide for each other here and now - Jesus believed God was present and at work in the human community - in the human heart. This we are free to consider and

reject. But this particular prophet, while constantly referring to God, believed in the inherent goodness of humanity - and the power of the human heart. For you it may not be God - but the good. And I believe and always had a sense that humanity is inherently good - a key Unitarian idea that is not shared by other religious movements or political ideals for that matter; not really.

Anxiety comes in order to protect you, albeit in a very annoying, over-the-top way. Action can absorb anxiety - in one anxious moment, it involves breathing, deeply, to get more oxygen and slow the heart - I am not anxious, I'm just experiencing a sensation of anxiety. Pull yourself back into the present - look around, what can you see, hear, smell or touch? I take to walking - and take in as much of the world around me I can - noticing new things. And as a long term project, I suggest that we take action and look after our social, physical, mental and spiritual health. Choosing to engage in this community contributes to my wellbeing - I sought a place, a community like this in the first place because I needed a space in my week where I could bring and share and consider my joys and concerns, hopes and fears - those ultimate questions that inevitably gets asked deep in our souls. It provides me a space which contributes to my social and spiritual health. It is vital. And perhaps, I will find more ways to consider how I can contribute to making this world a place of compassion and justice.

To conclude: John O'Donohue has a blessing I'd like to offer and share with you. I initially interpreted it as written for active people or people who have a job. But I think it's for all who have 'work to do' - not a job - but a purposeful role, an important role - a role where the wages are a blessing, a grace, a gift. The work of giving of yourself for the good or benefit of others as well as being good and compassionate to yourself - and that's all of us. This prayer for me is what spiritual health is all about - it focuses on that relationship we have with the world and that almost irrational gift of grace - if only we can recognise it.

May the light of your soul guide you.
May the light of your soul bless the work you do with the secret love and warmth of your heart.

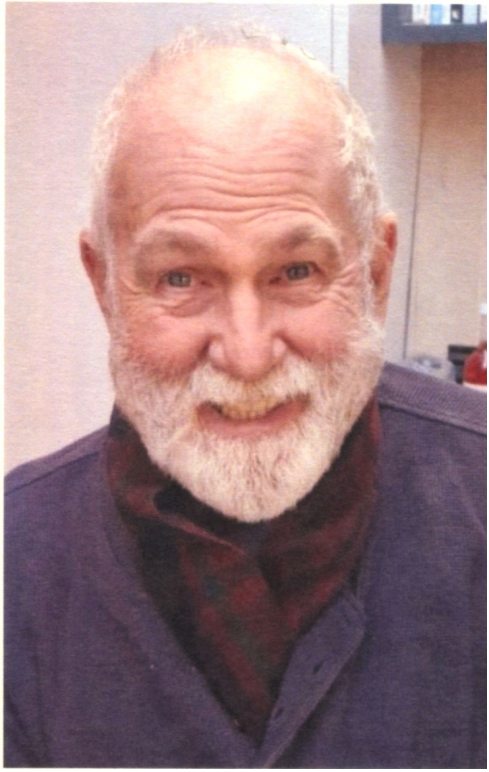
May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.
May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light and renewal to those who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.
May your work never weary you.
May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration and excitement.
May you be present in what you do.
May you never become lost in the bland absences.
May the day never burden.
May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises.
May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.
May you go into the night blessed, sheltered and protected.
May your soul calm, console and renew you.

This is a blessing for all - for me, this is about, the holy work of turning up - it encourages me to seek inspiration, refreshment and excitement from among the many tasks I have to complete on any given day. 'Approach your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises' .May this protect and inspire me when anxiety visits.

Rev.Gavin Byrne
Minister St.Stephen's Green Unitarian Church

Stephen B.Cleary

1944 - 7th August 2026



When we gathered the other night to write Dad's eulogy, we realised that reflecting the many layers of Dad succinctly would be extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible. Of course, one approach is to do it chronologically:

Dad was born in 1944 in New Rochelle, New York to his mother Gale and his father John, who at the time was deployed by the US Navy to the North Atlantic. Dad spent his early childhood in Charlottesville, Virginia and on Long Island before he was sent to boarding school in Connecticut at the age of thirteen.

Upon graduating from high school, he gathered his profits from running an informal credit business in his dorm, acquired a VESPA, and spent that summer alone cruising through France.

He completed his undergraduate education in Political Science at the University of Virginia and Claremont Men's College in California, where he went for a more progressive learning experience. Venice Beach in Los Angeles was the epicentre of the emerging body building culture of which he was a part. He went on to study law at the University of Pittsburgh, where he met our mother Marisela. Her father (our grandfather) was a visiting Ecuadorian scholar in Latin American literature at the University. Mum and Dad met in an elevator in the Cathedral of Learning, the main building on campus. They fell in love despite a significant language barrier, and before our father completed law school, they married and moved to Quito, Ecuador where Dominique and Patrick were born. There, through sheer hard work, creativity and talent, and with our mother's support, he built a textile business one machine at a time, which became a house-hold name in Quito. In the early 1980s, with a view to providing us, his children, new opportunities, and to be closer to his parents who had retired to Ireland, we moved to Dublin, via Sneem, Co. Kerry. Our family built a new life here, and a beloved third child, Dorothy, was born.

That's the chronology. The essence of who Dad was is again broad and deep. We have chosen to distil it to two core attributes:

First, his love for and absolute dedication to his family:
Dad was not one to make verbal declarations of love. It was an endearing pattern when we'd wrap up phone conversations with "love you, Dad" and a warm reply of "ok" from his end of the line. But we always knew that his love for us was profound and unshakable. He always let us take the spotlight, and no matter how great or mundane our achievements, experiences, and epiphanies or ideas were, his eyes would light up with genuine interest and pride, and he would always provide a point of connection and encouragement. We also knew that if we needed truthful and unvarnished advice, he was the most reliable source, which was of
incredible value.

Dad was always playful and joyful. He loved chocolate, cake and opening presents from us, so much so that we always had to let Dad (and only Dad) open one present on Christmas Eve. Just one. He could never wait until the morning. Dad was happiest during noisy family gatherings. Dad was also grounded and steady and always projected a sense of calm. This is especially true through his final days. It was in large part for our benefit.

And, the second attribute was his enduring desire to discover and learn, embrace new perspectives and challenge convention, which, we believe, also influenced his own spiritual journey. Dad's favourite question to us as young children at the dinner table was, "what do you think of the political situation?". For years we stared back at him blankly, too young to respond with any degree of coherence. He would answer "its political" with an irony that we soon understood as a message to dig deeper. As we got older, Dad loved making a provocative statement at a gathering. He would sit back to watch the lively debate unfold among his kids and grandkids.

Dad was irrepressibly curious. His reading tastes were broad – history, politics, mythology and theology. He always encouraged us to choose subjects at school to broaden the mind. He emphasised the love of learning over rote and he encouraged our independence in the pursuit of knowledge. It was this same pursuit of understanding, and possibly "truth", that we believe led Dad to return to the Unitarian Church of his origins, a spiritual home where he could feel anchored while continuing to explore. We are enormously grateful that he was embraced by this congregation. It became such a central part of his life in his final years.

Dominique, Patrick and Dorothy Cleary

Unitarian Walking Club.

Liz McManus is leading a walk at Kilruddery House.
Meeting at 10.30am

on Saturday 5th September at Kilruddery House,
Southern Cross Road, Bray, Co Wicklow.

There is a coffee shop in the stable yard where we will meet.
Parking is free.

Looking forward to seeing you. Liz McManus (0872357369)





Rory Delany - City Walks 2026

The first of our two 2026 *City Walks* will take place on 30th August 2026 and the second walk will be

On 13th September 2026.
Both walks will commence directly after Sunday Service.

Sunday 13th September *A Trip on the Bus*
A short *bus journey to Harold's Cross where we will visit Mount Jerome Cemetery to view the resting places of some people who were associated with our earlier congregations.

*Harold's Cross is served by routes F1, F2 and F3 which all depart frequently from a nearby stop on St. Stephen's Green South.

Holding Sacred Space

A couple of people asked for clarification of a phrase I used during the Q&A session following my candidating service on 24th November 2024. I had been asked what I thought were some of my strengths in ministry. I responded that, amongst other things, I felt one of my strengths is in 'holding sacred space' during worship.* Here is an explanation of the term, as I understand and use it.

The term "holding sacred space" or simply "holding space" is quite commonly used amongst some ministers / service leaders, when speaking about leading worship or facilitating small groups. As with any jargon, it's easy to forget that it may not be common parlance outside one's own field of work. So, let me try to explain what I understand by these terms.

The term "holding space" was first popularized by Heather Plett, a writer and facilitator based in Canada. In 2015 she wrote: "When my mom was dying, my siblings and I gathered to be with her in her final days. None of us knew anything about supporting someone in her transition out of this life into the next... we were… supported by a gifted palliative care nurse, Ann, who came every few days to care for mom and to talk to us about what we could expect in the coming days. ... By offering gentle, nonjudgmental support and guidance, she helped us walk one of the most difficult journeys of our lives... The work that Ann did can be defined by a term that's become common in some of the circles in which I work. She was holding space for us.

What does it mean to hold space for someone else? It means that we are willing to walk alongside another person in whatever journey they're on without judging them, making them feel inadequate, trying to fix them, or trying to impact the outcome. When we hold space for other people, we open our hearts, offer unconditional support, and let go of judgement and control."

For psychologists and counsellors, "holding space" refers to the act of being fully present with someone else, without judgment or distraction, so that the person can share their experiences and perspective; it refers to creating a safe, accepting environment,

engaging in attentive listening, and offering non-judgmental support. When a minister or lay leader facilitates small groups (spiritual exploration, bereavement support etc) the use of the term 'holding space' is very similar to how it is used by counsellors.

The term has evolved to mean something a bit different for those leading worship, meditation or other spiritual practice. A worship leader may see part of their role as 'holding sacred space' in order to enable those present to enter more easily, or more fully, into a state of openness: openness to the possibility of spiritual experience; to moments of grace; to encountering the divine.

In my experience of communal worship / spiritual practice, there are times when I feel deeply open to such experience; and times when I feel like I'm just 'going through the motions'. I'm sure I'm not alone in this. Some of this is to do with our own 'internal weather' or how distracted we are by other matters, but a good worship leader often has the capacity to create the conditions which allow congregants to enter more deeply into spiritual experience.

It's difficult to describe – in pragmatic terms – the exact skills which enable a person to have this capacity for 'holding sacred space'. It involves being fully present, rather than being distracted; however there are also other more nebulous qualities involved. For me, it involves holding a balance between entering into a state of spiritual openness myself, and retaining attention to the pragmatic aspects of leading a service.

I generally open a period of worship with the invitation: "Let us take a few moments of quietness to invite the Spirit of Life and of Love to be present among us; to awaken within us." The invitation is for us to settle into a time, when we are open to the possibilities of communal worship / spiritual practice. The effectiveness of 'holding sacred space' can often be assessed by the quality of silence. Are people distracted and bored, wondering when the next words will fill the silence? Or, do they feel enabled to settle deeply into the silence and open themselves to prayer / thanksgiving / the possibility of moments

of grace? Holding sacred space well can facilitate ‘openness to moments of grace’ for people who may be coming from busy, stressful lives, with not much opportunity for spiritual reflection or practice.

In thinking about how to ‘do’ this, I remembered words from Quaker Advices & Queries (A&Q). Quakers meet in silence and anyone present at meeting may feel prompted by the spirit to give vocal ministry. A&Q advises “Remember that we all share responsibility for the meeting for worship, whether in silence or in spoken words.” When I was a regular attender at Quaker meetings, my interpretation of those words was that we should value the contribution of those who never give vocal ministry, because they too are upholding the meeting by the attentive quality of their silence.

This idea of ‘upholding’ a spiritual gathering by the quality of one’s silence seems very real to me, but it is difficult to explain it pragmatically. This ‘upholding’ of a congregation, both in silence and with my words, is what I attempt to do when I lead worship. I don’t know how successful I am in this attempt, but I have been told by people whom I respect that they have appreciated my capacity to ‘hold sacred space’ for others.

Rev.Maud Robinson

* In using the word "worship", I refer back to Middle English worshippe, from Old English worðscip, "condition of being worthy"; from weorð "worthy" + -scipe "-ship". So when I say we gather for worship, I mean we gather to hold up that which is of worth, for examination, reflection, thanksgiving etc.

Dublin Unitarian Book Club's choice for July 2026.

The Door

by

Magda Szabo

The narrator of this story is a female writer who is only named towards the end of the novel. It is about her complex relationship of twenty years with her elderly housekeeper whose name is Emerence. It is set in Budapest , Hungary , following the 1956 Revolution and our narrator needs a housekeeper now that her writing career has taken off as it becomes unfrozen. A friend recommends Emerence, but it is Emerence who does the interviewing thus setting the tone of their relationship , she says, 'I don't just wash anyone's dirty linen'.

Emerence is an enigma, she is intensely private not just in her personal life but also her home. She is emotionally and physically closed off from the outside world when she closes 'The Door' to her apartment which she shares with nine cats, who are never let out. No one is allowed in and visitors are entertained on her porch. She does have some friends and many devotees as she carries out several jobs unbidden around the neighbourhood such as clearing the snow from the pavements and she has immense compassion and generosity if someone is ill as she is first on hand to bring help and some of her delicious food. However she can also be extremely rude, foul mouthed, vindictive, stubborn and is prone to holding grudges.

In her opinion it is hard physical work and what you DO for others that is of the highest value. Therefore she is at odds with her intellectual employer who writes for a living. She has no time for authority and despises doctors, priests, lawyers and intellectuals. Ironically she is on good terms with the local police and in particular the Lieutenant Colonel as she often treats them to her wonderful cooking. They in turn ignore the local gossip and speculation surrounding Emerence such as, was she a spy during the war, did she betray and rob Jews and so accumulating wealth from stolen goods?

Over the years the relationship between the narrator and Emerence grows into a sort of a love /hate relationship. There is much friction, misunderstandings and contention especially when the narrator and her husband adopt an abandoned puppy whom Emerence calls Viola and they develop a very special bond , so much so, that the dog mostly lives at

Emerence's place with the cats. Emerence has an almost mythological relationship with animals, giving her a further air of mystery.

Over time she does reveal to the narrator some of the details of her traumatic and tragic past. How her parents and twin siblings died thus forcing her to leave home as a young teenager to work as a maid for a Jewish family called the Grossmans. How she agreed to take their young daughter and pass her off as her own illegitimate child for which she was denounced by her family, when she returned to her home in the country with her. But this secret subterfuge saved the child from certain death by the Nazis.

Emerence seems almost superhuman but like us all she succumbs to the rigors of age and when she has not been seen for a number of days the neighbours become worried. It is only the narrator and the trusted Lieutenant Colonel that could call to the door to try gain access. When they do , Emerence is in a terrible condition having had a stroke. She is taken to hospital but the narrator is torn by guilt as in order to save Emerence she had to violate her wishes by breaking into her home causing her to lose all dignity and self autonomy. This dilemma lent much discussion among our readers as we talked about end of life decisions and how to respect those of others without causing hurt. Are you doing more harm than good? Our narrator felt that she had taken away Emerence's will to live as she could never return to the life she had. Emerence had what might seem a cold view on mortality and said to the narrator ' When the sands run out for someone, don't stop them going'.

The book club readers found this book very interesting and the two main characters very engaging. Emerence is a larger than life character and will stay with you after reading this novel. The translation was very good and so the writing was easy to read and very descriptive of the locations. According to Wikipedia Magda Szabo is Hungary's most translated author with publications in 42 countries and over 30 languages. The Door is a fine example of her work and a book well worth the read.

Alison Claffey
St.Stephen's Green Unitarian Church

Unitarian Music Society 2026

The annual meetings of the Unitarian Music Society was held on the weekend of 7th August. This year, I was delighted to be joined by Rev.Gavin Byrne our minister, and Shari McDaid. Gavin had been invited by the society to lead the Sunday morning service and he decided to stay for the whole weekend. Shari had decided to come along too as a participant. Both of them have been interested in the past and have not been able to join due to other commitments so I was really pleased they were there.

The event where members of the society meet in a sociable setting to learn about, and rehearse music which then gets performed on the Sunday evening. There are some breakout sessions which range from Madrigal Singing to learning about the Esperanto language (and many points inbetween). A team of rehearsal leaders (including me) chose pieces appropriate to the theme (this year's was Peace And Joy) for the choir to sing at short intensive rehearsals through the weekends. Newer member Ben Appelquist co-ordinated and arranged music for a mini-orchestra which played a few solos and also accompanied the choir. This year, the orchestra was small but worked extremely well together and the whole concert on Sunday was very enjoyable to both perform and, judging by audience reviews, witness. For my contribution, I was delighted to be able to conduct Shari's composition Psalm 100 which our own choir premiered in May at church. Shari was a much-appreciated member of the "orchestra".

Since David Dawson's death in 2020, it is heartening to see a new energised and experienced group of music leaders convened to both come up with ideas for music to prepare at the annual weekend, as well as put into practice new initiatives to make the weekend fun and productive for everybody. Leadership, problem-solving and creativity very much on display. The tone of this weekend was optimistic and hopeful ahead of the society's centenary next year.

The society is actively looking for new members of all ages to emphasize the importance of music in worship to all our chapels and churches. If you would like to join the society, or attend next year's weekend, or simply have further questions, do make contact with me at church or by email. josh@joshjohnston.com

The Society website - https://www.unitarianmusic.org.uk

Josh Johnston
St.Stephen's Green Unitarian Church

Dublin Unitarian Church

112 St.Stephens Green Dublin 2.

Service 11.00a.m.

Sunday Rota for September 2026

6th September	*Surprised by Joy*
Service	**Maeve Edwards**
Reader	**Robin Ward**
Flowers	**Janet Mulroy**
Welcomer	**Andrew Connolly-Crangle - Peter White**
Coffee	**Gráinne Carty, Janet Mulroy, Máire Bacon**
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13th September	*Love Your Neighbour*
Service	**Pamela McCarthy**
Reader	**Andrew Connolly-Crangle**
Flowers	**Peter Fontana**
Welcomer	**Jennifer Flegg - Gráinne Carty**
Coffee	**Madeline Stringer, Paul Murray, Andy Pollak**
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20th September	*The Bible Says So*
Service	**Rev.Gavin Byrne**
Reader	**Tony Roche**
Flowers	**Margaret Leeson**
Welcomer	**Alison Claffey - Daniela Cooney**
Coffee	**Gráinne Carty, John Leeson, Mary O'Brien**
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27th September	*Courage, Connection and Community*
Service	**Janie Lazar**
Reader	**Jennifer Flegg**
Flowers	**Paul Murray**
Welcomer	**Lorraine Doyle - Emer O'Reilly**
Coffee	**Therese Fontana, Daniela Cooney, Doireann Ní Bhriain**

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

Recordings of previous services are also available on the website.

CULTURE NIGHT

Dublin Unitarian Church

18 September 2026

6pm **What do these Unitarians Believe?**
An address by Rev Gavin Byrne

7pm **Organ Recital** Led by Olesia Borsuk

8pm **MindTravels** Reflections and meditations with improvised music by Rev Mark Hutchinson & Josh Johnston

9pm **Glóreile** Choral recital

All events will run for approx 40 mins - join us at any time during the evening

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

dublinunitarianchurch.org