



Ditchling **Unitarians**



Newsletter

May - July 2023

Open Minds, Kind Hearts, Free Spirits

SUNDAY SERVICES – 11 am

<i>DATE</i>	<i>SPEAKER</i>	<i>PIANIST</i>
7 th May	Francis Clarke-Lowes	Phillip Sear
21 st May	Rev. Duncan Voice	Nicola Lewsey
4 th June	Rev. Duncan Voice Flower Service	Phillip Sear
18 th June	Susie Courtault	Nicola Lewsey
2 nd July	Rev. Sheena Gabriel	Phillip Sear
16 th July, 3p m	Rev. Duncan Voice Anniversary Service	Nicola Lewsey
6 th August	Rev. Duncan Voice	Phillip Sear

MONDAY MEETINGS – 2pm

Organiser — Jill Clutterbuck

Monday 15th May – Speaker is Dr. Winn

Monday 19th June

Monday 17th July

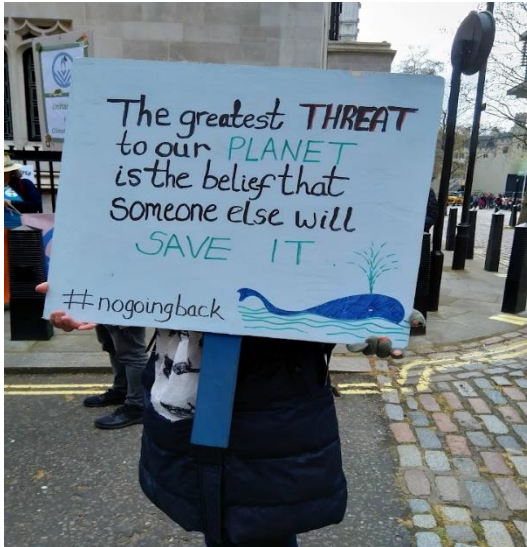
Join us at this friendly gathering for older people. We welcome a guest speaker for each meeting, and after the talk we enjoy a hot drink and some cake. All welcome.



*May the light of our chalice
Remove the shadow in our hearts,
And brighten our togetherness.*

*May the light of our chalice
Be as the light of love,
To guide us in our living.*

Climate Justice



On Saturday 22nd April a group of around 20 Unitarians took part in a peaceful protest in Westminster, called The Big One. We joined an estimated 60,000 people, representing a broad range of organisations and individuals, to express our concern about climate change and its effects. To share the view that not enough is being done to address this issue and that

what is being done is not happening quickly enough. And specifically on that day, which was Earth Day, to express our concern about the loss of biodiversity in our world. Some people, including members of our church, may not agree with some of these concerns and views. Some may not like the disruptive tactics of some activist groups or their demands. However, whatever your politics, there is no doubt that all the statistical indicators are heading in the wrong direction. Our world is rapidly getting warmer, many species are declining and pollution is increasing!

Climate change is huge and complex problem, but if you want a simple explanation the BBC has a page on its website which you might find helpful, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-24021772>

All nations of the world have a part to play in addressing climate change. The UK has made some progress in some areas, and the government has set a target to reach net-zero emissions by

2050, to try to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees in accordance with the 2015 Paris Agreement. According to the website Climate Tracker however, *less than 40% of the UK's required emissions reductions are supported by proven policies and sufficient funding.* In other words, unless something changes we will not achieve this target; and some would say that it is not enough anyway.

Does an event such as The Big One change anything? Well, hopefully it raises awareness of the issues – although the event was hugely under reported in the mainstream media! It allows people to come together and share their concerns and express themselves. It helps us to reflect on our own personal commitment to change that benefits the environment and therefore all life. Our historic consumption of fossil fuels, and our pollution of the world, has led to problems that we will be living with for a long time. And we don't want to get to the position where global warming becomes irreversible! Even now there are many climate related problems, such as rising sea levels and drought, that are affecting communities across the world. And it is the poorest who suffer the most. Climate justice is about speaking up for these people and the natural world. There are lots of problems in the world, but climate change is the big one!

At our Active Hope discussion group we will be sharing our feelings on these issues and reflecting on what the authors have to say. Please do come along, even if you missed the start. You would be most welcome.

With blessings,

Duncan

Meditation Group

Our small and friendly meditation group welcomes new members. We practice mindfulness meditation on selected dates. Our evening together usually consists of a guided meditation, a reading about mindfulness or meditation, a time of quietness and sometimes some sharing. We start at **7 pm**, and each session lasts for about 30-40 minutes. Payment is by donation.

Join us on any of the following dates:

Tuesday 23rd May

Tuesday 20th June

Tuesday 18th July

Flower Service

Sunday 4th June, 11 am

This Sunday you are invited to bring flowers to church for our Flower Service. Bring as many as you wish, so together we can make a beautiful display. Afterwards we will take home flowers that others have brought.

*"From you I receive, to you I give, together we share
and from this we live" – hymn 226, SYF*

Anniversary “Butterfly” Service



The annual celebration of our church community will be held on **Sunday 16th July**. The Service will begin at **3pm** and be followed by tea in the garden. Please join us.

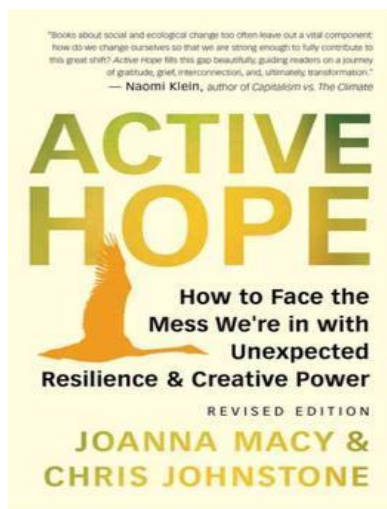


Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond your grasp. But if you sit down quietly, it may alight upon you.

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1804-64, novelist

Active Hope

Book Reading Group Starting 2nd May 2023



"The challenges we face can be difficult even to think about. Climate change, the depletion of oil, economic upheaval, and mass extinction together create a planetary emergency of overwhelming proportions. Active Hope shows us how to strengthen our capacity to face this crisis so that we can respond with unexpected resilience and creative power."

Discussion group meetings will be held in the Old Meeting House, The Twitten, Ditchling on the following Tuesdays, starting 7pm:

- **2nd May – Chapters 1 and 2**
- **16th May – Chapters 3 and 4**
- **30th May – Chapters 5 and 6**
- **13th June – Chapters 7 and 8**
- **27th June – Chapters 9 and 10**
- **11th July – Chapters 11, 12 and 13**

Please contact Duncan, on 07771 609347, revduncanv@gmail.com, if you would like to attend or have further questions. All are welcome.

Food Bank Collections



We are collecting for Burgess Hill Food Bank, 85 Church Walk, Burgess Hill. Donations can be left at The Old Meeting House.

If you are struggling and need the services of the Food Bank, then have a look on their website for details of their voucher system. Vouchers can be obtained from:

Citizens Advice – 0808 278 7969 or **Burgess Hill Town Council** 01444 247726.

The Food Bank offers collection from Burgess Hill, Hassocks, and a delivery service in Hurstpierpoint, but times are limited. See their website for details, burgesshillfoodbank.org.uk/how-to-get-food

Church Contacts

Minister – Rev. Duncan Voice revduncanv@gmail.com
07771609347

Hall Hire – Philip Eckstein eckstein.philip@gmail.com
01273 843549

All the latest information is also found on our website:

www.ditchlingunitarians.org.uk

Music for Summer's Evening

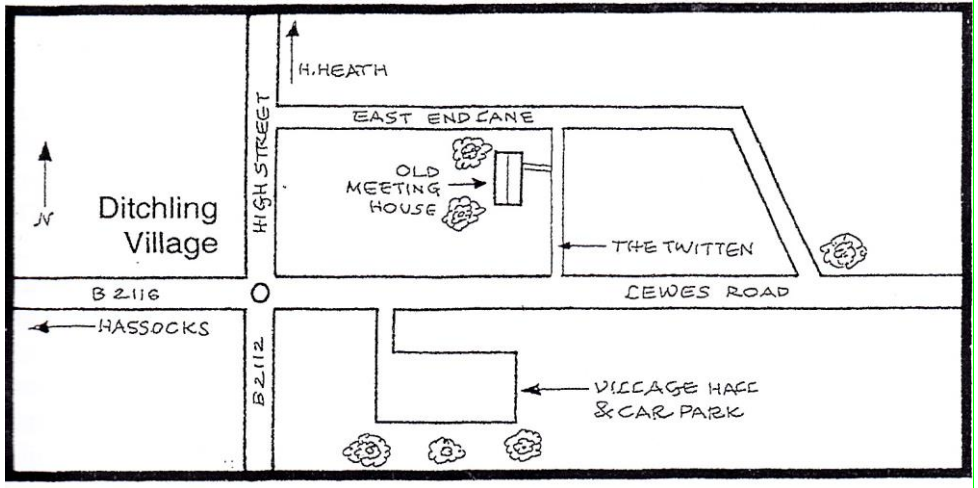
with Elizabeth Hills and Andrew Wickens

Thursday 27th July 2023, 7.30 pm

An evening of beautiful music at
The Old Meeting House



Tickets available soon.



Our congregation has been meeting at The Old Meeting House for over 300 years. We believe that people should be able to reach their own conclusions about what they believe, or don't, and we try to offer a welcoming and supportive environment in which to explore this. We are grounded in the Christian tradition, but we are open to the insights of different faiths and non-religious wisdom. Traditionally we have used reason as a way of discerning the value of religious claims, however we also recognise that faith is a matter of the heart. What is meaningful to one is not always logical to another. We are inspired in many ways and by many sources, such as poetry and nature and art. We greatly value caring community, and we see different lifestyles as valuable and enriching.

Whoever you are, and whatever your journey, we offer you welcome.