



The Frambridge Chronicle

**News from the Minister & Congregation of the Unitarian Meeting House,
Bridge Street, Framlingham**



Dear Friends, The **Eastern Union**, our District Association linking Unitarian congregations in East Anglia, has been suspended from 1st April 2016 for a period of two years following a decision taken by a substantial majority vote at the well-attended Extraordinary General Meeting of the Eastern Union held at the Ipswich Meeting House on Saturday 19 March.

The EGM had been called to consider a proposal from the Cambridge congregation, approved at the District's AGM September 2015, to wind up the Eastern Union. The background to the proposal was the stepping down of Shirley Fieldhouse, who has served faithfully as District Secretary for many years, and the reluctance of people to put their names forward to serve in this role. There has also been a feeling that existing District events rarely attract new people. Shirley was thanked warmly for her many years of service.

The presumption is that the Eastern Union will be wound up at the end of the two year period unless there is a decision to do otherwise. The constitution does allow for calling an Extraordinary General Meeting at the request of four constituent congregations - which gives the freedom for congregations in the region to go forward in any way they wish; whether to confirm that the Eastern Union be wound up or to revive it in a new form.

Ray and Sheila Seal were able to speak to their proposal of appointing a District Co-ordinator to keep traditional District events ticking over but it was felt that those present wanted to take a step back to think further about what could be put in place so no decision was taken on this.

The two year suspension is a constructive compromise put to the meeting by the guest chairman Alan Ruston, thus providing an opportunity for everyone to explore new and different ways of networking the congregations without the pressure to hold AGMs, Executive Meetings, or the usual programme of activities. Alan's suggestion quickly found favour with a clear majority. The EGM was also attended by Robert Ince of our national General Assembly Executive Committee and it was good to have his input.

It is up to us whether the suspension period will be one of stagnation & retrenchment or creative development. Certainly my wish is that we think seriously about how we want congregations in our region to get together and that we experiment a little. Slipping into isolation would be a very negative step.

Here are two completely fresh ideas to be considered: 1) a District retreat (Hucklow?); 2) living in the British region geographically closest to the Netherlands, we make efforts to establish formal links with liberal congregations there. In possible furtherance of this I am hoping to attend the forthcoming *International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) Conference* (17-23 July): the venue is the *Mennorode Conference Centre*, Elspeet, fairly close to Amsterdam. For more information on ICUU, see <http://icuu.server281.com/node/36>

Please do share your thoughts on ways forward & getting together in the future.

Blessings

Matthew

Please Note: The Minister's **rest days** are **Thursdays & Fridays** except in case of a pastoral emergency

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|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
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| Services in April 2016 | |  |  |
|------------------------|--------|---|---|
| Date | Time | The Unitarian Meeting House Bridge St Framlingham, IP13 9AJ | The Unitarian Meeting House Churchgate St., Bury St Edmunds IP33 1RH |
| 3 April | 3 p.m. |  | <i>Dissenter Faith is a load of Yeas and Nays</i> |
| 10 April | 4 p.m. | Matthew in dialogue with Jean Powis of the Baha'i Community |  |
| 17 April | 11a.m. |  | <i>So what did you learn in Assembly?</i> Matthew in dialogue with Rosemary Hegerty, feeding back on the Unitarian Annual General Assembly Meetings 2016 |
| 24 April | 4 p.m. | Unitarians: not a religion but a presence |  |

The Monday Study Group, 7 p.m. @, Pilgrims Cottage, Badingham, Framlingham. Tel: 01728 723322.
Monday 4 April Session 5, Monday 18 April final Session 6.

Regular events in the Meeting House during April:

Mondays & Fridays 09.30 – 10.30 a.m. 'SCHOOL RUN YOGA' This term begins on **Monday 11 April**. Pre-booking is strongly encouraged via the website www.bigskyyoga.co.uk.

Tuesdays 10 – 12 noon: CAFE CONNECT our community **Coffee Morning**. All welcome, **Fair Trade Refreshments & conversation** plus some bakery goods for sale.

Saturday 12 April 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. GREENER FRAM: Swap or Mend **Fair Trade** Refreshments for sale.

Special events in the Meeting House during April:

Wednesday 13 April 7 p.m. – 9.30 p.m. The Meeting House is hosting the **AGM** of the **Framlingham Residents' Association**

Thursday 14 April 7p.m. – 9 p.m. (Doors open 6.30 p.m.) A special concert will take place in the Meeting House performed by "Ramivana". Rami and Ivan are from Slovakia. This concert will feature unusual instruments from around the world. Tickets £12 (£8 Concessions) available at the door or pre-book at info@ramivana.com See poster attached – it would be much appreciated if the poster could be displayed. Thank you – Ed.

Forthcoming events

Sunday 24 April, 11 a.m., The Octagon Chapel, Norwich, "Fullness of Joy, Fullness of Light" a repeat of the dialogue between Matthew Smith and Suzanne Bartlett about her research and thesis on the significant, lasting contribution made to the Unitarian Cause in East Anglia by nineteenth century Unitarians Lucy Tagart and Florence Hill, who lived in Bedfield, near Framlingham until the early years of the twentieth century. During their lifetime they also built up friendships with the Martineau family of Rev James Martineau Minister of the Octagon Chapel, Norwich and his sister Harriet.

MINDFULNESS

Barbara Winfield will be launching a new mindfulness course at the Meeting House soon. If you are interested to find out more, please contact her on **(01728) 720029**.

Material for the MAY edition must be with the editor by 10.00 hrs Monday 18 APRIL 2016, – thank you

HARMONIC CONCERT BY RAMIVANA



**THURSDAY 14/04/16, 7-9pm (doors open 6:30pm)
Framlingham Unitarian Meeting House
Bridge Street, Framlingham, Suffolk, IP13 9AJ**

Entry: £12 / £8 concession

**Advanced bookings at 07915858099 or info@ramivana.com
or tickets available on the door**

We welcome you to our HARMONIC CONCERT using sound vibrations of traditional instruments from around the world, including symphonic gongs, didgeridoos, Native American flutes and overtone and throat singing, where you can enjoy and let the sounds take you on a journey around the world. It is a very healing and personal experience. The evening will end with an OPEN DISCUSSION about world instruments.

WWW.RAMIVANA.COM

info@ramivana.com