

Tony Windross has been Vicar of Hythe, in Kent, since 2008. He is a graduate of Cambridge University, where he read economics and geography, and spent 24 years as a teacher. Early in his teaching career he began to study for a London University degree in philosophy, gradually focusing on the philosophy of religion, which in due course led to him being ordained. He was a non-stipendiary minister for four years before moving to St Luke's, East Grinstead as curate-in-charge.

He was the incumbent at St Peter's at Sheringham in Norfolk for eight years before he moved to Hythe and it was while he was there that he wrote first the *Why Bother?* leaflets and then *The Thoughtful Guide to Faith*.

Tony Windross says in his introduction to *The Thoughtful Guide to Faith* :

... the book comes with a health warning: *it is not intended for those of a nervous disposition, or those who are easily shocked!* Rather, it is for those who, as members of the faith community or as interested onlookers, are depressed and mystified by much of what goes on in the name of Christianity...

... my underlying assumption is that Christianity must be accessible to everyone -

For an application form, please contact helen@hbellamy.me.uk

Brian Mountford served curacies at St Stephen's, Rochester Row and Christ Church, Lancaster Gate in the heady days of the late sixties. He then became Fellow and Chaplain of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge until 1978 when he was appointed Vicar of Southgate, one of the leading parishes of the liberal catholic tradition. In 1986 he was appointed Vicar of the University Church in Oxford, which combines ministry to the University, the City, and about 300,000 tourists each year. He was founding Chair of the Gatehouse Drop-in Centre for the homeless and is a Trustee of Family Links. He is an Honorary Canon of Christ Church Cathedral and Fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford. His books include: *Christian Atheist – belonging without believing* and *Perfect Freedom – about liberal Christianity*.

Brian Mountford writes in *Christian Atheist* (subtitled *Belonging without Believing*) about his initial reaction to *Sea of Faith* : *What is curious to me is that that always seems a sadly denuded form of religion. He continues yet it is extremely close to some forms of Christian Atheism I am now encouraging. We look forward to exploring the distinction.*

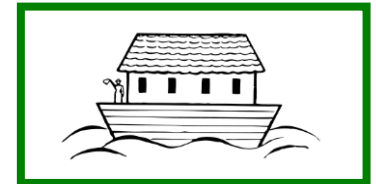
Richard Hall has been a SoF member for about 15 years and was a CoFE priest before he changed course and spent 30 contented years teaching RS and Philosophy to A level. In Zummerzret retirement he continues to enjoy singing and playing American folk music and has recently attempted to act and write for some amateur dramatists



SoFiC
Day Conference

London
10 March 2012

BEING CHURCH – on a rising tide?



Could we really move off from the place where we've been marooned for so long?

In what direction might we head?

Our thinking will be challenged by

BRIAN MOUNTFORD
author of
Christian Atheist

and

TONY WINDROSS
author of
The Thoughtful Guide to Faith

SEA OF FAITH is a network of groups and individuals who share the understanding that religions and religious faith are human creations and explore together the implications of such an understanding for their moral, spiritual, and social values.

SOF has no creed. It explores the implications for spiritual, social, educational and ecological issues that arise from embracing the provisional nature of religious insight. It welcomes people from all faith and humanist communities, and those with no involvement in any organised religion. The membership reflects a range of experiential, intuitive and intellectual concerns.

The Network took its name from a BBC television series *The Sea of Faith*, presented in 1984 by Don Cupitt, then Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Cupitt argued that we should cease to mourn the decay of traditional beliefs. Instead he offered a vision for the future of religious faith as entirely human, centred in spiritual and ethical activity.

This vision prompted an exploratory conference in 1988. Further conferences have been held annually and it was out of these that the Sea of Faith Network emerged.

There are local groups spread throughout the country. These are autonomous bodies, some meeting monthly, some quarterly, some preferring open, unstructured discussion, others organising lectures, workshops and one-day events.

SEA of FAITH in the CHURCHES provides a meeting place for those SoF members, and others, who find themselves in the midst of or, more commonly, hovering on the edge of the Christian Church

PROGRAMME

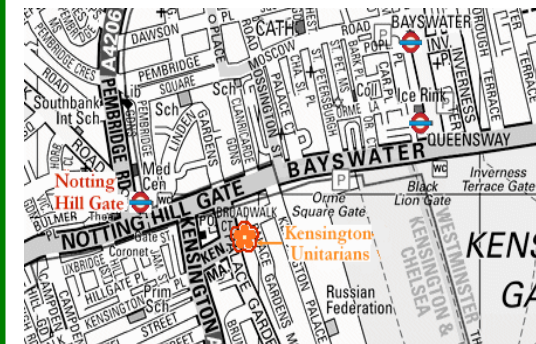
- 1015 Registration and Coffee
1045 Welcome
1055 Introduction – Richard Hall
Ebb and Flo - two old folk at the seaside
a personal survey of some tidal movements.
1115 Thinking Time
1120 Brian Mountford
Globalisation and Religion
– disdain, syncretism, or tyranny
The gap between official versions and on the ground practice
Christian Atheism?
- belonging without believing
1220 Thinking Time
1225 Questions to Brian Mountford
1255 Lunch
1345 Tony Windross
The Church is for Sceptics too
1445 Thinking Time
1450 Questions to Tony Windross
1520 Plenary Sesssion
1600 Tea and departure

Please bring along

- ~ **ideas** about how/why/where the church might move on
- ~ **details** of resources: books, web sites and podcasts, speakers, organisations . . . for sharing with other conference members

VENUE

Kensington Unitarians' Essex Church,
112 Palace Gardens Terrace, **w8 4rt**



(Note the NCP car park on Bayswater Road)

Essex Church has an accessible entrance to its ground floor approached via a reasonable incline. There is a wheelchair accessible toilet. If accessible parking is required please email info@kensington-unitarians.org.uk for further information. A loop system operates in the church.

