



# Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel

Founded 1662

Built 1703

*"Here let no man a stranger be"*



Feb - Apr 2016

[www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington](http://www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington)

[www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk](http://www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk)



## **Chairman's Letter**

Definitely a time of mixed blessings for everyone. We all know it's going to be busy around Christmas time but that didn't stop us from taking things on.

The Farmer's Market on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December at the Bay Horse in Heath Charnock went really well, and this was mainly due to three things. The first was the outstanding generosity of Chapel members who were unstinting in their kindness, giving all sorts of crafts and produce to the cause. For instance, we had Judith's marvellous marmalade and Alison's tempting medlar and quince treats. Also there were Carol and Dave's firewood, fine soaps, cakes and bird boxes. The second thing was our chance position of the stall which was under a lean-to shelter outside – quite cosy actually. And thirdly, the kindness of our hosts Fie and Karl who were so attentive and supportive, not to mention Fie giving us lashings of hot tea. Is it any surprise that we raised £150!

The music night at Chapel the previous evening was tremendous too. We are deeply indebted to the kindness of Craig Porch who assembled a strong line up of musicians from among his friends. We agreed to hold the event after being approached by Chorley Lions, who always have lot of charitable work to support, such as 'The Homeless in Winter' and a women's refuge. We provided mulled cider and mince pies to add to the festivities and the Lions assisted with the raffle, setting-up and seating people. Again Fie and Karl Eccles of the Bay Horse, who were married here in Chapel this June, supported us by donating a rather fine hamper to the raffle. Other prizes were a case of wine from the Lions and a bottle of Bushmills

- from my dad. We raised the princely sum of £307 which we split 50/50 with the Lions.

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December saw 'One Accord' in action with their 'Big Sing' which took place in the newly restored Barn, where else but at the Bay Horse. No doubt Alison and Peter have much to tell. I couldn't stay for the whole event but from what I did see, a thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all.

And what a Carol Service we had on 20<sup>th</sup> December. As usual we decorated the Chapel windows and this year the theme was The Feast of Christmas. We had readings between the carols all about the fascinating religious significance of the different foods we have at Christmas, from the once pilloried mince pie to the wonderful gingerbread house. Once again we were lucky enough to be on Santa's visiting list and he really made a huge impression on all the many boys and girls who were with us; the 'older children' were equally as enthralled. We thank Jimmy for decorating the tree so exquisitely. Our heartfelt sympathies went out to Roy Shepherd our dear organist who was laid up all over the Christmas period, in hospital! So, he was unable to play for us. We were very fortunate to be able to find a replacement organist, with only 5 hours to go, in the form of Peter Morrison from Chorley. Our profound thanks to you Peter. Derian House sent a thank-you note to Joan Thursby for the hand crafted chocolate boxes that Joan made for the children.

However, it has not been all quite such good news and cheer in the region as we have had terribly wet weather. Indeed, Cumbria recorded its wettest December ever and once again Croston came in for it, with serious flooding that Linda will tell you more about. The Congre-

gation have been able to make a donation to their funds in the form of the £150 proceeds of the December Farmers Market and the collection we took on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

At our service on 3<sup>rd</sup> January we were most fortunate to have with us the Bennet Singers, a community choir, under the leadership of Jan Turner. They sang four pieces for us throughout the service, which were: Carol to the Russian Children, Joy to the World, In the Bleak Midwinter and The Coventry Carol. It was all truly beautiful and a very welcome respite from the awful happenings in the world. Travelling had become pretty difficult in the district with bridges and highways closed and compromised by the various floods, but to hear this singing made it all worth the effort. And to cap it all 'One Accord' were with us at the service and we all got to sing their wonderful 'New Year Carol.'

So, certainly a mixed start to the year. Perhaps the answer is to sing, a lot! And with that I wish you a happy and prosperous 2016.

Amen & God bless, *Vince*  
Chairman  
Lay Person in Charge

The universe may be infinite in size, but like any puzzle, all pieces are important for the picture to be complete. Be all you want to be this coming year.

Excerpt from a prayer by Rev Shammy Webster, Rochdale Chapel

## **From the Committee**

### **Notice of AGM**

The Annual General Meeting of the Congregation of Rivington Chapel will be held on Sunday 20 March following the service.

A nomination form for the Officers of the Congregation and the Members of the Committee will be on the notice board during February and March. Nominations can be accepted up to the start of the meeting.

The post of Chapel Secretary is still vacant. Listed below are the various duties that the post involves.

### **Duties of Chapel Secretary**

1. Print and distribute the agenda for Congregational Committee meetings and Congregational AGM.
2. Take the minutes at Congregational Committee meetings and the Congregational AGM.
3. Type up and circulate the minutes before next meeting.
4. Send and receive correspondence.
5. Act as primary contact for Rivington Pilgrimage.
6. Act as primary contact for MDA (Manchester District Association) and GA (General Assembly)
7. Keep the Chapel Notice Board up to date.

### **Flower Rota**

Thank you to those who have already given notification of changes to the Flower Rota. If anyone else who is on the list would like to make any changes, or wishes their name to be removed, please let Alison Whitaker know. Alison would also like to hear from anyone who would like to be added to the list of flower donors. There are now

vacancies for the 3rd Sunday in January, the 3rd Sunday in May and the 3rd Sunday in October. If you wish to continue to provide flowers, but are unable to attend the service when it is your turn, please let Alison know so that she can arrange for flowers to be put in Chapel on your behalf.

### **Standing Orders and Gift Aid Donations**

Some years ago, members and friends of Rivington Chapel were invited to make regular donations through Standing Order to support the work of the Chapel. We are very grateful to all who have made or still make such contributions. However, there may be some Chapel members and friends, particularly those who have joined us more recently, who are not aware that they can support the chapel in this way.

The 'simple beauty' of the Chapel building and its surroundings makes it a lovely setting for weddings and other ceremonies. However, earnings from Rites of Passage bookings are subject to fluctuation from year to year, and cannot be relied on to cover all the cost of utility bills and expenses such as fees for visiting ministers.

Being able to depend on a regular source of income is important for keeping the finances stable and ensuring that the Chapel remains open for visitors and for worship. Another advantage is that the regular donations are eligible for Gift Aid if you are a UK taxpayer. This enables the Chapel to claim an extra 25p for every £1 donated.

If you would like to set up a Standing Order to make regular payments to the Chapel, please contact me. My contact details are on the back of this newsletter.

**Frank Ascroft, Treasurer**

## **Trustees Matters**

Michael Hough, Paul Fairclough and I recently met with a representative from Historic England who gave us some informal advice on what we could do to improve the heating situation in the Chapel. As the Chapel is a Grade II\* listed building, we have to be careful that we do not contravene any guidelines.

Following the meeting it was agreed that the best way forward with regards to the doors was to repair them in situ if at all possible. We have engaged John Winstanley (a cousin of Jimmy) to undertake this work. Listed building consent is not required as long as the same materials and construction methods are used as on the original door. We will be liaising with the Chorley Council Heritage Officer to ensure that this is the case.

As I reported in the last newsletter, the old timer for the heating has been removed. It has now been replaced by a new 7-day timer. This is in a much more accessible position and should mean that we can get the Chapel a little warmer before services, although we are still pursuing possibilities for further improvements.

Peter Barlow, the representative from Historic England, had not visited the Chapel before and seemed quite impressed with its general condition. He wrote the following in one of his emails: *“Many thanks for your continued input in looking after such a special building”*.

**Peter Bearon**  
**Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees**

## **Croston Floods**

As you will have seen in the news, the village of Croston (where John and I live) was severely flooded on Boxing Day and the village centre was totally cut off. Fortunately, our house was not affected but the Old School (where John is a trustee) was a victim. We spent the following 3 days clearing out mud, ripping up carpets, washing literally hundreds of plates and glasses and moving things into store. The work was hard and dirty and we were thankful to be able to go back to a warm, dry house with all home comforts.

The electricity supply was cut off for a day and a half so we could only work until darkness fell. Despite the chaos, the atmosphere was lovely as everyone was pitching in to help. People were constantly arriving with donations of food and drinks. Electricity Northwest sent a catering truck and a local restaurant ferried down vats of hot soup for residents and helpers.

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> another red severe warning was received and the hatches were battened down again. John sandbagged the Old School and the Pre-school to avoid a second inundation. We were asked to clear the village centre at 1pm when the high tide was due and everyone held their breath. All was well. The heroic efforts by the Chinook helicopter (piloted by a local lad) to repair the breached River Douglas and the fact that a tremendous amount of water had been pumped off the flood plain by the fire service saved the village from further flooding.

On Tuesday John and our friend Steve set up dehumidifiers to remove moisture from the air. We continued the work of cleaning,

boxing and putting things into storage so the building could be power cleaned and treated for any residual bacteria.

Although there is much work still to do to rebuild homes and businesses, the community spirit, as well as support from outside the village, has been inspiring. Donations of food, clothing, cleaning materials and even offers of furniture and accommodation have been pouring in. Khalsa Aid were here for a few days distributing Indian food to affected locals and emergency services. A hamper was sent to the village with a card that read simply "To Croston from Cumbria". A moving gesture given how hard hit that area has been. One man drove up from Cornwall, setting off at 5am to deliver donations. It has been uplifting that people have come together to give and share no matter how much or how little they have, regardless of background, culture or distance.

On our way home from Chapel on the following Sunday we called into the Old School. The cleaners had just finished decontaminating and the Pre-school staff were setting up ready to open on Monday morning. It must have been a mighty effort.

I contacted the Flood Relief Group and passed on the greetings from the Chapel. On behalf of the group I would like to relay their thanks for your prayers of support and for the very generous donation to the flood relief fund.

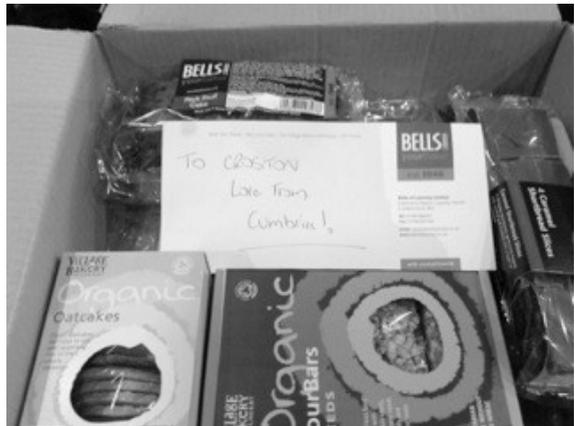
Thank you all.

**Linda and John Green**



Determination  
in the face of  
adversity

The hamper from  
Cumbria



### **A New Year Resolution**

Included in Vince's service on 3 January.

### **A Resolve**

I will this day try to live a simple, sincere and serene life repelling promptly every thought of discontent, anxiety, discouragement, impurity and self-seeking, cultivating cheerfulness magnanimity, charity and the habit of holy silence, exercising economy in expenditure, carefulness in conversation, diligence in appointed service, fidelity to every trust and a child-like trust in God.

From a calendar by Bishop John H. Vincent, 1909

## **2016 Calendar**

Sun 15 May	Anniversary Service
Sat 21 May	Open Day in support of Rivington Spring Festival (date tbc)
Sun 5 June	Strawberry Tea
Sat 10 Sept	Late Summer Fair/Heritage Open Day
Sat 24 Sept	Rivington Pilgrimage
Sun 16 Oct	Harvest Festival
Sun 18 Dec	Christmas Carol Service

### **Coffee4Craig**

We continue to support Coffee4Craig, a not-for-profit organisation which supports and works with homeless people in Manchester and South Wales.

In Manchester, activities include static street kitchens, a weekly welfare walk and support for other projects, charities and statutory services.

More information about their work can be found on their website, [www.coffee4craig.co.uk](http://www.coffee4craig.co.uk) . Please contact me if you have any items you would like to donate.

**Alison**

## **Booklets and Postcards**

On sale in the Chapel and the Village Tearooms are two booklets produced by Michael Hough, 'Rivington Chapel Memorial Inscriptions' and 'Rivington Chapel Trustees Minutes, August 1859 to March 1955'. Also available is a pack of postcards featuring old photographs of the Chapel.

Prices are as follows:	Rivington Chapel Memorial Inscriptions	£2.50
	Rivington Chapel Trustees Minutes	£3.00
	Postcards (set of 8)	£1.50

These are also available directly from Michael (plus the cost of postage and packing). Please contact him on 0113 267 7298.

## **A Note from the Editor**

Don't forget that if you would like to help us reduce the cost of printing and posting the newsletter, you can opt to have an e-mail version rather than a paper copy. You can, of course, read this and past issues online at [www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk](http://www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk). If you are happy to do so, please contact me on [newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk), so that the mailing list can be amended. Chris and Lynne Haighton, who distribute the newsletters, would also be grateful to be kept informed if there are any other amendments that need to be made to the list. Their contact details can be found on the back page of the newsletter.

**Alison**

## Dates for your Diary

### Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

7 February	Rev Stephen Lingwood - Bank Street Chapel
21 February	Rev Bob Janis-Dillon - Liverpool
6 March	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
20 March	Dr Irvine Delamore - Rivington
3 April	Prof Geoff Levermore - Norcliffe Chapel, Styal
17 April	Rev Penny Johnson - Dean Row Chapel
1 May	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel

### Flower Donors

7 February	Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon
21 February	Iris Wharton
6 March	Dianne Fairclough
20 March	Joan Thursby
3 April	Olive Mayor
17 April	Olive Fisher
1 May	Jaqueline Dagnall

## Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 6 March                      Congregational Committee Meeting  
After Service

Sun 20 March                    Congregational AGM  
After Service

---

---

If you would like to arrange a ceremony at Rivington  
Chapel, please contact  
Mary Horrocks tel: 01204 493757

---

---

**Copy date for next issue:    1 Apr 2016**  
**Issue date:                      17 Apr 2016**

send to:    Alison Whitaker, 14 Church Street, Westhoughton, Bolton,  
                 BL5 3RS

telephone: 01942 816569

email:        newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Please send your contributions electronically if possible to the email  
address above. For those without access to the internet I am still  
happy to receive handwritten copy,

<b><i>Your Committee</i></b>	
Chairman & Pulpit Supply Secretary	Vince McCully (Lay Person in Charge) 20 Thirlmere Close, Anderton, Lancashire, PR6 9QD 01257 483733      email: vinmcul@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary	Position vacant
Treasurer & Chapel Keeper	Frank Ascroft 13a Highfield Road North, Adlington, Lancashire, PR6 9RN 01257 483635      email: ascroftf@pobroadband.co.uk
Organist	Roy Shepherd MGI; MNMSCM 20 Shillingston Close, Harwood, BL2 3PD 01204 394061      email: roy.shepherd@yahoo.co.uk
Publicity Officer	Dennis Crompton 21 Woodfall, Astley Village, Chorley, PR7 1XD 01257 671869      email: crompton.df@uwclub.net
Newsletter Editor & Flower Rota	Alison Whitaker 14 Church Street, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3RS 01942 816569      email: newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk
Other Committee Members	Jacqueline Dagnall      01204 691833 Paul & Diane Fairclough      01257 474761 Geoff Newey      07746 906635
<b><i>Other Contact Details</i></b>	
Newsletter Distribution	Lynne & Chris Haighton 105 Albert Road West, Heaton, Bolton, BL1 5ED 01204 841678      email: chris.haighton@virgin.net