

# Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

*"Here let no man a stranger be"*



Nov 2019 - Jan 2020

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

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

Facebook: Rivington Unitarian Chapel



## **Lay Person in Charge's Letter**

Well, what can I say. After a busy Spring and Summer we have had a super busy Autumn, and it's not over yet with our Harvest Festival to come.

We do amazing things at Chapel and all because of team-work. Without this very little is possible. We had a grand Late Summer Fair when the atmosphere was everything people have come to know and love about our dear Chapel. However, the Tour of Britain cycle race passing through the next town along (Horwich) didn't help much, so numbers were a bit down, though our spirits were high.

The Pilgrimage was probably the pinnacle of the year for me so far. Folk don't always realise that we are actively planning for this two years beforehand, what with making certain of the venue, the speaker and the celebrant – not the sort of thing you can leave to even a year before. I have had some feedback from this year's Pilgrimage and it's all good, with one or two regretting they missed the date. The weather in the preceding 24 hours was nothing short of shocking. A veritable maelstrom had preceded with inevitable flooding on the Horrobin Lane causeway and other vital roads also rendered impassable. Even trains were turned back and we deeply missed our dear friends who were not able to make it through.

For those who aren't able to follow us on our Facebook page (Rivington Unitarian Chapel), where there are some great pictures, this is what I wrote about the day:

"Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and our Triennial Pilgrimage was once again so special. A gathering of simply amazing, inspiring and like-minded people, come together to celebrate civil and religious liberties. As Rev Celia Cartwright so rightly pointed out in her speech, where these liberties

exist they are hard won. Our enjoyment of them was never so obvious than in Rev Danny Crosby's equally inspiring, thoughtful and fun filled service.

The pictures show the set-up for lunch, Celia delivering 'The Toast to Civil and Religious Liberties', Diane Fairclough cutting gateaux, Danny and Sue during the service and some left-over goodies (2 huge gateaux, lashings of cream and loads of red cabbage, pickled onions and beetroot) that were whisked away to Coffee4Craig at Centre Point in Manchester."

The Pilgrimage was a great success, so hats off to 'Chapellers' Alison, Diane, Mary (whose flowers were divine), Paul, Peter, Geoff, Chris, Frank, Richard, Iris and Hannah.

You will see from displays in Chapel and the Tea Room that Chris Martin has been making a great effort to market the 2020 calendars and Christmas cards and has already had some successful sales. Another place where they can be purchased is the Post Office in Adlington (on the A6).

I would also like to say a massive thank you to Michael Hough who has recently resigned as a trustee. In addition to acting as Treasurer to the Trustees, Michael has worked tirelessly and purposefully on the grounds and infra-structure of the Chapel. In fact, when I sat down for the Pilgrimage service, one of the first things some visitors from Wirral said was how much they appreciated the heating. At the last Trustee's meeting I proposed a vote of thanks to Michael which was readily and unanimously taken up. Thank you, Michael and thank you, Teresa, for the most excellent cakes you have provided.

On September 20 and 21 I went on a creative writing course in Formby which was conducted by Rev Judith Campbell, a Unitarian Univer-

salist Minister from the States. This was organised by Rev Lynne Readett on behalf of the North West Provincial Assembly. I was among a dozen or so Unitarians from across the region who were gently and effectively guided through the creative writing process by Judith. Should this opportunity arise again I can very strongly recommend it. It was also a valuable time of retreat where you were given ample time for reflection.

Before the year's end we have our Harvest and Carol services and I look forward to telling you all about proceedings in the next newsletter.

*Vince*

Lay Person In Charge

### **2019 - 2020 Calendar**

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Sun 15 Dec | Christmas Carol Service |
|------------|-------------------------|

#### **2020**

|            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| Sun 15 Mar | Congregational AGM |
|------------|--------------------|

|           |                            |
|-----------|----------------------------|
| Sat 9 May | Rivington Village Festival |
|-----------|----------------------------|

|            |                     |
|------------|---------------------|
| Sun 17 May | Anniversary Sermons |
|------------|---------------------|

|            |                |
|------------|----------------|
| Sun 7 June | Strawberry Tea |
|------------|----------------|

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Sat 12 Sept (tbc) | Heritage Open Day and Late Summer Fair |
|-------------------|--|

|            |                  |
|------------|------------------|
| Sun 18 Oct | Harvest Festival |
|------------|------------------|

|            |                         |
|------------|-------------------------|
| Sun 20 Dec | Christmas Carol Service |
|------------|-------------------------|

## **Chairman's Letter**

Vince has already mentioned the Late Summer Fair and the Triennial Pilgrimage. I would like to add my thanks to all the people who helped at both events. The Fair raised a total of just over £370 pounds, a similar amount to last year. Most of this was taken on the Saturday, but the funds were boosted on the following day, when we took donations for the remaining cake which accompanied the after service refreshments instead of the usual biscuits.

I would also like to thank Rev Celia Cartwright for her perseverance on the day of the Pilgrimage. Having travelled down from Kendal, she was held up by the flooding on the approach roads to Rivington but finally made it through at the third attempt.

Janet Lythgoe, one of our Congregational Committee members, is the administrator for Bolton Christian Community Cohesion, and she has been sending me their regular email bulletin about church and community events. As well as finding out about what other organisations are planning, we are able to use the bulletin to publicise events at Rivington. If you would like me to forward these emails to you, please let me know.

**Alison Whitaker**

## **A thought**

Stand for something or you will fall for anything. Today's mighty oak is yesterday's nut that held its ground.

**Rosa Parks, US civil rights campaigner**

## **Trust Matters**

Again, and as stated in the Summer Newsletter, the summer months have continued to be relatively quiet with regard to the Chapel and its estate. The Tea Room lease is currently still under negotiation, but the tenants have indicated their wish to continue under the new terms, once finally decided. A continuing issue with regard to the Tea Room is that because it is within the curtilage of the Class II\* listed Chapel, its refurbishment is subject to Historic England approval. This involves our working closely with our conservation architect, Chorley Council and, not least, approved firms who have the skills to undertake work. These together add significantly to the overall costs of any particular project. As a consequence, an application has been made to Historic England for the Tea Room to be “delisted” based on the main criterion that the building ceased to have any link with the Chapel’s religious activities when it ceased to be a Sunday School in the 1950/60 period. Although records are absent as to when exactly the Sunday School ceased operation, the current tenants started to refurbish the building as a Tea Room in 1982. During this period the library, which was housed there, was found to be a bad state of repair and dismembered. Michael Hough has written a short history of the library and this, together with a few of the remaining texts, can be seen in the Chapel, in the second pew on the left as one enters.

Michael has also overseen the construction of a new path to the east of the Chapel running parallel to the Tea Room’s west wall together with a short new adjoining length parallel to the south wall running down into the lower churchyard area. A graded gravel topping is about to be applied as surface dressing which should provide a hard wearing, non-slip yet water permeable surface.

Calendars for 2020 are now on sale in the Chapel as well as a selection of Christmas card packs, each of which comprise photographs of Rivington and surroundings during the various seasons of the year.

**Richard Horrocks**  
**Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees**

### **Christmas Cards & Calendar 2020**

These are now on sale in Chapel. The Christmas cards are in 2 packs of 6 cards each, in both A5 and A6 sizes with envelopes. Between the two packs there are 12 different images of wintry scenes in and around Rivington. Prices are:

|    |              |                |
|----|--------------|----------------|
| A6 | 1 pack £3.75 | 2 packs £7:00  |
| A5 | 1 pack £5.50 | 2 packs £10:50 |

The 2020 Calendar features 12 images taken in the Rivington area at various times of the year. The cost is:

1 copy £6.00  
2 to 3 copies £5.50 each  
4 or more £5.00 each

Bulk orders are welcomed - please contact us for details.



## **What's in a name?**

Everyone with an interest in Rivington seems to know of “Clock House” aka Higher Wards Farm or even “Granny Lee’s”, - the residence of the Lee family who have a long association with the Chapel as records of baptisms, weddings and burials show. The property was demolished in 1905/6 by Liverpool Corporation when the remaining family members moved to Wards Cottage, so no evidence remains of its location overlooking the junction of Rivington Lane and Gilsbrook.

The name “Clock House” apparently arises from the story that pupils walking to and from school used the clock inside the farmhouse to check whether they were still on time to arrive for lessons. However, old photos of the farmhouse cast some doubt on this – a stone porch is built on the front with the entrance at a right angle to the lane so passers-by would have needed good eyesight or hearing if they relied on the clock striking the hour and quarters!

So, I was puzzled to read in MD Smith’s book, ‘Old Rivington & District’ (page 94, an extract from the Horwich Post Office Directory for 1890) that a James Lee, farmer, was listed as living at Ellers, a house/farm name I had not come across before. Research by J Cordwell reveals that the names Higher Wards and Clock House never appear on the census enumerator’s schedule which corresponds to the route they would have taken, viz:

1841 Ellers, occupied by John Lee and his children

1851 Ellers farm, occupied by John Lee, family members and lodgers

1861 Elders, occupied by John Lee and family members

1871 The Alders, occupied by James & Hannah Lee and children

1881 Ellers, Rivington Lane occupied by James & Hannah Lee

1891 Ellers farm, occupied by James & Hannah Lee

1901 Ellers farm, occupied by James & Hannah Lee

Interestingly, old maps of 1849 and 1892 show the property as Higher Ward's so it may be the case that different names were used by government officials and residents, further confused by folklore passed down.

**M Hough – 3x great grandson of John Lee.**

### **What I think of at Christmas Time**

At Christmas I think of a lovely happy time

Playing in the snow, and the church bell begins to chime.

I think of baby Jesus and the glorious night.

The bright shining star oh so very bright.

Inside the church we are praying, giving thanks for all we have.

Our families and friends who all make us glad.

We think of all those who don't have as much as we have now.

A place to sleep, some food to eat, a caring hand upon their brow.

What Christmas really means to me is happiness and joy.

Love for one another, Jesus the baby boy.

**Summer Walton, age 9**

*(Summer wrote this poem last year when she was 8, and it was used at last December's Carol Service)*

## **Global Chalice Lighting**

We honour the time of darkness that we descend into whether of season or soul.

May we find time of quiet reflection and of joyous celebration.

We bring stories, traditions, and rituals with us from our diverse lives.

We are people of faith with many beliefs.

We fill the darkness with lights of many faiths.

These lights warm us, illuminate the night and become symbols of hope for the future.

We celebrate the lights that are kindled in the darkness.

We pause in the darkness to celebrate the light within all our traditions.

We come together to rejoice with each other as family, friends, and community.

It is in bringing light to the darkness we are united and find companionship.

May the light we share be with us in days of darkness.

May the candles we burn remind us that we are not alone.

May they light our way back into the light and warm our hearts with hope for tomorrow and gratefulness for today.

**Words by A Member of the Unitarian Universalist Association in the  
United States**

## **Song of Hope**

(words written for the tune 'Finlandia' and sung at the 2019 GA Meetings)

This is my song, spirit of soil and starlight,  
A song of hope, for all the days to come.  
This is my dream: a world where kindness prospers;  
Where storms soon pass; clouds part to show the sun;  
Where rainbows crown the view, a gleaming promise  
That life's fresh start; a new world has begun.

In hills and valleys, rivers tumble by us  
Reminding us that time flows ever on.  
On sandy beaches, tides wash out our footsteps,  
As hearts forgive, and past hurts will be gone.  
O hear my song, spirit of soul and starlight  
A song of hope for all the days to come.

**Stephanie Bisby**

## **Rivington Chapel Publications**

The latest addition to the series of reprints of 'Rivington and District' booklets by David Owen is 'A History of Rivington Church'.

This booklet, together with all the publications in the collection, are on sale in the Chapel and The Village Tea Room. They are also available directly from Michael Hough (plus the cost of postage and packing). Please contact him on 0113 267 7298.

Full details of all our publications are also on the website:

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

## **Coffee4Craig**

We continue to support Coffee4Craig, a charity which supports and works with homeless people in Manchester and South Wales.

Coffee4Craig, in conjunction with Centre Point North, now operates a seven day a week drop-in centre on Oldham Street in the centre of Manchester. More information about the charity's work can be found on the website, [www.coffee4craig.co.uk](http://www.coffee4craig.co.uk).

Coffee4Craig takes donations of fresh produce as these can be used straight away to provide meals in the drop-in centre. Items such as toiletries and clothing are also welcome.

If you have any larger items, particularly household goods, they can, together with non-perishable foodstuff and toiletries, be taken to Help the Homeless in Chorley. They are based at 45 Clifford Street, which is not far from Flat Iron car park.

## **A Note from the Editor**

If you need to inform us of any change in your details, or if you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please ring Mary Horrocks on 01204 493757. You can also notify us by emailing [newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk).

Also, please email if you would like to help us reduce the cost of printing and posting the newsletter by opting 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).

**Alison**

## Dates for your Diary

### Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 3 November  | Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel      |
| 17 November | Graeme Pilbrough - Padiham Chapel     |
| 1 December  | Rev Frank Williams - Rivington Chapel |
| 15 December | Christmas Carol Service               |
| 5 January   | Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel      |
| 19 January  | Val Chamberlain - Bury Chapel         |
| 2 February  | Geoff Newey - Rivington Chapel        |

### Flower Donors

|             |                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 November  | Jacquie Kershaw                  |
| 17 November | John Patefield                   |
| 1 December  | Carol Worsley                    |
| 15 December | Christmas Decorations            |
| 5 January   | Christmas Decorations            |
| 19 January  | Marge Bradshaw                   |
| 2 February  | Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon |

## Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 3 November      Congregational Committee Meeting  
After service

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

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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.

|  |  |
|--|--|
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