Rivington
Unitarian and Free Christian
Chapel

Founded 1662 Built 1703

"Here let no man a stranger be"

Nov 2016 - Jan 2017

www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

www.facebook.com/Rivington-Unitarian-Chapel-1724516264491069

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

My letter in our last publication gave the concerning news about the fire at the Yew Tree Restaurant and Public House at Anglezarke. I am pleased to report that, after months of hard work, the building has been restored to all its former glory; well done all at the Yew Tree.

Our Facebook page has been a real boon to the Chapel and we have been putting it to good use. Often so much energy and effort goes into hosting events and special services that it's a shame when those who would appreciate them most sadly miss them. The name of our page is 'Rivington Unitarian Chapel', so be sure to . . . "look us up and hook us up" – if you haven't already done so. Give us a 'Like' too, please.

Rivington's sleepy appearance belies the fact that so much goes on here in one way or another and our beloved Chapel, a much loved place of simple beauty, is normally a haven for those who might be a little 'world weary' shall we say. But once again we have had a busy summer with our Chapel often framed against the deepest of deep blue skies (I'm writing this on National Poetry Day).

I am told that during the 'Pokemon Go' craze our Chapel became a 'Gymn', I'm sure this is a good thing, if only we knew . . . The Late Summer Fair was a wonderful occasion and the fellowship that one could feel was most heartening. Everyone chipped in, in one way or another; sometimes providing additions to the Bric-a-Brac, maybe some books, some mouth-watering home produce, or fine artifice from the crafters. The Tombola had a great impact, causing lots of fun amongst our visitors. We saw lots of old friends who came to see what we had to offer and there were a lot of new faces too, probably encouraged by our links with Heritage Open Day, or expo-

sure on Facebook. Not only did we have a fine day for it but we managed to raise valuable funds to the tune of £403.10.

Our Chapel was once again the venue for a meeting of choirs where Alison and Peter were joined by Linda and John to provide tea, coffee and biscuits, and we were able to let others enjoy the unique setting that we call home. Once again successful fund raising took place.

Our Triennial Pilgrimage took place this year on Saturday 24 September. Now where do we begin? Firstly, the Chapel was cleaned and tidied to within an inch of her life by trustees and members of the congregation. Diane and Paul spent hours cleaning the windows, Michael and Paul lavished attention on the lamp shades, Mary, Teresa and Alison were cleaning too and spiders were sent scurrying to the four corners. Carol did a wonderful job on the grass outside; there is an awful lot of it.

For reasons covered in previous newsletters we had to change venues for the Pilgrimage meal and fortunately we were able to use Rivington Church Hall. This Year we enlisted the services of none other than the GA (General Assembly) President, Dot Hewerdine, to make the speech and propose the toast to 'Civil and Religious Liberty'. This was informative, whilst being entertaining and was well received by all present. The meal was a huge undertaking for us; you could say it was a very steep learning curve indeed and while there are always ways to improve things, I can honestly say it was a success. Please check out the photos we have on our Facebook page, I think you'll be impressed and I have spoken to quite a few attendees since and they all say how good it was. So well done us!

Of course we owe a debt of gratitude to Fiona and Karl Eccles, the

proprietors of the Bay Horse Pub at Heath Charnock, who prepared all the food. The menu was a simple affair and described as a Lancashire lunch. Karl called the main course beef hot pot, but really it was a rather delicious beef casserole (one I think that even Keith Floyd would have been proud of) and it did justice to the days of preparation that he put into it. This was followed by hearty sponge and custard (no . . . much better than school meals) and tea or coffee. Fie, Aneka and Ken worked tirelessly to get the food out quickly while still hot. Thanks guys, we really owe you a huge THANK YOU. Mind you, it should be mentioned in despatches that Peter and Alison were pretty magnificent with the planning, logistics, setting up and clearing away too.

Moving on to the Pilgrimage service, after the meal a few hardy souls with four banners amongst them (from Gateacre, Chow Bent, Knutsford and Rivington Chapels) processed from the Church Hall through Rivington's leafy lanes and tracks to the Chapel. Again you can see some great pictures on the Facebook page. The service was conducted by the very popular and accomplished preacher Rev Bob Janis-Dillon who was able to appeal to the spiritual core of all who were present. The atmosphere and energy in our Chapel, when there are so many like-minded Unitarians committed to their faith present, is indeed something to behold and the hymn singing is . . . immense (possibly not the right word but . .). All I can say is, if you have not been to one of these Pilgrimage services then you have missed a real and unforgettable treat.

We won't get such a crowd as this now until we hold our Carol Service at 2:15 pm on Sunday 18 December. Before then we have two Naming Ceremonies in Chapel in addition to our normal services. I

have been asked to conduct a service, in October, at Park Lane in Bryn (near Wigan) and also a Naming service afterwards.

In September I began further studies on 'Rites of Passage' which entails attending at Bank Street Chapel in Bolton where a short course is being led by Rev Lynne Readette. This will give me an opportunity to learn further approaches and facets of this, let's face it, vital area of activity. I say vital because often it is only through attending Namings, Weddings and Funerals that many people ever even walk through our doors. And that is, I sincerely hope, when they are able to get more of a handle on the sorts of things that we stand for; and which they may feel a need to connect with . . . when the time is right for them. They will hear, even if just from our 'Chalice Words' that we stand for ". . . Freedom, Hope and Love. Freedom to express our many and varied beliefs and ways of worship. Hope that this freedom and the Joy it brings may bring love to all parts of the world." Amen

I know it's early, but may I wish a happy and joyful Yuletide to all (and don't forget our carol service, it's on 18 December)

God Bless,

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

A thought from Desmond Tutu

We're born to love - without prejudice, without distrust. Members of one family, the human family - made for each other and for goodness. All of us!

Quoted in the July/August 2016 edition of The Unitarian

Chairman's Letter

The West Gallery Singing Day in August was once more a very enjoyable affair and raised over £90 for Chapel Funds.

As Vince said, the Late Summer Fair on Sunday 11 September was a success and I would like to add my thanks to those who helped in any way, by providing produce, helping to set up or staffing one of the stalls on the day. At the next committee meeting we will discuss the pros and cons of holding the Fair on a Sunday rather than a Saturday. If you have any thoughts on the matter please let us know.

Following a flurry of last-minute bookings, the Pilgrimage Meal at Rivington Church Hall was sold out, and over 90 people sat down to an excellent meal provided by the Bay Horse at Heath Charnock. As the Chapel had to provide crockery and cutlery, the Committee had decided to buy the necessary items needed to supplement the cups, saucers and side plates we already had. The new plates, bowls, glasses and cutlery will be stored in the upper vestry and will be available for use at future events. Vince has already mentioned people who worked very hard before the day to give the Chapel a really good clean - he did an excellent job himself on the outside of the windows. My thanks also to those who helped on the Saturday by getting the hall ready, clearing up afterwards and stewarding at the service. I'd especially like to thank Sheila McCully who came along after the meal to help with the washing up.

We now have some pieces of toughened glass on the window ledges which will catch the drips of wax from the candles and so keep the sills much cleaner. Thank you to Paul Fairclough for organising this.

There is a new vacancy on the Flower Donor Rota. Anyone who would like to donate the flowers on the first Sunday in August, please let me know. If you are unable to attend the service when it is your turn, please let me know so that I can arrange for flowers to be put in Chapel on your behalf.

Alison Whitaker
Chairman

From the Committee

The post of Chapel Secretary remains vacant, and the Committee would be happy to hear from anyone who would like to take on the role. Details of the duties of Secretary are available from the Chairman.

2016 - 2017 Calendar (2017 dates tbc)

Sun 18 Dec	Christmas Carol Service
Sat 6 May	Open Day in Support of Rivington Spring Festival
Sun 21 May	Anniversary Sermons
Sun 4 June	Strawberry Tea
Sun 10 Sept	Late Summer Fair/Heritage Open Day
Sun 15 Oct	Harvest Festival
Sun 17 Dec	Christmas Carol Service

Standing Orders and Gift Aid Donations

Changes to HMRC regulations mean that the Chapel is eligible to claim Gift Aid on open collections as well as the regular payments made by Standing Order. However, the time period before we are able to make a claim for such donations is quite lengthy. In the meantime, I would like to encourage Chapel members and friends who have not already done so, to consider supporting the Chapel by making regular donations through Standing Order. As long as you are a UK taxpayer, the Chapel will be able to claim an extra 25p for every £1 donated.

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.

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

You will all be pleased to know that following a successful meeting of the Congregational Committee and Trustees, the financing of the planned heating upgrade in the Chapel was agreed with immediate effect. Permission has been obtained from Chorley Council regarding the suitability of the proposed storage heater upgrade and the introduction of heaters into each box pew. The work should be starting as soon as is convenient with respect to the selected contractor, and it is hoped that the necessary wiring and installations will be completed during the October-November period. Each seat in each pew will have a convection heater fitted underneath it. These will be switched on about an hour before each service, thereby creating a localised warm air volume in each box pew. The number of pews to be heated prior to and during services can be selected so that those that are rarely occupied may not be wastefully heated. However, when the Chapel is expected to be full, including during events such as weddings and namings, all pews may be heated, thus significantly increasing the overall general comfort of those present. We hope that the installation of this new heating system will attract members to attend Chapel on cold winter days as well as attracting more weddings and namings throughout the whole of the year. Reports from other chapels where similar pew heaters have been installed have been most favourable and it could be that the Chapel during a service in winter is warmer than staying at home!

In order to help raise funds for the heating project, One Accord (John, Linda, Peter and Alison) have volunteered their services together with friends to provide a musical evening on Saturday 11th March 2017 - further details will appear elsewhere and in the next newsletter.

We are still awaiting the final draft of the conservation architect's report on both the Chapel and Schoolroom and, once it is received, the Trustees will hold a special meeting to discuss its implications.

With regard to currently registering the Chapel estate with the Land Registry and working with our solicitor to “tidy up” and clarify a number of areas where we have concerns with United Utilities, these are still "works in progress".

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

Saturday 11 March 2017

A Musical Evening

featuring

One Accord

and

Caffrey-McGurk-Madge

One Accord (John, Linda, Alison and Peter) will be performing their usual eclectic mix of music and song, and will be joined for this fundraising event by their friends Nick, Ed and Robin , a trio who perform a range of traditional and contemporary folk songs.

Venue, time and ticket details tbc

From **We Refugees**

We can all be refugees
Nobody is safe,
All it takes is a mad leader
Or no rain to bring forth food,
We can all be refugees
We can all be told to go,
We can be hated by someone
For being someone.
…

We can all be refugees
Sometimes it only takes a day,
Sometimes it only takes a handshake
Or a paper that is signed.
…

We all came from refugees
Nobody simply just appeared,
Nobody's here without a struggle,
And why should we live in fear
Of the weather or the troubles?
We all came here from somewhere.

Extract from a poem by Benjamin Zephaniah. It was posted by Michael Rosen on his Facebook page on National Poetry Day.

Do you know what you are?

Do you know what you are?
You are a manuscript of a divine letter.
You are a mirror reflecting a noble face.
This universe is not outside of you.
Look inside yourself;
everything that you want,
you are already that.

A poem by Rumi, a 13th-century Persian poet and Sufi mystic

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.

Coffee4Craig

We continue to support Coffee4Craig, a not-for-profit organisation which supports and works with homeless people in Manchester and South Wales. More information about their work can be found on their website, www.coffee4craig.co.uk.

Coffee4Craig have limited storage space at their new headquarters, so cannot take larger items. However, donations of tinned/storable foods, toiletries and some household goods can also be taken to Help the Homeless in Chorley. They are based at 45 Clifford Street, which is not far from Flat Iron car park.

Alison

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. If you are happy to do so, please contact me on 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

6	November	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
20	November	Gordon & Veronica Walker - Bank Street Chapel
4	December	Graham Pilborough - Padiham Chapel
18	December	Christmas Carol Service
1	January	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
15	January	Rev Anna Jarvis - Monton Chapel
5	February	Rev Chas Van Den Broeder - formerly Monton Chapel

Flower Donors

6	November	Roy Shepherd
20	November	John Patefield
4	December	Carol Worsley
18	December	Christmas Decorations
1	January	Elsie Kent
15	January	Marge Ainsley
5	February	Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 6 Nov 12:30 pm (tbc)	Welcoming Ceremony for Huxley, son of Tania and Steve Conducted by Vince McCully
Sun 6 Nov After Service	Congregational Committee Meeting
Sun 20 Nov 12:30 pm (tbc)	Naming Ceremony - Leo George King, son of Kathryn and Gavin Conducted by Vince McCully

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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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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,

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