Rivington
Unitarian and Free Christian
Chapel

Founded 1662 Built 1703

"Here let no man a stranger be"

May - Jul 2017

www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

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Lay Person in Charge's Letter

I thank the Congregation for the confidence they showed in me, at our 2017 AGM in March, by electing me as "Lay Person in Charge". I appreciate it very much and hope to justify that confidence in every way that I can, especially by leading and augmenting our worship and spiritual journeys in a meaningful way.

Alison will be attending the General Assembly Annual Meetings in Birmingham on our behalf. This will be an eye-opener and is bound to enhance Alison's grasp of all things Unitarian, which can only be a good thing for her and this Chapel. I know the GA is something I really do need to attend and I was all set to do so, but a three-day residential conference at Luther King House, also in April, came up. This "Conference for Lay Preachers and Worship Leaders" is an ecumenical affair incorporating Baptist and United Reform Church representatives amongst others. Additionally, I have been invited to attend an Inquiry, lasting two days in July, into Unitarian Lay Leadership. It is being organised and funded by The Hibbert Trust and is being held at the Nightingale Centre in Great Hucklow. I have given my commitment to attend. This Inquiry, in tandem with the earlier conference, seems to be well-timed and could prove to be of great significance.

In 2016 I attended a Rites of Passage Course run by Rev. Lynne Readett and backed by the Provincial Assembly. It took place over three months and I was able to gain some valuable insights. I was also able to pass on some of my ten years' experience of conducting rites of passage ceremonies. Also in 2016 I attended two Unitarian Ministerial Inquiry events, one residential at Luther King House, and a one-day conference in Leicester. It was all very valuable indeed

with regard to an overall grasp of the Unitarian approach to leading worship.

Over the past twelve months I have been invited to take services, and conduct rites of passage, in three other Chapels, in Bolton, Wigan and Rochdale. The first service I ever took was on April 7 in 2001 in this Chapel. Other Chapels I have taken services at are Bury, Denton, Knutsford and Oldham.

I have been thinking recently about what my role here at Rivington involves, and have begun some discussions with the Committee about how that role can best be described.
The things I have main responsibility for are those connected with "Worship"; the main ones are outlined below:

- To take services and attend to rites of passage, to provide that we always have people to take our services and to be sure that they are suitable and acceptable to our congregation, also to be certain that we have our organist base covered (even if CDs are the solution).
- To explore and where appropriate introduce new and beneficial ways of worship.
- To support our congregation pastorally.
- To continue to pursue studies with regards to worship. For this reason I am enrolled on the "Intermediate Worship Studies Course".
- To liaise pastorally with the wider community. As a result of my duties at Chapel I have tasks that go beyond our four walls. I have been asked to provide references on three occasions, twice with regard to people seeking places for children

in Church Schools and once, most recently, as " . . . the person with pastoral responsibility in a place of worship", for a job reference in a Church School. Another example is to find out more about the possibility of becoming involved in the "Churches Together" movement. I understand that there has been some resistance to Unitarian Chapels being involved and joining in, but I feel that, approached in the right way, we should manage to be a part of it.

I leave you with the hope that everyone has a super, fun, invigorating and satisfying Summer.

God Bless,

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

2017 Calendar

Sat 13 May 12 - 4 pm	Open Day in Support of Rivington Spring Festival
Sun 21 May	Anniversary Sermons and Chapel Meal
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

Chairman's Letter

We held our Congregational AGM on Sunday 19 March at which Frank Ascroft and I were re-elected as Treasurer and Chairman respectively. We have again been unsuccessful in attracting anyone to take on the role of Secretary, so we will continue as last year, with Dennis Crompton as minute secretary and Vince acting as correspondence secretary. I would like to thank Geoff Newey, who has left the Committee after six years, for his contribution to the work of the Chapel. Our new committee member is Martin Brownlow, who is also sharing organist duties with Tanya Smalley.

Grateful thanks are also due to Chris and Lynne Haighton, who have 'retired' from distributing the newsletters. Mary Horrocks has agreed to take over this task. We are taking the opportunity to overhaul the current distribution list, so we would be very grateful if you would complete and return the enclosed slip to indicate whether you wish to continue to receive a copy of the newsletter.

The AGM approved an amendment to the Chapel Constitution to allow a change in the time scale for nominations for officers and committee members to make the arrangements more practical. The Committee will be checking the list of members against the criteria for full membership, as we may be in the fortunate position of the numbers having increased.

Starting with the first Sunday in May, the Chapel will be open before services over the summer months so that visitors to Rivington can come and have a look around. If you are able to spare a couple of hours to open up and welcome people, please sign the rota on the notice board.

The Ironman event this year is on Sunday 16 July, and as in previous years, the Chapel will be open for visitors. We discussed the possibility of holding an informal gathering in the afternoon once the race has moved on. If this proves possible, details will be announced at an earlier service and posted on Facebook.

Copies of the draft minutes of the AGM and the Treasurer's Report are on the notice board in Chapel and you can look at the minutes on the chapel website.

The concert in the Tea Rooms on Saturday 11 March was a great success, with 73 tickets sold and a total of £822 raised towards the cost of the new heating system. Everyone seemed to enjoy the entertainment and the raffle featured some interesting prizes – many thanks to all those who donated a prize. Thanks also to Jayne for putting on the refreshments.

As Vince has already mentioned I am attending the Annual Meetings of the General Assembly on behalf of the Congregation. By the time you read this, they will have been and gone, but too late for a report in this newsletter. I'll let you know how I got on in the next issue.

The Committee meeting on Sunday 2 April was mainly taken up with plans for organising some events that are coming up shortly. The Chapel will be open as usual on the Saturday of Rivington Village Festival which this year is on 13 May. If anyone can provide any preserves, cakes, biscuits or other produce please let us know.

This year's Anniversary meal on Sunday 21 May will be at The Retreat on Church Street (A6) in Adlington. If you would like to come, please sign the sheet on the notice board in Chapel or let one of the Committee know. There's a menu for us to choose from beforehand

so that The Retreat can have our order ready. The meal has been booked for 4:00 pm so we can go straight from the service.

After the service on Sunday 4 June we will hold our Strawberry Tea. If you are able to contribute by making some scones, please let us know. We hope we will be able to make this a fitting tribute to Roy Shepherd who organised this event in the past.

You will see from the list of Flower Donors that there are some vacant dates. As one of these is the Ironman event, it is less important for this year, but if anyone would like to provide flowers for Sunday 6 August, please let me know.

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

PS I hope you like the picture of the deer on the cover. It was spotted in the field across Sheephouse Lane just before the service on 2 April

Trustees Matters

The transfer of the land to the east of the Chapel incorporating the Garden of Remembrance is slow in proceeding as the legal contracts are completed with United Utilities. Hopefully, all will be in order by the summer.

The architect is now actively advising on the two immediate areas of concern in the Chapel which were identified during last year's quinquennial review and outlined in the last newsletter. These were the improvement of the outside drainage against the eastern and southern Chapel walls, and the removal of bird debris from inside the roof space, sealing it from further bird entry, and installation of insulation. Work on fitting steel mesh to seal the gaps between the outer

walls and the roof space has been commissioned and is expected to be underway before the nesting season starts, thereby preventing bird entry this year. Once this is in place, removal of debris currently present can be undertaken as well as putting in the insulation.

The outer drainage project requires the removal of all material from the present drainage system against the outer walls in order to assess what needs to be done to replace it. We are in the process of gaining quotations for this work. We anticipate that all necessary work for completing the project will be done by the autumn which will allow the Gregson Trust award of £3000 to be offset against the overall costs.

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

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 fluctua-

tion 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

Thoughts from Rabbi Harold Kushner

Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations.

Let the rain wash away the memory of the hurt, the neglect. Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows.

Let the warmth of the sun heal us whenever we are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly. So that we can see beyond labels, beyond accents, gender or skin colour.

Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness. So that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbours. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbours.

Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with beauty. And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upwards to heaven.

A Prayer

Within and Between Us

Here in this place
Now at this time
Feel the space that lies within us and between us
Shall we sow there a seed?
A kind word or deed?
Let us pause for a while and sense the presence here of no-thing.
A space full of hope
A space for what could be.
We create this time
We create this space
So let us cherish it now and only fill it mindfully.

Here we connect
Having time to reflect
We can use this space to really make a difference.
A space to fill with love
A space to learn and grow
Nurturing life, giving purpose and meaning.
A pebble in the pool
Sends ripples out to sea
So let us make a space filled with peace and with beauty.

Offered at last year's GA meetings by **Rachel Skelton**

Out of the mouths of babes…

A teacher trying to explain the concept of the Trinity being three in one asked her class to suggest words beginning with 'tri…'. They came out with 'triangle', 'tricycle', 'tripod' etc. When the list seemed exhausted, the teacher started to explain that these things were not each three separate things, but one thing with three parts. She was interrupted.

'I can think of another 'tri…' word, Miss,' said a bright boy. 'What about trifle?'

'Ah,' said the teacher, 'now that isn't a three-in-one sort of word.'

'But it is, Miss,' persisted the boy. 'It's sponge cake and jelly and custard, all in one dish; three in one, like you said.'

Adapted from a story in the Church Times

Joan Holding would definitely have agreed with the boy!

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 charity 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

Mary Horrocks has taken over as newsletter distributer, so any changes to the mailing list should be directed to her by ringing on 01204 493757. You can also notify us by emailing 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.

Alison

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

7	May	Prof Geoff Levermore - Styal Chapel
21	May	Chrissie Wilkie - Dean Row Chapel Anniversary Sermons
4	June	Rev Bob Janis-Dillon - Park Lane Chapel
18	June	Rev Lynne Readett - Chow Bent Chapel
2	July	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
16	July	Ironman event - Chapel open for visitors
6	August	Rev Tony McNeile

Flower Donors

7	May	Jacqueline Dagnall
21	May	Mary Horrocks
4	June	Judith Crompton
18	June	Jo Clark
2	July	Frank Ascroft
16	July	Vacant
6	August	Vacant

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Fri 5 May 2:00 pm	Blessing for Jacquie Lithgoe and Tim Kershaw Conducted by Vince McCully
Sat 20 May 2:00 pm	Wedding of Lisa Carroll and Ian Reid Conducted by Vince McCully
Fri 2 June 3:00 pm	Wedding of Marge Ainsley and David Bradshaw Conducted by Vince McCully
Sun 4 June After Service	Strawberry Tea
Sat 10 June 2:00 pm	Wedding of Jody Denver and Daniel Ashmore Conducted by Vince McCully
Sun 2 Jul (tbc) After Service	Congregational Committee Meeting

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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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