Rivington
Unitarian and Free Christian
Chapel

Founded 1662 Built 1703

"Here let no man a stranger be"

Nov 2017 - Jan 2018

www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

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

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

We often hear about the best laid plans of mice and men. Or, as Burns said,

> "The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
> Gang aft agley".

And so we find this true for ourselves, as on Friday 24th November this year we were planning to hold another evening of musical entertainment in partnership with Chorley Lions. However this has had to be postponed indefinitely. Craig Porch, who kindly assembles the 'turns', now has to care for his wife, Maxine, who suffered a disabling stroke earlier this year. He regrets not being able to help us as he has so graciously done on earlier occasions. Some will no doubt remember Maxine's role in our murder mystery play staged in the tea rooms in 2014, when she played Lilly Heeks, Bishop Burton's legal representative. Our hearts go out to Craig and Maxine and family and we hope that Maxine recovers as much as possible; they can be assured of our help at any time.

The lights we procured via the 'Rural Community Grant Scheme' and which were going to be used on 24th November are in safe storage and will prove invaluable, safety-wise, at our Chapel's community based events in the future.

At the last two Congregational Committee meetings there have been discussions on the matter of a workable title to be used in our Chapel (when, as in my case, one is not a Reverend in our denomination). You may have noticed my name has been added to the notice board of ministers which is in the Chapel; thank you.

Something that has been on my mind for a long time now is that the role of Chapel Congregational Chairman really ought to be like-wise

recognised; we are after all a “congregational” outfit, aren’t we? As such it is the will and direction of the congregation that must take precedence, isn’t it? Certainly way and above that of any external “governing” body, which reminds me that when I was at the Hibbert conference in July at Hucklow, Simon Bland from Essex Hall was there to support matters of ministerial and congregational “governance”. The matter of a Chairman’s “Notice board” probably needs to be discussed by the Committee and then brought up at the AGM.

Our Late Summer Fair on Sunday 10th September was hugely successful. Everybody was able to help in some way or other, whether in terms of a donation of time, or of materials or of both. Thank you. Again we experienced the warm glow of fellowship and the satisfaction of a combined effort coming to fruition. I say “fruition” as we raised the handsome sum of £528.67, wow! Again, well done.

Recently there has been much ado about loft insulation as Michael Hough has headed up the task of installing it. This was done in full consultation with our Heritage Architect, Ivan Wilson. Specially treated sheep’s wool insulation material has been used. But first, crows’ nests and squirrels’ dreys had to be removed, along with decades of detritus, by a process of sweeping, hoovering and bagging-up. You would be surprised at how big these nests were; think of a car’s bonnet and they are about that size and height in fact. Then walkways had to be professionally installed before 30+ huge bales of wool could be put in place. All in all a “big job” indeed. Big thanks to Michael and the team, Paul and Diane Fairclough, their friend Don, Tim Kershaw, and Adey and Alex Baxendale.

You can keep fully up to date with all Chapel happenings with pictures and brief accounts about these and all our exploits on our Facebook page “Rivington Unitarian Chapel”.

Wishing everyone a sparkling, peaceful and warm and happy Yuletide

God Bless,

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

2017-18 Calendar (2018 dates tbc)

Sun 17 Dec	Christmas Carol Service
Sun 18 March	Congregational AGM
Sun 20 May	Anniversary Sermons
Sun 3 June	Strawberry Tea
Sat 14 Sept	Late Summer Fair/Heritage Open Day
Sun 21 Oct	Harvest Festival
Sun 16 Dec	Christmas Carol Service

Chairman's Letter

Back in July, Peter and I went to Warwick Folk Festival. Linda and John were there too, and we all took part in a couple of singing workshops that were held in Warwick Unitarian Chapel. We were also able to go to the service on the Sunday, which was taken by Rev Ant Howe, who trained at Unitarian College Manchester and spent some time at Chorlton Unitarian Church.

Here at Rivington, the three West Gallery choirs that have been using the Chapel for a few years now held their annual singing event on Saturday 2 September, raising over £100 for Chapel funds.

A copy of 'Vision – Next Steps', a document produced by the General Assembly Executive Committee, has been printed and placed in the Chapel bookcase. If anyone wants their own copy it can be downloaded in pdf format from the Unitarian website, www.unitarian.org.uk

A job that has been outstanding for a while has recently been completed - the 'Ministers of Rivington Chapel' board has been updated and now displays Vince's name.

I was sorry to miss Marge Bradshaw's talk about Dementia Friends, but from the comments on the Chapel Facebook page it was a very enjoyable and informative session.

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

Trustees Matters

It is with great pleasure that I can announce that the transfer of the land incorporating the Garden of Remembrance from United Utilities is complete and the Deed of Transfer allows us in addition to use it for Chapel activities. In fact, and as was noted in the last newsletter, the trustees gave permission for Dean Taylor to present his play "Heroes" to an outdoor audience in the Garden during August to assess whether or not this was a good idea. The play was attended by about 30 or so people at 2.00pm on one of the few sunny days in August and appeared to be enjoyed by all present. The trustees agreed that allowing occasional usage of the Garden in this manner increased the Chapel's "public amenity", which would be to our benefit should we wish to apply for grants in the future.

With regard to the tearoom repairs, the architect has produced a full list of the works to be undertaken and how they should be carried out. The tenants are currently planning to start addressing these, with the removal of plaster from the south wall interior and the relaying of the gable roof coping stones considered to be the cause of the dampness being a first priority. This work is proposed to start in October.

The refurbishment of the drain against the outside of the Chapel east wall is proving to be more challenging than first thought. We have received one quotation for the work to be carried out in accordance with the architect's advice and with agreement of Chorley Borough Council. We are awaiting two more tenders and hope that a decision as to which to accept may be able to be made soon. Whether or not the work can be carried out before winter remains to be seen.

Finally, the state of the flags in the Garden of Remembrance currently has the attention of the trustees and we are considering a number of options to improve their evenness and reduce their tendency to quickly become slippery in wet weather.

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

A Bunch of Grapes

Harvest Festival at the Chapel. Saturday afternoon, all willing hands help to decorate and set the produce before the people. A long trestle table set between rail and pulpit. White clean cloth and then plates of fruit - apples, pears, oranges, tomatoes – islanded equidistant from each other, with tinned products posted as sentinels among the plates – beans, peas, spaghetti, pickled onions, with a tall slim vase of Michaelmas daisies placed central. Below the table lie bunches of carrots and parsnips, swedes and cauliflowers, interspersed with well-scrubbed potatoes. A pumpkin at each end, sitting like Buddhas guarding the root crops in between. The crowning glory of this array, a massive over-sized marrow, placed upright, challenging all who would approach this territory of first fruits from kitchen gardens all around.

The final touch of this devoted display is the delicate arch over the pulpit. It is made of willow branches and adorned with hips and haws. Hanging from the centre of the arch, just above the head of the preacher - a bunch of grapes.

Adapted from '**It Crossed My Mind', by William Leary**

(William Leary was a Methodist Minister and a good friend of my parents - Alison)

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A Message from the President of the General Assembly

At our recent Annual Meetings, it was good to see so many new faces with fresh enthusiasm, both of which were very welcome. The Executive Committee of the General Assembly made use of the Meetings to inform us in more detail on how they are attempting to fulfil the "Next Steps" priorities. One of the points that stood out for me is the work being put into making Lay Leadership training even better than it is now. Another point was the continuing expansion of the movement's use of the Internet to help spread our message and educate. And last but not least, we are now financially stable. We do, however, need to look carefully at how we present ourselves to ensure that the diversity of the Unitarian and Free Christian Movement comes across clearly in all aspects of our work and service.

The Rev Sarah Tinker, in a recent article in The Inquirer, suggested that if we as a movement are going to make it, we must realise that we are all in it together. My predecessor (Dot Hewerdine) often spoke in a similar vein. In my view, there is no single way to the Unitarian and Free Christian. We have Unitarians who are Atheist, Humanist, Pagan, Buddhist and diverse combinations of these. Plus, we have the Free Christians, some of whom are Unitarian Christian, Liberal Christian, and some feel more in tune with the NSPCI (Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland). This diversity for me is one of the beauties of our movement. Our ideal is to offer a welcome spiritual home to all comers.

Of course, this is the ideal. We need more fellowships, churches and gatherings if we want to come even close to making this a reality. That, my friends, can only happen if we become the religion of deeds and not words. We need more than ever to go beyond tolerance to

acceptance that others have different views and beliefs that are just as valid to them as yours are to you. Only then do we have a chance of becoming the movement we want to be.

Rev Charles VanDenBroeder

Global Chalice Lighting

One of the things I found out at the General Assembly Meetings in April was that each month the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists publishes a set of Global Chalice Lighting words in various languages. These are the words from May 2017, written by Aleks Zglinska who is Community Facilitator at Kidderminster New Meeting House.

‘A sacred flame burns in my heart,
Tells me I'm one, sets me apart.
Helps me to find that which is true,
In reaching out to you.
Once we're a few, a brighter light
Cuts through the darkness of the night.
In these connections we shall see
Strength in community.
The light we find in others’ hearts
Brings us together. Then we start,
Transforming lives and making friends
With this the light will never end.’

Alison

Blessings

The afternoon was mild and still
When we climbed Rivington Hill
Breathed air, fresh and fair
As we trod lightly there
Amongst bushes green
The whinberry to glean.

Our backs and bones basked
In the warmth of the sun
Picking fruit, Harvest task
Until our tubs overrun.

Crickets and grasshoppers chirping sound
Tiny froglet beneath bracken leaping around
Searching for the bubbling, chuckling brook
That runs underground.

High on the slopes
Hues of lilac-purple heather
Seven-spot ladybird resting on a leaf
All of nature enjoying the weather.

We thank thee God, and cherish
The good company, earth's bounty
The day's pleasure.

Tina Booth

Prayer to get you through the day

This was discovered in the Peterborough Daily Mail by Iris Wharton

Dear Lord,
So far today I am doing all right. I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or indulgent. I have not whined, whinged, cursed or eaten any chocolate. I have not tweeted or contacted anyone on Facebook to tell them I like them. I have not used my credit card.

However, I am getting out of bed in a few minutes and I may need some help then.

Amen

A Note from the Editor

Thank you to all those people who responded to the request to update their contact details. There are still some of you that we would like to hear from to check that you still want to receive the newsletter. If it is a change to the mailing list, please ring Mary Horrocks 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

Booklets and Postcards

There's a further addition to the list of publications on sale in the Chapel and the Village Tearooms. The new booklet is a digital reproduction of the 'Rivington Chapel Bi-Centenary Souvenir' produced in 1903. As well as this you can still purchase a reprint of 'Rivington Recipes', the two booklets produced by Michael Hough, 'Rivington Chapel Memorial Inscriptions' and 'Rivington Chapel Trustees Minutes, August 1859 to March 1955', and 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
	Rivington Recipes	£4.00
	Rivington Chapel Bi-Centenary	£4.00

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

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

5	November	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
19	November	Laura Dobson - Chorlton Chapel
3	December	Graham Pilborough - Padiham Chapel
17	December	Christmas Carol Service
7	January	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
21	January	Laura Dobson - Chorlton Chapel
4	February	Rev Danny Crosby - Altrincham and Urmston Chapels

Flower Donors

5	November	Jacquie Kershaw
19	November	John Patefield
3	December	Carol Worsley
17	December	Christmas Decorations
7	January	Elsie Kent
21	January	Marge Ainsley
4	February	Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Thu 2 Nov 10:30 am	Visit of Westhoughton History Group
Sun 5 Nov After Service	Congregational Committee Meeting

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

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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.

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