

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here let no one a stranger be"



Aug - Oct 2022

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Facebook: Rivington Unitarian Chapel

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

Each year during the first week of June it is National Volunteer Week; though the volunteering never stops, an important thing about this week is that we can recognise an often invisible multitude, where we can acknowledge all the valuable work they do in our community. Where we can just say it, say 'thank you' from the bottom of our hearts.

To me a volunteer is somebody who, for their own reasons, wants to do something that they don't have to do, or wouldn't normally do. It is a giving of their time, their expertise, their resources to benefit their community at large or an individual in particular. Rarely are they paid and volunteers are often out of pocket, even if it's finding the bus fare to help at a charity shop, as Isobel used to do in Chorley.

The dictionary definition of volunteering is: 'to offer to do something of one's own free will, or without being asked'.

Here are some facts from the Volunteer Week's website

- 16.3m people volunteered through a group, club or organisation in 2020/21.
- Most people have formally volunteered at some point in their lives, dipping in and out of involvement over time.
- Volunteering patterns changed substantially during the pandemic.
- Almost one in five (17%) people reported volunteering at least once a month, about 9.2m people.
- Less visible, informal volunteering, which includes a wider range of activities including unpaid help for someone who is not a relative. In 2020/21, 54% of the population (29.4m) volunteered informally at least once a year and 33% (17.9m) did so at least once a month.

These are some of the hard facts around volunteering; certainly it is an attempt to quantify a very subjective thing. I was a bit surprised or, more accurately, disappointed when, a few years ago now, the then Prime Minister David Cameron tried to put a fiscal value on it and unbelievably tried to actually harness it and thereby completely missed the point; I shouldn't have been surprised, should I? Sadly, few politicians 'do owt for nowt'.

Our nation is a kindly one. One with a definite community spirit; we see evidence of this every day, what with food banks, The Children in Need Charity, luncheon clubs, soup kitchens and so on, not to mention our recent Diamond Jubilee street parties and events and the readiness of charities to get involved in the Rivington Spring Festival each year. Though volunteering and charity work can go hand in hand it is not driven just by religious or spiritual urges. I think it is a deep-seated need within each one of us to do good; we just need the right opportunity or opportunities to come our way, the right opportunities that appeal to our better natures in ways that motivate us. As humankind is so diverse, it is no wonder that animal charities such as RSPB, The Donkey Sanctuary, Labrador Rescue Society and other cats and dogs charities fare so well.

A big thing for us Unitarians, among other church goers, is how do all our chapels survive. Through the work of our volunteers, that's how. Guys and gals who take time out from their busy schedules to get on with the tasks in hand. Producing newsletters, accounts, putting together calendars, attending to drains, guttering, tree felling and drive-ways, manning stalls and making produce, to name but a few, spring to mind.

I think that through workaday piety and a general mindfulness of good

things born from our regular worship, we Unitarians become more naturally aware of these opportunities for good deeds as and when they present themselves to us.

'God has made us what we are, and in our union with Jesus has created us for a life of good deeds, which are already prepared for us to do.'

St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians 2:10

This year our Chapel's volunteering ways will have added much to the life of the local community, especially with the Rivington Spring Festival in May and the Late Summer Fair/Heritage Open Day on 10 September. But the big one is without doubt the Pilgrimage on 1 October when we open our doors and our hearts to the worthy cause of 'Civil and Religious Liberty', to which ALL are invited, and we get to raise the roof of the Chapel with our hymns.

Stay safe and God bless

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

2022 Calendar

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|-------------|--|
| Thu 31 Aug | Canal Boat Trip |
| Sat 10 Sept | Heritage Open Day and Late Summer Fair |
| Sat 1 Oct | Rivington Triennial Pilgrimage |
| Sun 16 Oct | Harvest Festival |
| Sun 6 Nov | Send a Child to Hucklow Service |
| Sun 18 Dec | Christmas Carol Service |

Chairman's Letter

Thanks to the people who signed up for the canal boat trip. We have just enough people to fill one boat. The trip will be on Thursday 31 August and we're likely to be travelling from The Boatyard off Rawlinson Lane in Heath Charnock to Wigan Top Lock.

We've now confirmed that the date for the Heritage Open Day and Late Summer Fair will be Saturday 10 September. There'll be the usual stalls (produce, cakes, tombola) and also some traditional games. If you can contribute any preserves, cakes and biscuits or tombola prizes please let us know. We will also need some help with running the stalls, even if it's just for an hour or so to give people a break.

Bookings for the Pilgrimage on Saturday 1 October have started to come in. If you would like to book tickets, you'll find the details later in the newsletter.

The Send a Child to Hucklow Fund is celebrating its 60th Anniversary this year, and chapels have been asked to dedicate one of their services to marking this achievement. At Rivington this will be on Sunday 6 November. There will be special hymns and readings and we will be collecting to send a donation in support of the work the charity does to provide holidays for disadvantaged children. We hope that members of the congregation will be able to take part in the service, so we will be asking if anyone would like to do one of the readings.

We are still looking into how best to renovate our outdoor notice board, and we've also been discussing some ideas about how to make what is displayed there more welcoming - any suggestions for what you would like to see there will be gratefully received. One small change will be to slightly amend the wording of the 'motto', with 'no man' becoming 'no one', thus making it clearer that every-

one is welcome while maintaining the motto's poetic rhythm.

GA Meetings 2022

It felt good to be back at the GA meetings in person this year rather than on Zoom. There were plenty of familiar faces, including Judith and Richard Crompton. Richard took part in the session which celebrated 60 years of the Send a Child to Hucklow Fund.

There were four motions submitted by Unitarian groups and congregations, details of which I had sent out to members in March. All were passed, three (support for the NHS, affirmation of transgender rights, support for the World Citizens Initiative 'We the Peoples Campaign') by very substantial majorities. The vote on the fourth motion, regretting the lack of consultation over the rebranding exercise, was much closer, with a majority of less than 10. The GA Executive Committee will now consider how the resolutions will be put into practice.

As always, there was an inspiring Anniversary Service, this year led by two ministers recently admitted to the GA Roll, Rev Mark Hutchinson from the Cotswold group of Unitarians and Rev Melda Grantham, from Undodiaid Cymru/Unitarians Wales. The address, on the theme of 'Rocks and Rollercoasters', was given by Rev Wyn Thomas, minister of several chapels across the south of Wales. There was a mention for Rev Frank Williams as thanksgiving was made for the lives of those ministers who had died during the last two years. The collection this year was for the British Red Cross Ukraine Crisis Appeal and raised over £5000 once Gift Aid had been added.

Several of the workshop sessions this year were on the themes of 'Welcome' and 'Communication'. We were asked to consider how

we can best help people coming to our chapels and churches to feel welcome (apart offering them a cup of tea and a biscuit!) and to think about whether there is anything we do that might, however unintentionally, put off newcomers from coming back for a second visit. There were plenty of ideas for making the most of noticeboards, websites and social media, as these can often be the first impression of a chapel that people get.

A new feature this year was the Fringe during the Tuesday and Wednesday evening social time. This was an opportunity to gather in small groups and take part in informal activities such as knitting and crafting, making music and playing board games. I ended up playing 'Articulate' on one evening and building with Lego on the other. Lego has moved on a bit since I was teaching, and certainly since the 1960s, when there never seemed to be enough roof tiles to finish a house. It was all very enjoyable and relaxing after the intensity of the formal plenary sessions and the workshops during the day, and a good chance to meet and talk to different people.

This was the third time I have attended the GA meetings in person (plus the meetings on Zoom in 2021) and it's an experience I definitely recommend to you all.

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

From Rev Wyn Thomas' GA Anniversary Sermon. Inspired by dry stone walls seen on journeys through North Wales.

'We are not building walls, not the caretakers of long-ago stories. We are not here to maintain tradition and look after what is already here. We are the wall. We are the rocks that make sure the wall holds strong.'

A Prayer

Written in praise of people who perform some of the tasks that keep our Chapels going

Let us give thanks for:

The meeting organisers

The secretaries and letter writers

The minute takers

The small change counters

The website builders and Zoom managers

The article writers

The flower arrangers

The meeters and greeters

The biscuit providers

The gloved washer-uppers

Those who dust, mop and vacuum

The chair stackers

The car lift givers

The hand holders

Those with a spare tissue for tears

And the key holders, there long before you arrive and long after you leave.

May we give thanks and praise for all those working to make our world a better place.

From Chris Carr, Chair of Yorkshire Unitarian Union

Trust Matters

Following the identification of the need to replace the Tea Room gutters in the most recent Quinquennial Review, as mentioned in the Spring Newsletter, they have now been replaced by cast iron ones, which should last for many years. The cost of these has been partly shared with our tenants as per the formula previously outlined.

Furthermore, the planned laying of a semi-permeable surface on the parking area in front of the Chapel has also been completed. This should make parking much easier and facilitate access to the Chapel, especially during winter when the previous surface became quite muddy.

Given the expenditure incurred in undertaking the above two items, the previously planned work to apply a second coat of lime wash to supplement that applied to the Chapel interior walls last winter (2020) has been delayed until the end of the year since we have been offered a more favourable price if the work is undertaken then.

As also mentioned in the last Newsletter, Carol Worsley was presented with the floral array at the service in June in recognition of her many years of service as a trustee. Tim Kershaw was elected as a trustee at the AGM and we welcome him to the board and look forward to his contributions during this year and hopefully beyond.

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

Rivington Unitarian Chapel
Triennial Pilgrimage

Saturday 1 October 2022

Lunch at Rivington Church Hall

Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Lancashire, BL6 7SE

Guest Speaker: Rev Sue Woolley

President of the General Assembly

Please bring banners to display in the Hall

Service in Rivington Chapel

Conducted by: Rev Philip Waldron

Minister at Ullet Road, Wirral and Southport

Times

12:30pm Meet at Hall

1:00pm Lunch

3:15pm Service

Tickets for Lunch

(booking essential)

£15.00 Adult

£8.00 Child

Menu

Starter: Leek and potato soup (v) or Chicken liver paté

Main course: Butter pie (v) or Meat and potato pie or Poached salmon, all served with potatoes and seasonal vegetables

Pudding: Fruit salad

Other dietary requirements will be catered for.

Booking for Rivington Pilgrimage 2022

If you would like to book tickets for the Pilgrimage, you can:

- send a cheque made payable to **Rivington Chapel** to:

Alison Whitaker, 14 Church Street, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3RS

- pay by Bank Transfer (please email: contact@rivingtonchapel.org.uk with your requirements and for the bank details)

Please indicate the number of adult and/or child tickets that you require, your menu choices and any dietary requirements.

We would be grateful if you would either include a stamped addressed envelope or an email address so that tickets can be sent electronically.

The closing date for bookings is **Friday 16 September 2022** Tickets will be sent out during the week beginning 19 September.

Thoughts for these times

We are living in a fractured world of war and political instability and fear for the future of our children and grandchildren.

In our prayers let us reassert the values we live our lives by.

Let us feel the spirit of love and the spirit of hope in our hearts.

May we continually preach the values and standards of our faith by living them each day.

May we be an influence for change by being steadfast.

May our thoughts be strong and our words encouraging.

Let our strength be that while we are one, we are one of many in a faith community.

Our light is one lamp that is part of the floodlight that shines on the dark places of the world.

Rev Tony McNeile

What's in a welcome?

Some thoughts from attenders at the GA meetings

Different people need different things, and you don't always know what they are just by looking at them.

Some people want a handshake and a cuppa, others want to be left alone.

We can offer [people] all the cake in the world, but it's a non-judgmental space that will make the real difference.

Remember to welcome the existing congregation.

Publications

Please contact Chris Martin (01257 483702, email: chris_and_june@hotmail.com) if you would like to buy any of the various Rivington Chapel publications, details of which can be found on the website: www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk/publications

Chris now has all the images he needs for the 2023 calendar. He hopes to take it to the printer in early August so that it will be available in time for the Late Summer Fair on Saturday 10 September.

Donations

Please remember that if you are not able to attend services in person, you can donate what you would have put in the collection via CAFDonate. Gift Aid can be added if you are a UK taxpayer.

You can either follow the Donations link on our website www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk or go directly to <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/12556>

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 contact me, either by emailing newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk or phoning 01942 816569.

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 read this and past issues online at www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk.

Alison

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

| | |
|--------------|---|
| 7 August | Rev Kate Brady McKenna - Bury Chapel |
| 21 August | Hannah Stephenson - Southport Unitarians |
| 4 September | Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel |
| 18 September | Rev Danny Crosby - Altrincham and Urmston Chapels |
| 2 October | Graeme Pilbrough - Padiham Chapel |
| 16 October | Rev Lynne Readett - Chowbent Chapel Harvest Festival |
| 6 November | Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel Send a Child to Hucklow Service |

Flower Donors

| | |
|--------------|----------------------------------|
| 7 August | Elsie Kent |
| 21 August | Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon |
| 4 September | Diane Fairclough |
| 18 September | Elsie Kent |
| 2 October | Vince and Isobel McCully |
| 16 October | Mary Horrocks |
| 6 November | Jacqui & Tim Kershaw |

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sat 3 Sept Wedding of Caroline Waters and Martin Dainty
2:00 pm Conducted by Vince McCully

Sat 10 Sept Heritage Open Day and Late Summer Fair
11:00 - 4:00

Sat 1 Oct Rivington Triennial Pilgrimage
12:30

If you would like to arrange a ceremony at Rivington
Chapel, please contact Alison or Vince
Contact details overleaf

Copy date for next issue: 1 Oct 2022

Issue date: 16 Oct 2022

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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