

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here let no one a stranger be"



Aug - Oct 2024

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Facebook: Rivington Unitarian Chapel

2024 Calendar

Sat 7 Sept Heritage Open Day and Late Summer Fair

Sun 20 Oct Harvest Festival

Sun 15 Dec Christmas Carol Service

Not able to be with us in person? Why not join us on Zoom?

Meeting ID: 768 122 9647 Pass code: 322865

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7681129647>

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

I write this letter with the heaviest of hearts and apologise if we have not reached you sooner with the sad news of the death of Peter Bearon. Peter died on the evening of 25 June in Royal Bolton Hospital after a short illness. Peter's funeral service was held in Chapel on 11 July, and it is testimony to the high regard in which he was held, in both Chapel and musical circles, that there were over one hundred and sixty people in attendance, with standing room only for those unfortunate enough to arrive a little late.

It is the saddest thing to do, to report on the death of a Chapel member and Peter was such an integral part of Rivington Chapel life, a 'keystone' no less. Were I to write a book it would not do justice to the depth of Peter's commitment and dedication to the wellbeing of the Chapel and its congregation. For over thirty years, Peter was an officer of the Chapel Trust, either as its Secretary, Chairman or Treasurer and sometimes performing more than one office at the same time.

Peter's was a steady hand on the tiller and he helped to steer us through some pretty rough seas, Covid-19 being not the least of these. Peter always had a weather eye on the Chapel's future and this explains why we now have such a youthful, dynamic and effective body of trustees with ongoing meaningful projects for both the Chapel and the local community, the expansion of the columbarium being just one example.

We will miss you, Peter, and we will seek to do justice to your spirit of commitment and conscientiousness and your legacy in any way we can and to continue to offer '... Rivington Chapel or oratory as a place of piety and worship...' (as it says in our trust deed) for at least another three hundred and twenty one years.

I sign off now and humbly offer to Alison and to Peter's family and friends our deepest and most heartfelt condolences.

Stay safe and God bless

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

Chairman's Letter

In May the Chapel was open during the Rivington Spring Festival, when about £200 was raised for Chapel funds.

Later in the month, the Oak Apple Day music session was a very enjoyable and successful afternoon, raising a further £370. Thanks to Peter Gammon for organising the session, which might well become an annual event.

Deciding what to write for this newsletter has been difficult. Vince and Richard have both paid tribute to Peter, so I would just like to

say a very big thank you to everyone at Rivington Chapel for their kindness and support over the past few months.

The photo on the cover is of the beautiful flower arrangement by Peter's brother-in-law John which was placed on the coffin during his funeral.

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

Trust Matters

My last entry in the newsletter was for the Autumn 2023 edition. The intervening silence until now reflects the relative stability of trustee affairs during the winter period until our March AGM at which Peter was clearly ill. This soon led to his unexpected sudden and rapid decline, hospitalisation, and eventual death on the 25th of June. The Trustees wish to amplify their extreme condolences already expressed to Alison, and our next newsletter will feature our tributes to him and thanks for his enormous efforts over the last 30 years or so as a trustee and occupier of all office roles.

In fact, at our meeting in March, the Trustees presented Peter a gift of a boxed and engraved decanter and glasses and Booth's gift vouchers in grateful recognition of his exceptionally long and dedicated service as Trustee and Secretary of Rivington Chapel Trust. It is a tragedy that he was unable to enjoy this gift.

The Trustees are pleased that Sue Walton has assumed the position of Honorary Treasurer for the immediate future. She will be supported by Chris Haighton, who manages our portfolio investments. Chris has contracted an independent financial advisor to advise us on our current portfolio and so ensure that we are optimising its growth and earning potentials. We hope to receive a report by our September meeting.

The role of Secretary is proving more difficult to fill but, following personal recommendation by one of the Trustees, a suitable candidate is currently being considered and the Trustees have arranged to meet him at the end of July. Since this would be a paid role, following suggestions from the current President of the General Assembly, who expressed the challenge of filling secretariat roles generally, if the candidate is accepted, he will not be a Trustee.

During the September meeting of last year, as a consequence of the last niche within the Columbarium having been sold, Paul Fairclough and a number of the Trustees put forward three options for the future development of the Garden of Remembrance. These were a columbarium extension, an urn garden and the placing of memorial plaques. At the March 2024 meeting, plans were considered for a sixty-six niche Columbarium wall at the north side of the Garden at a cost in the region of £16,000. This would yield a projected income of about £33,000 when fully populated. However, this would assume that, rather than the niches being offered in perpetuity as has been the case, there would be a stipulated period, ideally of 15 years, after which the opportunity to renew would be offered. This would help to ensure the Columbarium's very long-term use. Plans for this project have been submitted to Chorley Council for approval. It was considered that the building works would be affordable without significantly affecting our investment portfolio value.

However, the Chapel's organ has continued to be problematic and according to an organ specialist would cost a significant figure to fully restore. While the current organ forms part of the internal character of the Chapel, it was decided that this would be retained but complemented by a pre-used organ, which could be purchased for a sum in the region of £3-4,000.00 with a 10-year guarantee, which

would still be affordable together with the proposed columbarium development. An organ has recently been purchased for £3,000 and has been installed adjacent to the current one.

The purchase of a further capital item, namely a PA system to ensure that visiting ministers especially could be heard, was agreed although at a sum of only a few hundred pounds. This too has been obtained and has been working well.

Notwithstanding these proposed expenditure items, one may consider our surprise when Janet Poole of Chowbent Chapel and previously of the now-closed Bank Street Chapel in Bolton, who took the service on 16th June, presented the Chapel with a cheque for £30,000. This was awarded by the Bank Street Chapel Dissolution Committee set up to liquefy the Chapel's assets and distribute funds to many of the charities that it has supported in the past. This windfall was most graciously acknowledged and will cover the planned expenditure as well assisting in further developing Rivington Chapel's activities, not least perhaps in increasing its exposure and congregation to the world at large.

The continuing concern of the perimeter walls requires professional advice, and this is being pursued by one of the Trustees.

Finally, the tearoom tenants have had acceptable quotations for replacement of windows at the north gable end, both at the side of and above the main entrance. These will be replaced during the summer, which will complete the significant challenge of renewing all the tearoom's windows.

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

Harvest Thanksgiving

At this harvest-time, we give thanks for the gifts of nature, freely given.

For the abundance and beauty of this earth, we give thanks.

For fertile soils, ripening crops and fruiting hedgerows, we give thanks.

For bracing breezes and misty mornings, we give thanks.

For cool evenings and spectacular sunsets, we give thanks.

For dew glistening on spiders' webs, we give thanks.

For the sumptuous scent of fallen leaves on damp earth, we give thanks.

For the circling seasons, the dance of light and dark, we give thanks.

For all the gifts of nature, freely given, we give thanks.

For the fruits of love and the gifts of friendship we harvest here in our beloved community, we give thanks.

For the joys of sharing, growing and flourishing together, we give thanks.

For the promise of harvest that lies in the seed, the huge oak tree in the tiny acorn, the sweet apple in the bitter pip, we give thanks.

For all the promise, potential and possibilities of our lives, we give thanks.

At this harvest-time, we think of all those around the world who hunger because their harvests have failed.

May we learn to share the harvests of the world fairly and justly.

We think of all those around the world who are fleeing conflict and persecution, who have been forced to abandon their harvests.

May they find sanctuary here.

We think of those close to home who do not know abundance, who must rely on food banks to feed their families.

May we share our harvest with all those in need.

May we be like fruit trees –

deep rooted, strong, bountiful –

giving shelter to the lost, support to the lonely,

and nourishment to the hungry.

from Rev Laura Dobson

Scenic Rivington Calendar 2025

Chris Martin would like to invite you to contribute photographs which celebrate the natural beauty of the Rivington area for possible inclusion in next year's calendar. You can submit photos at any time of year, but the cut-off point for the following year's calendar is August 1st. Thirteen images (one for each month and a cover photo) will be selected and all whose photos are chosen will be notified before we go to print. Please send your photos (landscape format only) to chris_and_june@hotmail.com

Rivington Open Hour

Chris Martin hosts an open hour in the Chapel on the first Wednesday of each month between 2:00 and 3:00 pm, when he gives visitors a free guided tour of the Chapel and talks about its history. The Chapel will next be open on Wednesday 7 August.

Virtual Tour

If you are not able to visit the Chapel in person, you can look at the 3D virtual tour created by Daniel Stenson from ViewPro360 in conjunction with Chris.

The tour shows a 3D image of the interior of the Chapel, and by clicking on the buttons for the highlighted features you can find information about each one.



You can 'enter' the virtual tour either by following this link <https://rivingtonchapel.org.uk/virtual-tour-of-rivington-chapel/> or using this QR code if you have a reader on your phone or other device.

There are now some QR codes in the Chapel and also at various points in the grounds.

Publications

Please contact Chris Martin (01257 483702, [email: chris and june@hotmail.com](mailto: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

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

04 Aug	Sian Murray - Ullet Road Chapel
18 Aug	Jean Clements - Denton Chapel
01 Sep	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
15 Sep	tba
06 Oct	Graeme Pilbrough - Padiham Chapel
20 Oct	Rev Amanda Reynolds - Kendal Chapel Harvest Festival
03 Nov	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel

Flower Donors

04 Aug	Elsie Kent
18 Aug	Alison Whitaker
01 Sep	Diane Fairclough
15 Sep	Elsie Kent
06 Oct	Vince and Isobel
20 Oct	Mary Horrocks
03 Nov	Jacqui & Tim Kershaw

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