

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here let no one a stranger be"



Nov 2025 - Jan 2026

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Facebook: Rivington Unitarian Chapel

2025-26 Calendar

2025

Sat 22 Nov	Christmas Craft Fair
Sat 29 Nov	Christmas Craft Fair
Wed 10 Dec	Parish Council Carols
Thu 18 Dec	The Lancashire Poetry Relay Team
Sun 21 Dec	Christmas Carol Service

2026

Sun 1 Feb	Ian Smith and Jimmy Gittins from State of Mind Sport
Sat 9 May	Rivington Spring Festival
Sun 17 May	Anniversary Sermons and Chapel Meal
Sun 7 June	Strawberry Tea
Sat 12 Sep (tbc)	Heritage Open Day
Sun 18 Oct	Harvest Festival
Sun 20 Dec	Christmas Carol Service

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

Firstly, I would like to thank and congratulate everyone who worked so hard and tirelessly on our Triennial Pilgrimage on 27 September. It was a triumph and did you and the Chapel proud. There was a great attendance of Unitarians from far and wide and it was a joy to see so many, both old faces and new.

Today, 25 October, I, along with Judith and our chairman Alison, attended Tina Ghandi's ordination at Walmsley Chapel, Egerton, where we witnessed a truly moving and special occasion. Every detail was assiduously covered and all were made to feel welcome and a part of this significant ceremony.

After these two events one can only feel the strongest of winds in the sails of our faith, and our importance as a tolerant, nurturing and inclusive faith has never been more vital and needed in a fractured and wayward world.

And now for something completely different; as a Rivington Parish Councillor for some years now (Rev Samuel Thompson was also a councillor over a hundred years ago), I know that one of our perennial problems has been with traffic, parking and antisocial behaviour. Here is a copy of my part in a submission we recently made to Lancashire Highways Department:

This Sunday lunchtime, 21 Sept 2025, I was in our church yard overlooking Sheeppouse Lane, directing half a dozen cars back down, as the road was jammed. Nothing new, as 30 years ago Bill Jones, who lived in the post office, was doing the same.

The point is that nothing but radical change will make a difference. We obviously need parking to be restricted at these 'choke' points. Importantly, we have elderly folk and those with restricted mobility attending our two churches throughout Sunday and these roads are perilous. Also, Duke of Edinburgh Award youths, laden with bulky rucksacks, traverse the area at all times and, like the elderly, their mobility is restricted if there are fast moving vehicles.

The tranquility that is sought in the area is severely impinged upon by souped-up bikes and cars that create a racket. This is insufferable for residents. David's call for speed bumps would, I feel, make a marked

difference for the better regarding anti-social use of the roads. Paid parking would no doubt create a good deal of problems for residents as the urge to leave cars in very inconvenient places would escalate. The knock-on effect MUST be taken into consideration and not conveniently brushed over.

Last but not least, we must remember at all times that Lever Park is a place bequeathed to the people for rest and recuperation.

So, it's not all a bed of roses, but at least there is some weeding going on.

Soon we will be entering the festivities of Yule and I would like to point out that there are two Christmas fairs taking place in Chapel towards the end of November and a Parish Carol Service in Chapel at 7pm on Wednesday 10th December when there will be a brass band, mulled cider, hot Vimto, mince pies, a quiz and lots of carols. Keep your voices together though, because it's our Carol Service at 2:15pm on Sunday 21st December. Don't miss these; come and sing in jubilation.

Stay safe and God bless

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

Chairman's Letter

The Chapel was open for Heritage Open Day on Saturday 13 September. A feature this year was a display of some of the documents and books from Martin Brownlow's extensive collection, the earliest dating from the 1790s. Our tombola stall proved popular as usual, and there was a good range of preserves on sale (there are still some jars available if you're interested).

Vince has already mentioned the Pilgrimage, and I would like to add my thanks to everyone who played a part, both on the day and during the months of preparation. Having the meal at the Village Tea Rooms proved very successful and we are extremely grateful to Jayne, Jade and all the staff for all their hard work.

I would also like to endorse Vince's words about Tina Ghandi's ordination service. In celebration of her Hindu heritage, Tina wore a sari, and there were some traditional prayers in Sanskrit. The service was led by Rev Ant Howe, Ministry Tutor at Unitarian College, and there were contributions from other ministry students. Several ministers from various parts of the country were there and music was provided by the Chowbent Choir. Tina is going to serve as Minister at Chowbent.

As well as the events mentioned by Vince, we can also look forward to an evening's entertainment provided by The Lancashire Poetry Relay Team on Thursday 18 December. This has been organised by Chris Martin, and further details can be found on page 7.

The new date for the service postponed from last August is Sunday 1 February, when we look forward to welcoming Ian Smith and Jimmy Gittins who will talk about the work of State of Mind Sport, a charity that promotes positive mental health among those engaged in sport. You can find out more about their work from their website, <https://stateofmindsport.org>

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

Trustees Matters

Since the last newsletter, the Trustees have received the Heritage Statement for the Chapel building as a prerequisite to being fully able to plan for the proposed modifications to the vestry, which, hopefully, will:

- a) Introduce a toilet with disabled access to the kitchen area,
- b) Improve the doorway between the chapel and the vestry and so enable wheelchair access, and
- c) Improve access to the first floor so that better use may be made of the space, with meetings being of a principal focus here.

At the present time, given receipt of the architect's sketches of two plans that attempt to address these objectives, we are currently seeking a meeting with Historic England in order to discuss the feasibility of either of these prior to applying for Listed Building Consent and the creation of formal plans for submission to Chorley Council for their approval.

With regard to disabled access, we are currently working with a temporary ramp provider with a view to enabling wheelchair access via the right-hand door on the west wall. It is hoped to have a decision within the coming weeks regarding its design and purchase.

A full tree audit has been undertaken across the estate with a priority list of actions to be undertaken. These are currently being costed and some will be effected before winter fully sets in.

Finally, so that the Chapel may be hired out for events with a greater degree of economic confidence, an 'Open Hours' hourly costing rate is currently being calculated which may be used by both the Trustees and the Congregational Committee to ensure that all costs are fully

Rivington Chapel presents...

**The Lancashire
Poetry Relay Team!**



**Join us for a 'Christmas Crack-
ing' evening of rhyme and song.**

Thurs 18th Dec. 6:30 to 7:45pm.

FREE admission

(donations welcome).

covered when events are being arranged in the Chapel and costed accordingly.

At the last AGM, your chairman, who has been in post for 10 years now, signalled his intention to stand down, while retaining his membership of the Trustees, at the AGM in March 2026 and so volunteers are being sought both from within the current Trustee body as well as externally.

**Richard Horrocks
Chairman of Trustees**

New email addresses

Some new email addresses have recently been set up that you can use for contacting the officers of the Chapel Trustees and for other specific reasons. These are:

trustchair@rivingtonchapel.org.uk to contact the Chairman

trustsec2@rivingtonchapel.org.uk to contact the Secretary

trusttreasurer@rivingtonchapel.org.uk to contact the Treasurer

remembrance@rivingtonchapel.org.uk for enquiries about the Garden of Remembrance

estates@rivingtonchapel.org.uk for matters relating to the buildings and the grounds

publications2@rivingtonchapel.org.uk for inquiries about the various publications available

There is also an address to contact Vince McCully, our Lay Person in Charge: laycharge@rivingtonchapel.org.uk

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:

publications2@rivingtonchapel.org.uk) 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

The 2026 'Scenic Rivington' Calendar is now available, and there are some new Christmas cards this year featuring wintry scenes in the area.

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

02 Nov	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
16 Nov	Rev Laura Dobson - Chorlton Chapel
07 Dec	Jean Clements - Denton Chapel
21 Dec	Christmas Carol Service
04 Jan	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
18 Jan	Tanya Smalley - Rivington Chapel
1 Feb	Ian Smith and Jimmy Gittins - State of Mind Sport

Flower Donors

02 Nov	Jacqui & Tim Kershaw
16 Nov	Judith Crompton
07 Dec	Carol Worsley
21 Dec	Christmas Decorations
04 Jan	Christmas Decorations
18 Jan	Mary Horrocks
1 Feb	Alison Whitaker

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 2 Nov Congregational Committee Meeting
After service

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 Jan 2026

Issue date: 18 Jan 2026

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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