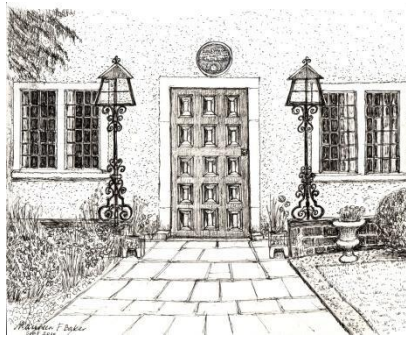


Founded 1662



Building 1694

# Elder Yard Unitarian Chapel Chesterfield

Elder Yard Unitarian Chapel, Elder Way, Chesterfield S40 1UR  
Tel: 01246 554506 Website: [www.chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk](http://www.chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk)

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Registered charity No.220091

*In the light of truth and the warmth of love, we gather to seek, to sustain, to share.*

## *Newsletter January/February 2025*

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### Welcome to our Newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2025. Happy New Year to all.

The days are becoming longer again and the current beautiful snowy scenes are pierced by some welcome rays of sunshine.

### Details of services and leaders for 2025

Services are held on the second Sunday of each month and start at 3pm.

12 January	Rev. Maria Papp	13 July	Peter Rawson
9 February	Peter Rawson	10 August	Rev. Maria Papp
9 March	Peter Rawson	16 September	Rev. Maria Papp
13 April	Rev. Maria Papp	12 October	Rev. Maria Papp
11 May	Rev. Maria Papp	9 November	Peter Rawson
8 June	Rev. Maria Papp	14 December	Rev. Maria Papp



### Lunchtime Concerts in the Chapel

The 2024 Saturday lunchtime concert series came to a close on December 21st when a large audience enjoyed piano duets with a Christmas flavour performed by Andrew & David. The Chapel concerts now take a break until March 15th 2025 when there will be a concert of choral music performed by MusicWork Vocal Ensemble. The new series of Saturday lunchtime concerts at Chesterfield library begins on January 25th 2025 with a New Year piano recital performed by Andrew Marples.

All of these concerts run from 11.45am to 12.30pm admission is free, with a retiring collection.

## Maintenance Update



Two major issues unfortunately arose in December! A wall in the toilets had to be exposed, fixed and re-plastered urgently. The wall is 330 years old, so fair enough! Ryan our decorator is repainting this whole loo/cloakroom area in now!



The second disaster was that the upstairs (small) gas boiler had a major breakdown and is now dead. It was fitted in the early 1970s so again, fair enough. The Trustees are collecting quotes for a replacement system. This boiler heats the radiators in the upstairs room, stairwell, toilets and downstairs room. It also provides all of the chapel's hot water.

On a more positive note, Mike the gardener has visited and removed all the leaves, pruned, trimmed and tidied.

## Christmas Service and the Re-Gifting Stall

The planned Christmas coffee morning on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December was cancelled because of the anticipated storm, but the re-gifting stall was held at the Christmas Service the day after. The service was a great success, with the seasonal decorations adding to the atmosphere. The service was led by Rev Maria Papp and we are grateful for the beautiful a cappella singing of the Aurora Choir. In recent years their involvement has been a welcome highlight and we are thankful that they fit us into their busy schedule.

Ann was due to sing at the service and she and her husband Alan were both going to undertake readings, but both were poorly and couldn't attend. Thankfully, Rachel Mansbridge kindly stepped-in and beautifully undertook two of the readings. Thank-you Rachel. Janet and Sarah delivered the remaining readings, with the congregation joining in magnificently, as instructed. It was a comforting and joyous service and the hot drinks and baked goods afterwards went down a treat.

The re-gifting stall had been set-up in the entrance room and so people browsed and bought items as they balanced their mince pie and coffee. This raised over £30.

The Chapel has donated £50 from the service and re-gifting stall sales to the Disasters Emergency Committee to support the humanitarian work they are facilitating charities on the ground in Gaza to undertake. The Government has committed to matching donations and so, in real terms, our donation will achieve £100. Unitarian congregations had expressed their frustration about how to show their concern at what is happening in Gaza and how to help, and so it was agreed at the Annual National Meeting in April 2024 that any such donations from congregations to DEC was a constructive action to take.



## **Elder Yard Trustee Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22 January 2025. If you have anything you wish to raise with the trustees for possible discussion at the next meeting, please let Ann Shutt know by emailing [tillypretoria2@btinternet.com](mailto:tillypretoria2@btinternet.com)

**General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches – National News & Views.** The General Assembly explains “Our congregations are autonomous democratic organisations, led by the members. Each elects its own leadership annually and decide their own vision and plans. The culture and ethos of each congregation is unique, while belonging to our larger family.” The national website address is <https://unitarian.org.uk> and the information below, and much more, can be found there.

***Assisted Dying Bill Statement - 6 December 2024.*** In light of the recent vote to move forward with the Assisted Dying Bill in Parliament, Geoff Levermore, President of the Unitarians and Free Christians in the UK, reminds us that our denomination voted in favour of assisted dying in 2013, after a year’s examination of the issue within our congregations. Ultimately, it was our underlying values of love for our neighbour and compassion for all beings that swayed our stance. From Ann Howell, our Social Action Officer: It is important to mention that our vote in 2013 was far from unanimous and that while the motion we agreed on was in favour of giving terminally ill people the right to end their life in a “painless and dignified manner”, this new bill brings up some potential nuances that should be considered.

***Latest Executive Committee of the General Assembly meeting*** – this was held in Birmingham on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of November. The national website provides a detailed account of what was covered at the meeting. One particular part was feedback from the Transformer staff who have been linking in with congregations on an organised basis to find out what the

issues are about sustainability. The project has been running for 3 years so far and could provide a key platform to help a broader spread of congregations with their longer-term viability.

***Stunning Donation to the City of Newcastle*** – Newcastle Unitarian Church donated their stunning collection of silver to the city last Autumn. The church commented on the long-standing links with the council, “Our historical records state that:

“...in August 1669, the town sergeant [of Newcastle upon Tyne] broke up a meeting at Rev. Richard Gilpin’s house (near where the Hanover Square Chapel later stood). The information laid before the town magistrates named Richard Gilpin, William Durant, Henry Leaver and Richard Pringle as the preachers. Also present were four past sheriffs, four ex-mayors, one future mayor, some of the aldermen, the town’s physician, the town surveyor, and about thirty other well-to-do burgesses, with, in some cases, their wives. (No wonder the magistrates had been reluctant to enforce the law!)”



### **Community Support in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire**

Community Services that can help in time of need.

#### ***Homelessness support*** –

Pathways charity, 120 Saltergate, Chesterfield S40 1NG. Tel: 01246 498204

Phone lines are open Monday to Thursday between 9am and 5pm and Friday 9am- 4.30pm. Drop-in sessions are open at 10am – 12.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at their main office- 120 Saltergate. Also provide support about maintaining a tenancy and link with specialist support organisations.

#### ***SAIL – Derbyshire Sexual Abuse and Incest Line.***

Offer free, specialist counselling for adults aged 18 and over in Derbyshire who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, incest or sexual violence.

To refer, and for general enquiries phone 01246 559889.

**Website:** <https://www.derbyshiresail.org.uk>

SAIL provide a helpline Phone 0800028267 or text 07522561397

**EMAIL -** [helpline@sailderbyshire.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sailderbyshire.org.uk)

Can provide support from specially trained Independent Sexual Violence Advocates, including victim support during court cases. **Website:** <https://www.derbyshiresail.org.uk>

To suggest a Community Service for inclusion, please contact [sarah.sheila18@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.sheila18@gmail.com)

## Did you know?

### *In January*

**1838, 18<sup>th</sup> January**, first marriage in the Unitarian chapel, being also the first marriage in a dissenting place of worship at Chesterfield under the new act.

**1963, 1<sup>st</sup> January**, work starts on building the new Chesterfield Bus Depot at Stonegravels, for the cost of £650,000. Things were obviously built to last then, as this is still in use today.

**1963, 11 January**, the last independent cinema in Chesterfield, The Lyceum on Whittington Moor, stopped showing films. The building was taken over by the Carlton Club. The building remains in some kind of use, but looks a little frayed around the edges.

### *In February*

**1963, 6<sup>th</sup> February**, more snow! Hopes of a break or thaw in the worst winter snow conditions since 1947 were dashed as snow started to fall once again on this day.

## Events Coming up in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

### *In January*

**Derbyshire Archaeology Day 2025** at The Winding Wheel

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January from 9.15 am. Price: £12, Concessions £9.20, Children under 16 Free. Presentations, stalls bookshop. Hosted by Peak District National Park, Derbyshire County Council and Chesterfield Borough Council. This event is open to anyone.



### *In February*

**Discos for Grown Ups** at the Winding Wheel. After three sold out discos in 2024.

Saturday 1 February 2025. Doors open at 7 pm and the disco starts at 8 pm.

Various admission prices, starting at £20.70. Advance Booking is recommended

**Let's end the newsletter on some thoughtful and inspiring words.....**

**I Am Only One – contributed by Janet Mansbridge**

At the start of a new year, it is natural to wonder how 2025 will unfold for our families & the world in general. We might also be thinking about how to best use our strengths & energies to bring about positive changes. Sometimes, events on the world stage & challenges in our own lives can leave us feeling powerless or even helpless.

When I feel overwhelmed, I turn to the words of the American writer & Unitarian minister, Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909)

I am only one,

But I am one.

I cannot do everything,

But I can do something.

And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.

Written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, I see these words of wisdom as relevant to my own life today. Humbling yet empowering, they help me see that I have a contribution to make. They remind me of my responsibilities to family & community but provide gentle reassurance on frustrating days; they provide the spur that I need & a comfort blanket on days when I do not feel equal to the challenge.

Put simply, if less beautifully:

Ok, I cannot change the world on my own,

So I won't be too hard on myself.

But I will not just sit on my derriere & do nothing!

Continued thanks to our chapel officers:

*Chairman: Alan Shutt    Secretary: Ann Shutt    Treasurer: Martin Barrett*

*Organist and Building Manager: Andrew Marples*

Please see any of the above if you need help, have news or require information about the Chapel.

Contact Numbers

Andrew Marples: 01246 211655

Ann & Alan Shutt: 01246 554506

Martin Barrett: 01246 567674

Website: [www.chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk](http://www.chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk)

General email: [info@chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk](mailto:info@chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk)

*Any contributions for the newsletter may be sent by email to: [sarah.sheila18@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.sheila18@gmail.com)*

*Holy and beautiful is the custom which brings us  
together in the presence of the most high;  
to face our ideals; to remember our loved ones;  
to give thanks;  
to confess and forgive;  
to be enlightened and to be strengthened.*

the **unitarians** and  
**free christians**

