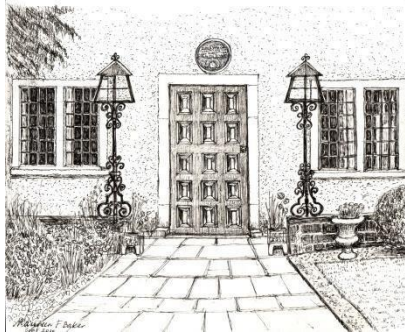


Founded 1662 Building 1694



Elder Yard

Unitarian

Chapel Chesterfield

Elder Yard Unitarian Chapel, Elder Way, Chesterfield S40 1UR
Tel: 01246 554506 Website: www.chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk
General email: info@chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk
Registered charity No.220091

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

Newsletter May/June 2025

Welcome to our Newsletter

“In summer, the song sings itself”

William Carlos Williams 1883 – 1963

(American medical doctor, poet, novelist, playwright and essayist)

Details of services and leaders for 2025

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

11 May	Rev. Maria Pap	16 Sept	Rev. Maria Pap
8 June	Rev. Maria Pap	12 Oct	Rev. Maria Pap
13 July	Katherine & Peter Faulkner	9 Nov	Rev. Maria Pap
10 Aug	Rev. Maria Pap	14 Dec	Rev. Maria Pap



Lunchtime concerts in the Chapel

The popular Chapel Saturday lunchtime concerts continue on May 17th when there will be a concert of string duos performed by Lucy Phillips and Jonny Ingall. On June 28th Katy Strudwick will give a flute recital, accompanied by Andrew on piano. The concerts run 1.45am to 12.30pm admission is free, with a retiring collection.

Maintenance

The new upstairs gas boiler is now installed and working smoothly. Taking advantage of the good weather, Richmond Builders have replaced the crumbling rendering on the front wall of the chapel – a bit of colour matching is still to be arranged. More jobs are in the pipeline as the Trustees try to keep the place in good repair!

Musical Outings

Andrew recently travelled to Upper Chapel in Sheffield to perform as part of Sheffield's Classical Weekend concerts. In the concert on March 22nd 11.30am – 12.15pm he played as part of a piano trio (Piano, Violin, Cello) called Trio 240. They played a programme of music based on the musical journals/collection of Jane Austen and family – she was a keen amateur musician. They also played a full Trio by Clara Schumann – a female composer, concert pianist, wife to Robert Schumann and mother of 8 children! The event attracted over 80 people and was a big success. The concert is being repeated at Chesterfield Library on June 21st.



On April 27th Ann and Andrew provided songs and organ music for 'A Celebration of Spring' at the Old Meeting house, Mansfield organised by Maria. Several members of Elder Yard came along to the service and enjoyed their afternoon! Ann sang 6 songs accompanied by Andrew on piano and organ. The music was interspersed with spring-themed readings (with several members of the Mansfield congregation as readers), one organ solo ('On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring' by Delius) and the hymn: 'All things bright and beautiful'.



The Old Meeting House



Rev. Maria Pap

Elder Yard Trustee Meeting

The last trustee meeting was held on Weds 19 March 2025. It was a very busy meeting as the previous one had to be postponed. The key items discussed were:

- Approval of the last minutes.
- Review of the finances of the Chapel. There is no cause for concern, but as always, the trustees are mindful of the need to increase income to the chapel from weddings, events and possible grants. There is always indoor and outdoor maintenance and replacement work required.
- Maintenance. Andrew confirmed the new boiler is working well. The work on the walls of the toilets, and the follow-up decorating has been undertaken. Required rendering work outside was approved. It was agreed that a spring clean is required and a date will be agreed after Easter.
- Safeguarding. Discussion about policy, record keeping and guidance about how to deal with any safeguarding incidents. Sarah will finalise these documents. Sarah will undertake safeguarding training and will have a DBS check undertaken.
- Ann talked about incoming communications and her replies to these.
- Discussion about the planned Unitarian District Meetings and about when to invite the Old Meeting House congregation at Mansfield to one of our services.
- Booked wedding services and christenings.
- Heritage open days in September – dates, publicity, decorations, refreshments.
- July service – who will lead the service as Maria is not available.
- Concerns about vehicular approach to the chapel car park. A meeting has been arranged with the nursery manager.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 9th June 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

Coffee Mornings

The first coffee morning of Spring/Summer is on Thursday 8th May, 10 am to 12 pm.

It would be lovely to see you there. Any donations of baked or bought goods would be very welcome. Please contact Sarah on sarah.sheila18@gmail.com if you wish to donate or have any questions.

The proposed future dates for the coffee mornings are:

Thursday 26th June

Thursday 24th July

Thursday 21st August

Friday 12th and Saturday 13th September (Heritage Open Days)

11th December (Christmas).

Heritage Open Days at Elder Yard

The Chapel will be open to visitors on Friday 12th September and Saturday 13th September from 10am to 4pm as part of the national Heritage Open Days scheme. The theme this year is Architecture, and so, with our beautiful building and gardens, we should be able to meet that focus. Refreshments will be served, and any left over will be served at our monthly service on the day afterwards – 14th September at 3pm.

With Our Best Wishes

I'm sure all of us associated with Elder Yard would like to offer get well wishes to our friends Elaine Buttery and Peter Rowson who have both been unwell. You are in our thoughts and you are missed.

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 and from their regular electronic newsletter.

Unitarian GA Annual Meetings – 14 and 15 April 2025.

This year's meetings are reported to have been more energized than some previous ones. Three new lay leaders were welcomed. Rev Maud Robinson lead the service.

Summer School in August

"Finding our religion: Being Unitarian in the 21st Century". This will take place locally at the Nightingale Centre and is the 30th anniversary of the summer school. Go to <https://unitarian.org.uk> to book a place and for more information.

New course: All About U

An Introductory Course about Unitarian history, theology and values. Find where you fit in, and share your experience to enhance the future of Unitarianism.

3x zoom sessions, 7 - 9pm, Wednesdays:

28th May, 4th June, 11th June

There is no fee for this course, but please consider making an appropriate donation for the

work of Unitarian College.

To book your place and find out more, please email Admin@unitarian-college.org.uk

LGBT+ Unitarian Voices

This Unitarian website <https://unitarian.org.uk> includes a very interesting timeline of Unitarian LGBT+ debate, action and key activists, in the context of social and political change.

Unitarians in the Public Eye

A feature about national or locally known Unitarians.

Mary Swanwick 1841 to 1917

Mary Swanwick was born at Old Whittington, Chesterfield on 13 July 1841. Her mother was Elizabeth Drayton and her father was Frederick Swanwick, the Chief Engineer for George Stephenson. She had a younger brother called Russell, born in 1843.

The family were non-conformists and regularly attended services at Elder Yard Chapel.

Miss Swanwick was a keen philanthropist and educationalist and has had a huge impact on the lives of Whittington residents.

She was a manager of the Whittington Schools Council (before it was taken over by Derbyshire County Council) and she attended Whittington schools regularly to see what teachers were doing and to check registers. In recognition of her contribution the Whittington Websters endowed school on Church Street North, Old Whittington became Mary Swanwick Community school in the 1930's. The school is still a focal point of the village and Sarah's children both attended there.

She was involved in many charities and organisations and she was a trustee of the Webster Charity. The charity is still supporting children in the Whittington area, through grants made to local schools for equipment and individual children and young people can apply for support with their education.

Miss Swanwick was also involved with Chesterfield St Helena's School for Girls and was the first lady governor there. Four years after her death a memorial was unveiled to her at the school. Unfortunately, I don't know whether the memorial is still in place.

Excitingly, she nurtured the development and career of artist Joseph Sydall (1864 to 1942) by becoming his patron. He was a local Whittington boy living on Church Street North, working as a solicitor's clerk when Miss Swanwick paid for him to study under Sir Hubert von Herkomer. Sydall exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1898, and he designed the Old Whittington and Dronfield War Memorials.

Miss Swanwick was elected as Guardian of Old Whittington Ward, and held this role for over twenty years.

The extract from her obituary in the Derbyshire Courier April 17 1917 indicates what she would particularly be remembered for, "She was indeed a 'Guardian of the poor' in its fullest sense and probably nobody but the poor themselves know what a true friend they had in her". Miss Swanwick died on 7 April 1917 and her funeral service took place at Elder Yard Chapel followed by burial in the family plot at Spital Cemetery.

There is a photo of Mary Swanwick in Elder Yard Chapel, which we are proud to have.

Baptism at the Chapel

We were presented with a full Chapel on Sunday at 2.00pm on the 13th April when Rev. Maria Pap, Baptised “Noah Nathan Mark Hardwick”. It was a wonderful day for his parents, Savannah Johnson, and Luke Hardwick along with his five Godparents and guests. They all enjoyed what was a very emotional and wonderful day, even Noah seemed to enjoy the ceremony too.

The Chapel would like to wish Noah and his parents a very happy future together.

Did you know?

In May

2002, 3 May - Labour politician Barbara Castle died (aged 91). She was Labour MP for Blackburn from 1945 to 1979. As Labour Transport Minister she introduced permanent speed limits, breathalysers and seat belts. As Employment Minister she introduced the Equal Pay Act 1970. She was also Secretary of State for Health and Social Services and a Member of the European Parliament. She was born Barbara Anne Batts in Chesterfield on 6 October 1910 – still eight years away from partial suffrage for women. (Please note, the newsletter is not promoting any particular political view).

In June,

1791, June 12 (Whitsunday) – “a heavy fall of snow early in the morning”. So changeable weather is not just a recent feature!

Community Support in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Community

Services that can help.

- ***For information about pest control in your gardens without using harmful chemicals and also lots of information about making your garden wildlife friendly.***

Royal Horticultural Society – go online at www.rhs.org.uk

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is also an excellent source of information online at

www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

- ***To donate old tools which could be refurbished and sent for use in Africa*** look at Christian charity “Tools with a Mission” on line at www.twam.uk

You can put your postcode into the website to find out your most local volunteer, where you can drop off tools you wish to donate.

To suggest a Community Service for inclusion contact: sarah.sheila18@gmail.com

Events Coming up in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

In May

Friday 23 – 26 May

Cliff Festival is a four-day event full of music, seminars, Bible teaching and activities for people of all ages. It runs at Cliff College near Bakewell in Derbyshire, with camping plots and indoor accommodation available for those attending.

Saturday 24 – 26 May

Derbyshire Open Arts Festival. This weekend showcases some exceptional Artists, providing the excuse to explore the county. Visit inspiring work spaces, talk to artists and have the opportunity to buy an original piece of art. Find out more about the artists and plan your route on the Derbyshire Open Arts website. www.derbyshireopenarts.co.uk or phone [07964 824446](tel:07964824446)

In June

7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 June

Paddlesports on the Chesterfield Canal

At the Hollingwood Hub, 22 Work's Road, Hollingwood, S43 2PF. The Chesterfield Canal Trust website will have more details.

22, 26, 27, 28 June 9 am to 5 pm

Highlight Craft Festival - Highlight Crafts, Unit 1c Wingfield Court, Clay Cross, S45 9JA.

Cards, flower making, candle making etc. Register between 9am to 9.30 at the venue.



Any contributions for the newsletter may be sent by email to: sarah.sheila18@gmail.com

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

General email: info@chesterfield-unitarians.org.uk

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.

