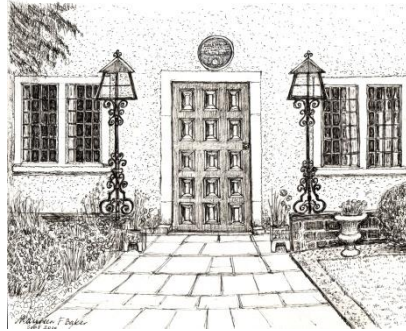


Founded 1662



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 2026

Welcome to our Newsletter

Details of Services and Leaders for 2026

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

Date	Leader	Date	Leader
May 10th	Rev. Marie Pap	June 14th	Rev. Marie Pap
July 12th	Kath & Peter Faulkner	August 9th	Rev. Marie Pap
September 13th	Rev. Marie Pap	October 11th	Rev. Marie Pap
November 8th	Rev. Marie Pap	December 13th	Rev. Marie Pap

Saturday Lunchtime Concerts at the Chapel

All are welcome to attend, doors open 11.15am:

16 May from 11.45 to 12.30: Chamber Music from Hallam Recorder Consort.

27 June from 11.45 to 12.30: Flute Recital by Katy Strudwick & Andrew Marples.

Elder Yard Trustee Meeting

The last Elder Yard trustee meeting was held on Wednesday 11 February and a summary was included in the last newsletter.

A shorter trustee meeting was planned for after the Chapel Sunday Service on 10 May, but this has now been rearranged to Wednesday 13 May 2pm, so that more time can be designated to the agenda items.

If you wish to request an item for inclusion at the next meeting, please contact Ann on tillypretoria2@btinternet.com

Sunday Service and a celebration of Spring at Mansfield Old Meeting House

Ann Shutt and Andrew Marples provided a beautiful musical recital at the Sunday Service at Mansfield Old Meeting House on 26 April. The service was led by Rev. Maria Pap with several poetry readings from the congregation. Alan, Janet and Sarah attended the service and received the usual very warm welcome from our friends at Mansfield.



Chapel Coffee Mornings

The first coffee morning of this year was held on Thursday 2 April. It was well attended with some individuals popping in to have a look around the chapel because the gates and doors were open. It was lovely to chat and share our

hospitality and beautiful building. There is a coffee morning on Thursday 7 May at 10am and then on Thursday 18 June at 10am.

District Service at The Old Unitarian Chapel Great Hucklow

We are looking forward to attending the District Service at The Old Unitarian Chapel Great Hucklow on Sunday 17 May at 2pm. This will be attended by the Unitarian General Assembly President and we anticipate a welcoming celebration of fellowship organised by our friends at Great Hucklow. To help with travel to the service, the postcode is SK17 8RG

Fellowship Service at Elder Yard with our friends from Mansfield Old Meeting House.

Elder Yard Chapel congregation is delighted to invite our friends from Mansfield for a joint Fellowship Service on Sunday 14 June at 3 pm. We have previously attended similar services at the Old Meeting House, Mansfield and enjoyed a warm welcome, food and interesting activities. This is our opportunity to reciprocate and subject to the weather on the day, we hope to offer afternoon tea on the lawn. There is parking at the rear of the Chapel (the ground is uneven) and public paid parking on the “donut” roundabout which is very close by. The postcode for the Chapel is S40 1UR, and if you need to pull-in and ask for assistance in finding the Chapel, please ring Sarah on 0770 753 6927. There is wheelchair access to the main entrance of the Chapel, but unfortunately there is a step up/down to the toilets, though grab rails are fitted to help with the step

Heritage Open Days at Elder Yard.

“The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker - what did your ancestors do, and what was their daily life like?” The theme for 2026 Heritage Open days is Everyday Histories and we will be open to the public on Friday 11 September and Saturday 12 September from 10am to 4 pm. Everyone is welcome to enjoy the building – the oldest chapel in Chesterfield - and the grounds, and to view historical documents and items we have on show for the weekend. Refreshments will be served. There is wheelchair access to the main entrance of the Chapel, but unfortunately there is a step up/down to the toilets, though grab rails are fitted to help with the step. Why not come and find out more about Emma Holmes who was baptised at the Chapel and who went on to be referred to as the mother of the Australian Labour Party?

Please note, we are not open to Heritage visitors on Sunday 13 September, but anyone is welcome to the Sunday service that day at 3 pm.

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 in their regular electronic newsletter. These snippets are a small selection of the current content.

Swift Response

“The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches has passed three resolutions at its Annual Meetings in Derbyshire, empowering the movement to respond more swiftly to threats to human rights and defending the right to protest as a spiritual practice. A third emergency motion also called for an immediate end to the war in the Middle East. The votes took place last month during the plenary sessions of the Annual Meetings, where several hundred Unitarians gathered.” (Unitarian Newsletter)

Feminist Theology

In 1985 Unitarians produced a report on Feminist Theology called Growing Together. The latest newsletter includes an interview with one of the authors and proposes that the content is still relevant.

The newsletter says: “The Double-Sided Debate runs in two columns down the page, and it begins like this:

For every woman that is tired of being a weak person when she knows she is strong — there is a man tired of looking strong when he feels vulnerable.

For every woman tired of looking foolish — there is a man tired of people expecting him to know everything.

For every woman tired of being called an emotional female — there is a man tired of the denial of the right to cry and be tender.”

The report goes on to cover parenthood, work, sexuality, money, competition, and freedom.

Free Resources

The Unitarian national website has a really good section providing a wide range of reports, inspirational publications etc. These can be found at <https://www.unitarian.org.uk/resources/>

Unitarianism at a Glance

Ann kindly submitted this really helpful explanation of the Unitarian faith in Great Britain and Ireland. Many Unitarians can struggle to explain their faith, because it doesn't follow any one doctrine. Let's hope that the mainstream view of Unitarianism referred to in the last paragraph is softening and is more accommodating as time passes.

There are about 7,000 Unitarians in Great Britain and Ireland, and about 150 Unitarian Ministers. There are about 800,000 Unitarians Worldwide.

Unitarianism is an open-minded and individualistic approach to religion that gives scope for a very wide range of beliefs and doubts.

Religious freedom for each individual is at the heart of Unitarianism. Everyone is free to search for meaning in life in a responsible way and to reach their own conclusions.

In line with their approach to religious truth, Unitarians see diversity and pluralism as valuable rather than threatening. They want religion to be broad, inclusive, and tolerant. Unitarianism can therefore include people who are Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Pagan, Atheist etc.

- Unitarianism has no standard set of beliefs
- Unitarians believe that religious truth is not necessarily or primarily laid down either in scriptures, by a holy person or by a religious institution
 - No individual or group in Unitarianism makes an exclusive claim to the truth
 - Within certain core values each Unitarian can believe what they feel is right
- Unitarians are so called because they insist on the oneness of God and because they affirm the essential unity of humankind and of creation
- Unitarians believe religion should make a difference to the world, so they are often active in social justice and community work
- Unitarianism grew out of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century CE and started in Poland and Transylvania in the 1560s
- Unitarians have adopted the Flaming Chalice as the symbol of their faith
- The Unitarians were the first Church in Britain to accept women as Ministers in 1904.

- Unitarians welcome LGBT+ in the Ministry and support equal rights for LGBTQ+ within the Church and in society at large. Same sex marriages are offered at Unitarian chapels.

A heretical religion?

Early Unitarians felt that the language of the Bible spoke clearly of “one God”. Because of this they felt that the traditional Christian idea of God being a Trinity was wrong.

From the viewpoint of mainstream Christianity, therefore, Unitarianism is a heretical belief, and for many centuries those who believed in the unity of God were persecuted by the churches.

Did you know?

In May

1993: On 7 May 1993 a fire at the Littlewood’s Store on Market Place in Chesterfield town centre (now Primark) tragically claimed the lives of two shoppers who could not get to an emergency exit in time. The fire was started deliberately and the young arsonist was jailed for two charges of manslaughter and for damaging property.

In June

1966: The Regal Cinema in Staveley closed. It had opened in April 1939. In 1967 it reopened as the Wedgewood Cinema but it closed in December 1969, then opened as a bingo club till 2007. In 2010 it opened for the final time as the Regal Cinema, but closed within a matter of months. It is located near to St John’s Church and is on a register compiled by the Chesterfield and District Civic Society of buildings that they feel are at risk and are important.

Community Support in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

Community Services that can help you and the community.

Relating to troublesome skin conditions.

The British Skin Foundation

For A to Z information about skin conditions and how to get help click on <https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/conditions>

For those with Eczema. Eczema UK.

For support, research and raising awareness. Click on <https://www.eczema.org.uk/>

To suggest a Community Service for inclusion contact:

sarah.sheila18@gmail.com

Events Coming up in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire

In May

1940s Market.

Transporting us back to the 1940s, with lots of activities.

Thursday 28 May 2026 from 10 am till 4pm in Chesterfield Town Centre

Free Tennis sessions.

Saturdays 10 am till 1pm from 21 March to 22 August 2026

Give tennis a go this spring and summer with free social sessions at King George V Park in Staveley. To book, click on <https://www.lta.org.uk/play/free-park-tennis/>

In June

Chesterfield International Market

Friday 19/6/26 to Sunday 21/6/26 from 10 am to 19.00

See what is on offer at a range of colourful stalls in the re-vamped market area.

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



We need to get rid of the stigma surrounding Mental Health, for not only does this affect women but men, children, our armed forces, nurses, doctors, paramedics and police. In fact someone you know may at some point have or may still be suffering with their mental health, just let them know you are there to support whatever it is they are going through. In the meantime, when you are out and about one day, just give a smile to a complete stranger for you never know what sort of a day they may be having or about to have. It costs us nothing to be kind or there for someone, even a stranger. *Ann Shutt*

A few Quotes to start your day

“Finding peace within is the greatest victory of all.”

“Breathe in hope, exhale doubt—let your light shine.”

“Every day holds the potential for a fresh start.”

“Your voice matters; share your story and inspire others.”

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.

