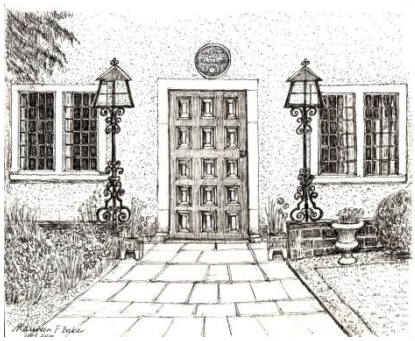
Founded 1662



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 November/ December 2026

Welcome to our Newsletter

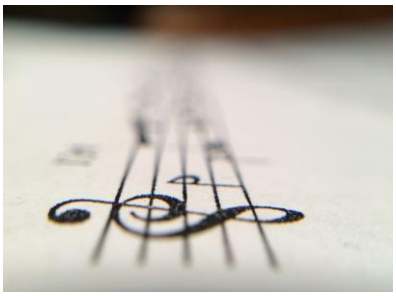
Details of Services and Leaders for 2026/27

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

Month	**Leader**	**Month**	**Leader**
November	Rev Maria Pap	Dec. Carol Service	Rev Maria Pap

Month	**Leader**	**Month**	**Leader**
January 2027	Rev Maria Pap	February	Rev Maria Pap
March	Rev Maria Pap	April	Rev Maria Pap
May	Rev Maria Pap	June	Rev Maria Pap
July	Kath & Peter Faulkner	August	Rev Maria Pap
September	Rev Maria Pap	October	Rev Maria Pap
Nov	Rev Maria Pap	Dec	Rev Maria Pap

Saturday Lunchtime Concerts at the Chapel



November 14th - Choral music: Farnaby & Co.

December 19th – Christmas piano duets*:*
David Mayo-Braiden & Andrew Marples

Concerts run 11.45am to 12.30pm, doors open at 11.15am. Free entry with donations at the end - all are welcome.

Elder Yard Trustee Update

The last trustee meeting was on 12 October 2026.
Attended by Alan Shutt, Ann Shutt, Andrew Marples, Philip Mansbridge, Janet Mansbridge and Sarah Hartley, with apologies from Martin Barrett.
Matters Arising discussion focussed on a possible visit to Belper Unitarian Chapel, Warm Spaces future application and the Spare Chair initiative.
Other discussions included:

- possible application to become a Company Ltd by Guarantee
- proposed date for the GA presidential visit next year (9 May?)
- progress towards installing another board outside to explain more about our faith
- lengthy discussion about the damage to the roof and guttering, (estimates, insurance etc)
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable people.
- detailed discussion about risk assessments in relation to safety and reducing the risk of potential harm to anyone using the building.
- Wedding held on 19/10
- Baptism on 8/11
- Finance update
- Replacement grand piano
- Sheffield District Association meeting to be held at Elder Yard on Sat16 Jan.

Next full trustee meeting on 15/2/27 at 11am.
Next Way Forward meeting on 25/1/27 at 11am

Christmas Service at Elder Yard Chapel – all are welcome

Our usual carol service takes place on December 13th at 3pm with a festive mixture of readings, carols and choral music, followed by tasty nibbles and hot drinks! We welcome MusicWork Vocal Ensemble as our guest choir this time. They rehearse in the chapel regularly and perform a Carols by Candlelight concert here each year (Wednesday December 16th this year). They are directed by our own Andrew Marples and are celebrating 30 years of singing together in 2026.

Please come along and bring family and friends to make it a memorable celebration.



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.

New legal status: From 1 October 2026, the General Assembly (GA) will be operating under its new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) structure. It has been a lengthy process to achieve this, partly because of consultation about the change.

Re-confirmation of the GA's object: incorporation hasn't changed the long-standing object of the GA, "To promote a free and enquiring religion through the worship of God and the celebration of life: the service of humanity and respect for all creation; and upholding of the liberal Christian tradition."

The Social Justice Network: "to find out what the Social Justice Network (SJN) has been up to in 2026 and add your voice to determining its course for next year and beyond. Hear from Unitarians and friends on issues including Climate Justice, LGBTQ+ rights and advocacy, racial justice including allyship, financial justice, including Universal Basic Income

Join the SJN on Zoom on **Monday, 30 November at 7pm**. All are welcome! For more info, email: info@unitarian.org.uk."

Christmas Coffee Morning

The Christmas Coffee Morning at Elder Yard Chapel will be held on Thursday 10th December from 10am to c. 12pm.
Hot and cold drinks, seasonal home- made and bought cakes and pastries, including vegetarian and gluten free. Contact Sarah for more information sarah.sheila18@gmail.com

An Important Note from Rev Maria

Dear All,

In 2027 we would like to trial out some different formats for our services and what better time than a new year? We agreed that a more community focused, sharing approach will be explored and we are starting it in January.

The topic is 'New Beginnings' and you are invited to share your personal thoughts, favourite quote/s, music or hymn choices and reflect on it.

Here are some questions for your consideration:

What old habit, expectation, burden or grief do you need to release before you can step into something new?

How do you handle the transition from the old year to the new?

The new year often brings massive, impossible resolutions, which rarely come to fruition. What is one microscopic, gentle change you actually want to invite into your life and see in the life of the chapel?

Please, let me have your contributions by the middle of December to allow us time to pull the strands of the service together. Thank you.

Maria

How World War II changed local lives

Some comments on Facebook

SG

My mum worked at Sheepbridge she was an inspector for bomb cases she was also disabled and wore irons on both sides of her leg didn't stop her working in those days it was work or get no money.

LE

My aunty by marriage her sister worked on a crane my aunty worked on a farm. My mum wanted to join up but wasn't allowed as she worked on weaving looms at Robinsons

SDL

My mum worked at the Jam Factory on Whittington Moor making hand grenades (I saw this comment more than once…I'll never look at a jar of jam again without remembering these comments! Sarah)

JS

My mates mother became a Welder at JJ BLOW engineering

SH

My mum illuminated the dials for aircraft with radium in Chesterfield

Margaret Wilson, 95, trained as a wireless operator before being transferred to Bletchley Park in 1942, where she listened to German radio. "That's all I can tell you, a secret is a secret," she said. At the time, she did not realise the importance of the work - but even now she knows its significance she will not reveal all. Despite pleas from researchers and family, Mrs Wilson, from Shirebrook, said: "No one else has talked, so I won't either.!"

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Boy Miners At Markham Colliery



"Two boy mining recruits, one as young as fourteen, are given advice by an older miner at Markham Colliery near Chesterfield, Derbyshire, England during World War II on 8th September 1943. British coal mines are short of 30,000 miners and local boys and school leavers are now being recruited to work underground." (Photo by James Jarche/Popperfoto via Getty Images)

Loyal Clowne Miners

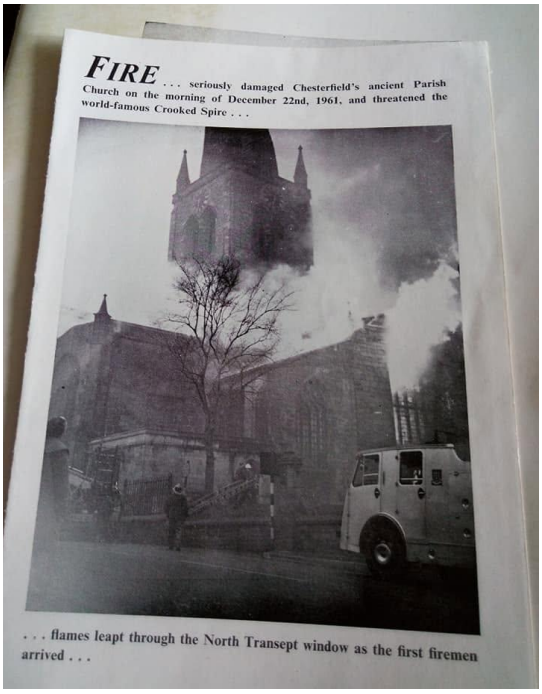
The men employed at Southgate Colliery, Clowne, continued work yesterday, in response to the Government's appeal, the men and boys almost to a man sacrificing Bank Holiday. Out of nearly 500 men and boys, only 18 were absent.

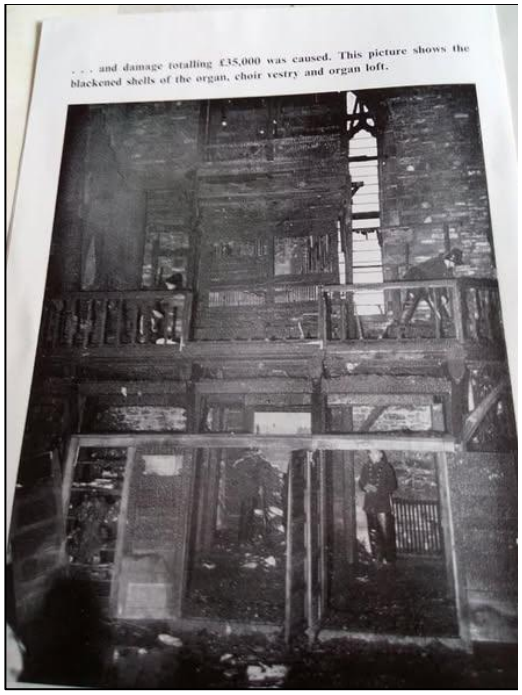
Did You know?

In November

1918 on 10 November Sub-Lieutenant Harry Young, of New Whittington, was killed in action near Mons, Belgium. It was one day before the armistice, and he is thought to be the final soldier from the Chesterfield area to sadly lose his life in the Great War. He is buried at the Valenciennes (St.Roch) Communal Cemetery in Nord, France)

In December 1962, 22 December the Crooked Spire was very sadly ablaze.





Events Coming up in Chesterfield in December – all at The Crooked Spire

Christmas Tree Festival, Sat 14 November 8:00am to Sun 29 November 5:00pm

Alfie the Elf's Christmas Rescue, Tue 1 Dec 11am to Sat 2 January 2027 at 2pm

Creative Station Concert, Sat 5 Dec 8am to 5pm

Candlelight: Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Fri 11 Dec 6.30pm to 9.30pm

Rose Choir, Sat 12 Dec 8am to 5pm

Festive Brass at the Crooked Spire, Sat 19 Dec 8am to 5pm then the same day Festive Brass Christmas Story told through Brass Band Music 2.30pm to 5pm

Inner Wheel Carol Service, Sun 20 Dec 4pm to 7pm

Plus these events elsewhere:

Library lunchtime Christmas concert with Cantiamo 11.30am to 12.20pm Library Theatre, doors open 11am admission free.

Brass and Voices; Holymoorside choir with Darley Dale Brass band Saturday Dec 12th 7.30pm St. John's church, Walton
Carols by Candlelight: MusicWork Vocal Ensemble Wednesday December 16th 7.30pm Elder Yard Chapel

Support available in the Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Community
Christmas time can be happy and comforting, but it can also be stressful, lonely and a vulnerable time for some.

For Mental Health

Derbyshire Mental Health Helpline and Support Service
If you are unable to see your GP urgently and need to speak with someone about how you are feeling please phone 111 and choose option 2.
This is a 24/7 telephone service provided by the NHS in partnership with community-based organisations.

For Domestic Abuse

Derbyshire Domestic Abuse Helpline
If you are being emotionally, psychologically, financially, sexually or physically abused by a family member, partner or ex-partner please phone 08000198668, text support 07534617252.
If in danger phone 999 to contact the police. If you phone 999 and are unable to speak because the perpetrator will hear, tap 55 on your phone when the call handler speaks to you, and the call handler will understand.

When Less Is More

About twenty years ago, I experienced the magic of a Tyrolian Christmas. A holiday based in the small hamlet of Muhltal in the snowy Wildschonau valley, produced many wonderful memories – visits to Salzburg and Innsbruck and a ride on the Zillertalbahn railway through spectacular winter scenery. But what impressed me the most was the beautiful simplicity with which the Christmas traditions were honoured. And absolutely no bling!! It is interesting that, in recent years, there has been a shift in British taste towards an appreciation of hand-crafted decorations and small gifts that seem to carry the warmth of their creators. Sometimes less really is more.

Merry Christmas, Everyone!
Janet Mansbridge



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.

the **unitarians** and
free christians