

Unitarian and Free Christian



Cairo Street Unitarian Chapel, Warrington Newsletter for November & December 2025



Chair's Report

In the autumn we had a very busy time in the chapel. Heritage day in September was a great success with many people trying to find out more about our very interesting history and connection to the Academy. The pilgrimage to Rivington Chapel was a wonderful meeting place and the Academy lecture given by Bill Cook was a very special and informative lecture and attended by many. The long awaited wedding in September was a lovely event, conducted by Lesley but sadly ended in a huge downpour for the couple. Harvest festival was a very special service and all donated food items were donated to the food bank. We also had a special visitor for a service, Mr Mc Guffog was on a visit to the UK from Australia. His great grandfather was choirmaster in our chapel and he was delighted to find some documentation in our books.

For our chapel and all our congregation, it was wonderful to hear that Robert Foreman has passed his VIVA and is now officially accepted as our minister, having moved on from minister elect. It is good to see that he and we as a congregation can now be settled and move on with all that will be required in the future.

Our gardens have been lovingly put to sleep and we are all looking forward to a calm and reflective time for winter and Christmas coming.

In these difficult times in the world, I hope we can all find some peace and tranquillity to look forward to in the winter.

With these thoughts, I wish everybody a very Happy Christmas.
Friede

Minister's Reflection

This coming Sunday, we will gather at Cairo Street Chapel for our annual **Remembrance Service** — a moment in the year when we pause to honour those whose lives were cut short by war and conflict. We remember not only those who served and fell, but also the countless civilians, families, and communities who bore the unseen costs of human violence.

Remembrance is a practice of love as much as history. It asks us not only to look back, but to look within, to confront that aching question which has echoed across centuries: *Why do we suffer?* How can faith survive in the shadow of such loss?

This is the ancient question of *theodicy*, the problem of evil. It has tested every theology, every heart that has ever dared to believe in goodness. Why do good people suffer while others seem untouched? Why do the innocent die in war? Why does cruelty so often seem to prevail?

Our Soul Deep session this Sunday after the service (11:30am) will explore that very question. We will not promise easy answers — perhaps there are none, but we will search for meaning, for light, for resilience. Some find it in human compassion, others in divine mystery, others still in the stubborn act of rebuilding.

As Unitarian and Free Christians, we do not seek a single explanation. Instead, we seek the courage to face suffering without turning away. We affirm that in every dark place, there remains the possibility of goodness — the kindness of a stranger, the forgiveness that follows tragedy, the courage of one who still chooses hope.

This Sunday, I invite you to join us, in remembrance, in reflection, and in the shared work of making peace real again.

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old...”

— Laurence Binyon

You are warmly invited to the Ordination of

Robert Foreman



29th November 2025 | 2 PM

Nazareth Unitarian Chapel
93 Church Street, Padiham, Lancs, BB12 8JH

I would be delighted if you could join us after the
service for a buffet and refreshments. and music
parking is available at the chapel

RSVP

Scan this code



OR

robunitarian@gmail.com

Rev. Robert Dennis Foreman BA (Hons)

Saturday, the 29th November 2025 is a big day for Rob Foreman, his formal Ordination as a Unitarian Minister will be at the Nazareth Unitarian Chapel in Padiham with his family and friends in attendance. A number of Rob's ancestors were members of the Chapel and were amongst those who built the Chapel in 1876.

Rob started his journey into the Ministry when Bob Janis started a Lay Leadership training course at Cairo Street. Two of our Chapel Members, Leslie and Gary, were also members of the course and are now successful Lay Leaders. After several years of studies at the Unitarian College, Manchester, including his final year at Park Lane and Cairo Street, Rob will now be enrolled as a practising Unitarian Minister.

Our Chapel Roll of Ministers now shows Rob as the 39th Minister at Cairo Street, going back to Robert Yates, who founded the congregation in 1662, following his doctrinal ejection from St Elphin's Church.

Rob's Induction Service as Minister of Cairo Street Chapel will be taking place in the new year

Friede will be coordinating those from Cairo Street who wish to attend Rob's Ordination, including any travelling arrangements for the day ... in some ways, as a second Away Day for 2025.

Chapel Events

September was a busy month at the Chapel, mainly associated with the Heritage Festival.

The first weekend, we had the Chapel Open Days on Saturday and Sunday which were well attended. Donations for tea & coffee and Friede's delicious home-made cakes, along with takings from our Historical leaflets, written by Ray Beecham, were more than double the amount we have received in previous years.

Closing our contribution to the Heritage Festival, on the Sunday of the second weekend, we would normally hold our Academy Service. This year it was publicised as our Academy Lecture, which was presented by Bill Cooke, a renowned local historian and writer. The subject of the Lecture was

Joseph Priestley's impact on the twenty-first century

The Lecture was well attended and most informative, showing how Joseph Priestly's opinions and teachings have influenced and even moulded present day living, Bill Cooke illustrated how Joseph Priestley greatly influenced the writing of the American Constitution ... which is currently under attack by President Trump. The whole Lecture was recorded on video ... this video is now available on our website in our Historical section. A video worth watching.

At the beginning of October, Rob's Harvest Service at Cairo Street was memorable, based on a concept which Ray Beecham had developed, "Harvest of the Mind". Ray, who has not been well in recent months, took part in the Service, speaking about two educationalists associated with Cairo Street, Mary Carpenter and Anna Letitia Barbauld about their education for all and Letitia's philosophy where education develops the whole person with an enquiring, rational thinking mind.



After the Service, Rob officiated at the Interment of Ashes for Joan Leslie, whose father, Bill Leslie was a Lay Preacher and a long time Chairman and Treasurer of our Chapel Committee. Peter carried out the Interment for the family. Joan now rests beside her mother, Nancy, in our Garden of Remembrance.

Chapel Flowers: Ray Beecham 01229 586900

bee chamray@yahoo.co.uk

2nd November	In memory of Marjorie Massey
9th November	Flower Fund
16th November	Flower Fund
23th November	Flower Fund
30th November	Flower Fund
7th December	In memory of Stewart Garmston
14th December	In memory of Adrian Martin
21th December	In memory of Janice Mellor
28th December	Flower Fund

If you have any family members you would like to remember, contact Ray Beecham to join the Flower Fund and have them remembered in the Newsletter and in the relevant service.

Chapel Services Organist : Peter / Stefan

2nd November **Remembrance Service** Rob Foreman 10.30am

16th	November	Rob Foreman	10.30am
7th	December	Rob Foreman	10.30am
21st	December	Rob Foreman	10.30am

Chapel Committee (2025 - 2026)

Chair: Friede Sheikh

Committee Members: Ray, Lesley, Peter, Barbara, Gary, Helen

Chapel phone number: 01925 419693

Chapel Charity Number: 235996

Website: <https://cairostreetchapel.uk/>

Editorial Note:

This Newsletter is now available as a PDF file. If you would like a regular PDF copy, please contact Peter on peter.mcguigan@yahoo.co.uk