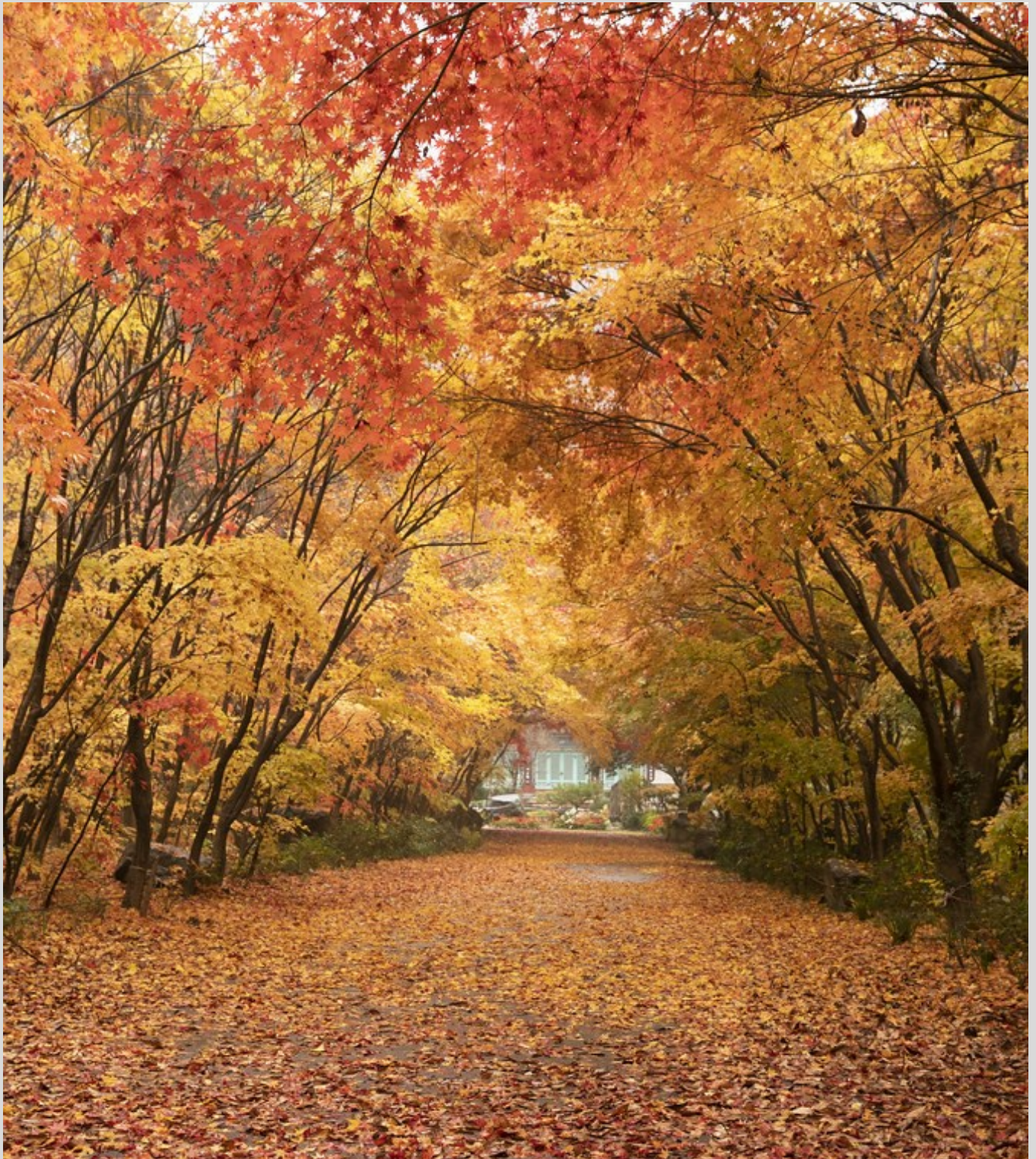


Unitarian and Free Christian



Cairo Street Unitarian Chapel, Warrington Newsletter for September & October 2026



Chair's Report

Once again our sincere apologies for not having sent a newsletter for the last few months. We had a rather challenging time with members ill health and bereavement with all the complications that had to be dealt with long distance. Hopefully things will go smoothly in future now and all we can do is to be there when needed and to support each other.

Everything in the chapel is going very well and we are continuing under the very considerate guidance and wonderful services from Rob. As part of our commitment to the local charities we have donated money and giving support where it is needed. We are still having our 'tea and toast' morning on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month, which is much appreciated and well attended. For the 'Summer Solstice' Lesly held a wonderful celebration outdoors, continuing now for several years, it was well attended and much appreciated in the lovely garden setting.

Sadly there will be no Walking day in Warrington this year but a meeting in Bank Park under the heading of 'Standing together in faith', where Rob will take part with our beautiful banner.

Our gardens are beautiful as ever and much admired by passer bys, the flowers are always having a very special place on our altar.

Hopefully we can now move on to a calmer time in the chapel and enjoy being there together to enjoy the wonderful services, being together and moving forward in our congregation.

Wishing you all a lovely summertime.

Best wishes
Friede

Looking Outward from Cairo Street

I have long believed that the best way to raise the profile of Cairo Street Chapel is not simply to look inward, but to reach outward. We must, of course, care for the congregation we already have, but we must also build relationships with the wider community and consider the congregation we hope to serve in the future. With the committee's support, I have therefore been representing Cairo Street at several important events across Warrington. This is not separate from the work of the chapel; it is one way in which our values of openness, compassion and service can be carried beyond our doors.

I attended a fundraising event hosted by Cllr Mo Hussain during his year as Mayor of Warrington. The event raised money for four important local charities: Warrington Youth Zone, Warrington Disability Partnership, St Rocco's Hospice and Room at the Inn. Each supports people within our town, including young people, disabled people, those receiving end-of-life care and people affected by homelessness.

While there, I met Charlotte Nichols, MP for Warrington North. We have arranged a further meeting to discuss how we might help foster better relationships within communities that can sometimes feel divided. I am especially interested in strengthening interfaith dialogue and creating opportunities for people of different faiths and cultures to meet one another.

Charlotte also suggested that I might work alongside the Revd Philippa Shaw, priest-in-charge of St Andrew's Church in Orford. St Andrew's is exploring how the Government's Pride in Place funding might benefit the local community. One possibility is an event bringing together Warrington residents from different cultural and religious backgrounds. These conversations remain at an early stage, but they offer an encouraging opportunity for Cairo Street to help build understanding and friendship.

I also represented the chapel at Warrington's Walking Day Reborn heritage event and at Warrington Pride. At Pride, I met the organiser of Rainbow Connections, an LGBTQ+ choir which meets at the Friends Meeting House. I joined Christians at Pride in the parade, celebrating the message that faith should be a source of welcome rather than rejection.

On the Sunday following Pride, I attended the Open Table service at St John's United Reformed Church. Open Table provides an inclusive Christian community for LGBTQIA+ people, their families, friends and allies.

While reading St John's history booklet, I discovered a wonderful connection between our two congregations. After the former St John's Chapel in Winwick Street closed in 1909, its congregation worshipped every Sunday at Cairo Street for approximately 15 months while preparing to build its present church on Wilderspool Causeway. It was a lovely reminder that Cairo Street has long offered hospitality to other worshipping communities.

I also spotted a photograph on the noticeboard of my predecessor, the Rev Bob Janis. Bob has recently married Jana in his hometown in Connecticut, and I am sure we all join in wishing them every happiness for their life together.

Alongside this outward-facing work, pastoral care remains central to my ministry. I continue to reach out to Barbara, and I remain available to make pastoral visits or calls to anyone connected with the chapel who would value support, companionship or simply a listening ear.

Closer to home, our garden continues to be a sanctuary during turbulent times. It is looking increasingly resplendent, and my special thanks go, as always, to Ray Beecham, Peter and Helen. Without their time, care and hard work, our little corner of the world would not be nearly as welcoming or as beautiful as it is.

The garden and chapel will provide a wonderful setting for our forthcoming Heritage events, which are detailed on the next page.

I hope these activities demonstrate that Cairo Street is not standing still. We are caring for our historic chapel and those already connected with it while creating new relationships throughout Warrington.

Our future will not be secured by looking inward alone. It will grow as we open our doors, enter into the life of our town and show through our actions that Cairo Street remains a place of welcome, thought, compassion and community.

All my love and best wishes, Rev Rob

Dates for our Heritage Festival contribution

Saturday 19th September 2026

Open Day 10.00am until 4.00pm

Sunday 20st September

Academy Lecture 3.00pm

This year, our annual Academy Lecture will focus on the remarkable life and work of the Rev Philip Pearsall Carpenter and his fight against pollution in the town. He campaigned for the provision of sewers, the prevention of smog and the provision of clean drinking water for Warrington.

The Academy Lecture will be presented by

Philip Jeffs of Warrington Museum

open

What we have missed?

We have missed two editions of the Newsletter and, as Editor, I can only apologise. There was one important event during that period which does need to be recorded. The Induction of our Minister, held at Park Lane on 25th April. Below are two pictures I took of the ceremony.



A recent Visitor to Chapel

A few weeks ago, Friede and Peter welcomed some notable visitors to Chapel ... George, and his daughter Joe, from Liverpool. George had been to Cairo Street Chapel before, over 20 years ago, and had, at that time, climbed over the Priestley Gates to obtain photographs of some of the Chapel tombs for his research. His reason then George's surname is **Gaskell**.



George's line of Gaskells left Upholland in the 1840s for Liverpool. There are several links to the Warrington Gaskells, in particular from the marriage of Elizabeth to Charles Holland.

Having spent several hours discussing the Gaskell family and viewing the Chapel Burial grounds, George does plan to return for future discussions at a later date. We have assured him our gates will be open.

Chapel Flowers: Ray Beecham 01229 586900

bee chamray@yahoo.co.uk

6th	September	In memory of Tom and Ivy Williams
13th	September	Jim Morris
20st	September	Marjorie Morris
27th	September	John and Elsie Tavlin
4th	October	Jim and Marjorie Morris
11th	October	Ettie Massey
18th	October	Zoe Davis
25th	October	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 / Events

Organist : Peter

6th	September	Rob Foreman	10.30am
19th	September	Heritage Open Day 10am to 4pm	
20th	September	Academy Lecture	Philip Jeffs
4th	October	Rob Foreman	10.30am
18th	October	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