

**Summer 2025**

# **The Fulwood Messenger**

**The Magazine of Fulwood Old Chapel  
(Unitarian)**



**Whiteley Lane, Sheffield S10 4GL**





# Message from the Chair

Dear all,

Another summer beckons, although as I write this it is still spring, but what a glorious sunny one it has been. So much sunshine and blue sky! Let us hope we have not had our quota already. The gardens are coming to life, the birds busily singing and building their nests, it is a wonderful thing the greening up of the countryside. We were in southern Spain in late March and they had had huge amounts of rain, everyone we spoke to were very thankful for that.



Drought causes so many problems in the South , I often wonder how they have enough to fill all the swimming pools and supply all the tourists , never mind the indigenous Spanish, with water for all the hotels and houses. The mountains were very green and looked almost alpine, beautiful.

The chapel is looking very good, Anne has been very busy with getting improvements to the school room and the chapel itself will be decorated in the summer. We have occasionally welcomed visitors from Stannington as, since the absence of Maud, they have dropped to having only two services a month. Certainly all are welcome here. We are always looking for new members, roles and responsibilities in the chapel are constantly needed. Especially when anyone is ill as Peter has been, it makes us all realise how much work and commitment both Peter and Janet have given to the chapel. We are very pleased to see anyone returning to chapel after an illness, life can be very challenging !

Unfortunately we will not be involved in the Fulwood fete this year as it has changed venue to the scout hut and field on Old Fulwood Road. Our chapel is not needed which is a shame as it brought people in to see it and gave us an opportunity to make some money. However, I do understand the reasoning behind the change and I hope it is as successful as in years gone by.

I wish everyone a lovely summer and hope to see many of you in the chapel.

*Jane*

# Happiness

Happiness is a few pounds heavier.  
It's accepting being tired.  
Being older. Being softer.  
Being more reaching oak and less wildflower.  
Happiness is taking days to bask in silence.

Not doing. Just being.  
Happiness is no longer shrinking.  
It's releasing.  
Guilt. Regret.  
The weight of the past, and the fear of the future.  
It's discovering the joy in simplicity.  
The beauty in the little things.  
The power in the everyday



Sometimes in June I will the sun to do  
its worst.  
To bake the earth, me and the bricks  
On the back of the house  
If it is not hot in June  
Then there are no guarantees  
I almost mourn the longest day  
We build up to it  
All of Winter  
Often an anticlimax of blustery days  
Showers and unpredictability  
All summer  
I guiltily long for global warming to  
come North

I want to discard a sock, a vest, a long  
trouser  
I want the heat to hit me as off a plane  
In the Mediterranean  
I was married on an August afternoon,  
Cool and windy, sunshine and showers  
Wearing a dress that was too thin  
Shivering for the photos  
Perhaps I need to live abroad  
To sit outside late of an evening  
Without the need for heater or fire pit  
With only the mosquitoes for company.

**Jane Moore**



# Esme Wall

We were all so sad to hear that our very dear friend, Esme Wall, slipped away in her sleep on the morning of Friday April 25th. We had been looking forward to helping her to celebrate her 100th birthday in September, and it seems likely that she would have been enjoying her birthday, had she not had an unfortunate fall which shortened her life.

I hope to be able to publish a suitable piece on Esme's long life in our next issue, but in the meantime I am fortunate that her daughter, Philippa, has recently sent to me an account of Esme's choice for the Music Appreciation group. How lovely that we were able to join with her in her choice.



Esme, pictured in 2023

## Appreciating the Music Appreciation Group

Having attended and thoroughly enjoyed several of the monthly music appreciation sessions, my mother, Esme, and I decided we should build a playlist around music that evokes memories of events, places and people from her almost 100 years of life. I knew such a venture would trigger hours of enjoyable conversation and I can thoroughly recommend the process.

Esme was an only child, blessed with a father who loved music and who, not entirely to his wife's delight, brought a gramophone and piano into the family home, followed by a large collection of 78s he picked up at house clearance sales after WW1. He passed on his enthusiasm for the star tenors of the era to his daughter, so we started our session with old recordings of Enrico Caruso and then Beniamino Gigli, who he took Esme

to see at the City Hall. It was lovely to be introduced to the music of these two legends, as well as to hear more about the grandfather I never really knew, since he died when I was just 3. The love of the tenor voice stayed with Esme and we added in a track from The Three Tenors along with Andrew Lloyd Weber's Pie Jesu sung by her favourite of the three, Jose Carreras. This track had an extra emotional pull, as it was played at my father, Peter's funeral; it being one of his favourite pieces too.

Great fun was had researching the White Horse Inn, a musical and film from before my time which had clearly made an impression on my mother. On their first holiday abroad, she had been delighted to see the actual inn in St Wolfgang that the musical was written about. We got the photos out and talked about the rest of that trip and the two further continental trips they took together before my dad decided foreign travel was not really for him.

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The White Horse Inn, St. Wolfgang  
im Salzkammergut, Austria.



My mother did start to learn the piano as a child, but her own mother had concentrated on ballet and elocution lessons for her daughter and then, after marrying in 1946 and being busy raising five children, time to play was limited. In the late 1970s, Esme was introduced to a young Malaysian MA music student who was teaching to fund her stay in the UK. Finally, in her 50s, she was able to have regular lessons and really enjoy spending time at the piano. She chose two pieces for our list that reminded her of this time: 'Carillon' by the group Sky that was the first piece she played for her new teacher because it gave her a huge confidence boost to be told it was beautifully played and 'The Marseillaise', simply because she loved the tune and the sheet music was in her dad's collection so she had been determined to play it. It was a sad day when her teacher graduated and returned to her home country.

We had a difficult task choosing just 1 track from a 4 tape set of Pan Pipe music that Esme played in the car on the many occasions she drove the 90 miles alone to my sister's house in Ravenscar.

The distinctive sound of the pipes triggers happy memories for her of roadside daffodils in the Wolds villages she drove through and the long dog walks on the moors with the gorse in full bloom.



Next up was Pachelbel's cannon, a piece magical to both of us, having shared the experience of a musical firework concert at Capesthorne Hall where it was accompanied by small lanterns floating across the night sky at intervals, and later a trip to the Rockies where we bought a CD filled with variations of the piece accompanied by sounds of the sea and played it over and over as we drove through the majestic landscape.

The final track was Whiter Shade of Pale, by Procul Harum. Why? Because whenever I hear it, I am taken straight back to my childhood, hearing it on Radio 2 and listening to my mother telling me she wanted it played at her funeral. I'm then reminded of listening to Waggoner's Walk with her every morning and of Jimmy Young with his recipes.

Music has the power to do this and I truly appreciated not just the music we gathered together, but the sharing of memories and experiences that the music brought to us.

**Philippa Alliss**

## **The General Assembly (GA) Meetings, Birmingham 2025** **From Caroline Thorpe**

Thank you FOC for funding me to attend GA. It was inspiring and connecting as usual, and I managed to combine it with an overnight stay and brunch with my son and 20 month old grandson on the way down, so double delight!

The event ran from Saturday at 2pm to Monday at 2pm. As usual there was so much going on, but singing hymns with 350 others, in a corporate conference room that had been designated 'sacred' for a few days, is always a joy. I was for the first time a proud banner holder and for this year there was a banner parade to start and end the proceedings. I also joined the scratch choir that had just 2 and a half rehearsals to learn two songs to sing in the Sunday Evening Anniversary Service which was very ably led by our friend Rev Maud Robinson. It was fun and the songs were very well received. I hope to share Lead with Love with you at a service soon.

Maud's service was called 'What Strength can we call on in Dark Times?'. She included an analogy of having a favourite pebble in our pockets to support us.



My overall sense of the two days is of the importance of building and celebrating community and strengthening our capacity for love and joy. The keynote speaker Alison Webster of Modern Church, asked us to contemplate Paul Simon's classic song, 'The Sound of Silence', the 'words of the prophets are written on the subway walls' particularly caught my attention. She also reminded us of the power of fungi and the underground mycelium that they create and how it is hidden much of the time until it is time to fruit.

As well as shared meals and workshops there were lots of plenary sessions to make sure that the business of the GA runs properly. We are going for a CIO status and after quite a long process the meeting passed motions to allow the process to be continued over the next year by the GA and officers. Geoff Levermore was re-elected as President for a further year and is looking forward to visiting more chapels - especially the small ones.

I think it is really useful to go to other Unitarian events, we are a broad movement full of interesting people. There were a lot of younger folk at GA too which is inspiring. I would particularly like to recommend Summer School, a residential course at the Nightingale Centre in August (15th to 22nd August 2025) - it is possible to join online for some of it. I am sure that Chapel would help fund anyone that would like to go and Sarah Tinker will be there as a friendly face to welcome you. There are also lots of Unitarian College events including one for Children and Families at Hucklow 3-5th October, where children 7-14 go free.



Caroline, parading Fulwood's banner

## ...and from Sue Toulson

I was at the GA too, there wearing my Women's League hat (and the President's 'regalia' – which I determinedly wore for the whole meeting!). I spent much of my time on the League table in the exhibition room. I was also pleased to be present in the plenary session where our friend Marion Baker was proposed for – and awarded - Life Membership of the General Assembly, in recognition of her many years of work for the Unitarian community.

While there I also saw Andrew Mason, of course, and it was particularly good to see Gavin Mason, who gave me a bag full of documents including notices and scripts from Fulwood Men's Concert. Extracts will certainly appear in future editions of the Messenger. Oh yes they will. Rev. Maud Robinson especially charged me with sending her love to everyone at Fulwood.



## ...and from Judith Short

I was honoured to attend my first GA meeting as Fulwood Old Chapel's nominated representative of the Sheffield and District Association. I attended all the Plenary sessions and a selection of workshops and enjoyed singing in the choir for the Anniversary Service.

The GA meeting provided me with an excellent opportunity to network in my capacity as Chair of Trustees at Great Hucklow Chapel, as Secretary of the Ronksley Trust for the benefit of Fulwood Old Chapel, and as a Trustee of the Send a Child to Hucklow Fund. When one is facing funding, administrative or logistical challenges, it is a huge help to know that other congregations have been, or are currently, navigating similar issues, and that there is a toolkit of useful resources available to help in many areas.

It was also useful to visit the various exhibition tables and learn more about the various groups active within the movement. The event was an enlightening but exhausting experience – one I hope to repeat in the future.

When more than half of Unitarian congregations now have fewer than ten members, it made me thankful to be part of the Fulwood Family and of the wider Unitarian Community.

*At this season when the cold winds cease and gentle sunshine wakens the earth, when fields and gardens are clothed in new radiance, we would keep our mind and heart open to the beauty of nature and the splendour of the spirit. As winter yields to spring, so may the coldness of our heart yield to the gladness of the world, and the new life of earth find response in the renewal of our human lives. Thus shall we become worthy participants in the great life which out of the old eternally brings forth the new. Amen.*

**I asked Rev. Sarah Tinker to write this for us**

## *The Art of Conversation*

Look out for more conversations after occasional Sunday services in the year ahead. We held one back in March and what a pleasure it was to have 12 people, including two joining us on Zoom, gather together with their sandwiches, with the simple aim of listening and speaking with another.

You'll have heard it endlessly – the idea that the British are experts at small talk, yet tend to shy away from deeper topics. Happy to engage with the crucial matter of the weather; will it, or won't it rain today. Less comfortable with sharing our inner thoughts and feelings. That's how the stereotype goes.

But after 35 years of connection with Fulwood Old Chapel, I'd describe it as a space in which people can explore at a deeper level. Having first poked my head around the door in 1990, I was swiftly asked by Jean Mason if I'd like to join a group that was about to study a course called Building Your Own Theology, BYOT for short. And there I soon was, with a group of fellow seekers, each Thursday evening, considering different aspects of life. We shared our beliefs, our doubts, our values – what mattered most to us in life at that time.





Back in the 90s, we were a pleasing mix of all faiths and none: theists, atheists, agnostics, Christians, Sufis, Buddhists, experts in philosophy alongside the world of science, lovers of the natural world. And when we gathered for a conversation after the service back in March this year, we proved to be a similarly diverse group, including several people who spoke of their journey of faith as a movement from more traditional Christian denominations to our Unitarian community. These people in particular, seemed to value the space that Unitarians offer for doubt. They spoke of appreciating being able to express their uncertainties about matters religious, not feeling they needed to pretend to be certain in their beliefs.

I've come to value these kinds of conversations greatly. It's fascinating to hear people speak of their faith, speak of their values and what matters most to them. It's healthy I reckon for a community like ours to have conversations that go deeper, beneath that social veneer – though chit chat itself does much to oil our 'social wheels'. But if we're only on this planet for a relatively short while, and we only get to be here on earth this one time (though some Unitarians may think differently!) then let's make best use of the time we have and the connections we're making, one with another.

Each of us is such a unique and wondrous individual, the only person who can truly begin to explain our thoughts and feelings to others. Together at Fulwood Old Chapel we can practice the ancient art of conversation and in talking together, find out more about ourselves and others. All are welcome to join us for the next Sunday conversation, with future dates to be announced in the weekly Chapel email.



**Sarah Tinker**

**Judith Short has sent me this very personal account  
of a difficult time in her life.  
Perhaps others may find this helpful with their own issues.**

*What strength can we call on in dark times?*

This was the title chosen by Rev. Maud Robinson for her Anniversary Service at the General Assembly meetings this year. She gave a brave and heartfelt address, baring her soul to the attentive, warm and loving congregation of conference attendees.



She spoke honestly and unflinchingly of her lifelong struggles with depression and several, thankfully unsuccessful, suicide attempts at moments of profound darkness. She did not offer an easy answer to the question she had posed, but she allowed those listening to realise that the strength needed can come from within and around us. I was particularly moved by two elements of this service – firstly, that where once it may have been uncomfortable or unusual to hear someone give voice to the reality of mental health struggles, it is now much more acceptable to admit that one is frail, flawed and vulnerable. The second was the sense of relief I felt that my own struggles were not unique, that there may be some catharsis in sharing my experience and, like Maud, demonstrating that there is more to come beyond those dark times.

It is worth the effort needed to find the small strands of strength still present and begin to weave them into a safety rope that aids recovery.

I wrote the following poem when I was suffering from debilitating anxiety and depression after ‘burning out’ in my 40s. I was trying to be the best doctor, the best wife and mother and the best friend to all, and lost myself somewhere in the midst of the striving. I believe my writing represented the beginning of understanding and finding myself again. It was hard, but with small steps I climbed my way back. I am pleased to say that, more than ten years later, the darkness has never again become quite so impenetrable.

**Dr. Judith Short**

# The Shell of Survival

She is six.

Her life is full of endless possibilities.

The irksome frustrations of childhood are but an exciting challenge;

She is nurtured within the security and warmth of the blanket of her family.

She is safe to explore, to reach, to become the person she is destined to be.

Her father falls ill;

She knows about illness; medicine makes it better.

She is not worried and goes about her life.

Her father disappears to hospital, but all is well.

Letters arrive detailing the wonder of the unfamiliar routines of a patient; she is intrigued.

Her father comes home; he is tired, but full of cheer.

Then one day, she is told; he is dead.

She runs upstairs.

The rumpled empty sheets of the bed shout the presence of absence.

Her soul is shredded and lies bleeding.

Her existence is in turmoil; nothing makes sense.

Her heart continues to beat, her body continues to function.

Her mind spins.

Would her own death reunite them? She cannot be sure.

She continues to live, but her life is diminished.

She must survive.

She is lucky.

She is bright and quick; she has music inside her, and creativity.

She must use her talents to make her life mean something.

Fulfilment is measured in achievement.

She does well, and better, and best.

It feels liberating to strive and be rewarded.

She is bullied by jealous friends.

She knows, one day, she will move beyond their narrow perspective.

She has ambition.

She creates a protective shell for her wounded soul.

She moves on.

She has empathy, and the skills of negotiation.

She is a natural leader.

She grows and learns and seizes opportunities.

She becomes a doctor.

Her vocation becomes her identity.

She is acutely aware of her patients' vulnerability and their ultimate mortality.  
Submerged beneath the demands of a caring professional life,  
Her own mangled sense of self is deeply buried.  
She marries and becomes a mother.  
The protective shell around her soul is cracked; she anticipates pain.  
She repairs the shell and goes about her life.  
Her family are loved and cared for, but for self-preservation,  
She maintains an imperceptible distance.  
She continues to achieve and yet remains unfulfilled.  
She indulges her intellectual curiosity in every direction.  
She fills her days with projects and plans.  
She is busy.  
Her soul is disregarded.  
She presents her shell to the world.  
Her colleagues and companions see only the surface, shiny, glittering and successful.  
Her soul is desolate, stifled in the dark, airless interior.  
Thus she continues, never understanding her constant drive, her need to achieve,  
Her emotional dichotomy.  
Now she is 43  
She is exhausted, sapped dry, an empty sack.  
Her shell has become unwieldy, heavy and unbearable.  
She becomes fearful, agitated and her confidence withers away.  
She needs to escape.  
Her shell is breaking, exposing the pale, unattended, wounded soul.  
It cries out for attention, howling in despair.  
It has been neglected.  
Can it be repaired, nurtured, allowed to flourish?  
Only time will tell.

**JAS January 2012**

*Hope is born in springtime, though the cold wind chills;  
hope as strong as snowdrops, gold as daffodils.  
Hope be in our planting, hope be in our prayer,  
be the key that opens hearts to greet the year.*

**Barbara S. Russell**







For lo, the winter is past  
The rain is over and gone  
The flowers appear on the earth  
The time of the singing of birds is come  
And the voice of the turtledove is heard in the land.



### **Song of Songs, 2**

**Here's a poem about Lockdown,  
written by Julie Sheldon for the Ledbury Poetry Festival 2020.**

**What if it's just Nature  
Taking back control  
Questioning the actions  
Of every living soul  
What if it's just Nature  
Asking us to stop  
To think about our planet  
And treasure what we've got**

**What if it's just Nature  
Slowing us right down  
Time to look around us  
And see what can be found  
What if it's just Nature  
Asking us to think  
What is it that we really need?  
Love, health and food and drink**

**What if it's just Nature  
Giving us the time  
To be more understanding,  
Generous and kind  
What if it's just Nature  
Asking us to care  
To think about each other  
And sometimes just be there**

**What if it's just Nature  
Sending us this pain  
Time to re-evaluate  
Before we're all insane  
What if it's just Nature  
Setting us a test  
To try to save our planet  
Let's do our very best!**

***Did it change us, I wonder?***

## **Submissions for the next edition of The Messenger**

Our next issue of The Messenger will be the one for autumn, covering August to November. Please let me have anything you'd like to be included by the middle of July: by the 12th would be perfect. I'd love to print any snippet of news you may have, or any item which has caught your eye and which could interest or entertain other readers.

**You can send items to me at [susantoulson@gmail.com](mailto:susantoulson@gmail.com),**

**or by text message to 07971924329**

**You can send me items by post, of course, too.**

**Geraldine Bennett keeps me informed of Litter Picking events and, if they fit in with the dates of the Messenger I include them. Below is some useful general information she sent recently.**

**[nethergreenlitterpickers@gmail.com](mailto:nethergreenlitterpickers@gmail.com)**

## **Health and Safety helps to keep everyone ... Happy and Smiley**

### **Collaborative Events**

**Rivelin Valley Road; City Limits to Lodge Lane  
For safety reasons no children or dogs at these events.**

- Wear High Viz. (Contact your local group leader if you do not have one)
- Wear sturdy footwear with a good grip.
- Wear gloves. Gardening gloves with some form of protective layer and best.
- Always beware of traffic and work a safe distance from the curb edge. Do not lean into the carriageway.
- Where footpaths are very narrow, always walk facing the oncoming traffic so that you can see what's coming your way.
- Avoid using your hands.
- Don't pick up any glass or sharp object. It can pierce the bag and injure you or the Council's collection team.
- Do not lift heavy objects. Note the location and report it to the group leader or report on the Fix My Street app.
- Don't carry a heavy bag. Tie it up, leave for collection, use a new bag.
- Beware of overhanging trees, bushes, hedges and road signs – don't get your face scratched or your head bumped!
- Beware of slip/trip hazards – take extra care on slopes especially when the ground is wet.
- Do not touch any waste that is hazardous such as syringes or asbestos. Report it to the group leader or report on the Fix My Street app.
- Find the First Aid kit is with the group leader.

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**The 'Fix My street' app** (The yellow one) is a quick and easy to use, photo reporting app. Once set up on your phone, it is easy to make reports anywhere in Sheffield. Eg fly tipping, blocked drains, full litter bins, empty grit bins.

Have you ever noticed that contractors have left items in your neighbourhood after a job? Has the item been there for months? Why not report that traffic cone, sandbag, barrier or road signs by using the app.

## The British League of Unitarian and Other Christian Women (BLUW)

Just to remind you (as if you need it) that we meet, usually on the first Monday of each month (unless it's a bank holiday), to have coffee, a chat and, usually, a speaker. Last month, Seth Jenkinson came to tell us something about his life as a doctor. It was fascinating, and we'll certainly be inviting him again, as we know he had lots more to tell us! On May 12th, we had a visit from Florence Nightingale (aka Joy Parker-Wilson) and on June 2nd I've asked our own Ariane Lawson to talk to us.



Later in the year we'll be having a belly-dancing class, and Brian Holmshaw will also be coming to speak to us (not on belly dancing, of course.....). You would all be very welcome to join us at our meetings. 11.30am in the Hollis Room, Upper Chapel. There is room to park in the forecourt.

### 5 YEARS AGO

**In 2020, we were coping with lockdown. It seems like a distant memory to me. It seems that I decided to use the time to tidy the very many drawers in my bedroom – I get the feeling that I didn't get round them**

**all: there are 33 not counting the ones which hold my jewellery. Here is something which I wrote at the time:**

#### 25th May

Gently sorting drawers (one or two a day..... let's not go wild). Today I'm on a 'travel' drawer (I have several of those!). Packed with REALLY useful gadgets - lots of them. Five things for weighing suitcases?? An emergency plastic rain bonnet with peak - from Woolworth's. Tons of hotel freebies ... It's getting like meeting old friends as I'm coming across stuff I've thrown in from earlier drawers. I'm not a great clearer-outer it has to be said - but I've binned three very large carrier bags of rubbish from five previous drawers, so I'm not putting it ALL back ...

#### 11th June

Still sorting through drawers (in fairly desultory fashion). Today I've discovered that I will never need to buy another ear plug and have no less than six fold away raincoats/jackets etc to add to the two I bought more recently. More importantly, I opened a letter informing me that my annually-rolling-over Domestic & General insurance and repair plan has been protecting my Hotpoint Double Oven for the last 16 years and will continue to do so. The snag which occurred to me was that for the last 13 years I've been the owner of a Cannon gas cooker. No Hotpoint anything. That was in my last house. That'll teach me to read letters properly!

## 15th June

Onto bedroom drawer no 17. (Only 16 to go). It's an interesting drawer - and I cannot believe the items which I used to consider absolutely vital to long-haul travel!! The snag is that, although my frequent flyer days are over, I just can't quite bring myself to throw it all out ... A few things have gone: toothpaste masquerading as concrete; travel mints best before 2004; a mangled screwdriver. The rest, though?? Hmmmm.



*All 33 drawers are still full – some of it the old stuff, some new. If I ever clear them out you'll be the first to know. I sometimes catch the family glancing around them here with a look akin to panic in their eyes. They know who'll have it to clear out when I'm gone ...*

James Pitts from London, England, CC BY-SA 2.0  
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via Wikimedia Commons



**On Sundays** with coffee after service, we sometimes have cake baked by one of the generous members of our congregation. On Easter Sunday we had a Simnel cake (courtesy of Waitrose I think!) which was gratefully received. If you read the Spring edition of the Messenger, you will have been aware of the place of Simnel Cake in our spring traditions!

Sorry to say that this edition has been held up by almost a week due to my WiFi going down again. Isn't it strange? For about two thirds of my life so far, I had never used a mobile phone, sent an email or a text, or googled anything. Now, if I can't do any of those things, I'm bereft! I remember when I started working at the university we did everything by hand. There was one typewriter in the office. By the time I left, if the computer network went down we didn't know what to do if we weren't actually teaching. There would be a flurry of desk tidying, dusting, book-straightening, then a bit of anxious knuckle biting before people started to slink off home.

I've been stuck this week because most of the pieces for the Messenger had been sent to me by email and I couldn't get them onto my lap top to transfer them to the page. Nor could I send what I'd already written to Patrick... Fortunately, after only 4 solid hours in communication with my internet provider, they agreed to send me a new router which has currently solved the problem. Such a timesaver, technology ...





*A Glad Goodbye to April* April hasn't been a good month for us at Fulwood Old Chapel in the last couple of years. Two years ago we said our sad goodbyes in April to dear Susie, Roger Webster and Beryl. Last year it was Roger Newton, and now our dear Esme. I'm glad to be welcoming May again! We have lovely memories of our friends - but I wish they were here!

*Senior Moments* We all get old, eventually. At least, we hope to! I've noticed a strange thing: as I get older, 'old' gets younger! Have you noticed this? Two of my grandparents died at 80 which, to mid-20ish me, seemed pretty old. I think that they would have been regarded as being 'old people' then. These days, 80-year olds are my contemporaries and we're not old ..... are we? Terry Wogan died on my 70th birthday. He was 77, and I remember thinking how young he was to have died, having been born in the same decade as I had been. I've a feeling that, if he'd died on my 69th birthday, I would have thought that he'd had a reasonable 'innings'. Now I find myself using the word 'only' in front of numbers in the 80s: 'she's only 85 ...' Hmmmm. Well, old or not the senior moments come upon some of us.

### **Dressing up to the nines**

I live in a cul-de-sac and over the last few months mine has been the only house not having major renovations. Feeling that I should make an effort, and aware that my front door was missing something, I bought a lovely, shiny, self-adhesive number 9 and stuck it very firmly on the door. Standing back to admire the effect of my makeover, I lifted my gaze six inches - and rested on the number 9 already in situ further up the door. I then raised my eyes to the door canopy where - behold!- another number 9 was winking in the sun. All told, I've now got five number nines on and around my front door! So, no excuse if I'm eventually found wandering around the street wondering where I live.





Bas relief by Isobel Baxter. Image c. Isobel Baxter

# Holberry

A new Historical Play

by David Price

author of

*Sheffield Troublemakers:  
Rebels and Radicals  
in Sheffield History.*

At 7pm on Saturday 21 June, actors from St Mark's Church and By the Book Drama Group will give a dramatised play reading of a new play about Sheffield's most famous Chartist revolutionary, Samuel Holberry, written by David Price, author of *Sheffield Troublemakers: Rebels and Radicals in Sheffield History*.

The play is being performed on the 183rd anniversary of Holberry's death, which took place on 21 June 1842 in York Castle where he was imprisoned. This was a time of distress and turmoil in Sheffield. There was a depression in trade and many people were unemployed and impoverished. The Government had recently introduced a harsh new workhouse regime for those who were destitute. In 1832 the middle classes had been given the vote but the working classes still had no say in the running of the country. The Chartist movement emerged demanding the vote for working class men.

In July 1839 the House of Commons turned down the Chartist petition. The Chartists were split into those favouring physical force and those favouring moral force. In Sheffield, those favouring physical force were led by a forceful young ex-soldier called Samuel Holberry. He was newly married but entirely focused on planning an uprising to begin in Sheffield in January 1840 after which many other towns would join in. The play traces the twists and turns of Holberry's plot from the point of view both of the conspirators and the guardians of law and order, leading to a crisis on 11 January 1840, followed by Holberry's imprisonment and death. He then became a Chartist martyr. In the 1970s his memory was revived. The cascades in the Peace Gardens are dedicated to his memory.

You are invited to come and enjoy the first performance of this new and dramatic play set in our City.

at **UPPER CHAPEL** Norfolk Street, Sheffield S1 2JD  
**7.00pm Saturday 21st June 2025 Fully accessible venue.**

**FREE ADMISSION.** Retiring collection for St. Mark's and Upper Chapel

# Contacts

For personalised ceremonies and hire of the Chapel or Old Schoolroom,  
please email

**booking@fulwoodoldchapel.uk**

To advertise or submit an article for The Messenger,  
please contact **Sue Toulson** at **susantoulson@gmail.com**  
or on **07971 924 329**

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## Services and Service Leaders

*Services begin at 11.00 unless otherwise stated, and finish around noon.  
Everyone is welcome to share tea and coffee and conversation afterwards.*

*We do not take an offertory at our services.*

### May 2025:

25th - Philippa Shewry

### June:

1st - Jane Moore

8th - Rev. Sarah Tinker

15th - Ed Fordham

22nd - Caroline Thorpe

29th - No Service at Fulwood -  
joint Service at Underbank

### July:

6th - Rev. Sarah Tinker

13th - Ed Fordham

20th - Philippa Shewry

27th - Rev. Maria Pap

### August:

3rd - Chapel visit to Great Hucklow

10th - Peter Rowson

17th - TBA

24th - Rev. Maria Pap

31st - Joint Service with Underbank at Fulwood

[www.fulwoodoldchapel.uk](http://www.fulwoodoldchapel.uk)

