



Newslink

SOUTH WEST CUMBRIA UNITED AREA

Charity Registration Number 1141404

Methodist and United Reformed Churches Working Together

The Minister Writes



Dear Friends

As I write this, the weather is dry, the wind is (relatively) gentle, and the forecasters suggest that that's how it will stay... at least for the next few hours. But you may remember that February's news told of very different conditions, not least in my Cornish homeland, with winds raging so strongly that tens of thousands of people found themselves without electricity, tidal surges washed away stretches of coastal railway line and 'severe weather warnings' were issued, implying that the conditions posed a

ISSUE 89

March 2014

threat to life itself. Much closer to home we've seen the power of natural forces clearly displayed around substantial parts of the United Area's coastline. Rita and I have gazed out from the window of our new home and had clear views of the waters of Morecambe Bay rising up our immediate neighbours' gardens as sustained gales drove high tides towards their properties.

Under such circumstances it would be hard not to get a fresh sense of the fragility of human life. This month sees the beginning of Lent, and the seasonal cycle of Bible readings starts off with Matthew's account of Jesus' temptations. We're told that "He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished." There's not a hint of hyperbole there. That weeks-long abstinence from food will have left Jesus hovering on the brink between life and death. It also gave him a wonderful clarity of vision; it made

Area Website www.swcumbriaunitedarea.urch.org.uk

him acutely aware of the spiritual backdrop against which his inner struggle was being conducted. Jesus, born to an unmarried mother, rushed away to Egypt as a refugee even before he was old enough to understand what was going on, this Jesus was being tempted to become invulnerable. How seductive it must have seemed to use the power that could transform stone to bread; could summon up angelic hosts to defy the law of gravity; could put Jesus in control of everything and everyone around him by force majeure. How enticing it must have seemed to feel safe. For Christians in some traditions, Lent begins with an Ash Wednesday service which includes the imposition of ashes. As each person receives that smudge of ash on his or her forehead a reminder of mortality is given, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ." Many 21st century people go to great lengths to avoid that moment when they must finally confront the uncomfortable realities of life and death. The Lenten disciplines offer us a structured - but nevertheless powerful - way of facing up to those ultimate truths from which we might long to hide. We continue to hold in prayer those who have the same terrible issues forced upon them by the chaos of climate change. May Christ be with you on your journey through the wilderness, and may he bring you through death to eternal life.

Martin Williams

Abbot Hall Weekend

It is not too late to book in for the next Abbot Hall weekend, which will be from 6th - 8th June on the theme of "Discovering Pentecost". Please look out for a booking form in your church, or contact me for one (474601). It will be possible to come for the day on the Saturday - the day delegate cost of £15 includes the sessions, morning coffee, a cooked lunch and access to the swimming pool. Please contact me if you will be coming on the Saturday as we have to book those places in advance, too.

Hazel Edmondson

REGIONAL & NATIONAL WEBSITES

District: www.cumbriamethodists.org.uk

North West Synod: www.nwsynod.org.uk

Connexional: www.methodist.org.uk

National: www.urc.org.uk

April issue No 90 of *Newslink* will be published at the end of March. Please send all material to reach Mrs Hazel Edmondson, 22 Tweed Rise, Barrow, LA14 3LX by Sunday March 9th. Items can also be passed on by ☎ **01229 474601** or ✉ edmo@twtw.freeseve.co.uk

Advance Dates

Please note in your diaries now the following dates which were agreed at the recent United Area and Community Outreach Group meetings. More details will follow nearer the time:

COG Coffee morning - Dalton Market St - Saturday, 14th June

COG Slog/Faith Tea/Area service - Sunday 29th June

United Area camp - Urswick - 18th to 20th July

Welcome service for Rev Jennet McLeod - Trinity - 4:00 pm. Saturday, August 30th

(The welcome service for David Edmondson in the Pendle Circuit will be at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 6th at St Andrew's Methodist Church, Barnoldswick.)

Sharing Jesus

At the February meeting of the COG group, those who had seen the Share Jesus International "Sharing Jesus" booklet that was sent to many of us as a follow up to the team's visit to Trinity spoke very highly of its content. We wondered if there was any interest in holding two or three gatherings to discuss the issues it raises (e.g. how to take conversations deeper, ways to explain the gospel, answering difficult questions), using the book as a guide. If you would be interested in joining such a group, please let me know, with some indication of best time(s) and day(s) to meet: if I hear from half a dozen people, I'll be more than happy to organise something.

David Edmondson

Living For Now: Preparing For The Future, Saturday April 26th, St Paul's Church, Barrow

This event will spend time looking at ways of preparing for the future whilst living fully today. How can we prepare for possibly being incapacitated in the future - or help family and friends in this situation? What help is available so that we can live as full a life as possible even if we have some disability? The event is organised by Churches Together in Cumbria Social Responsibility Forum. Similar events have already been held very successfully in Keswick, Lancaster and Kendal. The main speaker will be Martin Keeves from the Office of The Public Guardian (in Birmingham) and it is also hoped to have speakers from relevant local organisations. The event will be chaired by experienced solicitor, Gary Rycroft, from Lancaster. It is from 10:30a.m. to 1:00p.m. and anyone can attend, it is not limited to those who are connected with a church, but booking is needed. To book please contact Elaine Bates via email at eabates@live.co.uk or phone 01229 822149

Ann Hufton

Fairtrade Event

The highlight of this year's Fairtrade fortnight in Barrow will be a free Fairtrade wine tasting event at Forum 28 in Barrow on Monday 3 March (6.30 - 8.30pm), organised by the Co-op in conjunction with the Mayor of Barrow. Admittedly, wine is not high on the priority list of some of us, but there will be some tasty nibbles, presentations and films on Fairtrade and an Argentinean Head Teacher whose school was built with the Fairtrade premium and who teaches the children of the workers at the local wine producers' co-operative. She will be talking about the benefits that Fairtrade has brought to her community and answering any questions the audience may have. The evening will be in support of the Mayor's chosen charities and promises to be fun and educational. The event is open to Co-op members but Co-op members can bring guests who don't have to be members themselves as long as it is a Co-op member who makes the booking (by all means get in touch with us if you would like to go). I'm afraid that because of the nature of the event you do have to be over 18. If you are a Co-op member, you can book directly by phoning 0800 088 4862, or email membership.northwest@co-operative.coop

Please note that the usual Praise Group meeting that Monday evening has been cancelled so that those of us who wish to can attend this Fairtrade event.

Hazel and David Edmondson

New Fair Trade Steering Group Members Needed

In some ways I am trying to play down the fact that I'm moving in August, but there are some areas in which we need to find other people to take my place. I have for some years chaired the small Barrow Fairtrade steering group, and as you know I am convinced that having an active interest in Fairtrade is important to the health of Barrow, Dalton and Askam, so I am keen to see the work continue. We need more people on the steering group anyway, and it would be great to be able to introduce 3 or 4 new volunteers to the group before the summer. If you have an interest in economic justice, or if the poverty of so many producers makes you feel sad and/or angry, and you could give a few hours a month to promoting Fairtrade in the borough, then please contact me.

David Edmondson

Lent Group

Meeting at Beacon Hill on 5 consecutive Tuesday evenings from 11th March. "York Course" material being followed. Theme "Building on the Rock"

1st meeting on 11th March starts at 7:30pm until 9:00pm, with all other meetings being from 7:00pm until 8:30pm. Ron Wilson, Ann Hufton, Bob Mantle and Alan Jones sharing the leadership of sessions.

Ron Wilson

Knitted Bible

Originally the Minister at a Church in the North East asked members of the congregation who could knit to create the scene of the Last Supper, but enthusiasm and imagination combined to make it much more ambitious. The result is that 33 stories of the best known Bible stories were produced. Everyone who sees them will be able to understand and enjoy them and may discover some detail that they had forgotten or never noticed. In addition there is the text for the story and a brief explanation which is also presented in a booklet. The exhibition is on a country wide tour but will be at Trinity Church Centre in Barrow from the 5th until 15th July from 10:00am until 4pm daily with Sunday from 12noon until 4pm.

The following are the stories told : Creation, Adam & Eve, Noah's Ark, Abraham & Sarah, Jacob's Ladder, Joseph & his brothers, Moses in the bulrushes, Moses & the Ten Commandments, Samson & Delilah, Samuel & the Temple, David & Goliath, Elijah, The fiery furnace & the lion's den, Jonah & the whale, Angel Gabriel visits Mary, Jesus is born, John the Baptist, The Wedding at Cana, The woman at the well, The poor widow, Jairus' daughter, The Good Samaritan, Jesus blessing the children, The paralysed man & his friends, The boy with the loaves & fishes, Zacchaeus, Jesus in Bethany, The raising of Lazarus, Palm Sunday, The Last Supper, The Crucifixion, The Resurrection, Breakfast on the beach.

I will be inviting schools, Churches, organisations to attend and publicising it throughout the County. Any help with welcoming people to the exhibition, and even elaborating on a story, or in the kitchen to provide refreshments would be very welcome.

Brian Whittaker

MWiB Network

The District Spring Day is on Thursday March 13th @ Penrith Methodist Church.

Council Meeting 10:45p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Service 1:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. when the speaker will be Linda

Crossley our National MWiB President her theme being

“Work with Dalit Women”. (***Please bring a packed lunch.***)

By now each church should have received this year's Easter offering envelopes, book marks and poster. If you have too many envelopes please keep them for next year as they are now standard issue Should you find you need more envelopes please give me a ring (821815). Your gifts make an important contribution to the church's worldwide mission.

The Easter Offering service will be held at Beacon Hill Church on Sunday May 18th when there will be faith tea at 5 p.m. followed by the service at 6p.m.

The season of coffee mornings for Network starts in March, with the coffee morning at Vickerstown on March 22nd - all welcome from 10:00 a.m.

Elaine Pears

Help, Please

Have I lent anyone my video recording of the animated “Jesus the Healer”? It seems to be on walkabout and I would love to have it come home!

Elaine Pears

CAMEO and Reflections

The March CAMEO meeting will be on Friday 21st March; the theme of our discussion has yet to be decided. We meet at Ramsden Street at 7:00 p.m. It would be good to see others join us to take a look at contemporary issues through the light of our faith. The “Reflections” evening on the third Sunday of the month (March 16th) at Vickerstown will be on the theme “40 days”. The church will be open from 8 pm until at least 9 pm, and (as always) refreshments will be available in the church porch.

David Edmondson

First Tuesday Ladies

We meet monthly at Elaine Pears’ house, 59 Croslands Park, to study the Bible and enjoy a time of prayer and fellowship. The dates for the coming months are 4th March, 1st April, 6th May, 3rd June and 8th July. All meetings begin at 7:30pm.

Janet Ladds

Women’s World Day Of Prayer

The Barrow area service takes place on Friday 7th March at the Baptist Church Abbey Road and will be a joint service with Dalton and District Churches. This year the speaker will be Mrs Kathleen Skinner - National President - so it is hoped as many people as possible - ladies and men - will make the effort to attend. It isn’t often we have a member of the National Committee as our speaker let alone the President! The service begins at 2:00 p.m.

Margaret Manwell

There will also be a service, again at 2:00 p.m. on Friday 7th March, at Whicham Valley Church.

Margaret Cain



Green Tip

Resource Cumbria’s offer of subsidised compost bins expires on March 31st - for details or to order online go to www.getcomposting.com

David Edmondson

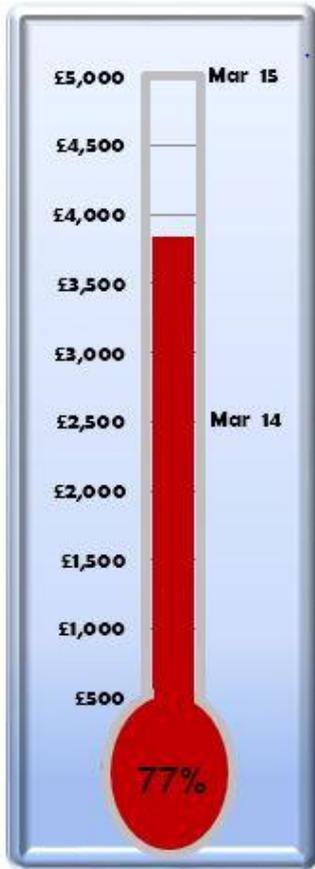
Stop Press

An Evening of Gospel Praise with Rev William McCrea

to mark the launch of his new DVD “Telling the Story”

Friday 14th March at 7:30p.m. Newbiggin Village Hall, Penrith CA11 0HT
Admission £6 -- Further details Melville & Mary Harris tel 017684 83366

Christian Aid Community Partnership



With money from Ramsden Street's carol service, the total has now risen to £3839-10, with more to go in from the collection at the February United Area service. In March, the proceeds from Kirkby's Lent Lunch will be added to the appeal. We have had the latest update from the project, which includes the following information and a prayer to share:

Habibah Barati is a busy mum of six. She had her first son, Zabi, when she was 17. Now aged 38, she leads a female shura in Khwaja Sabz Posh District, Faryab Province. Like all parents the world over, Habibah hopes for a better future for her children. Taking care of her children is her top priority and she likes nothing better than to spend time with her family. But lack of education and jobs, combined with the unstable security situation, make it difficult for people in her community to support their families. Up until recently women in Habibah's community had no say in the day-to-day running of their community and often did not have a voice in their immediate family either. Basically, if you were a woman, your views and opinions didn't count.

The project you are supporting to help women set up their own shuras (Dari word for council) and speak out for change is increasing their knowledge, and is helping them to improve their lives and their futures.

Habibah's message to you is that her community really appreciates your support, which makes our partner AWEC's work possible. Habibah explains: '[In our] village shura, we are able to share our ideas with each other and work in partnership. AWEC has provided a lot of workshops such as peace building, conflict solving, women's rights, and children's rights and health. We have learned a lot.' For women who previously were ignored by the government, their community and even members of their family, the opportunity to speak out and be heard is nothing short of life-changing. Habibah says: 'The things we've learned from this project mean we are able to work strongly in our society.'

Prayer: Lord God, We thank you for the commitment of our partners like Mohammed at AWEC.

We praise you for the strength of ordinary women, like Habibah, using their voice to bring their communities together.

You sent your Son to walk among us, a living symbol of your love, so that we, your children, would know your peace. In the villages, districts and provinces of Afghanistan, we pray that your love, which knows no boundaries, unites families, communities and nations.

Amen.

Hazel Edmondson

Individual Churches

Trinity

Monthly Coffee Morning: Saturday 1st March 9:30 a.m. There will also be a Stork Sale that morning.

Lent Courses begin on Tuesday 11th: 11:00 a.m. - noon followed by a light lunch at Ramsden Street and, following the same course - on the same evening at 6:45 p.m. preceded by tea at 6:00 p.m. at the Baptist Church. You can mix and match as is most suitable.

Once again we have to announce the death of one of our members- Bette Rattray. Bette came regularly with her husband Max, although latterly owing to ill health she was not able to attend. Martin conducted her funeral service on 30th Jan. Our thoughts and prayers go to all the family

On a happier note, on Sunday 9th Feb we welcomed Audrey Jackson in Eldership. Our prayers and good wishes are with her as she takes up this role.

Margaret Maxwell

Trinity Prayer - We meet in the lower meeting room at Trinity each Friday morning between 8:50 and 9:30am to pray; each week we give time to one of the United Area churches, and a set of streets, as well as other prayer concerns. If you have any prayer concerns or things you wish to be prayed for, please contact Janet/Alan Ladds (833882) so we can add them to the prayer book.

7/03	Kirkby	'C'
14/03	Broughton	'D'
21/03	Millom	'E'
28/03	Trinity	'F'

Janet Ladds

Kirkby-in-Furness

Coffee and Company will be as usual on the fourth Tuesday of the month on March 25th from 9:30am to 11:45am when it will be followed at 12 noon by a Lent Lunch of homemade soups and bread. This year all donations will be sent to the Christian Aid partnership in which the United Area is involved. We often raise about £50 at Lent Lunch which means our donation would be worth £200 to this project. The information boards put together by Hazel will be on display. We are hoping to have them for a few days before and after so that people from the village will have an opportunity to look at them when they drop in with donations for the Food Bank. An excellent, but at times harrowing, book about the plight of women in Afghanistan is "Dear Zari" by Zarghuna Kargar which recounts real-life stories from Afghan women, told in their own words. We would love to see you at our Lent lunch.

Janet Sheldon

Hartington St

Notes from the Hub:

We have had 6 new families come onto the toddler group register since Jan 6th and we have 2 new families now attending Chat N Play on Wednesdays.

We have changed the after school club X-Cite from a Wednesday to a Tuesday to avoid clashing with St James school choir.

Asda have kindly donated £70 towards the project which has been a real boost. The community champion Gill Gerrish came to the hub in person to hand over the donation and some photos were taken of the soft play structure and some of our families. These photos can be seen behind the checkouts on the big community board so have a peek next time you're in!

The current count of how many families we have regular contact with is now at 56! Praise God :-)

Mike Little

The March service at Station View will be at 2:00 on Monday, March 17th.

Tea club (now at 4 pm, remember) is scheduled to be on Thursdays March 6th and 20th - but do check with Jim or Val Hutton (831035) first if you have not been to the previous tea club meeting: the days do occasionally change, with any announcement being made at the preceding meeting.

David Edmondson

Askam

The Askam Sisterhood started on 15th January, when members and friends were entertained to an afternoon of enjoyable music played by the Royal Holborn Hill Band, of Millom. Andrew Cain conducted and led the audience through a mixed programme, which was enjoyed by all those present. Thank you to all the musicians.

On 29th January, the Sisterhood members were taken to Derbyshire via slides presented by Rita Williams. Martin explained why the Well Dressing ceremony was started and then talked us through the process of preparing the clay and decorating the design, with live flowers. As part of his Sabbatical in 2012 Martin and Rita returned to one of their previous Churches in Wirksworth in Derbyshire and spent a week helping the Church members and friends to complete the amazing Well Dressing, for that year. The design was very impressive and had an Olympic theme.

We were then shown Well dressings which the Church had produced during the previous years - all beautifully crafted and a full week's work went into each one. If your Church hasn't been along this leg of Martin's Roots and Routes, it's well worth putting it on your Church calendar. Thank you Martin and Rita, for a very informative and interesting afternoon.

Coming Events: Askam will be holding another Quiet Day, on St. David's Day, 1st March, from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m. Alan Jones will lead the day, with a break for lunch. This is an opportunity to prepare ourselves for Lent. Each and everyone will be very welcome, to be quiet and let God into our thoughts.

Dorothy Gleaves

Beacon Hill

Beacon Hill hosts "You Me and Afternoon Tea" 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Mondays March 3rd, 10th and 17th when we hope to share good fellowship with folk in the neighbourhood and beyond. We have a lively programme of activities planned to suit all tastes and are looking forward to this outreach. Everyone invited so if you're free do come and join us.

Elaine Pears

We will be holding a Barn Dance in aid of The Leprosy Mission on Saturday 29th March at 7 pm. The caller will be David Edmondson and refreshments will consist of hot dogs and baked beans.

For catering purposes please phone me on 825986 if you wish to attend.

Lilian Wood

Dalton

According to the Fair Trade Website, the Fair Trade Foundation will campaign to make the price of bananas fair for farmers and workers. Fair Trade fortnight is from 24th February to the 9th March.

A final reminder of the Bible Society coffee morning in Ulverston on 6th March: any help on the day or donations for raffle, tombola and cakes etc. will be greatly appreciated.

R Willock

Christian Women's Fellowship: The next meeting of the CWF will be on Wednesday 19th March at 7:30 pm. The speaker for that evening is Brenda Thompson. All welcome.

D Zazi

Dates: Saturday 1st March Church Coffee Morning. 9:45 to 11:15 am.

Ramsden Street

We held an enjoyable social evening on Friday January 31st for our friends from the Oaklea Trust Houses.

FACTORS (Fun At Church Together On Ramsden Street) is for adults and children and meets monthly. The next dates are Friday February 28th and Friday April 4th. We meet at 4:00pm until 5:30pm and anyone is very welcome to join us.

Our church lunch on Wednesday March 5th will be a Lent lunch at 12:00. A very simple meal will be served for a suggested donation of £2.50.

Anne Stevenson

Millom

We have quite a busy time in the run-up to Easter. Lent lunches commence on Thursday 6th March for 6 weeks. These will take place from 12noon to 1:30 pm. As usual half the proceeds from the lunches will be for Christian Aid. The annual Daffodil Tea in aid of Marie Curie Cancer Care will be held on Friday 14th March from 3 to 5 pm. All welcome. (Last year 60 people came.) Looking further ahead June Paterson is doing a flower display on Tuesday 8th April entitled "Sunshine and Showers" at 7pm in aid of Church funds. Tickets will shortly be on sale for these events via Mona Shelton and Margaret Riley. We are as ever grateful to Jack Giles for printing posters and tickets. The usual weekly activities have started again after the Christmas holidays. We now have 20 girls attending Girls Brigade - the highest total since we began. Thanks to Teresa and Hayley for their work with the girls. Messy Church will be held on 23rd March from 3:30 to 5pm. The Thursday Craft group averages 12 ladies each Thursday afternoon and a lot of lovely items are produced. The regular Friday Coffee Mornings are a time of friendship and invariably finish much later than the advertised time (for 10:30 read 11 or 11:15 - the crack must be good!) Please call in if you are in the Millom area for coffee and a slice of toast.

Margaret Riley

Vickerstown

Our regular monthly coffee morning will be from 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 22nd - all proceeds from this morning will be given to the work of Methodist Women in Britain (formerly Network).

One of the most popular items when Vickerstown hosted "You, Me and Afternoon Tea" was the chair based exercise session led by Ruth McDonald. Ruth has kindly agreed to do three more half hour sessions for us on Thursday afternoons in March, starting at 2 pm on the 6th, 13th and 20th. We also enjoyed the teas - so will again be providing a light afternoon tea after each session, at around 2:30, to give an opportunity for chat until 3 o'clock or just after. All welcome.

There will once again be a series of 3 Lent groups on Walney, meeting at St Columba's church. These will take place on Wednesday afternoons, on the 19th and 26th March, and the 3rd April, beginning at 2 pm.

Hazel Edmondson