



# Newslink

**South West Cumbria United Area**

Charity Registration Number 1141404

Methodist and United Reformed Churches Working Together

The  
Minister Writes



As with every great event or moment in time in all our lives, the days and weeks following seem to be lived in a somewhat subdued atmosphere - we eagerly looked forward to it; we prepared well; it happened; and then.....

Well, the joy of Easter has passed, and I hope you all had a good one, but the thing with Easter is that it is not, and was never meant to be, a 'once-in-a-year' one off event! The joy and celebration of Jesus' resurrection, is meant to be with us - offering encouragement and strength, through every day of our lives! This doesn't mean we will live in a constant

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state of euphoria (how awful that would be), but should nevertheless be a reminder in the quieter and perhaps difficult times we encounter, that there is life beyond what we face. This happens in our personal lives; those of our individual churches; and that of the United Area of which we belong. No sooner had we been preparing for and rejoicing in welcoming Mike (Little) into the post of 'Family Worker' with specific responsibilities at Hartington Street, but also being an asset to the Area itself, than we have to deal with the challenge of Martin's curtailment of his current appointment with us. Disappointing though this is, the Trustees of the Area will endeavour to rise to task of seeking the best way forward, that this may have created new opportunities of different ways of working together and sharing in our common mission of spreading the Gospel message, and serving our local

Area Website [www.swcumbriaunitedarea.unc.org.uk](http://www.swcumbriaunitedarea.unc.org.uk)

communities. We as Trustees are always looking for better and more effective ways of serving God and his kingdom in South West Cumbria, rest assured, that with all your prayers and support, the United Area will get through these challenging times, that as with the events of Good Friday and apparent endings, there does come the glory of Easter Day, and we therefore look forward to the changes that may be made in the near future, and the 'new beginnings' which await us from Autumn 2014, as resurrection follows our Good Fridays.

With every Blessing

*Ron Wilson*

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## Churches Together In Barrow

The A. G. M. will be held on Tuesday 23rd April at St. Columba's, Walney at 7:00p.m. The speaker will be Ruth Harvey, Churches Together in Cumbria Ecumenical Development Officer. She will be speaking about her experiences of the Iona Community. This is an open meeting and all are welcome. *Margaret Manvell*

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### “Encircled In Care”

This is the name given to a Methodist resource which aims to “train, power and enable pastoral carers and others to share in Christ’s caring ministry, leading to a fullness of life that reaches beyond the Church into the world”. The third of the 3 foundation sessions, “Good Practice”, will be held at 7:30 at Beacon Hill on Tuesday 16th April. All are welcome to attend, even if you did not come to the first two sessions.

*David Edmondson*

### Flashbacks

Flashbacks...to times with Jesus: This event for year 4 children from three schools (Greengate Juniors, Sacred Heart, and St George's) is going to run at Ramsden Street URC in April. The sessions will be on Mon 22nd April, afternoon; Tues 23rd April, afternoon; Wed 24th April, morning; Thur 25th April, afternoon. If you would like to help with one, or more sessions, please get in touch with Iva Cole, Ann Hufton, Jean Helm, Kate Hughes, Joan Linney or Hilary Mantle.

*Ann Hufton*

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## REGIONAL & NATIONAL WEBSITES

District: [www.cumbriamethodists.org.uk](http://www.cumbriamethodists.org.uk)

North West Synod: [www.nwsynod.org.uk](http://www.nwsynod.org.uk)

Connexional: [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)

National: [www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk)

May issue No 81 of *Newslink* will be published at the end of April  
Please send all material to reach Mrs Hazel Edmondson, 22 Tweed Rise, Barrow,  
LA14 3LX by Sunday April 7th. Items can also be passed on by  
( 01229 474601 or \* [edmo@twtw.freemove.co.uk](mailto:edmo@twtw.freemove.co.uk)

## **Ordinand's Testimony Service**

On March 21st there was a gathering of people from all over the Cumbria District who had a part to play in the early months of Rachel Williams' ministry. That gathering, known as the District Probationers Committee, took the final decision that Rachel (who is the only Probationer Minister in the district this year) should be sent forward for ordination at the Methodist Conference meeting in London in July. So what comes next?

We're delighted that the Committee has recommended Rachel for ordination. There'll be a very special opportunity in a few weeks' time to express that delight publicly, and to hear Rachel speak about God's call to her and about the early part of her ministry. The Area Service for the summer quarter will actually be a District Service. That Ordinand's Testimony Service is planned for Millom at 6:30 p.m. **(note the change from the usual time)** on Sunday 16th June. Rev. Richard Teal, our District Chair, will be with us for the occasion, as will others from around Cumbria and beyond.

Then for a week or so before her ordination, Rachel, along with Ordinands from around the country, will go into retreat. This is a sacred time of preparation and spiritual refreshment leading to that unique moment when God, through his people, affirms Rachel's call and the work he has been doing in her and through her. Rachel, for her part, will be invited to affirm her 'lifelong commitment to this ministry', fully aware that it 'will make great demands upon [her] and upon those close to [her].' The Ordination Service itself will be a ticket only event, and will take place on Conference Sunday 7th July at a London venue which has yet to be confirmed. Please get in touch if you'd like to know how to go about booking a ticket. But even if you can't be there, please don't miss the opportunity to share in the Testimony Service on June 16th - and remember to pray for Rachel as she charts a course for a ministry which will enrich many lives and draw many people to our God over years to come.

*Martin Williams*

## **Cameo And Reflections**

The April CAMEO evening will be will discuss the proposed high speed rail line. It will be at Ramsden St at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 24th. The "Reflections" evenings continue on the third Sunday of the month at Vickerstown; the April gathering on the 21st will be on the theme of "Sovereignty". 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*

## **Farewell Service**

You'll have noticed that in writing about Rachel's Testimony Service I mentioned that it would start half an hour later than is usual for an Area Service. That's because many of us will also want to be at a 4:00 p.m. service some miles away on the same day. Rev. John Goddard has been with us in Barrow for some eleven years now, and has made a rich contribution to the life of the church and the wider community. Many of the churches on our plan have welcomed him. The congregation at Trinity especially has valued many opportunities to receive his pulpit ministry when united services have bridged the 'Abbey Road Gap'. John's chairmanship of Churches Together in Barrow has been a blessing to all of us who think ecumenically, as was his presidency of Churches Together in Cumbria up to and beyond the time when the Ecumenical County was launched.

John has now received and answered a call to be minister at Saffron Walden Baptist Church in Essex. The afternoon service at Abbey Road Baptist Church on June 16th will give us the opportunity to say 'thank you' to John, and to wish him and Karen, Sean and Liam well as a new set of challenges and opportunities beckons them.

*Martin Williams*

## **Network**

Network Coffee mornings: Thanks to Askam for hosting a Network coffee morning on Saturday, April 6th from 10:00 to 11:30. There will also be one at Trinity on Saturday 20th April, 9:45am to 11:15am, hosted by Kay Sharp and myself.

Easter Offerings: The service is to be on Sunday 21st April, at 6:00pm at Trinity Church Centre. The service is to be led by Mrs Janet Ladds & Mrs Kay Sharp; the speaker is Mrs Yvonne Blackley. Easter Offerings from each church will be received and dedicated at this service. There will be a cup of tea after the service.

*Janet Ladds*

## **First Tuesday Ladies**

The next meeting will be on 9th April (as the 2nd is straight after Easter), and will be at Beacon Hill church at 7:30 p.m.

*Janet Ladds*

# Christian Aid Partnership

As I hope many of you will have heard, at the February United Area meeting it was agreed that as the United Area we should take up a "Christian Aid Partnership". There is much more information about this on the UA website, but I know that not everyone has access to this. The basic idea is that, over a designated time period, we promise to raise £5000 for Christian Aid for a specific project. According to Christian Aid, the benefits to working in this way are:

**Your money will be multiplied to achieve even more.** The projects you can choose to support through the Partnership Scheme are 'matched' by money from the European Union or other bodies. **That means that every £1 you give is worth at least £4** (the exact amount depends on the project selected) to your chosen project!

**Your group can make a difference** to a specific community in the developing world.

**Your giving will go where you intend.** Your gifts will go to the project you have chosen to support. You will know exactly where your money is going and the impact it is having. The money is transferred directly to our overseas partners and is not sent via any government. (Please note that 90% of the money we receive from the scheme is used for the project you have chosen, the remaining 10% will be used for Christian Aid's work around the world.)

**You can grow in faith.** 'What does the Lord require of you, but to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6.8). We will help you pray for those in the developing world and stand in solidarity with a community.

It is important that to note that money raised during Christian Aid week does not form part of this, but is paid direct to Christian Aid in the usual way. What attracted me to the scheme was the more than match funding - surely a good "selling point" if we can enthuse more "fringe" groups into holding an event; I also see it as a way of drawing the United Area together in a bigger project. The collection from February's United Area service has been used to start off the fund. If you do raise any money for Christian Aid to go towards our total, please pass the money through your church accounting system in the usual way, and then send it to Bob Mantle (payable to South West Cumbria United Area but with a clear note saying it is for Christian Aid).

We have a choice of 2 projects - again more details are on the UA website, but the basic details are as follows:

1) Supporting people living with disabilities in the Middle East: This new project in Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territory aims to improve the lives of thousands of people with disabilities, directly benefitting over 30,000 people. However, its wider impact will boost the prospects of many times this number. Closing date: 31st December 2014.

2) Transforming women's lives in Afghanistan: A new project by Christian Aid and local partner the Afghan Women's Educational Centre will enable women to have an education, a voice in decision making, and to receive funding to start small businesses. Closing date: 31 March 2015.

If you have a preference, please let me know as soon as possible on reading this. Please be imaginative in devising ways of raising the money. As an example, David and I would like to invite you to a barbecue at Vickerstown between 5:00 and 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 11th to celebrate it being my 60th birthday (he sneaked his in during November last year without letting on...). We would provide the savouries and drinks and enjoy your company; if you would like to bring cakes or a sweet, that would be great. We really, really don't want any presents, but will have a bowl out for any donations to the partnership project. If you are intending to come, please let us know so we have the right amount of food!

*Hazel Edmondson*

Cass and I celebrated our Golden Wedding Anniversary in Sept. 2012, and because of work commitments in South Africa, Roy Booth, who was the Best Man at our wedding was unable to join us. Instead he invited us to stay with him and his wife Shirley, in Cape Town and so we flew out there in January, 2013.

I had heard lots about the Lebone orphanage, in Bloemfontein, from Tom and Jan Luke. Tom was a Deacon in the South West Cumbria Methodist Circuit at the time, and he and Jan had visited Lebone quite a few times, always telling us of the wonderful work and progress they had seen during their stay. I was also privileged to sponsor one of the boys Siphso Busby, and was kept informed of his progress. Sadly Siphso became very ill in 2011 and was in and out of hospital over several months. Whilst he was ill, Avril and Willem Snyman, the administrators of Lebone Village, were touring England and other European countries, and visited Barrow-in-Furness. I was able to talk to Avril about Siphso, and she forewarned me that the doctors had told her he was very, very ill, and may not be there when she got back to South Africa. He finally passed away in Sept, and I felt very saddened that he had so short a life, but knew he had been loved very much at Lebone, and they had done everything possible to make his last few months special. I was thankful that he no longer suffered and was safe in the arms of Jesus. I still read the Lebone Light with great interest and always marvelled at the continuing progress, and amazing wonders being achieved at Lebone, but felt I had somehow become detached without Siphso.

When we reached Cape Town, we spent time with Roy and Shirley and I felt we were so near to Lebone that it would be wonderful to go and see for ourselves this amazing place. After contacting Avril and Willem, Cass and I decided to hire a car and motor up to Bloemfontein to visit Lebone Village, 1,000 km away but not a difficult journey, for, as soon as we left Cape Town, we were on the N1 a major road, the whole journey. We took two days to travel there, and arrived early on Wednesday, 30th January, finding Avril and Willem's home courtesy of Mrs. Satnav. On our arrival we were made to feel so very welcome, by Avril (Willem was already at work), who said we were to sleep in the garden room - a little haven in their grounds, so we were immediately made to feel very much at 'home'.

My knowledge of the origins of Lebone was a bit sketchy so Avril explained to both of us, just how it had all begun, by Jaine Rist's love of children and the fear of what would happen to all the orphans, caused by the loss of their parents through AIDS. The story was so intense and Avril's reluctance to get involved for almost two years was very moving. Finally after many months of inner turmoil - to use Avril's own

words, she said yes to God's call and agreed to open Lebone House - which seemed an impossible task at the time. Willem offered to help out one day, when Avril was taken into hospital and realised that he also was also desperately needed at Lebone, so gave up his job and joined Avril in this great challenge.

After we had settled into our Garden Room, Avril drove us out to Lebone Village (its new status), and we were able to see for ourselves just how the tiny seed had grown and flourished over those 12 years, into a Garden of Eden.

Our first impression was a very welcoming gateway with a huge picture of happy children. Lots of trees and flowers everywhere, and gardeners busy in the fields. The impression of joy stayed with us all that day and the next, the love was so strong from everyone - especially the children - that we were overwhelmed by it all. . As Avril parked the car we met Brian, who has alzheimers, and is busy chipping paint off a large flower pot, 'his job' - which seems to give him great satisfaction and allows his wife to work as a volunteer gardener.

The main entrance leads to a reception area, in the new admin block, where the walls are covered with a montage of photographs and newspaper clippings of events at Lebone. Each year South Africa celebrates Mandela Day, where people are challenged to do something special for others. One of Lebone's extra special helpers was Morgan Freeman the American actor who visited and helped paint a room on a Mandela Day. The admin block has well equipped offices, printing room, and a kitchen. From here we could see a massive orchard which gives them very necessary fruit for the children and staff. Fields are full of nourishing vegetables, and 'the tunnel'- a huge greenhouse, to grow extra food was impressive. As with most farming they have their problems, too much rain has caused the crops outside to drown, too much sun has made the tunnel food wilt!! but Willem ever the optimist continues to overcome these difficulties.

*Dorothy Gleaves*

*(Part 2 to follow next month)*

## Individual Churches

### Trinity

Monthly Coffee Morning: Saturday 6th April 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Scone Social: Wednesday 17th April 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

*Margaret Manvell*

The prayer group continues to meet on Friday mornings in the Lower meeting room @ 9.00am. Churches and Streets for prayer focus/Week beginning:

- è 07/04/2013 Trinity 'D'
- è 14/04/2013 Vickerstown 'E'
- è 21/04/2013 Beacon Hill 'F'
- è 28/04/2013 Hartington St 'G'

Anyone who would like specific prayer can get in touch by email or phone:

[janladds@btinternet.com](mailto:janladds@btinternet.com) or 833882.

### Hartington Street

All are welcome to our midweek Fellowship meetings:

**Tea Club:** You are invited to join us for our Tea Club, which starts at 6:00 p.m. and ends around 7:30 p.m. on alternate Thursdays. Tea is served at 6:00 p.m. It's a great opportunity to enjoy fellowship over a light meal, and listen to a guest speaker: a lovely gentle way to introduce new people to the church family (or re-introduce those who've been away for a while).

More details from Val & Jim (831035). All are welcome! Dates & Speakers.: 18th April, speaker to be arranged.

**Care & Share Fellowship & Knit & Natter:** Will meet weekly on Tuesdays at 10:00 -11:30 a.m.at Hartington Street. Fellowship. Prayer, a cuppa & bring your knitting. The dates are 2nd April at Barbara Crickett's, 9th April TBA, 16th, 23rd, 30th April all at Hartington Street

#### **Bible Study:**

Thursday fortnightly led by Rev Martin Williams from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. on April 11th & 25th.

Our monthly visit to Station View will be on Monday April 15th at 2:00p.m.

*Ellen Powell*

### Ramsden Street

We look forward to hosting Flashbacks on 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th April when children from Greengate Juniors, Sacred Heart and St George's schools will be attending.

*Anne Stevenson*

## Beacon Hill

On Saturday 16th February, at Beacon Hill Church, there was a masked ball for The Leprosy Mission. All who attended looked very elegant in their masks and fancy clothes and fun was had by all. We raised £143 and would like to thank everyone who attended and donated! Thank you also to Alan and Anne who led the dances and Ron and Denice who performed beautifully for us all. We had our just desserts in the break and watched Joyce Grenfell's "Stately As A Galleon" and sang along.

The next Gateway event will be "Afternoon Tea at the Ritz" on Saturday 20th April at 2:30-4:30pm.

*Jasmine Aldred*

## Dalton

At our coffee morning on March 2nd we had a Fair Trade display on our notice board and a table with samples of Fair Trade goods and people were invited to 'Take a Step for Fair Trade' and they enjoyed a taste of F T banana dipped in chocolate. Our coffee morning made £300.00 for church funds. A sincere thank you to all who helped and supported this event.

*R Willock*

**Christian Women's Fellowship:** The next meeting of the CWF will be on Wednesday April 17th at 7:30 pm, when we will be entertained by the Praise Group. All welcome.

*D Qazi*

**Thursday Club in Dalton:** The Thursday Club sessions at Wellington Street have been successful but have now temporarily finished so that a new programme can be organised for the autumn. It is intended that they will start up again from Thursday September 5th. Look out for details of the programme in the September edition of Newslink.

*Ann Hufton*

## Vickerstown

We will be holding another Holiday Club session during the Easter holidays, from 10 till 12 on Wednesday, April 3rd; a chance to share the Easter story with the small group of children who are now "regulars".

Be cause the first Monday in April is Easter Monday, the Good News Library visit will be from 2:00 p.m. on Monday, April 8th. As our March coffee morning was right at the end of the month, there will not be a coffee morning at Vickerstown in April, but you might like to note now the date of the next one which will be from 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 4th.

*Hazel Edmondson*

# Askam

Askam Coffee Mornings will start again on Easter Saturday, when proceeds will be for our Church Funds. The next Saturday we will donate to Network. Everyone will be very welcome to join us for a Fairtrade cuppa, and a biscuit. £1.00 covers a bottomless cup. There will be books and jigsaws for sale. 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

A Visit to Lebone Village: Cass and I were privileged to visit Lebone Village, in Bloemfontein in January, whilst holidaying in South Africa. We were made very welcome by Avril and Willem Snyman, and stayed at their lovely home. We spent two days at the Village and were amazed at the wonders that are happening there. Avril gave me many photographs of the children to bring home and distribute to their mammas and papas as the children call their sponsors. If you are one of these sponsors could you please let me know either by ringing me on 465378 or emailing me on [dorry55@talktalk.net](mailto:dorry55@talktalk.net). Avril is keen to get an up to date list of all their friends in and around Barrow, as she would like to be able to have direct contact with you all.

Now the children are older they could also write direct to you, or email you. Elaine Pears has kindly given me a list of those of you who donate to Lebone, but we have no list of which child is whose. Avril and Willem are planning a European trip next year 2014, so hopefully we will all be able to meet together to welcome them and hear their news. I look forward to hearing from lots of you, as I still have a lot of photographs to distribute - in spite of taking them to an Area meeting!!

*Dorothy Gleaves*

**Quiet Day Askam:** Quiet Day at Duddon Road Church on Saturday 9th February 2013 from 10am - 4 pm led by Alan Jones and Revd. Malcolm Cowan, vicar of St. Cuthbert's Kirkby-in-Furness.

The group consisted of Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and other denominations. The morning was spent quietly listening to music and discussing reflections of the world around us, giving accounts of the mind pictures that the music conveyed to us. This had a spiritual, calming effect on the group, opening our minds to God's creation. We had lunch of soup and rolls (kindly provided by Pat Jones) and the meal was a time of silence as it would be in a monastery. After lunch there was a service of Holy Communion led by Rev Malcolm Cowan, followed by a time of silence, listening to music giving us time to be mindful of God's presence. Mid afternoon we had a talk given by Tony Millar member of Secular Franciscan Order and he taught us how to take time to talk to God by quietly listening to him with no outside disturbances, how to breath and slow our bodies to be in tune with Gods presence. I have never been to a quiet day like this before and I recommend such a day to everyone; sometimes it is good to take time out and really reflect and communicate with God and the beauty of the world he has given us. Thank you Alan and everyone who took part in this very special day.

*Margaret Frankland*

## Letter From Tom Luke

In connection with Lebone, Dorothy received this letter from Tom Luke and sent it to share:

So pleased you enjoyed your visit to Lebone, the children there are so special to us. It is lovely to see how much the place is growing since we were last there. To be honest, we didn't have any particular children we were sponsoring, as we felt close to all of them, and felt it would be unfair to single any out, but if you have any spare photos we would be delighted to see just how much they have grown.

You mentioned Pule in your last email, and I remember praying for him to be healed during one of the services at Lebone. He was a lovely little lad, with so many illnesses, yet always with a big smile on his face. It is really humbling to think that it is almost 10 years since Jan and I first went to Lebone, and how the United Area is still very much involved in supporting the work there, long may it continue. We are certainly intending to visit Barrow again, once we have moved to Manchester later this year, so I look forward to seeing you all again in the not too distant future.

Regards,

*Tom Luke*

## Millom

For some reason Queen Street and Food seem to be synonymous!! Following the supper on Valentines evening where £188 was raised for Canaan Heights School in Jamaica we held our annual Daffodil Tea for Marie Curie Cancer on 8th March and raised £333. Over 70 people came from the various churches in town and others who are not connected to any particular church but support us at the events we hold throughout the year. They enjoy the fellowship and "friendly welcoming atmosphere" we have been told by many of our visitors. A great team of helpers work very hard to make these events possible. The Lent lunches are continuing until 21st March and we have a short break until 27th April when we will welcome the New Abbey Singers who are giving their first concert in Millom "Spring Serenade" at 4:30 pm with of course a TEA and the money raised at this event will be for Lebone House. The Girls Brigade continue to meet each Wednesday evening during term time and two new girls have started making a company of 15 girls aged 4 to 11. The Parent and Toddlers groups use the premises on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and the Craft class meet on Thursday afternoons. Meeting Point on Tuesday afternoon varies from week to week with bible study, prayers and social afternoons. And of course we have our Coffee Morning every Friday from 9:30 to 10:30 which often finishes after 11 if the conversation is stimulating!! The Good News Library van calls on the 4th Friday each month and we get all the news from the Grange area. We look forward to our Sunday morning services where we have different ministers and local preachers from the United Area and several of our members join the Salvation Army on Sunday evenings to share worship with them.

*Margaret Riley*