



Newslink

SOUTH WEST CUMBRIA UNITED AREA

Charity Registration Number 1141404

Methodist and United Reformed Churches Working Together

The Minister Writes



Dear Friends,
I love the lead up to Christmas, and the festival itself, because we get our once-a-year chance to sing carols. My all-time favourite is probably one from the 19th century: *The Angel Gabriel from heaven came*. This describes the meeting with the angel and Mary. The tune is a delightful folk song and I feel an excitement, and a challenge, whenever I sing the line in verse 3 where Mary says *...to me be as it pleaseth God*. I would love to think that I could try to live up to that sentiment in my own life. Of

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course, nowadays, there are lots of great new carols - the words of *Jesus is the heart of Christmas* (Singing The Faith 207) sets my heart racing - *Jesus is the heart of Christmas...share him in each card you send...find his peace on busy days...welcome him with love and praise!* Again, I'd love to think that I could concentrate more fully on Jesus even in the madness that is often the few weeks before Christmas. You can tell that Christmas is approaching when the supermarket 'muzak' turns from general tunes to Christmas music. Sometimes this background music (which I think is supposed to make our shopping experience more pleasurable!) includes tunes of actual Christmas carols such as *Hark the Herald Angels sing* but it is much more likely to be popular songs such as *I'm dreaming of a white Christmas* or pop songs such as Wizzard's 1973 hit, *I Wish It Could Be*

Area Website www.swcumbriaunitedarea.urch.org.uk

Christmas Everyday. Although not written with a Christian perspective, it always seems to me that Wizzard's song could have something to say to us. In the chorus it says *Oh, I wish it could be Christmas every day and let the bells ring out for Christmas.* I have the feeling that the song implies it would be great to have a pile of presents, indulge in a lot of eating and drinking, socialise all day with friends and family every day of the year - but we all know that would not be the case! However, for us as Christians, each day of the year *should* be a day when we allow Jesus to be birthed afresh in our lives, each day should be a celebration of Christmas. I hope you, your family and your friends have a Holy Spirit filled Christmas - let the bells ring out for Christmas!
Blessings,

Ann

Dalton Community Advent Calendar

If you are coming to Dalton during Advent then look out for our Community Advent Calendar which will be displayed, by kind permission of David Atkinson, in the window of David Atkinson Car Sales. The first picture will be displayed in a special frame on December 1st and then there will be a new Advent picture every day until December 24th. Pictures from previous days will be taken out of the special frame but will continue to be displayed along the bottom of the windows. Twenty four different groups/individuals from Dalton and Newton have made the pictures and it should be a brilliant display - don't miss it!

(If you can't actually get to Dalton, then visit our Facebook page to view the pictures. <https://www.facebook.com/DaltonCommunityChurch/>)

Ann Hufton

REGIONAL & NATIONAL WEBSITES

www.cumbriamethodistsdistrict.org.uk

North West Synod: www.nwsynod.org.uk

Connexional: www.methodist.org.uk

National: www.urc.org.uk

February issue No 118 of *Newslink* will be published at the end of January. Please send all material to reach Lilian Wood, 89 Risedale Road, Barrow, LA13 9QY by Sunday January 8th. Items can also be passed on by
☎ **01229 825986** or ✉ lilian.wood4@gmail.com

Appeal For Nicolas Lowe Children's Home, Argentina

The Cumbria Methodist District has asked churches to help to raise £4,000 during 2016/2017. This will support one child in the home for a year. Fliers about this should be available in every church. We have decided to make this a United Area appeal; there is no definite target for us, so it will be interesting to see how much we are able to raise. (see page 8 for more information on the home)

When you have money to pass over could you please make the cheque payable to South West Cumbria United Area and send it to Mrs Lynne Pearce, 60 Steel Street, Askam, LA16 7BP, clearly stating that it is for the Nicolas Lowe appeal.

If you have already sent money for this appeal separately, could you please let Lynne know the amount, so that she can keep a note of the total raised by the Area.

Vickerstown's Food & Fellowship group has already raised £92 and the soup and quiz evening at Beacon Hill raised a further £143, so we have a good total already.

Lilian Wood

Area Directory

The South West Cumbria United Area Directory will be updated in January 2017 and in order that this can be completed would individuals and churches please check their entries in the current copy and email any changes, additions, deletions etc to secretary@ramsdastreeturc.org.uk by Monday 9th January 2017 (or phone 825662). If no changes are necessary then an email stating 'no change' would be appreciated.

Anne Stevenson



Christmas Big Sing



As the country gets into top gear for Christmas with parties, overeating, presents, excessive drinking, extravagant spending, nostalgia and all the other excesses that seem to be obligatory at Christmas it is perhaps fitting that we too select a higher gear and prepare ourselves with an evening of community carol singing. Supported by the Area Praise Group carols old and new, with brief outlines of the story/theology behind them, will be sung at Hartington St. on Monday December 5th at 7:30 pm. It is an opportunity to bring friends along so that they too can get a feel for what Christmas really is about. Refreshments will of course have a seasonal theme.

Charlie Mills



Youth Spot

Flashbacks.... to times with Jesus

Another running of 'Flashbacks' has now been completed. It was held at Dalton Community Church on Monday 31st October through to Thursday 3rd November and was greatly enjoyed by enthusiastic classes of primary school children and adults alike!

And for those of us who may be unfamiliar with the activities that take place at this event....

Each session begins with us helping the children to make wrist bands using beads which represent various events in Jesus' life, as told in the Bible. The children then split up into four groups: in one area making matchstick crosses after hearing about Jesus' crucifixion; in another area making fish pictures (made from cutting up paper cupcake cases) reminding the children of Jesus' appearance to his disciples on the beach after his death and resurrection; they experience the Jewish synagogue and all have great fun (myself included!) in trying to blow the shofar (this being a musical instrument made from a ram's horn which is blown to announce important events); they also play a game which leads them through several Bible events. The session then comes to an end with the story of the wedding at Cana and includes a feast followed by a fully costumed traditional wedding ceremony, with a bridal party, and aptly finishes with Jewish music and dancing!

For me, as always, it's been a real privilege and a pleasure, not only to be working with the children, but also being part of an enthusiastic and friendly group of helpers who willingly share in the tasks to be done. However, I realise that 'Flashbacks' couldn't possibly take place if it wasn't for a great deal of preparation and hard work having taken place prior to the event itself (inviting the schoolchildren, setting up the various areas of activity in the church and purchasing and getting the craft items together etc). Therefore, on behalf of myself and indeed the whole United Area, I would like to express sincere thanks to the organising team of Ann Hufton, David and Kate Hughes, Joan Linney and Bob and Hilary Mantle for their ongoing hard work and dedication to 'Flashbacks' in giving so many 8 and 9 year old children such a meaningful and memorable time. The children are the reason that we undertake this work; so we pray that for the foreseeable future we might continue to plant seeds that will grow and flourish within them.

Daphne Watkinson

First Tuesday Ladies

Our Christmas meeting will be held on Tuesday 6th December at 7:30 pm at 59 Croslands Park, when we will share food and fellowship. There will be no meeting in January; our next meeting will be on 7th February.

Elaine Pears

Forthcoming Meetings

The next Local Preachers/Worship Leaders meeting will be held on Thursday 8th December at 7:30 pm at Kirkby. All leaders of worship are encouraged to attend. The meeting of the Community Outreach Group will be held on Thursday 2nd February, 6:45 pm for 7 pm at Market Street, Dalton. It would be good to have a representative from every church.

Churches Together In Barrow

The Agape meal will take place on Thursday 19th January at St Mary's, Walney. The speaker will be Gill Grisedale, the Community Pastor at St. Mark's. Meet at 6 pm for the meal at 6:30 pm. The cost is £4.50.



Green Tip

Once again there is an opportunity to recycle your Christmas cards at Marks & Spencer, who are working with the Woodland Trust and will plant a tree in the UK for every 1,000 cards they receive. They will accept cards between 2nd and 31st of January.

At Beacon Hill we will be asking the congregation to bring all their cards to church so that they can be counted before being recycled. Last year we managed to collect over 1,700, so we helped to plant almost 2 trees.

Lilian Wood

Financial Reports

The following should have been included with the COG report in last month's 'Newslink' but had to be left out due to lack of space.

Network (Methodist Women in Britain) Year ending 31st August 2016

Receipts

Cash in hand/brought forward	7.20
Autumn ecumenical event	71.50
Easter offerings	653.92
Summer effort	120.00
Coffee mornings (x2)	273.00
Total	£1125.62

Payments

Banked: World Mission Fund	725.42
Banked: MWiB	388.00
Expenses	5.00
Cash in hand/carried forward	7.20
Total	£1125.62

Sincere thanks to all who support Network/Methodist Women in Britain.

Muriel Dawson

Methodist Mission Funds

Details for the 12 month period ended 31st August 2016 are as follows:

World Mission Fund

7 out of 9 churches made a contribution, with a total amount of £1,418.32 being paid into this fund (JMA £789.52 and General Fund £628.80). This is a total reduction of £632.00 on last year's figures (JMA reduced by £44.90 and General Fund by £587.10).

Mission in Britain Fund

5 out of 9 churches contributed, with a total amount of £770.50 being paid into this fund. This is an increase of £352.00 on last year's figure.

Bob and Daphne Watkinson

About The Nicolas Lowe Children's Home

The foundation which supports the work of the home was formed 22 years ago by 30 Methodists in Argentina. The home has very basic facilities, but provides the safe and caring environment which the children so desperately need. There is also a smaller home where 8 children are cared for by a couple with 2 children of their own.

Over the years, it has been a constant struggle to fund the work - inflation in Argentina has been running at over 30%, and whilst the government does provide some support to the home, their payments are often months late and have therefore reduced in value. In addition to trying to meet the ongoing running costs, the home has faced serious problems as major repairs were urgently needed to the building, including a new roof and replacement of the contaminated/leaking water reservoir. Funding is also required to help to provide professional psychological help for the children.

Some of the children are victims of physical and sexual abuse, abandonment or neglect, some have parents who are drug addicts or are in prison. Their stories are heartbreaking: a 6-month old who sustained two fractures in each leg plus a broken arm as a result of being beaten by her mother; a 6 year old raped by her father; siblings who witnessed the murder of their mother by their father; a brother and sister who were put on a bus by their mother and told to get off 10 blocks later - the mother was never found.

The value of the home to the children cannot be overestimated and there are many success stories. Despite the ordeals faced in their early years, as a direct result of the refuge and care provided by the home, children have been able to overcome their problems, leaving behind their painful past to become a positive influence in their communities. Some have gone on to become doctors, engineers, artists. "Instituto Lowe saved my life" is a comment often repeated.

On a visit to Argentina in 2013 Richard Teal and others from Cumbria visited the home. Reflecting on their visit afterwards, Richard said that out of the whole of their time in Argentina, it was this visit to the children's home which stuck in his mind.

The Cumbria - Argentina Methodist Partnership says: 'We know that there are many demands on finances, with numerous situations both in this country and overseas competing for our attention and many appeals for financial assistance. However, we feel we cannot ignore the plight of the children in the home. They need a safe roof over their heads, improved facilities and staff to care for them.'

Put simply, in the words of Richard Teal, "these children need us".



Individual Churches

Dalton

Our October coffee morning raised £255 for the refurbishment fund. Thanks to all who supported us.

The Bible Society Action Group raised £1004.38 in the year ending 31/10/2016. Thanks for your support.

Future Events:

- 04-12-16 Bible Society Advent Praise 3 pm at Wellington Street.
- 13-12-16 Afternoon communion service 2:30 pm at Market Street.
- 17-12-16 Coffee and Carols 9:45 to 11:15 am at Market Street.
- 18-12-16 Christmas meal at 4:45 pm followed by Carol service at 6 pm at Wellington Street.
- 24-12-16 Christmas Eve Communion service at 6 pm at Wellington Street.

R Willock

Christian Women's Fellowship. Christmas Supper and Carol Service will take place on Wednesday 21st December starting at 6:30 pm. There will be no CWF meeting in January 2017.

D Zazi

Ramsden Street

A concert by the New Abbey Singers will be held on Sunday November 27th at 2:30pm. Tickets are £4 and this includes refreshments.

At the very last minute the Boxes of Hope group have been offered the use of a large warehouse so will not be using our Church as the collection point for the shoe boxes. We were happy to offer our premises, even though they were not really big enough, but are pleased that a more suitable place has been offered.

Our Autumn Fair on November 5th was a good event and raised over £520 for Church funds.

At our Coffee Morning on Friday December 9th the Greengate school choir will be coming to sing carols and Christmas songs for us at 10:30am. We always enjoy their visits and it is lovely that they actually ask us if they may come! The coffee will be served in the Church so that there is plenty of room for people to join us.

Our Carol Service will be held on Sunday December 18th at 2:30pm and will be led by Ron Wilson. We hope to have contributions to the service by our FACTORS group and a Christmas tea will be served after the service.

A re-affirmation service will take place on Sunday January 8th 2017 at 11am.

Anne Stevenson

Trinity

The December Midweek Informal Communion will be on Tuesday 6th at 10:30 am and in January it will be on 3rd. There will be a cuppa before the short service.

There will be no prayer meeting at church on Thursday 29th December due to people being on holiday, but we can still pray wherever we are. We will meet again at church on 5th January and of course on every Thursday thereafter at 8:45a.m.

Advent Bible Study 'Living in the Light' Joint with the Baptist Church on Thursdays 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd December at 6:45 pm, preceded by an optional meal at 6:00 pm.

Coffee mornings: Saturday 3rd December sponsored by Fund Raising Committee and Saturday 7th January sponsored by Brian and Norma. Start time 10:00 am.

Christmas Concert Saturday 3rd December 4:00 - 6:00 pm.

Christmas Services

Toy Service 11th December followed by a Church Christmas Dinner, cost £5.00 for adults and £2.00 for children.

On 18th at 11:00 am there will be the Nativity Service presented by the Sunday School and at 4:00 pm members of the Baptist church will join us for a Carol Service led by Jennet.

On 1st January there will be a Baptism, so our Communion Service will move to 8th January.

Family News

On 14th October Jennet baptised Logan Robert Alan Wakefield (Muriel's Great grandson) and welcomed him into God's family at Trinity. It was a bittersweet service as the service had been brought forward so his Grandad, Alan, could be present, but unfortunately he was not well enough to attend and a couple of weeks later we heard that Alan had died. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this time.

Margaret Manuwell

Trinity Prayer - We meet in the lower meeting room at Trinity each Thursday morning between 8:50 and 9:30 am 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.

Week commencing

4/12	Urswick	U
11/12	Dalton	V
18/12	Askam	W
25/12	Kirkby	Y
1/01/17	Broughton	CTiB
8/01	Millom	A
15/01	Trinity	B
22/01	Vickerstown	C
29/01	Hartington St	D

Janet Ladds

Beacon Hill

Cake power!

On 6th November the Eco Team sold cakes after the morning and evening services to raise the money to buy our second twinned toilet. World Toilet Day on 19th November highlights the importance of good basic sanitation and improved hygiene education in less developed countries and offers ways in which we can help. Every twinned toilet bought through Tearfund helps to prevent the spread of disease so that men, women and children can transform their lives and make a better future. So, a big 'thank you' to everyone who bought - and baked - rock cakes, plum cakes, rocky road and banana and walnut loaf. We managed to raise £70, which is more than enough to buy this year's toilet.

Kathryn Aldred

More fundraising - our soup and quiz evening on 12th November raised £143 for the Nicolas Lowe children's home in Argentina.

Our Advent meetings will begin on Monday 28th November at 7:30 pm. The theme this year will be "Telling the Story" and the 4 meetings will involve Bible-based discussion, hymns, prayers, poetry, activities and food. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Our Mince Pie coffee morning will be held on Thursday 15th December, 10 am-11:15 am, with mince pies replacing the usual cake stall.

Our usual monthly coffee mornings resume on Thursday 26th January, with stalls selling cakes, handmade cards, books and Fairtrade items.

Lilian Wood

Kirkby

The people in the village of Kirkby have been filling 'Boxes of Hope' shoeboxes in November for the annual appeal and bringing them to the Methodist Church. Volunteers for the charity Teams4U have collected them and arranged transport to rural Romania where the charity has many ongoing projects and contacts. Teams4U was founded in 1990 by Dave Cooke when he made the very first Christmas shoebox appeal. It is such a simple idea, so easy to do and we hope will bring delight to children who, in many cases, have never before received a gift.

In December we will be thinking about giving out our own small gifts within the village to people that we know are having a difficult time so that they know that they are in our thoughts and prayers over the Christmas period.

During work on the church roof we have been meeting in the church hall but hope to have the roof completed, the church painted and have the carpet back in situ in time for the Over 55 Lunch Club to have their Christmas meal in there and some of our own Christmas services. Although Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year we have elected to not have a service so that people can join with other denominations in the village to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Mary Wilkinson

Askam

Rev and Mrs Hall visited Askam Sisterhood on Wednesday 2nd November. She was a delight to listen to, and they had spent a lot of their married lives working as Missionaries in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. Their last visit to Sierra Leone was earlier this year, when they joined a team of clergy and volunteers, to teach leaders to work for equality for women in Sierra Leone. This happened after the Ebola outbreak, and they were inspired by the way the people of that country had rallied after the devastation the disease had caused. We should pray that their work starts a spark for the women of this country - to gain respect and equality with the menfolk. She is an excellent speaker and we hope to have her again next year. She left us with this thought - one of her husband's ministries was in the Shetland Isles - and that's another story!!

When you read this the Askam Sisterhood will have held their Christmas Party, on Wednesday 30th November with their entertainment for the afternoon, the delightful children's choir from Askam Village school.

The Askam Scouts are planning a sleepover in Duddon Road Church hall from 6:00 p.m. on Friday, 2nd December - 9:00 a.m. Saturday, 3rd December. We hope they have lots of fun (and get some sleep!!).

We are planning a Christingle Service on Sunday, 11th December when Deacon Debbie will lead the service. This will be at 4:00 p.m. at Duddon Road Church; everyone welcome. As last year, we hope to encourage the children present to make their own Christingle oranges. It was hectic last year, but lots of fun, and we are sure the children appreciated their 'own orange' more than just having it handed to them.

Our Carol Service is on Sunday 18th and the following Sunday is Christmas Day so we will not be having a service in Duddon Road, but there is a service in Dalton Community Church (Market Street) at 9:30 am.

Our Covenant Service will be on Sunday, 1st January, led by Rev. Ron Wilson, at 11:00 a.m.

Dorothy Gleaves

Hartington Street

All are welcome to join our Care and Share fellowship/Knit and Natter. We meet weekly on Tuesdays at 10:00 - 11:30 am. Fellowship, Prayer, a cuppa & bring your knitting. Our last meeting before Christmas will be on 13th December and we will begin again on 10th January 2017.

Our Bible studies will be held on Thursdays at 1:30 pm on the following dates: 1st December, 15th December, then 12th January and 26th January.

Ellen Powell

Millom

We wish all the readers a very Blessed and Peaceful Christmas and New Year from Queen Street, Millom.

2016 has been a time of sharing with fellow Christians, especially the Salvation Army on Sunday evenings and St. George's Anglican Church on Wednesday mornings, as they have held their weekly communion service here during the past few months whilst their new heating system is installed. It is good to have fellowship together and our Friday coffee mornings and Thursday craft classes warmly welcome members of all denominations as well as non-churchgoers. We hope that all our visitors feel "at home" here in Millom.

Rachel, Stephen and David left us in August and seem to have settled in at Brampton (according to items on Facebook!) and we trust that Debbie is getting used to being "up North" again - not quite back to her roots in Cheshire but in friendly Cumbria instead.

This year has seen celebrations of the Queen's 90th birthday, fundraising for Caanan Heights Jamaica, Lebone House South Africa, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Shoe boxes for Transylvania (153), Holy Beetle, Lent Lunches, The Foodbank, Praise on the Lake and a Spring Fayre, so we have been quite busy and from November a new Bible Study starting weekly on Tuesday afternoons for Advent and beyond. Our Carol Service will be on 18th December at 11 am and at the Salvation Army in the evening and there will be an extended Communion Service on Christmas Eve as well as a short service on Christmas Day morning at 10 am.

We look forward to more new and exciting events in 2017 as well as our usual commitments listed above.

Margaret Riley

Vickerstown

The Area Bonfire held at Vickerstown on November 5th raised £145 for the Methodist Fund for World Mission. The weather was kind to us, there were plenty of fireworks and all those present seemed to be having a good time! Thanks to all those who helped make it work - the Dalton team of Ron, Bob and David on fireworks duty and Jennet and her helpers (particularly Bob, Daphne and John) in the kitchen.

There will be no coffee morning at Vickerstown in December and we will not be having a service on New Year's Day. There is a Christmas Day service at 11 a.m. which will be followed by a buffet lunch for those able to stay. The next coffee morning will be on Saturday January 21st from 10 to 11:30 a.m. with the usual stalls - cakes, Fairtrade and bring-and-buy. All welcome, no entry charge.

The ecumenical Walney Churches Choir will again be performing a mixture of sacred and secular, seasonal and general music on the first Thursday and Friday in December (1st and 2nd Dec this year) starting at 7:30 p.m. in St. Columba's church. No set charge, there will be a retiring collection for charity (usually the homeless shelter and George Hastwell School, though I have not seen confirmation of this yet for this year). All welcome.

Karen Edmondson

Regular Sunday Services

Morning service times are as follows:

Askam	(Duddon Road) 9:30 am (except 5 th Sunday–11:00 am)
Beacon Hill	(Holyoake Avenue, Barrow) 9:30 am
Dalton Community Church	(alternates between Wellington Street & Market Street) – 9:30am
Hartington Street	Barrow 10:30 am
Kirkby	(Marshside) 10:30 am (except 2 nd Sunday – 6pm 5 th Sunday – 10 am at St Cuthbert's)
Millom	(Queen Street) 11:00 am
Ramsden Street	Barrow 11:00 am (except 1 st Sunday – 10:30am & 5 th Sunday – 11:00 am at Trinity)
Trinity Church Centre	(Warwick Street, Barrow) 11:00 am
Urswick	(Tarn Close) 11:00 am (except 1 st & 3 rd Sundays – at Parish church)
Vickerstown	(Warren Street) 11:00 am

Evening services are held as follows:

Beacon Hill	4 pm every week
Trinity Church Centre	4 pm every week
Kirkby	6 pm on the 2 nd Sunday

United Area joint evening services as arranged. For details, please consult the Plan or the website: www.swcumbriaunitedarea.urch.org.uk

Regular Coffee Mornings

Please note that coffee mornings are held every week as follows:

Millom -	Fridays from	9:30 till 10:30
Ramsden St. -	Fridays from	10:30 till 12:00



Dalton - Mondays:	Tea and Chat at Wellington Street from 10 to 11:30
Hartington St - Tuesdays:	Care & Share Fellowship & Knit & Natter from 10:00 to 11:30