



Newslink

SOUTH WEST GUMBRIA UNITED AREA

Charity Registration Number 1141404

Methodist and United Reformed Churches Working Together

The Minister Writes



At our recent URC North Western Synod Meeting in Bamford near Rochdale, the main item and focus of both morning and afternoon sessions was the little booklet “Missional Discipleship: What is it?” This was introduced and presented to Synod by its passionate author Lawrence Moore. The introduction, outlining that Christianity in today’s society no longer looks like Jesus (backed by research among American 20-30 year olds) was heard in stony silence! Lawrence then goes on to write that ‘people outside the church recognise more clearly than we

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do, the gap between their experience of us as church and what they imagine or expect of Jesus.’ Further statistics were then shared showing to what depth the scale of the crisis has reached ie we are seeing a continued disconnection from institutional Christianity coupled with a growing hostility towards the church, with many people today believing the Christian Church is Bad News.

However, response to Jesus is very different, with research published just a couple of years ago by Wikipedia, that the list of the world’s most significant people in human history, whilst including Napoleon and Shakespeare in its top ten, has Jesus Christ at No.1! Whilst the talk of ‘Jesus’ brought people to smile and talk animatedly and positively, move the topic to ‘church’ and the mood changed with comments becoming negative and hostile, leading the researchers to conclude that “Christianity in today’s society no

Area Website www.swcumbriaunitedarea.urch.org.uk

longer looks like Jesus.” We apparently do not behave the same way, share the same priorities and make the same sorts of differences to people and communities as Jesus did - we (in church) are simply not recognised as followers of Jesus, so we need ‘to walk the walk’ with Jesus. Missional Discipleship therefore becomes a process of reconnecting the Church with the Jesus we claim to follow, until others see in us, as individuals and as a body of his people, the Church - the Jesus in us. The (very readable) booklet goes through four more chapters outlining: a road trip with Jesus (reminding us of the basics); dying and rising (reminding us of the potential cost of walking the way, but also of resurrection); a life lived not for our own sake (call to follow and have a life lived for and on behalf of the world that God loves); and (as Lawrence describes it) ‘Church 101, being part of the process of learning the spiritual secret of Christian life, and learning to die to ourselves in order to discover the freedom of the life that God has for us in Jesus - with the four sub-headings being: renewing covenant; learning to trust; investing in change; and we are God’s answer!

In the light of an overwhelming acceptance of the booklet, Revd Sarah Moore then presented three resolutions to Synod as a proposed “Synod Strategy” in response to “Missional Discipleship”, all of which were passed by a significant margin. Being published during the Lent and Easter period lends even more credence and relevance to the ‘food for thought’ we’re being asked to ponder on over the coming months, that even in death there is hope!

With every Blessing

Ron

The booklet is available from United Area Staff members; URC elders; N W Synod Office and ‘on-line’ at “walkingthewalk.org.uk” and follow the Missional Discipleship open course links.

Many thanks to Lawrence Moore for the inspiration for the above

REGIONAL & NATIONAL WEBSITES

www.cumbriamethodistsdistrict.org.uk

Connexional: www.methodist.org.uk

North West Synod: www.nwsynod.org.uk

National: www.urc.org.uk

June issue No 122 of *Newslink* will be published at the end of May

Please send all material to reach Lilian Wood, 89 Risedale Road, Barrow, LA13 9QY by Sunday May 7th. Items can also be passed on by

☎ **01229 825986** or ✉ lilian.wood4@gmail.com

“Born To Die For Us”

An exhibition at the Forum in Barrow of paintings by the Christian artist Paul Shepherd, depicting the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The exhibition will on show until the end of May.

Safeguarding Foundation Training

We believe it is vital for every church member who comes into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults to be fully trained in safeguarding. People who did the initial training five years ago will be attending a refresher course in May. For anyone who has not yet received training, there will be a foundation course in safeguarding on Thursday, 22nd June at Trinity Church Centre, starting at 6:30 pm. If you would like to register for this course, please contact Kathryn Aldred (United Area Safeguarding Officer) by email (km.aldred@icloud.com) or phone (430842) as soon as possible. Thank you.

Youth Spot

Bible stories exhibition - 27th March - 1st April

That was a week, that was. Children from 8 schools and many Rainbow / Brownie / Church groups contributed to a truly wonderful exhibition, of around 40 Bible stories, which showed the artistic and inventive skills of the children to portray a variety of Bible stories using a wide range of materials.

During the week, 7 of the schools were able to visit the exhibition, in total around 350 children. They spent some time viewing the exhibition with the assistance of Church helpers, and then had refreshments in the lounge and a chance to engage in many craft activities. The feedback has been exceptional, typical being the following from Victoria Academy

“Thank you so much for your efforts this morning. The children loved it ... and so did the staff. It was really well organised with the children’s needs in mind and we are so grateful to you for inviting us.” Gill Simpson, Year 3.

We have already started to plan for next year.

Brian Whittaker

Appeal for Nicolas Lowe children’s home, Argentina

The Area total stands at £1357.16. The appeal will close at the end of June, so could you please make sure that any remaining contributions are sent to Lynne Pearce by the end of May.

Lilian Wood

First Tuesday Ladies

We will meet on Tuesday 2nd May at 7:30 pm at 59 Croslands Park to study the Bible and enjoy a time of prayer and fellowship.

Elaine Pears

Fairtrade Fortnight - A Follow Up

In the March Newslink, I asked for details of what different churches were doing to support and promote Fairtrade, both during the Fairtrade fortnight and beyond. Here is just a sample of the work that is happening in our United Area:

Karen emailed about the work at Vickerstown: We are a Fairtrade church and have our certificate on display in the hall, on the Eco-Congregation noticeboard (other bits on there also refer to the place Fairtrade has in that work). Every coffee morning has a Fairtrade stall, which people regularly come to for their own favourites - especially chocolate! Unless we are given things to use up, in which case we won't waste it, all the tea, coffee, sugar and hot chocolate used in the kitchen at church events (services, coffee mornings, Food & Fellowship etc) carries the Fairtrade mark and at least some of the baking for the coffee morning cake stall uses Fairtrade ingredients. We always try to have a coffee morning in or around Fairtrade fortnight with a display up to give some extra information - one of the photos we have on our page of the Area website is of this and we mention our Fairtrade Church status in the information on there. Part of the proceeds from this coffee morning is usually donated to the Fairtrade Foundation (£85 this year).

Dorothy from Askam sent the following message: Just to let you know how Fairtrade goods are used at Duddon Road Church! We have a supply of Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar which is used for refreshments after events and special services, ie the monthly mid-week service, coffee mornings, our Garden Party and also any Christmas special services, such as Christingle. We also use Fairtrade goods at Sisterhood, the exercise class and Praise Group. In April, they had an Easter Coffee Morning with Fairtrade goodies and received generous support from the manager of the Askam Co-op.

At Beacon Hill, we have a popular Fairtrade stall at the monthly coffee mornings, offering a good range of fairly-traded goods. In March Lilian and Kathryn held a Banana Party to raise funds for The Leprosy Mission, but as this fell within Fairtrade Fortnight we also had a focus on Fairtrade - we displayed a giant Fairtrade banana and played the Banana Split game, which reveals how much of the price we pay for a banana is given back to the various people involved in its production. Guests enjoyed a number of other banana-themed activities: a quiz and wordsearch, guess the number of banana sweets in the jar and Bananagrams (a fantastic Scrabble-like game provided by Margaret). We finished with tea and a range of banana-related treats.

In Dalton, Raymond wrote about promoting Fairtrade at the regular coffee mornings at Dalton Community Church and the Dalton Community Association held a Fairtrade coffee morning in their lovely Community Hall, with Fairtrade drinks, cookies and chocolate donated by the Co-op. Patricia invited me to this event, where I met Councillors Ann Thurlow and Barry Doughty, both of whom are active in the Dalton Fairtrade Group. They had the excellent idea that, in future, we could work towards becoming a *Fairtrade Borough* which, alongside the continuing important work in our various churches, would enable us to organize some alternative events involving a wider range of people. It sounds exciting, so watch this space!

Kathryn Aldred

Iris Braithwaite

'Nothing comes from nothing - nothing ever could' sang Julie Andrews in the Sound of Music - when Maria found true love.

Last year we sadly said goodbye to a wonderful lady, Iris Braithwaite. Her memorial service was held at Duddon Road Church, and such was the love she shared with all her family and friends, that the Church overflowed into the Church Hall. There were tears and laughter throughout the service as family and friends paid tribute to the amazing person she had been.

I first met Iris many years ago when she moved to Askam with husband Bob and her family of five. She joined Duddon Road Church and over the years she supported us and many of her grandchildren and later great grandchildren were christened at the Church. After the children had left home she took up playing golf, and from the hilarious stories some of her golfing friends related in the service was a friend to everyone there. Her baking skills were amazing, and nobody could match her gingerbread, even those who have since tried her recipe.

She loved flowers and was in her words 'Betty's assistant' - this being Betty Blamire, her dear friend, who was a keen flower arranger. Betty helped to organise, and Iris helped with, the Flower Festival, which ran for a weekend when the Church celebrated its Centenary.

Iris was a loving Mum to her children and many grandchildren and later she was blessed with great grandchildren. We learned at her service that she never missed a birthday and was always there to guide and support her extended family.

I went to see her when I knew she was very ill. Her daughters were caring for her, taking it in turns to cover the 24 hours of the day, with their brothers visiting when they could. She was her lovely welcoming self, always interested to know of others' problems. She told me how as a child the village she lived in used to have a weekly visit by the Bible Man. She said she went to see him on this particular day, and she put up her hand when he asked who wanted a New Testament. "I was only small" Iris said "but he saw my hand and gave me one", saying "you always come to see me, don't you." "As I received the Testament" Iris continued "it opened at St John's Gospel and I read this verse - God so loved the World" then Iris asked me to read this out at her funeral. I knew immediately the words she wanted, as I remembered my parents singing this, and the music and words flooded my mind. I felt very humbled that she had asked me, and so was honoured to be part of her memorial service. Iris had lived her life as a Christian with these words her guide.

But what of the words from Julie Andrews? After the service we all met to share our memories of Iris, with so many friends and all her lovely family. I was told however that the people in the Church lounge had not been able to hear the service, and I felt so sorry, and disappointed for them all - as the words of tribute were so moving. Later one of her golfing friends said "you need some new speakers, and I will buy them for your Church, and he can put them in." This turned out to be Stan Alexander who donated the

money for the parts and Paul Burton, who worked so hard with my husband to install the new microphones and speakers in the Church lounge. The new speaker system is in place at Duddon Road - nothing comes from nothing. Iris will always be in our hearts, and because of her joyous and generous nature we are blessed at Church. We will always hold you in our thoughts and hearts Iris. Sleep peacefully - reunited with Bob.

Dorothy Gleaves

Green Tip



Bee Creative in the Garden is a new initiative launched by the Royal Horticultural Society in partnership with the Wildlife Trusts. The campaign aims to help gardeners to protect bumblebees and solitary bees, the heroes of pollination.

For more information visit

www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk

Lilian Wood

Individual Churches

Trinity

Tuesday 2nd May Short midweek informal communion 10:30 am preceded by a cuppa from 10:00 am - Abbey Chapel

Saturday 6th May 10:00 am - 11:30 am Monthly Coffee Morning

Bible Study Thursdays in May, starting on 4th May - An Essence Course led by Jennet at 7:00 pm in the Lower Meeting Room

17th May 11:00 am Service at Risedale

24th May 2 for Tea in the Lounge. Alan Garnett - Slide Show, 'An American Trip'

Baptism

On Palm Sunday Sienna Fawcett was brought by her parents Gary and Leanne for baptism. Sienna's older sister Zoey and brother Serge were also present along with a number of family and friends. Palm Crosses were given to the congregation within the service and we were encouraged during the prayer that followed to use our cross as a focus on our head, lips, hands and heart. We trust that all of those present heard the Palm Sunday story afresh and were challenged.

Margaret Manwell

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

May	7 th	Dalton Community Church	R
	14 th	Urswick	S
	21 st	Askam	T
	28 th	Kirkby	U

Janet Ladds

Askam

Sisterhood will finish on Wednesday 10th May with a visit to Vietnam and Cambodia (talk by Mrs Lesley Nix), followed by a celebratory tea. Please let me know if you are interested in joining us that afternoon - all welcome. (Tel: 465378)

Our annual Garden Party will be on 1st July, 2:30 - 4:00 - more details in June Newslink. We are looking forward to working with our friends from St. Peter's Ireleth in the coming months, sharing worship and social events.

Dorothy Gleaves

Hartington Street

The theme of March's Messy Church was Easter. The children enjoyed icing cupcakes to look like a chicken had hatched out of it. A paper plate was transformed into an Easter bunny basket filled with goodies and a ginger, cross shaped biscuit was decorated to remind us that we celebrate an empty cross and the Risen Jesus. We made stained glass crosses out of tissue paper to put in our bedroom windows so the sun can shine through. We also made Easter cards with an empty cross on a hill with the sunrise in the background - the sunrise was the children's handprint. The Story time involved a large cross being used as a bridge to be walked over between sin and eternal life, and we all learnt that by Jesus dying and rising again we have been saved and given the opportunity for life forever with Jesus. Sunday morning was as Messy as Saturday with a giant painting of a sunrise and a collage cross being made by every person at church. We celebrated through a song in Sign Language the message of John 3:16. A great time was had by all church members and messy church families!

Rebekah Mills Strawson

Mondays Toddlers 1-2:30 pm in The Hub.

Tuesdays Knit and Natter 10-11:30 am in The Hub.

Bible Studies alternate Thursdays, 4th May and 18th May 1:30 pm - Fruitfulness on the Frontline.

Chris Mills

Beacon Hill

Our monthly coffee morning will be held on Thursday 25th May, 10 am-11:15 am, with stalls selling cakes, handmade cards, books and Fairtrade items.

Lilian Wood

Ramsden Street

Our next church lunch will be on Wednesday May 3rd at 12 noon.

FACTORS meet again on Friday May 5th from 6pm to 7:30pm when we will have a Christian Aid theme.

We are holding a 'Bargain Sale' on Friday May 12th from 4pm to 6pm when there will be books, jigsaws, DVDs, toys, bric-a-brac etc on sale.

The prayer shawl group meets at 1pm on Wednesday May 17th.

We have decided to take part in 'Thy Kingdom come' wave of prayer and will hold an hour of prayer on Tuesday June 6th from 3pm to 4pm.

Anne Stevenson

Dalton

Approximately 50 people attended our Beetle Drive which began with very tasty sandwiches and scones. Midway through the evening we had a quiz and Ron tested our grey matter with questions from Who Wants to be a Millionaire (£1,000 section) - he didn't dish out any millions though!! The evening raised £225 for our refurbishment fund.

Future events:

Saturday 6th May Church Coffee Morning at Market Street 9:45 to 11:30 am

Tuesday 9th May Midweek Communion service at Market Street at 2:30 pm.

R Willock

Christian Women's Fellowship. The next meeting of the CWF will be on Wednesday 17th May at 7:30 pm when the speaker will be Miss Gail Burns from Kirkby Church of Christ. All are welcome.

D Zazi

Preliminary notice - An Evening with Peter Dyer, Saturday June 10th 7pm at Wellington Street.

More details in the June Newslink.

Vickerstown

It was a delight to welcome little Jackson Oldfield into God's family by Baptism on March 19th, with the church packed as his family and friends joined us to witness his christening - the first at Vickerstown for some time.

On Palm Sunday, 9th April, we joined with our friends from St. Mary's (Walney's Anglican church) for a walk of witness, singing hymns and carrying palm crosses, from the library on Central Drive to St. Mary's where we shared their service which was also a Church Parade. It was a lovely morning which always makes the outdoor element more pleasant!

There will be a coffee morning at Vickerstown on Saturday May 13th from 10 am until about 11:30am with the usual stalls - homemade cakes, Fairtrade and books/bric-à-brac/bring and buy. All welcome. For those who like to plan well in advance, June's coffee morning will be on Saturday 10th and we will then have our annual afternoon tea in July, on Saturday 22nd.

Karen Edmondson

Millom

Another month has passed by already. The Ecumenical Lent Course has been very interesting but an average attendance of 12 was disappointing considering five churches were taking part. Maybe the day or timing needs reviewing for 2018? The seven Lent Lunches at a charge of only £3 have raised £500 for the Middle East charity "Embrace". Again numbers have been lower than previous years but with several donations the amount is similar so we are grateful to all the helpers and "customers" who have attended.

Looking ahead to Friday June 23rd we will be holding our annual Strawberry Tea from 3:00pm to 5:00pm in aid of "Action for Children".

Deacon Debbie is off to Japan shortly to visit her son. We hope she has a safe journey and takes plenty of photographs to show us on her return.

Now that the clocks have altered we look forward to summer already the grass at church has been cut so it is a sign that the weather is improving and although the daffodils have died the rose bushes are covered with leaves and the hydrangea is sprouting as well so we will have plenty of colour in the weeks ahead. A little oasis in a rather drab street!

The Friday coffee mornings and Thursday Craft Group are well attended but we would welcome more girls on Wednesday evenings to the Girls' Brigade as numbers are rather low at the moment.

We join with the Salvation Army on Sunday evenings and we are pleased to see two of them at Queen Street in the mornings on a very regular basis.

We are grateful to our regular pianists Ann and Catherine (and also Gladys who steps in when they are not available). Music is a very important part of our worship each week as we praise God for all His goodness towards us.

We trust you have all had a peaceful and blessed Easter when we rejoice in the resurrection of Jesus and His promise of Eternal Life and we look ahead to Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples.

Margaret Riley

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	6 pm every week
Trinity Church Centre	6:30 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.urc.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



Broughton - Tuesdays:	at the Square Café from 10:30 to 12 noon
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