



The Way

The FREE newspaper of the Church in Cumbria – Summer 2019

Broadcaster's long road to ordination

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Angels fly in to help festival-goers

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Matt Martinson: 'I made some enemies inside, simply for being a Christian but, you know what, I really thank God for my time in prison!'

DAVE ROBERTS

ARMED ROBBER TURNED VICAR

■ Matt's new role after serving time

"PRISON wasn't easy, especially being in there as a new Christian. There were people in there who wanted to test me all the time. Was I this angry guy who would always fight back?"

"They constantly wanted to trip me up, to prove that I was bluffing and that I'd not really turned to God. If they pushed my buttons, they wanted to see if I would just simply revert to the old me."

By Dave Roberts

"I made some enemies inside, simply for being a Christian but, you know what, I really thank God for my time in prison!"

The Rev Matt Martinson talks about his amazing personal journey of faith as he sits in one of four churches in Carlisle for which he has just been appointed the Priest in Charge.

The 44-year-old begins a new ministry in the city this

summer, having previously served as vicar in Hull.

But things could have been so different; his is a life transformed by faith.

Matt grew up in a troubled family and began to truant from school at the age of 12. He turned to drink and drugs as his life spiralled into one of crime; petty offences escalated to drug dealing, burglary and ultimately armed robbery.

In 1995 he was jailed for 11 years, having committed an armed raid on a post office in

York. After serving nearly four years - during which time he drew alongside a prison chaplain and came to faith - he was released and was eventually ordained.

Matt explains: "I remember being in prison and hearing God say to me, 'One day you will be a vicar'. I burst out laughing saying, 'Didn't you just hear what the judge has sentenced me to?'"

"But it was amazing to grow as a disciple while in prison. I left there knowing what it was

to be a Christian and to follow God. The day before I was freed I sent myself a card saying, 'Don't forget Jesus because he is the one who has got you through all of this'."

Now he, his wife Haley and son Seth have been called to Cumbria where he will serve as Priest in Charge of Carlisle Holy Trinity and St Barnabas Team Ministry and Priest in Charge of St Luke's Morton.

■ Turn to page six to read Matt's full story

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The Way is the newspaper of the Church in Cumbria. It is produced in partnership between the Church of England Diocese of Carlisle, the Methodist District of Cumbria, the United Reformed Church in Cumbria and Churches Together in Cumbria. Through Churches Together in Cumbria, we ensure coverage of and distribution to the Roman Catholic, Salvation Army, Quakers and independent churches. The editorial team is made up of representatives from across the denominations.

The purpose of *The Way* is to reflect the Church in Cumbria to itself and to our communities more widely.

We do not seek to promote any particular theological viewpoint, but rather aim to stimulate debate by featuring writers from a variety of church traditions and from society more widely.

While we are happy to consider unsolicited submissions, we operate largely on a system of commissions and do not guarantee to publish any materials received.

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The Way
Newspaper of
the Church
in Cumbria

Seeking God's lead for refreshed vision



By Dave Roberts

CHRISTIANS are being encouraged to continue in 100 Days of Prayer as we seek God's lead for a refreshed vision to grow his kingdom in Cumbria.

Over the last five years, the God for All strategy has seen a concerted push towards evangelism and mission, with dozens of Fresh Expressions of churches created and the formation of more than 30 mission communities.

The vision continues to be rolled out ecumenically between the four partner denominations – the Methodist Church, United Reformed Church, Diocese of Carlisle and the Salvation Army – alongside companion churches.

The current strategy runs to the end of 2020 so work is now underway to begin looking beyond that date. An important first step has seen the Bishop of Penrith, the Rt Rev Dr Emma Ineson, call for Christians across Cumbria to come together in prayer for 100 days.

Bishop Emma said: "As some-



Bishop Emma: 'Open our hearts and our ears'

JENNY WOOLGAR PHOTOGRAPHY

one who was drawn to ministry in Cumbria by the God for All vision, I firmly believe it provides a sound bedrock on which to build and refresh. But it is vital that we open our hearts and our ears to God's calling about what should be the next steps. So we're turning to him in prayer to ask for his guidance."

The 100 days of prayer began on Pentecost Sunday and will finish on September 17. It will be followed by a further 100 days of listening, running up to Christmas Day.

Suggested daily prayers are available for download on the God for All website's associated

100 Days of Prayer page.

The call to prayer is being welcomed by all four denominational leaders. The Rev Richard Teal, outgoing Chair of the Cumbria Methodist District, said: "We have journeyed a long way together and now we need to saturate the future in prayer and listening so that we hear what God is saying to us."

The Salvation Army's Divisional Commander, Major Roger Batt, said: "Someone once said, 'Seven days without prayer makes one weak'. For me, 100 days of prayer invites us as a people, as a church together, to be of immense power."

EVENTS AT CARLISLE CATHEDRAL

JULY

Thu 18 to Sun 21 - 5.45pm (Thu and Fri), 3pm (Sat and Sun), Choral Evensong.

Guest choir, Lynwood Singers

Sat 20 - 10am to 4pm, Bell Tower Open Day. Book on the day from 10am (£2.50 adults, children free)

Tue 23 to Thu 25 - 5.45pm, Choral Evensong. Guest choir, Lay Clerks and Scholars from Isle of Man Cathedral

Sat 27 and Sun 28 - 3pm, Choral Evensong. Guest choir, Melbourne Parish Choir (Derbyshire, not Australia)

Sun 28 - 6.30pm, Kammerphilharmonie Koln Concert by the Cologne Philharmonia. Tickets £16 (concessions available) from Carlisle Tourist Information Centre, Old Town Hall

Tue 30 - 12.45pm, Alexander Ffinch; a free, lunchtime organ recital. Alexander was due to play at Notre Dame this summer but due to the fire this is no longer possible. We have offered him an extra slot on his summer tour to launch his latest album.

AUGUST

Fri 2 - 5.45pm, Choral Evensong, Morland Choristers

Sat 3 - 3pm, Choral Evensong, Morland Choristers

Mon 5 to Sun 11 - 5.45pm weekdays and 3pm Sat and Sun, Choral Evensong.

Guest choir, University of Bristol Church Choir

Sat 17 to Mon 26 - Exhibition by Cumbrian artist Christine Hurford, south aisle

Sat 17 and Sun 18 - 3pm, Choral Evensong. Guest choir, the Heritage Singers from Leeds

Sun 25 to Sat 31 - 3pm Sat and Sun, and 5.45pm weekdays, Choral Evensong. Guest choir, Choir of St Mary's Maldon (Essex)

OCTOBER

Sat 5 - 5pm, Royal School of Church Music Festival

Sat 26 - 7pm, Salvation Army International Staff Band Concert (tickets TBC from Salvation Army)

PRAYER WALL

Here are some of the prayers received so far as we seek God's guidance about a refreshed vision. You can send in your own reflections via prayer@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

Dear Lord, Thank you for reminding us of the importance of praying for our local schools. We pray for the six Year 6 children who took part in pray for the six Year 6 children who took part in our Mothers' Union meeting at Westnewton on our Mothers' Union meeting at Westnewton on Thursday. May they read the Scripture Union tracts they were given 'Jesus = A friend for ever' and discover lasting friendship with you Lord Jesus.

That people in Cumbria may find in Christ the way, the truth and the life.

Can we pray for those who are 'hidden' in our county: the isolated, the lonely, the homeless, those trapped in slavery, and pray that we open our eyes and hearts to see them.

Creator God,
We give you thanks for all your blessings,
that you are truly for all,
and that all is for you.
Lord Jesus,
We give you thanks that you call us to be your disciples
and to live as witnesses of your good news.
Holy Spirit,
We pray that you will be with us in these days of prayer,
to guide and lead us in all your ways. Amen

Help us be aware of your presence with us each day. Show us how to love and care for the vulnerable in our society. Show us how to share Jesus with others.

May we recognise your loving presence among us.

We pray that Christians in Cumbria may work together for the Kingdom.

We pray that we might put prayer first in all our lives and know the value of silence.
That we might help to heal the divisions in our communities.
That we might live in confidence and hope as Christ's disciples.

Generous God, touch us again with the fire of your spirit and renew in us all the grace and love you offer to us. May that deep holiness of heart shine from us in the way we live and act as your community in Cumbria.

That everyone may have the experience of the love and presence of God and know it and value it for what it is. That we may find spiritual inspiration in our special landscape.

God of new life, move through the locked doors of our hearts.
Open us to your love that is moving in your world.
Teach us as your disciples.
Make a new church of us.
May we be a sent people of blessing, and a gathered people of your peace.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus sent by love,
As a sacrifice of love, to be a gift of love.
Amen

BBC man's road to ordination

■ As a self-supporting minister, Richard will continue to work for Radio Cumbria

By Dave Roberts

BBC Radio Cumbria presenter Richard Corrie will never forget the moment he discovered he had been accepted for ordination – he nearly dropped his mobile 'phone in a deep fat fryer!

The 45-year-old was working a Friday afternoon shift at the fish and chip shop he owns in Wigton when the call came through, confirming his success.

Richard laughed: "In all the excitement the 'phone nearly ended up in the chip fryer but to be honest I wouldn't have cared."

"I knew so many people had been praying for me, both before and after the selection process but I still couldn't call it. When I was told I'd got through I was totally wowed and then I got on the 'phone to tell my mam!"

The well-known broadcaster, who presents the station's early morning slots and the Sunday morning breakfast programme, is one of seven people from across the Diocese of Carlisle selected for ordination this year.

Richard was born and brought up in Carlisle, studying media at the city's Institute of Art before first presenting on CFM. He joined BBC Radio Cumbria in 2008 having already freelanced there.

As a self-supporting minister he will continue to work for the BBC, both during his training and following ordination as an Assistant Minister in three years' time.

"As a small boy I asked my mum to take me to Sunday School at St Barnabas in Carlisle," Richard explained. "I later became a server and assistant organist before moving to Currock Methodist because I wanted to be an organist."

"After that I was at St Herbert's Currock for 30 years before moving to St Michael's and St Mark's Stanwix to experience ministry in a new setting as part of the discernment process."

His path towards ordination has not been easy. Richard was unsuccessful at two selection conferences, the first of which was in 1998. Despite that, he felt called to train as an Anglican Reader and was licensed in 2004.

Richard said: "In 2016 I went to see Bishop James to say I still felt I was being called to ordination. Since then we've taken it slowly, we've discerned things properly and I'm now going forward as a self-supporting Assistant Minister which means I can continue to broadcast but as an ordained person."

"It's a totally different approach but the right one for me; previously it was about going away to train at college for three years and then

PRAY FOR...

PLEASE hold all those recently selected for ordination in your prayers. The following people will all be trained through Cumbria Christian Learning over the next three years:

- Andrew Burrell
- Richard Corrie
- Lucy Foster
- Deborah Hoddinott
- Duncan Jackson
- Sarah Jones

Belinda Stanley will train at theological college in Birmingham.

And please pray for the following people who will train as Readers through Cumbria Christian Learning:

- Liz Borlase
- Nick Gray

coming back to help run a parish. But now I'll train here in the county. I'm passionate that other Cumbrians who feel called to ordination are able to move forward in this way.

"For me ministry is all about communication. That's what I do through my job in the media and through my job on a Sunday morning. For some people who can't get to church, I may already feel like their 'radio vicar', so I truly believe my ministry and my broadcasting will go hand in hand."

The Rev Canon Peter Clement, Diocesan Director of Ordinands, has supported Richard throughout that discernment process.

Peter said: "I am absolutely thrilled Richard has successfully completed the selection process. At times this has been a challenging journey for him. He has experienced knock-backs but his faith has always remained steadfast and I know he understands that it has been God's timing to get him to where he is now."

"I'm thoroughly looking forward to supporting Richard and all of our other wonderful ordinands as they seek to live out God's purpose for their lives through new ministry."

Richard says that support has been echoed by all his colleagues at BBC Radio Cumbria.

Graham Moss, assistant editor at the station, said: "Richard and I have worked together for over 20 years, and for as long as I've known him he's been talking about pursuing this calling. I've shared the disappointments when things haven't progressed, so I'm delighted he's finally been selected."

"We both know that the hard work starts here and that Richard has to combine this with his day job of producing and presenting radio programmes, but everyone at BBC Radio Cumbria is really pleased for him."



'Steadfast': Richard Corrie, left, with the Rev Canon Peter Clement

DAVE ROBERTS

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By The Way

First woman 'an oddity'

AS the first woman incumbent in Manchester Diocese I was, at first, always going to be something of an oddity. Being placed in a deanery in Oldham surrounded by men clerics, some of whom probably disapproved, was a challenge. But then God calls all manner of people to minister in his church. Our church grew so we (and the Holy Spirit no doubt) must have been doing something right.

**Carole Marsden, Parish News,
Parish of Kirkby Stephen with Mallerstang,
Crosby Garrett and Soulby**

I RECENTLY attended a Bishops' Advisory Panel – the final step in a process to discern and test vocation for ordination. You may be pleased to know I was recommended to go forward for ordination and Bishop James has been gracious to confirm this will happen.

**Duncan Jackson, Parish Magazine,
Benefice of Egremont with Bigrigg and Haile**

I AM off on an early summer holiday to Italy. Amazing to think that nearly 2,000 years ago those we would consider Italian today were responsible for building that iconic part of our national heritage lying close to Newton Arlosh and Kirkbride – Hadrian's Wall.

**Fraser Clark, Parish Magazine,
St Bride's Parish Church Kirkbride
and St John's Newton Arlosh**

THIS year, we celebrate the 150th anniversary of St John's, Cotehill. The land for the church and churchyard was donated by yeoman farmer Charles Peascod. The cornerstone was laid in 1869 and the sandstone used in the construction came from a local quarry.

**Magazine of All Saints' Scotby and St John's
Cotehill with Cumwhinton**

THE Trinity of the Father, Son and Spirit shows how things can be both clearly distinct yet deeply connected: three distinct 'persons', who are nevertheless in perfect communion with each other.

**Michael Woodcock, Two Valleys Parish News,
Cartmell Fell, Crosthwaite, Crook, Helsington,
Winstler, Witherslack and Underbarrow**

A ZULU Prayer: May the rains fall on our land and the cows grow fat; may the children take the wisdom of the ancestors and build upon all that is good; may time stand still as we gaze upon the beauty around us; and may the love in our hearts envelop all those we touch.

The Observer, Saint John the Baptist Upperby

THEY used to say we can learn from studying history but sometimes that is hard to believe. Looking through newspaper cuttings of 20 or so years ago it is plain that locals were extremely concerned then – and I have no doubt well before this – about coastal erosion and the threat to our main road.

**Allonby Beachcomber
Monthly Village Newsletter**

IT is a pleasure and a privilege to be writing to you as your new diocesan president; thank you for entrusting me with the role. I know you will join me as I thank Jane and the other retiring trustees for their leadership and commitment over the last three years.

**Janice Eadington,
Mothers' Union Spring Edition Newsletter**

THROUGH Jesus, there's a way back. It's free. It's full of love, it's full of forgiveness, it's full of hope – not condemnation but a new start. For those who say, 'I don't belong any more. I'm not an insider', welcome back, you belong. For those who say, 'I'm too ashamed to come back', you're wanted and loved.

Andy Murphie, Crosthwaite Parish Keswick

MANY people pray even if they don't call themselves Christian. I find this interesting in a time when 'religion' is a negative word to many and the word 'spiritual' is not broadly understood. Yet people still have regard for the soul.

Ruth Crossley, New Life, In the Parish of Dalton-in-Furness, Newton and Ireth with Askam

Grandson Ben inspires dementia anthology

■ Family pay colourful tribute to a young man

By Dave Roberts

WHEN you first walk into Hilary and Eric Binks's flat you can't help but notice the vibrant colours.

Bright primaries abound: from the knitted blanket which lies across a sofa to the beautiful scarf Hilary is wearing, a garment designed and made by a friend. It's clear, this couple love colour.

But, five years ago, all colour drained from their lives after their 27-year-old grandson, Ben Osborne, took his own life.

Hilary, 75, explains: "There were absolutely no signs of what was to come. Ben was a lovely young man and never raised any issues. He seemed so happy and settled. It was such a terrible shock."

We've met on the day that Ben – an assistant manager at Penrith and Appleby leisure centres – would have celebrated his 32nd birthday. Now, five years after his death, his grandmother has used Ben's memory as inspiration for an anthology she has had published.

A Rainbow Anthology, Living Well in Colour is a collection of prose and verse inspired by people living with dementia.

Hilary volunteers for the Penrith branch of the Alzheimer's Society, helps lead 'Singing for the Brain' sessions and is a dementia-friendly church enabler at St Andrew's where she and Eric worship.

"Although the colour went from our lives almost completely at the time of Ben's death, this *Rainbow Anthology* has helped to reinstate it in a way," Hilary adds. "He is there in the dedication and he will be forever in our lives."



Hilary Binks: 'It was such a terrible shock'

DAVE ROBERTS



Happier times: Eric and Hilary with Ben and Rebecca

The book features work by Brenda Rack, one of the Binks's neighbours in their retirement complex in Penrith, with whom Hilary set up a writing group. Brenda was diagnosed with dementia in 2015 and died earlier this year. The book is also dedicated to Brenda and to Hilary's mother, who also had dementia.

Part two of the anthology is based around rainbow colours and features pieces written by Hilary, drawing on thoughts and recollections of people who live with de-

mentia and attend the Penrith memory café.

The book is a family project with Eric drawing the flower illustrations, Ben's sister Rebecca editing and Ben's mum, Kate, advising on marketing.

Hilary adds: "He has been our motivation for doing something with our lives and with this book. It's only a small anthology but it packs some really big messages: you're never too old to find something new, recognise a talent and keep the colour in your life. Most important of all, it shows you can live well with dementia."

Central to the anthology, too, is Hilary's strong faith. The couple were members of St George's, Kendal, for nearly 40 years before moving to Penrith following Ben's death, to help support their family.

The former health visitor, nurse manager and counsellor says: "Throughout the book my Christianity is there for everyone to see.

"After Ben's death we were very thankful for the fact we were grounded in a Christian community. There were a number of Christians around us who were sensitive to our needs at our previous church, St George's in Kendal, but when we moved to Penrith and St Andrew's people very quickly welcomed us and cared for us."

Printing costs have been jointly met by the Dementia Action Alliance and Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors, a dementia-friendly business and member of the alliance. Copies are being sold around the town including in St Andrew's Church café.

The book can also be ordered at rainbowanthology@btinternet.com or via Facebook. Alternatively, write to Hilary Binks, c/o Parish Office, Penrith Parish Centre, St Andrew's Place, Penrith CA11 7XX. Cheques made payable to Rainbow Anthology. The cost is £5 plus £1 postage.

Poet branches out with new woodland collection



'Intriguing': Martyn Halsall

PICTURE COURTESY
NEWSQUEST CUMBRIA

POEMS celebrating Cumbrian kindness, a cherry tree's role in a requiem and a Wasdale church memorial are each *About Woodland* in a new pamphlet by Cumbrian writer Martyn Halsall.

"While each poem explores a particular species, or its setting, each also wanders off in hopefully intriguing and creative directions," said Martyn, a former *Guardian* correspondent who now writes for the *Church Times*.

Martyn said ideas for the 16-poem collection emerged from his cottage garden at Santon

Bridge in west Cumbria.

"Poems developed as I realised how fortunate we were to have so many different kinds of trees, not only in the garden but in adjacent woodland," he said.

"Individually each tree conjured gratitude and association. *Elm*, for example, honours the gift of a wooden bowl, turned by a farmer friend, and given to us in memory of our former collie.

"The poems celebrate God's creation at a time of threat to our loaned world, and will help both the Christian, and wider, commu-

nities to value the planting and preservation of our woodlands."

About Woodland is Martyn's fifth poetry publication. Others include *Sanctuary* (Canterbury Press) *Coronach* (Wayleave Press) and *Borrowed Ground* (Cylch Cerrig Press).

Last year, he was awarded first prize at Carlisle's Borderlines Book Festival poetry competition.

For information on how to purchase *About Woodland* (£5) or Martyn's other publications, contact him on 01946 726 507 or via martynhalsall22@gmail.com

■ Beautiful local churchyard joins the Quiet Garden Movement

Find peace, serenity and God in nature...

By Dave Roberts

THE title of 'Quiet Garden' may be something of a misnomer for Ulverston Parish Churchyard.

As Jane Parker and I chat, sitting on a bench to the rear of the church, our conversation is set against a cacophony of caws from rooks and the bright chirpings of song birds. It's a beautiful noise!

The grounds around the Grade II* church are equally lovely; so much so that they have just been inducted into the Quiet Garden Movement's UK list of recommended spaces.

The idea came from Jane, who 18 months ago joined the committed team of gardeners who tend the churchyard.

She explained: "I've always been something of a contemplative and I've tried to get involved in various things in church but nothing seemed to be quite right."

"Then I decided to join the gardening team. The first time I came along everyone was given jobs to do, we worked for two hours and then had a cup of tea. It was a wonderful time of peace and order and people working at their tasks."

"I felt I could pray while I was working. I could feel God's presence and I began, over time, to realise this is a quiet garden and one that people need to know about and experience."

The Quiet Garden Movement was the vision of Anglican priest Philip Roderick. The charity's



Tranquil: Ulverston Parish Churchyard is looked after by a team of gardeners including, inset, Jane Parker

PICTURES: DAVE ROBERTS

first garden opened in Buckinghamshire in 1992.

The movement nurtures access to outdoor space for prayer and reflection in a variety of settings, such as private homes, churches, retreat centres, schools and hospitals. There are now more than 300 Quiet Gardens worldwide.

For Ulverston Parish Church it represents an opportunity for people who may not come to church, to connect with God through nature.

Jane added: "I find God in nature very easily. This is about providing other people with that opportunity too. I know there

have been people who have come to sit in the garden while eating their lunch and just to take time out. That is wonderful!"

"People lead such busy lives these days. Many people simply don't know how to be still with God but through nature we can."

The gardening team – led by Elizabeth Thompson – keeps beautifully tended borders and lawns to the front of the church. To the rear the churchyard is purposefully less sculpted.

Wooden benches have been donated or refurbished by congregation members. Two seats – donated

in someone's memory – are inscribed with Bible passages rather than 'In memory of' plaques.

Specially-designed cards – including artwork by Catherine Saunders – are attached to the benches.

The group plans to produce a special brochure advertising their Quiet Movement Garden.

Jane added: "Ultimately this about giving people the confidence to know that God is with them. It's an opportunity for them to sit, turn off their mobile phone and just be with him."

■ For more on the Quiet Garden Movement, visit www.quietgarden.org.

Young take a message to Bosnia



'Adventure': Some of the YWAM group with local people in Sarajevo

MEMBERS of Windermere Network Youth Church and young people from Brough have completed 10 days of Christian mission in Bosnia.

Seven young people, three adults and a toddler spent two weeks of the Easter holidays on the trip, linking up with Youth With A Mission (YWAM), an international Christian mission organisation.

They took part in YWAM's 'Missions Adventure' programme which included four days of training followed by 10 action-packed days in Sarajevo, Bosnia, working with a church in the city's Dobrinja area.

The trip was organised by Libby Cuthbertson, a youth worker in Grange-over-Sands and Chris Mason, of Network Youth Church.

Chris said: "A highlight of the trip was being able to bring joy to over 100 school children as we gave them sculptured balloons made into flowers, swords, dogs and other creations."

"We also offered face-painting and played football and basketball with local people in the public parks."

There are hopes of a summer 2020 mission trip which will be open to anyone aged over 13.

Green fingers are route to good mental health

THE Bishop of Carlisle – the Church of England's lead bishop on healthcare issues – has backed experts' calls for churches to promote gardening for mental wellbeing.

The Rt Rev James Newcome was one of the speakers at a special conference at Lambeth Palace at which a fresh call was made for churches to use their green space to offer 'therapeutic gardening'.

Green Health Live 2 brought together chaplains, public health experts and healthcare professionals, to showcase innovative work being done by parishes to provide therapeutic gardening spaces – and encouraged more churches to work with local mental health charities and medical professionals to do the same.



Therapy: Bishop James at work with secateurs

MARCIN MAZUR/
LAMBETH PALACE

Bishop James said: "Churches are places where people can find healing and community, so it is no surprise – but it is absolutely wonderful – that growing numbers of parishes are providing

spaces for therapeutic gardens.

"We know that gardening is a powerful form of therapy, and when done with others it tackles loneliness and social isolation. It's my hope that churches will embrace this opportunity to make a valuable and vital contribution to supporting mental health in our communities."

Last year a survey of clergy showed that mental health issues were at the top of the list of problems they faced within their parishes.

Research shows gardening can help relieve the effects of depression, loneliness and a range of mental health issues, but many people, particularly in towns and cities, do not have gardens.

Churches often have space where

a garden can be created to offer basic gardening experience, access to nature and companionship.

The conference was organised by the Church of England's Environmental Working Group and also included input from former politician and now prison chaplain the Rev Jonathan Aitken.

He said: "Therapeutic gardening has a valuable role to play in the rehabilitation of offenders and as a calming and caring influence on prison communities. I know this from personal experience."

"During my prison sentence 20 years ago I did regular work in the prison flowerbeds and in its market gardens. We prisoners were pleased to have something useful to do which beautified and benefitted our surroundings."



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By The Way

Flowers mean so much

I WOULD like to thank all the people who so generously help with the ministry of flowers during the year. Putting a couple of vases of flowers in church not only helps decorate our church but also means a great deal to the recipients of the flowers to know that they have been remembered... The flowers are given to people for encouragement, or when they have been ill, or maybe they are celebrating some notable event in their lives.

Pauline Beeby, The Grapevine, Newsletter of the Methodist Churches of Coniston, Swarthmoor and Ulverston

IT is difficult to believe four years have passed since my ordination as deacon and the beginning of my ministry amongst you and alongside you. It has, as I hope and pray you all know, been such an immense privilege and joy to have been called to follow Christ here.

Andrew Norman, Parish Church of St Paul Grange-over-Sands

THE beauty of creation is very noticeable here; the contrast to my previous home in Birmingham has been something I have pointed out at every opportunity. I find myself very comfortable here because of the wide open spaces, the natural beauty that surrounds, the opportunities to explore. I find myself inspired by God's creation.

Andrew Sterling, Newsletter, Kirkby Stephen, Appleby and Tebay Methodist Circuit

IN 1909, Longsleddale was a parish of just over 100 people living in 25 households. Almost all adults were involved in farm work and had been born in Westmorland or the neighbouring counties. The backgrounds of the vicar and his wife were different. John Henry Grice McCall was a Scot from a Glasgow merchant family; his wife Emily Augusta was born in Madras, India, the daughter of Major General JAG Munsey.

Tony Cousins, Skelsmergh, Selside and Longsleddale Church and Community News

AT each of our monthly healing services we give space for people to share what God has been revealing to them, or what he has been doing in their lives. These stories are always much more interesting than my sermon which would have preceded them. It is great to hear real stories of God at work in people's lives. I'd like to ask you to consider your gospel story. It matters! It really does!

Rob Jackson, Parish of Whitehaven

WHO is where in Christ Church churchyard? This arises from a query I had lately. The churchyard was where all Penrithians were buried (not just C of E) between 1850 and 1872, by which time it was full. Only the Quakers and the Congregationalists had their own burial grounds.

Jeremy Godwin, Penrith Beacon, Magazine for St Andrew's Penrith, Christ Church Penrith, St John's Newton Reigny and St John's Plumpton Wall

THIS year we shall be looking at stewardship in Aspatria and Hayton, and although Gilcrux is not specifically addressing stewardship it is determined to find a large amount of money for the significant repairs needed for the building to be usable. For all of us, and for all churches, generosity is important.

Tim Herbert, Link, Aspatria Methodist Church, St Kentigern's Aspatria, St Mary's Gilcrux, St James' Hayton

THANKS to all who have given me feedback about ideas for our new magazine, that I began sharing with you last month. This month I have some more thoughts to share with you, and I hope your feedback will continue – including constructive criticism. I want to produce a magazine that anyone in our community might want to read, irrespective of whether they are part of a local worshipping community of Christians.

George Nasmyth, ADRU Benefice News, Aldingham, Dendron, Rampside and Urswick

'When I look back and think how I put fear into her, I'm ashamed'

■ Vicar talks about how life has changed since his armed raid on post office

By Dave Roberts

THE Rev Matt Martinson stares into space as he recalls the moment he walked into a York post office to commit an armed robbery.

"I can remember going through the door into the shop and there was a lovely lady behind the counter," he explains. "I think she understood straight away that something was going to go wrong and to see the fear in her eyes is something I shall never forget.

"When I look back and think about how I must have come across to her – to put that fear into her – I'm completely ashamed. I really, really regret that I could have been someone so horrible as to do that to someone else and it's something I have to live with every day.

"I would love with all my heart to be able to apologise to her. I pray for her every day, though I don't know where she is or even if she is still alive. I will continue to do that until the day I die. I pray for her family as well because I know what I did will have also affected them."

We are talking in the main body of Holy Trinity Church off Wigton Road in Carlisle, after what has been three hours of interviews and filming with the county's media.

Matt's is a faith story which has attracted plenty of attention since the announcement of his appointment as Priest in Charge of Carlisle Holy Trinity and St Barnabas Team Ministry and Priest in Charge of St Luke's. And that's not surprising; his is a heck of a story to tell.

Born into a troubled family in Yorkshire, his parents split when he was young and he chose to live with an abusive father, who has since died.

"I was surrounded by violence and crime because of my dad so I inevitably went down that way myself," Matt says. "I learned to answer all my problems with my fists. Things just got worse and worse.

"I was well and truly off the rails and living with my dad meant I could get my hands on drink and drugs. The crime I was involved with got worse too; shoplifting became burglary and then robbery."

In a bid to end the spiral of



Welcome: Matt meets some of his congregation



Family man: Matt with his wife Haley and son Seth

decline, Matt joined the Army and was stationed in Germany. That ended badly; he regularly went AWOL and was discharged.

Back in the UK he began to re-offend; his crimes became increasingly serious leading to the armed robbery. He was eventually arrested after being involved in a car crash in Carlisle while visiting a friend – just a few miles from where he is now ministering.

Matt adds: "At that time I blamed God for everything that had gone wrong in my life. As far as I was concerned it was his fault. I even tried to commit suicide.

"But before I was arrested I said to him, 'I don't care if I live or die now but if you get me caught



New life: Matt performing a baptism

alive, then I will follow you.' When I was alone in the police cell after my arrest I felt God's presence and I said 'Yes' to him. Immediately so much of the anger and hurt I had bottled up was taken from me; it was amazing."

In 1995 he was jailed for 11 years. After serving nearly four years – during which time he drew alongside a prison chaplain and came to faith – he was released.

Matt says: "While I was in prison God told me three things: I would marry, I would be involved in prison ministry and I would be a vicar. I felt as though this was a big joke; none of this could happen to me in a month of Sundays!"

But within weeks of release

MAIN PICTURE: DAVE ROBERTS

he'd met his wife, Haley. The couple married and have a 19-year-old son, Seth. In 2000 Matt started a three-year degree course at Bible college despite struggling with literacy. Later he and Haley set up the Beyond Bars charity to support serving and former prisoners in community training programmes and rehabilitation.

And then he was accepted for ordination. A two-year theological course followed during which time Matt woke one morning to find he had no feelings in his legs. Doctors diagnosed a prolapsed disc, trapped sciatic nerve, crumbling spine and pelvis. It means he is now a full-time wheelchair user.

"I was someone who was very fit and active so it was hard," Matt continues. "I've learned more about God and my relationship with him by being in a wheelchair. I know he is a loving God who has done some amazing things in our lives as a family."

Now the family are in north Cumbria, called to serve within the county's ecumenical God for All vision.

Matt adds: "We love what is happening in Cumbria through God for All. There is a sense of mission, community and the need to reach out to people. We give thanks that we can be a part of that."

Angels descend on festival

■ Teams of Christians will offer help and safe spaces for vulnerable people at Kendal Calling

By Dave Roberts

TEAMS of Christian 'Festival Angels' are set to mingle with the crowds at this year's huge Kendal Calling music event – in a first for Cumbria.

The four-day festival takes place towards the end of July on the Lowther Hall estate near Penrith. Last year's line-up of performers pulled in more than 25,000 people.

Now it has been confirmed that Festival Angels – Christians who provide safe spaces for vulnerable people – will form part of the on-site support. The teams, many from local church communities, will be highly visible in yellow tabards and branded T-shirts.

Festival Angels started in 2011 at Leeds Music Festival and is an offshoot of the Street Angels initiative created by Yorkshireman Paul Blakey in 2005.

Paul, who is chief executive of Christian Nightlife Initiative Network which oversees the Angels, said: "Amazingly this concept was started by an 82-year-old lady in Leeds, whose grandchildren were going to the festival. She realised that people needed support so she rounded up the local vicars, spoke to the festival organisers and it was agreed that the churches could set up a marquee to run a café in the afternoon."

"By year three the organisers were asking if the café could stay open throughout the whole festival – day and night. And they asked if 'detached teams'



Live: Crowds enjoying last year's Kendal Calling

PICTURE COURTESY
NEWSQUEST CUMBRIA

of angels could walk round the grounds making sure people were okay."

The Angels offer a caring Christian presence at festivals, drawing alongside people who may need help or reassurance. A 'Jesus Loves Festivals' design will feature on banners at Kendal Calling with copies of Mark's Gospel also available.

"It's not about proselytising," Paul explained, "but at the same time people are attracted to the banners and start to talk to us about why we're doing what we are. That gives an opportunity to explain that, as Christians, we're looking out for other people and making sure everyone is comfortable and safe."

"Whether it's helping people put up tents or carry luggage across the site, we get stuck in and people seem to really appreciate that."

Last year – as part of a trial – a safe hub was located at the festival. This year, three of the hubs – the caravans where people who may feel threatened or vulnerable can go to for help – will be located on camp sites.

Meanwhile, more than 30 vol-



'Guardian': An angel mingles with festival crowds; inset, the colourful 'Jesus' banner

unteers have signed up as Angels. They will work alongside the organisers' welfare, first aid and security teams.

Paul added: "Jesus loved a party. He turned water into wine, which suggests to me he wanted people to enjoy themselves. So we'll be there to do his stuff, what he does best, and that is to help care for the young people who are there."

■ To volunteer as a Festival Angel at future Kendal Calling events or other music festivals, visit www.festivalangels.org.uk.

VOLUNTEER HOPES TO REACH OUT



Jordan Summers: 'More secure place for everyone'

JORDAN Summers' stint as a Festival Angel may feel a little like a busman's holiday.

The 24-year-old – who lives in Penrith and helps lead worship in the town's Methodist Church – runs his own audio-visual and events company, 1Five Events and Film.

He has also signed up as a volunteer Festival Angel for Kendal Calling.

"I'd reached out to Paul Blakey to see if we could bring the Angels to Kendal Calling and that sparked conversations," Jordan explained.

"The result is that I will be one of the Festival Angels at this year's event. I've been to a number of one-day festivals and also helped stage some in my job but this will be different."

The week of Kendal Calling will be a busy one for Jordan. He will be helping to run

Penrith Methodist Church's Holiday Club on Thursday and Friday before heading over to the festival site in the afternoon on both days.

He added: "I'm conscious many churches don't have great contact with people in their late teens through to their early 20s. Kendal Calling is that demographic so it's a great place to go to."

"So much of what we do in church is about in-reach where we say to people 'Come with us, into our building and we'll introduce you to God'. Whereas this is about saying 'You're over there so we'll come to you. We're not going to interfere and, actually, we're going to make your event more comfortable, more fun and a more secure place for everyone to enjoy' but we'll be going there under a modern outworking of faith."



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By The Way

So many jam jars...

THANK you to all the St Elisabeth's jam jar recyclers for the last 10 years. You have kept me well supplied with jars for damson jam and marmalade, but I now have so many I do not think I will be able to use them all.

Perhaps you can find someone else to pass them on to or put them in your recycling box.
John Derrick, Haraby Viewpoint, The Parish Magazine of St Elisabeth's Church, Haraby

THE daffodil tea on April 24 was enjoyed by everyone. People took part in a table quiz and game before sharing an afternoon tea. It raised £154 for church funds. Thank you to all who helped and to those who came along.

Around Church, Ramsden Street URC

CONGRATULATIONS to St Cuthbert's, Lorton, on becoming a bronze level Eco Church. Thank you, Rosemary Riley, for your hard work in applying for this status. We will follow our work on this by having a special weekend in July dedicated to our environment.

Sandra Ward, The Link, The United Benefice of Lorton and Loweswater with Buttermere

ON June 30, I will have been a member of the house of clergy for 40 years. When, in May 1978, I presented myself to a selection board, I had little idea of the joys and hardships that would be my lot other than the fact that I believed God had called me into his service.

Gavin Walker, Gosforth, Nether Wasdale and Wasdale Head Parish Magazine

EACH step of spiritual growth needs to be experienced, reflected upon and embedded into our lives. Our first step is to desire spiritual maturity. We do this by committing ourselves to be more Christ like. Perhaps we could start by asking God in what areas of life he wants us to work next.

David Newlove, The Messenger, Wigton Road Methodist Church

FROM July, on the second Sunday morning each month, we will offer a different sort of church – 'café church'. There will still be singing and praying, but the environment will be quite different, and at the heart of it will be the chance to talk over things that matter in a relaxed atmosphere, over tea or coffee.

Michael Bonner, Dean Parish News

LEADING the Stricklandgate Sunday Night Winter Shelter is one of the most rewarding experiences, and I must express my gratitude to all of you for your support and encouragement. Our building is a welcoming one and has the accommodation we need to provide a good service for our guests.

Anne Pater, The Stricklandgate, Newsletter of the Stricklandgate Methodist Church Kendal

HELLO. My name is Peter Dixon and I am looking forward to taking on the role as a self-supporting curate at St Paul's, Holme Eden, and Holy Trinity, Wetheral. Before introducing myself more fully I need to point out that, as far as I am aware, I am not related to Peter Dixon, the philanthropist whose name is enshrined on the inner walls of St Paul's Church.

Peter Dixon, Focus on Eden, Holme Eden and Wetheral with Warwick

AS a group of Dementia Enablers we have felt God has been in all our deliberations and has guided us in the way he wants us to go, so it is fitting that the Barrow Tea Service will be launched the day after Pentecost. "All of us... have been baptized into the one body by the same Spirit, and we have all been given the one Spirit to drink." (1 Corinthians 12: 13)

Lilian Wood, Newlink, South West Cumbria United Area

JESUS taught that there's more to life than work and money. He said that God wants humankind to have abundant life – relaxation, enjoyment, companionship. And if you're looking for a space in which to be at peace, to reflect, to sit quietly, church is it.

St Bridget's Parish News

DOWN YOUR WAY... ON THE CAMINO



Creator God: A sea of poppies greets pilgrims on stage five of the walk from Puente de la Reina to Estella



Alto artwork: At the top of the Alto de Perdon, a steel sculpture is dedicated to all those walking The Way



Nothing wasted: An old hiking boot helps mark the way on stage six



Paradise found: One of the watering holes along the Camino at which walkers can rest and find refreshment



Best foot forward: Sinc, Carol, Fiona and Mike cross the border into Spain on stage one

Pilgrims take first steps on The Way



Ready for the off: From left, Fiona Richardson, Dave Roberts, Mike Crawley, Carol Graham and Sinc Graham prepare to leave St Jean Pied de Port

By Dave Roberts

IT WAS a chance comment made in church one Sunday morning that got things rolling.

"You know, for a long time now I've been thinking about walking the Camino," I casually mentioned to my good friend, Mike Crawley.

At this his eyes lit up. He pounced: "So have I, marra! Let's get it sorted!"

And so we did. An invitation was thrown open to others in our church family and two pilgrims quickly became five. Four came from within our embryonic mission community, Eden Wild Goose, which takes in churches around Warwick Bridge, Wetheral, Scotby, Cotehill and Cumwhinton. A fifth is a neighbour of Mike's.

Flights and hostels were booked and we were off, landing in Bilbao before transfers to the start of the Camino Francés in St Jean Pied de Port in France, the most popular of all routes.

Now, people may think of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela as a gentle walk. Let me, at this early stage, put that notion to bed. It's hard. In fact, it's very hard. And it's long: 500 miles long.

The first day sees pilgrims head over the Pyrenees into northern Spain. We were lucky; blue skies and a welcome breeze helped us on our way to the 1,500m summit. The next day people on the same stage had to be rescued as temperatures dropped to minus 4C. Be warned, the Camino can bite!

But that's partly its appeal and, anyway, a pilgrimage shouldn't be easy; it's good to be challenged both mentally and physically but to know that God is right there with you at that time.

It's a challenge that millions of pilgrims have risen to since the Early Middle Ages, walking The Way towards their final destination, the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia where the remains of Saint James are said to be buried.

Many walk the entire route in four to five weeks. For three of us, the intention is that it will take four or five years, completing 100-mile sections over consecutive years. Two members of our party plan to return in September to complete the rest of the route.

In the panel on the right are some personal reflections of our time as pilgrims on The Way...



Carol Graham, Retired Senior Manager, Cumberland Building Society

"BON Camino!" "Bien Camino!" These are greetings all along the route by the young and old, those of all shapes, sizes and fitness levels, each person there for different reasons and each with a story to tell.

I started out on this pilgrimage not knowing what to expect but the experience far exceeded anything I could have wished for.

The scenery along the way was breathtaking; at times I had to pinch myself to believe I was actually walking the Camino. The five of us supported each other: we

prayed, we laughed, we sang, we cried a little too. Now there is such a great bond between us all.

There was time to reflect. My favourite flowers are poppies and, because of the time of year, they were in abundance all along the route. As I gazed at them I felt an inner peace with God, who I felt was walking beside me with each step.

My favourite film is *Love Actually*. At the beginning and end it shows people of all nationalities and walks of life meeting family and friends at an airport arrivals lounge. Each person's face shows incredible love and kindness.

So many times on our journey I experienced the same love and kindness, offered up by my fellow pilgrims.

Dave Roberts, Diocesan Communications Manager

PRAYERS on a bridge, the journey begins. Screaming legs, steep ascents, mountain passes, verdant pastures, sun-tanning meals, Compeed plasters, burning blisters. Metronomic walking poles regulate the pace, sweets offer sugar rushes, helping hands guide others on slippery slopes.

Our guardian angel. Sylvie from La Rochelle. Daily hugs and kisses: "Vous êtes mon chemin!" Freshly squeezed orange juice, bread broken and shared atop a mountain, riverside walks, café con leche aplenty.

New pilgrims met, stories told: high-level jobs quit, lives re-imagined. Listening ears, no judgement. Rural bliss and wide-city-centre bustle. Weary legs and wide-awake eyes. Seeing crosses everywhere: inside churches, fashioned in fences, vapour-trailed in brilliant skies.

And where's God? He's in all of it: the gentle cow bells tolling and the soaring golden eagle, the bandaged Achilles tendon and the graffitied underpass, the thunder and lightning and the drying sunshine, the distant mountain range and the pilgrims' belly laughs. He's never felt so close. He is The Way.

Sinclair Graham, Retired Head of Audit (Unretired Churchwarden)

OUR Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to "love your neighbour as yourself". Approximately 2,000 years later the fab four sang that "all you need is love".

We set off with God and love in our hearts, excitement and some apprehension. We crossed paths with dozens of pilgrims from all over the world, mainly walkers, but also cyclists and some horse riders. And we encountered love and high spirits all the way; despite the physical pain some were experiencing.

It was hard but satisfying. At times we walked in silent,

reflective solitude, enjoying the landscape. At others we shared stories, laughed a lot and saw acts of kindness and perseverance.

Our own 'chief pilgrim' Mike excelled at this. On day one he shared his bag of pear-drops with a young South Korean couple who hadn't eaten all day. Day two he gave a water bottle and, on a third day, a young lady who was having difficulty walking became the recipient of Mike's walking poles.

So what did I get out of the experience? Time to think, talk, laugh, meet, greet, admire and reflect on the goodness present in our world. God saw his creation was good, so do I!

Mike Crawley, Retired police officer

I AM not the world's best person in the morning so getting up about 6am was a bit daunting. But it was surprising how the Camino's rhythm soon became the norm: up early, a long walk, up a hill, down a hill, early to bed and repeat.

There was a pleasing reassurance in the steady crunch of feet on the path, the tip tap of walking poles, the smiles, nods and cheery "buen camino!" salutations as pilgrims greeted each other.

It was a blessing to meet and talk with people from all over the world. Their names escape me now but - to recall just a few - there was California, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, France, Finland and Hawick.

My fellow Camino buddies were brilliant: we talked, laughed, sang, cried, talked some more... and did I mention laughed?

My enduring memory of this first 100 miles will be the fellowship, companionship and laughter; the joy of being in one another's company.

Five of us set off on this adventure but I believe there was an unseen sixth companion in each step taken, each tear spilled, each guffaw of laughter. Their presence could be felt.

The Camino was brilliant, superb, amazing, beautiful. Ever thought about doing it? Then give it a go!

By The Way

Welcoming volunteers

OUR fantastic 'welcomers' are well on with the annual task of welcoming thousands of tourists and other visitors to our beautiful building. From comments in the visitor book, we know how they appreciate not only the beauty, peace and history of the church but the warmth and help our volunteers provide.

**Lucy Foster, Parish Life,
Holy Trinity Parish Church Kendal**

OF the many ways Jesus can be seen, some are these: teacher, saviour, healer, priest, prophet, messiah, son, leader... The list is long and can be extended. It is also testimony to the impact his life made at the time. Much of the New Testament is devoted to exactly that question of how we should see Jesus.

Geoffrey Ravalde, St Mary's Wigton

YOU are probably reading this because someone has delivered *Contact* to your door. We need to thank the people who willingly undertake this task every month on a purely voluntary basis. We are pleased to facilitate the circulation of news about activities, not just church events, around the parishes of Lamplugh, and Ennerdale and Kinniside, but it wouldn't happen without our 'deliverers'.

**Contact, Lamplugh, Kirkland and Ennerdale
Ecumenical Parish**

THIS April marked the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, in which upwards of 800,000 people were killed in 100 days, leaving 95,000 children orphaned. I've visited this beautiful country, seen the scars and heard the memories that remain... and witnessed the steps being taken to bring about healing and reconciliation.

**Malcolm Riches, Writings on the Wall,
Newsletter from the Anglican Churches of
Lanercost with Walton, Gilsland and Nether
Denton**

THE world seems to be waking up to the problems of climate change. Will you now help protect the world that God does indeed love, and has entrusted to us to care for? Will you follow simple principles that most of us say we agree with? Live simply, love your neighbour, walk humbly, show mercy, tread lightly. Meaning is not found in possessions. As the Christian tradition would put it: be Christ-like, be a blessing to all around.

**Bill White, Together Community Newsletter,
provided by the churches of Matteredale,
Watermillock, Patterdale, Greystoke,
Penriddock and Mungrisdale**

WIND and breath are powerful symbols of the Holy Spirit. They are never seen in their effect. Jesus said: "The wind blows wherever it wishes; you hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8 GNB)

Dave Harkison, Living Stones, Whitehaven URC

LAST Christmas knitted angels were distributed around Abbeytown with a simple message of peace. The idea came from other areas where churches hung angels around their community to share the message of Christmas.

Solway Plain Team Magazine

AS I was running a few days ago, I wondered why it is so hard to develop a routine of prayer. I pray every day, but my prayer-life seems to be rather erratic. I have a routine for other things, but I can't seem to keep to a steady routine for prayer. Why is that? The conclusion I came to was that all the other things involve a physical action – including reading the Bible each morning.

Steve Carter, Raughton Head Parish Magazine

NINE of us spent a pleasant, sunny Easter Monday morning rambling over fields, through bluebell woods and along the river-side. It was such a beautiful day for enjoying the views, some quite unfamiliar to a few of us. It was also a good time to share conversation as we went along. Where to next?

Maureen Stevens, Parish News, St George Kendal

Charity reports massive increase in personal debt

By Dave Roberts

A CHRISTIAN debt relief centre in Cumbria has reported a huge increase in the amount of money now owed by people it supports.

The Eden Debt Centre was set up in 2015 in partnership with Penrith Methodist Church and the national charity Christians Against Poverty (CAP). It is run from the Wordsworth Street church.

Figures show that, by February 2018, the cumulative debt carried by all its clients was £272,000. By February 2019, that had risen by a further £340,000 to £612,000.

Last summer the average debt per client – since the centre's launch – was just under £7,000; by May 2019, that had risen to £8,220. The average debt of new clients taken on since July 2018 is £11,500.

Jon Cook, the centre's manager who also leads the King's Church Eden, said: "The end of last year through to the start of 2019 has been incredibly busy.

"During that time we knew there were clients who'd made contact with us but because of the pressure by the time we'd been able to arrange a home visit for some of them, they were no longer there.

"That could be for all manner of reasons; for instance, they could have been evicted. That is the most frustrating outcome for us.

"There's not a single cause for this mounting debt. People can suffer financially for all different types of reasons, be that a loss of job, illness or breakdown of a relationship and family life. It seems as if people have been surviving just above the financial 'tide line' and it has not taken much to change financially for them to start to struggle."

The centre is now looking to employ a second 'debt coach' as it continues to take referrals from across an area stretching from Alston to Kirkby Stephen.

Since opening, the Debt Centre has seen 82 clients for a first appointment. Of those, 19 are now officially debt-free and 28 others are actively working towards that.

Jon works two days a week, taking referrals from community groups, housing associations, social services and health organisations. After an initial home visit – at which the debt coach is accompanied by a volunteer befriender – there's a further meeting to look in detail at a client's finances before a central team of case workers at CAP's London headquarters draws up a budget and pathway to a debt-free future. Clients learn how to budget more efficiently or

'When you're struggling to get out of bed... dealing with bills is impossible'



Debt-free future: Lorraine Cooper, pictured talking with Jon Cook, says CAP's intervention has made a huge difference to her life, relieving much of her stress

LORRAINE Cooper's life fell apart after her marriage of 20 years suddenly ended. The mother-of-two fell ill, suffering anxiety, stress and depression. She was unable to continue in her job as a shop manager and her illness meant she couldn't deal with her difficult financial situation.

Over 18 months the situation grew worse. Lorraine was unable to face opening the mail for fear it was an unpaid bill or demand. Her debts rose to £12,000.

In desperation she looked for help. That came in the guise of the Eden Debt Centre and a visit to her home by Jon Cook and a befriender.

Lorraine explains: "When you're struggling to get out of bed, make a meal or have a shower, dealing with any bills is just impossible. The easy thing to do is just throw the post into a basket behind the front door and not open them.

"However, the problem does not go away; you're just pretending. But the bailiff is not pretending when he knocks on the door to take away your car. Eventually someone gave me the number for CAP and I made contact."

Jon had to use the back door on his first visit to Lorraine's house. "You simply couldn't open the front door because of all the mail that was wedged behind it that Lorraine could not face opening," he recalls. "We took all of that away to sort through it, and then we could sit down with Lorraine and work things through."

The CAP team drew up a series of options which would lead to a debt-free future. Lorraine knew her income level meant she would never be able to pay the debt back. She chose to apply for a debt relief order, which in essence wrote off the debts and will remain on her credit file.

"You would not believe how much stress that took away," she explains. "It meant I could begin to plan for the future. I now just make payments by direct debit; I don't have an overdraft. I pay for what I can afford."

Amazingly, her recovery from debt has since led to Lorraine finding a faith.

She regularly attends the church Jon leads in Penrith. Congregation members paid for a removal van and helped her move house, and she is being baptised this summer.

"I can remember Jon asking to pray with me the very first time we met," Lorraine says.

"Because I wasn't mentally very well I just said, 'Do what you need to'. I felt soothed by the prayers and gradually, over many months, I came to understand that God has been with me throughout all of this."

can explore the possibility of declaring themselves insolvent.

The service is provided within a Christian context; when Jon meets clients for the first home visit and subsequent meetings he offers the opportunity to pray together.

He added: "One of the amazing parts of this work is that it is helping build understanding with people in our wider community that churches and Christians can work to tackle this kind of social issue. We've had tremendous support from Churches Together in Penrith."

While the centre does not offer financial pay-outs to the people it helps, there are times when those

in crisis are given food parcels or sacks of coal to help heat homes.

Jon added: "In those emergency situations we will do what we can to help people and that is what being a Christian is all about.

"As a church leader I was looking for a new way in which I could live out my faith in a practical way.

"The debt centre has allowed this to happen and it's opened up my eyes and the eyes of others in our churches to the need there is in our communities for us, as Christians, to help others."

■ If you're affected by debt, contact CAP on 0800 328 0006.



Jon Cook: 'It's opened up my eyes and the eyes of others'



Learning: Sophie's mum, Caroline, doing craft with some of the girls at Molima Family Home. Caroline, mentioned, is at the back wearing a hat



Relaxing: Sophie's husband, Jamie, with some of the boys at Molima Family Home. Humphrey, mentioned, is bottom right

1,000-mile bike ride to buy desks for orphans

■ 'Remembering the poor' takes Sophie to Malawi

By Sophie Hodge,
Diocese of Carlisle's
Stewardship Enabler

"ALL they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I had been eager to do all along." Galatians 2:10

As a teenager I was fairly certain that being a Christian meant we had to remember the poor in a pretty radical way. I assumed this meant the almost inevitable career progression to overseas missionary.

However, God had other plans, and now aged 30 I have found myself called to Penrith rather than Porto-Novo. Yet I still feel challenged by what it means to remember the poor in the context of the globalised world.

In April, I returned to a small town in Malawi called Dedza. I'd first visited in 2016 but this time everything was different. The streets were familiar, the culture not quite so alien and the level of poverty not quite so shocking. But the biggest difference for me was that it was a place where I had relationships. I was returning to friends – 22 amazing young people living at the Molima Family Home.

These young people were the reason I'd first visited Dedza. Each of them had been through a lot, having been orphaned by AIDS at a young age. (Malawi has one of the world's highest HIV rates.)

Two hilarious young boys,



Friends: Sophie and Jamie with children from the home



Vast improvement: Left, Dedza pupils in an old classroom without any desks, and, right, a new classroom block recently funded by Orfund

Lawrent, 11 and Humphrey, eight, had been discovered as street children and brought to the home. Caroline, one of the oldest children, was found near the local primary school rooting through bins looking for discarded food. Each child has their own story.

Now at Molima, these children and others are part of a family. They receive love, care

and support from the Banda family, delicious meals and, crucially, access to education. The latter is particularly significant in a country where only 10 per cent of children go to school.

I have learned through these 22 children that remembering the poor works best in the context of relationship. As we played, sang, danced and did

craft together, remembering the poor came easily.

Now back in England, constantly barraged by my hectic, fast-paced 'normal' life, the challenge is to still remember these remarkable young people.

This summer I will remember the poor by embarking on a 1,000-mile sponsored cycle from Ullswater to Lake Garda in Italy – the Cumbrian Lakes to the Italian Lakes.

We are aiming to raise enough money to provide desks for the local school that the Molima children attend.

Currently, more than 100 pupils in each classroom study and write while sitting on the damp ground. The poor learning environment takes its toll, with only 25 per cent of pupils graduating from primary school to secondary school.

To sponsor me, please visit www.give.net/lakeistolakes.org.uk.

WHAT'S ON AROUND CUMBRIA

DAY OF GATHERING

Sat July 27, 10am to 4pm, Cartmel Village Hall, Cartmel, Cumbria LA11 6PS

The team from Christian Meditation in Cumbria will lead a day to come together and meditate and walk in creation. Cost is £5 although there is a suggested donation of £10. Drinks and cakes are provided but please bring your own lunch. To book contact Richard on 01946 862990 or at cmcwccm@fastmail.fm.

LIVING WITH THE MYSTICS

Tues August 6, 10am for 10.30am-3pm, Friends Meeting House, Elliot Park, Keswick

Bob Morley leads a day exploring the works of French philosopher, mystic and political activist Simone Weil. Cost is £5. Drinks are provided but bring your own lunch. To book contact Bob Morley on 016974 72644 or rgm1@live.co.uk.

QUIET DAY

Fri September 6, 10am to 4pm, Rydal Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9LX

Artist and graphic designer Depa Masih leads a quiet day on the theme 'I am the Good Shepherd' (John 10: 11-18). It is free but booking is required and donations are suggested. Bring your own packed lunch or visit Rydal's tea shop. To book contact 015394 32050 or mail@rydalhall.org.

RECORDERS AT RYDAL

Fri September 20 (4pm) to Sun 22 (3pm), Rydal Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9LX

Enjoy beautiful music and develop your skills in the company of players of a similar upper-intermediate and advanced level ability with tutor Mary Tyers. Cost is £220 per person residential and £110 non-residential. To book contact 015394 32050 or mail@rydalhall.org.

MOUNTAINS AND MYSTERY RETREAT

Tues October 8 (4pm) to Sat 12 (10am), Rydal Hall, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9LX

The Rev Robert Williamson leads the retreat which includes longer or shorter walks according to preference. There is an opportunity each day for reflection and fellowship, while music, poetry and scripture combine to illustrate the theme of 'Mountains and Mystery'. Cost is £380 per person, full board. To book contact 015394 32050 or mail@rydalhall.org.

THREADS #FXCUMBRIA

Sat November 2, 10am for 10.30am-4.30pm, Stoneybeck Inn, Bowscar, Penrith, CA11 8RP

This is the third annual Fresh Expressions day and will explore how to strengthen ties with each other, local communities and FXs, and build on co-operative learning. Tickets, including refreshments and lunch, are £25 per person for Cumbrian residents and £30pp for those outside of the county. To book visit www.trybooking.com and search for Threads #FXCUMBRIA.

LIVING WITH THE MYSTICS

Tues November 5, 10am for 10.30am-3pm, Friends Meeting House, Elliot Park, Keswick

Margaret Ives leads a day exploring the works of German Catholic priest, physician, mystic and religious poet Angelus Silesius. Cost is £5. Drinks are provided but please bring your own lunch. To book contact Bob Morley on 016974 72644 or rgm1@live.co.uk.

A FRACTURED NATION: BREXIT AND A CHRISTIAN VISION OF THE COMMON GOOD

Fri November 22, 7pm, Keswick Methodist Church, and Sat November 23, 11am, St Thomas Kendal

Dr Anna Rowlands of the University of Durham will lead these two sessions, organised by Engaging Theology in Cumbria (formerly known as Cumbria theological Society). Suggested donations of £5 to cover costs. To book, visit the website, www.cumbriachristianlearning.org.uk/cts/

By The Way

The Trinity explained

TRYING to explain the Trinity has kept many a theologian busy. One helpful picture is to imagine the sun. The sun – way out there in space, and unapproachable in its fiery majesty – is the Father. The light that flows from it, and which illuminates our lives, is the Son. The heat that flows from it, and which gives us the energy to move and grow, is the Holy Spirit.

The Link, Holy Trinity and St Barnabas with Sandsfield Fellowship

FOR most of us, there will be people for whom we regularly pray that the love of God might flood into their lives. The ten days of 'Thy Kingdom Come' are a special opportunity for that prayer. As well as praying for others to know the good news of God's love, it is also a time when we can renew and refresh our own life of prayer.

James Richards,
Parish of St Martin's Windermere

ST MARY'S tea towel offer... Designed by Bettie Gray, this cotton tea towel is now available to purchase at £5 each plus p&p. Bettie has based the design on the carving of the vine and gourd surrounding the western door, carved by Sarah Losh's gardener, Robert Donald. The tea towel is a practical memento of St Mary's and makes an attractive present.

St Mary's Church Wreay

A NEW venture, initiated by Keith Spence, has been a meeting in the church hall on the first Thursday of the month to listen to and talk about jazz. Your editor attended the first 'session' – surely the right word – and has missed most since but reports are of enthusiasm among the growing numbers.

Newsletter of Penrith and Penruddock URC

TOWARDS the end of June I will become Penrith Mission Area Leader and Penrith Mission Community Leader. At this stage it is unknown what Julie will be doing. As we seek your prayers for us and for the folks of Penrith, be assured of our prayers for you.

Gary Cregeen, Team Talk, The Magazine of the Parishes of St Aidan's and St George's with St Luke's, Barrow-in-Furness

Individuals bloom in 'renewal' movement

By Dave Roberts

THE Rev Eleanor Hancock is a naturally ebullient person; get her on to all matters faith and she's away!

But that faith-filled enthusiasm goes up a further notch when Eleanor explains more about the Cursillo movement of which she is the Spiritual Director in Cumbria.

"Over the years we have encouraged and helped 'breed', if you like, countless ordinands, priests, deacons, readers and commissioned lay ministers," she says.

"In terms of helping to build people up and make them realise that we all have a part to play in building up God's Kingdom, then I don't think there's anything like it. In simple terms, Cursillo is a renewal movement."

Cursillo was set up in Spain following the country's civil war. A group of young leaders felt called to set up a new short course in Christianity (that is what 'Cursillo' means) to help build themselves up in their faith and as Christian leaders to encourage their society to be one fully centred on Christ.

The movement, introduced into America before the UK, continues to encourage Christian growth through prayer, study and action.



Eleanor Hancock: 'I knew after that weekend I was a child of Christ'

DAVE ROBERTS

In 1994, it came to Cumbria. Eleanor took part in the county's first ever Cursillo weekend at Rydal Hall, the Diocese of Carlisle's Christian retreat and conference centre near Ambleside.

It saw people come together for three days of worship, learning and living together. Lay and ordained people led the weekend which included talks on the focal points of Christian life such as grace and forgiveness.

Those weekends continue today, once a year, beginning with Christian meditation and then leading into a short, silent retreat over the first night. The following day starts with Holy Communion and meditation, with the continued focus on the individual's personal relationship with Jesus.

"This is all about building disciples in the faith and, as a consequence, building up the local church so we can see God for All become a reality," adds Eleanor, who retired as Priest in Charge of Holy Trinity and St Barnabas with Sandsfield in 2017.

"A lot of the county's more pioneering lay ministers are Cursillistas. They have felt empowered in their ministry through what they have experienced in Cursillo."

"I can remember going on that first ever Cursillo weekend and I was really poorly with a virus. I came back a changed woman. People at work kept asking me, 'Where the heck have you been?'"

"I knew after that weekend that I was a child of Christ. I'd been renewed in faith and I'd been

touched by the Holy Spirit in a way I'd never experienced before. I'm still in contact with some amazing people I first met on that Cursillo weekend."

And that is another important part of the movement. It offers people the chance to form new support groups. It is estimated that 400 people have taken part in a Cursillo weekend.

"It has helped build up people's faith and equip them with the confidence to shine their faith as a beacon to others," says Eleanor.

"We have people who are foster carers, Foodbank volunteers and champions against domestic violence who felt able to do what they do now through their Cursillo experience. But it's not just about social action; it's about apostolic action."

'I thought my ministry would be to bake cakes'

"BEFORE I went to a Cursillo weekend the thought of becoming a Reader was hugely daunting," Allison Lee admits.

"I was not someone blessed with huge amounts of self-confidence. I thought my ministry would be to clean the church or bake some cakes but, after Cursillo, I began to understand God had different plans for me."

It is eight years since Allison attended one of the annual Cursillo weekends. Since then she has seen her ministry flourish, supported by fellow Christians and Cursillistas.

She is now an Anglican Reader at Holme Eden Church, east of Carlisle, and part of the Eden Wild Goose Mission Community.

Allison is a member of a reunion group which generally meets one evening every five or six weeks. They are not people Allison went on the weekend with but they represent people she has



Allison Lee: Now a Reader

drawn alongside through the Cursillo experience. The group is one of many which have been formed across the county over the years.

Allison continues: "It's a valued time together when we can update each other about what's gone well in the last few weeks or what difficulties we've been fac-

ing. We come together knowing we can pray having listened to each other beforehand."

"We look at three main areas: piety, study and action. People may think that sounds dry and boring but it's a time when you can refocus on the moments when God has recently drawn close to you and you may not have realised. There's chance, too, to consider different ways of studying."

These groups get together a couple of times a year for an Ul-treya (Spanish for 'onward') to support each other and join in worship.

Allison, 52, is an intelligence analyst for Cumbria Constabulary and branch leader of the Cumbrian Christian Police Association. It's a position that has also benefitted from her involvement with Cursillo.

She adds: "I'm thankful for all the support I've received through my involvement with Cursillo and also for the support I can offer to others too."

Alex Haynes

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Musicians: Members of the Carlisle Citadel Salvation Army band



Traitor: Judas Iscariot lurks in the wings, waiting to make his entrance



Audience: The Rev Isaac Lawrence, front right, helped organise the event



Actors: Jesus, in white, with some of his disciples

TEARS OF PASSION

■ Both performers and audience get emotional at staging of city's first Passion Play

By Dave Roberts

ORGANISERS behind Carlisle's first ever Passion Play say more than 1,000 people gathered to watch two outdoor performances that reduced many to tears.

The production saw 47 cast members take to the stage, supported by a technical crew of 10 and 55 singers and musicians.

The Rev Isaac Lawrence, vicar of Scotby and Cotehill with Cumwhinton, was the visionary behind the staging of the play.

He said: "It was absolutely amazing and went beyond all my hopes. Naturally I felt anxious on the day that things went well but there was a wonderful sense of the Holy Spirit moving among cast, crew and audience."

"I could not believe so many people turned up to watch. The weather was beautiful, the performances were incredibly powerful and there was a huge sense of community, mission and evangelism."

Written and directed by John Davies from Classic Theatre Cumbria, the Passion Play also featured musical support from the Carlisle Citadel Salvation Army band and their Songsters, alongside the



'Lost': James Bober, as Jesus, captivates the crowd

JENNY WOOLGAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Carlisle Taize Choir. The performance began and ended with the Resurrection, bringing the message of hope and salvation.

Isaac added: "As well as those who stopped to watch, there are also the people who were passers-by, and our prayer is that what they saw and

heard may have sown seeds and that at some point they choose to explore their faith more. We set out to put on a Passion Play through which we could reach out to the church and un-churched. We'd like to think that we achieved that."

"I saw people – both in the cast

and audience – with tears in their eyes as the performances went on. That's because of the power of the Passion Play. It's the ultimate story of God's love."

The role of Jesus was played by James Bober, who works for the Diocese of Carlisle and who previ-

ously studied for a post-graduate diploma in acting after attending drama school in Birmingham for a year.

James said: "An actor should be able to get lost in their role when they're performing. But there is a part in the play when Jesus is praying in Gethsemane, and I had the real feeling that, at that point, it was not just me reciting those lines. There was spirituality there, but I did not make that; it was gifted to me. It is a moment I shall not forget."

Both performances were dedicated to the memory of former BBC Radio Cumbria broadcaster and Anglican Reader Nigel Holmes who was to have been the play's narrator. Nigel died suddenly, just a few weeks before the Passion Play was staged.

Isaac said: "It was absolutely right that we dedicate the play to Nigel. He had brought something very special to his performance. For all of us, it felt as though we had lost a family member."

Those behind the Passion Play are exploring the idea of a smaller-scale production, based around the Nativity, to be performed on Scotby playing fields later this year. Longer-term plans could also see a play developed based around Old Testament stories.

Festival of prayer 'bigger than expected'

THE Cumbria Community of Prayer has held its first Festival of Prayer at Rydal Hall.

The festival, sponsored by Cumbria Ecumenical Spirituality Group, attracted 42 people.

They heard from Jeff Thomas on 'contemplative prayer', Stephen Wright on 'pilgrimage', Vernon and Francesca Ross on 'Northumbrian community', Christine Pickering and Lori Passmore on 'embodied spirituality', and Ruth Lee and Pauline West on 'images of prayer'. Five workshops were also available.

Diocesan spirituality adviser, the Rev Canon Cameron Butland, said: "The event has proved to be highly popular; we had more people than expected and it was good to be part of an event focused exclusively on the life of prayer."

"Whilst the timing was coincidental it was good to have this event during the God for All 100 days of prayer and hold the county in prayer."

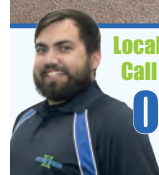
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Mike Angelo Photography

PRESS – PUBLICITY – PRESENTATIONS

Lakeland Seasons, Lakeland Life and Lakeland Calendar are three 50-minute audio-visual presentations showing the annual beauty of Cumbria.

These FREE entertaining and informative shows may be booked in advance by WI and MU. Music, poetry and narration accompany the spectacular images which have already been appreciated at various venues.

For details, phone/text 07813 085877
or visit www.edenonline.net

By The Way

Organist in tears

I HAVE been a church organist for 53 years – the last 35 in our benefice – and on Palm Sunday, at Askham, I was presented with a bottle of wine, a card and an oblong package. Fortunately, I didn't open these until I got home or I should not have been able to maintain my composure. The package contained a beautiful silver jewellery casket with an inscription on the lid recording my 35 years as organist; the card said I would receive in the post £200 in gift vouchers, which I duly have. For the first time since taking the decision to give up, I was in tears. I am quite overwhelmed, and humbled, by your generosity.

Jenny Jones, North Westmorland News

THE name TLC came not only from the initials of 'Thursday Lunch Club' but also from the expression 'tender loving care' and that is exactly the atmosphere we hope to offer at Keswick Methodist Church. We all need a bit of TLC now and then, and to now have the facilities in our newly refurbished church hall and kitchen to offer this was a no-brainer.

Sally Lunson and Helen North,
Keswick Methodist Church Newsletter

FOR me, the heart of all I love about Dalston is St Michael's Church. It stands in the centre of the village as it has stood for more than 800 years. Over the years the building has changed, both inside and outside and the style of worship has changed too. It will evolve more over coming years, but the church remains as a sign of an unchanging reality behind the people and the landscape.

Cecily Mark-Bell, Dalston Parish Paper

HAVE you visited the library at the back of St Michael's Church in Torpenhow recently? There are new books being added every month. Why don't you take out a novel for your holiday or a child's book of prayers to read with your children before going to bed? There are books for everyone, covering a wide range of subjects and age groups.

Binsey Link, Magazine of Binsey Team
Mission Community, the churches of
Allhallows, Bassenthwaite, Boltons,
Embleton, Ireby, Isel, Plumland, Setmurthy,
Torpenhow, Uldale and Wythop

OUTREACH worker update: With the Gift Day, and with our grant application to the Henry Smith Charity due to be decided in June, we will hopefully have the funding in place to advertise the post in the summer. The current work involves finalising the job description ready to advertise and the more boring but no less important task of pulling together all the various policies that make up the terms and conditions of employment. Once all that is in place we will be down to prayer that the right person for the role can be found, and everyone can help with that.

Alistair Bell,
Egremont Methodist Church Newsletter

THE aims of 'God for all' are undoubtedly excellent but there will be pitfalls along the way whatever unity is seen in the county. There will still be some possibly older people who will have doubts. Speaking as an older person myself, I am very much in favour of closer relationships with members of other denominations – after all, we are all Christians and there is far too much interfaith hostility in other parts of the world (as evidenced in news reports every day) without fellow-Christians being at loggerheads.

Reg Capstick, The Link,
Parish Magazine for Orton, Tebay and
Ravenstonedale with Newbiggin-on-Lune

I AM moving to the North Kirklees and Morley Circuit in the Yorkshire West District in August, to take up an appointment for the 2019-2020 Connexional Year. Thereafter, I shall either take up an overseas appointment or be returned to the full round of stationing from 2020 onwards.

Wendy Kilworth-Mason, In Touch,
Magazine of Seascale and Gosforth
Methodist Churches

'Visual' Bible talks the millennials' language

■ Designer Karen wanted to present Bible in an easily accessible way

By Dave Roberts

FOR an author, there's a certain satisfaction in knowing your Carlisle book launch is the second most successful for sales – beaten only by the Harry Potter novels!

And that was the case for Cumbria-born designer and illustrator Karen Sawrey and her 224-page *Infographic Bible* – a five-year 'labour of love'.

Published late last year, the beautifully produced hardback book is now on its third print run.

Its pages offer the reader an opportunity to explore the Bible in new ways, through text and graphics. It's specifically aimed at a millennial audience.

Karen, who was born in Whitehaven and worked in publishing in London before returning to Cumbria 12 years ago to freelance, explains: "This was the dream project for me. I'm passionate about engaging a visual generation with creative ways to see and digest information and I'm passionate about Jesus. The *Infographic Bible* ticked both of those boxes.

"God has used every part of my story in the production of this book. I've pulled on every relationship and contact I've built up professionally over my 25 years as a designer, all the skills I have developed in that time and then there's been a steep learning curve and additional training to help make this book happen."

An initial production team of three people grew to seven. Eventually Karen oversaw a 57-strong team including theological advisers (representing a range of voices across the church), administrators and a host of contributors, tasked with creating data which could then be analysed and wire-framed onto a page before ultimately being transformed by Karen and others into a series of beautifully designed infographics.

The data had to be created for the first time, allowing Karen to visually represent the key stages of the Gospel message as well as exploring themes such as 'Who



Creative: Karen Sawrey at work

SAMANTHA FOSTER @TRIBAL IMAGES4



Infographic Bible: The cover, left, and some inside pages

JAMES VINCENT

did Jesus say He was?' 'How did God speak?' (a stunning audio-wave infographic), 'All prophecies about Jesus and how they were fulfilled' (illustrated through a rainbow infographic which is Karen's favourite), the most influential women of the Old and New Testaments, Creation, meditation on wellbeing and prayer.

Karen explains: "At the moment we're experiencing an exploding, global visual language in which we're constantly absorbing information. That's driven by the millennial generation, social media and the internet as well as research that shows combining visuals with text improves communication and learning.

"The aim of an infographic is to visually represent information, data or knowledge in a way that is quickly and easily accessible, better digested and retained. Infographics are increasingly becoming the currency of communication for the masses.

"That is nothing new; Jesus

spoke in parables, creating images to help his audience understand and remember the essence of his message and Paul chose to write in the street language of the day. The infographic's aim is to do both: create a visual image and then support that graphic with text that can be understood by anyone who picks up the book.

"This is not a book which is meant to replace the Bible. It does not cover every book in the Bible and it does not simply illustrate the text of the Bible. What it does do, however, is to show the Bible's 'big picture' Gospel message from Genesis to Revelation, with subjects chosen to help drive that relational story forward. The main aim is to point the audience back to the Bible and to show it can be wrestled with, analysed and meditated on."

Brought up in a Christian family, Karen moved away from God in her teenage years. She consciously reignited her relationship with him when later working as a

creative designer for the Alpha course and Holy Trinity Brompton Church, overseeing many products and branding re-designs.

It is that deep Christian faith which has been at the heart of the *Infographic Bible* project which took five years from 'pitch to publication', and throughout which she has been supported by members of her congregation at Carlisle's Vineyard Church.

Karen concludes: "I believe the Bible is one of the key places we encounter God. My hope is that the *Infographic Bible* points people to God's life-giving word, no matter where they are in their journey with God, inspiring them to approach and interact with it. It is an incredible gift which God extends to every person."

■ The *Infographic Bible* has been translated into German, Dutch and Russian. It is published in the UK by HarperCollins. It is available online at www.eden.co.uk and in shops. For details, visit www.theinfographicbible.com.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Young Arthur enters Christian fold with baptism on RNLI lifeboat

By Dave Roberts

AS BAPTISMAL fonts go, a ship's upturned bell has to be one of the more unusual.

Add to that a christening on board an RNLI lifeboat, and there's a further twist.

But that is exactly how young Arthur Jackson was recently welcomed into the life of the church at the Barrow RNLI station in Rampside.

The Rev Martin Williams, a retired Methodist minister who has taken on the role of chaplain to the crew, officiated at the service.

He said: "It was fabulous to be able to baptise Arthur in the lifeboat station setting. Up until I started taking baptisms down on the lifeboat, I think every other one I had conducted in a quarter of a century of ministry was done within a church setting."

"The lifeboat station is such a focal point in the lives of the people here. The children of this area grow up understanding the importance of the service. So, without a doubt, it is the right place to have them baptised."

That is a view echoed by Arthur's dad, Ben, who has been a crew member with the Barrow RNLI team for 18 years, following in the footsteps of his grandfather. His eldest son, Harry, was also baptised on board their boat, the Grace Dixon.

Ben, 36, said: "We have such a strong family connection with the lifeboat station that we felt it was the right thing to do, and Martin was more than happy to help. For many of the people at the baptism it was something they'd never experienced before in such a setting."



Surprising setting: Above, the Rev Martin Williams with lifeboat crew and Arthur Jackson's family on board the Grace Dixon; and, right, near the Barrow RNLI station

MAIN PICTURE: RITA WILLIAMS

"Martin's chaplaincy is very important to us as a crew. We value the connection he has with us all and the support he provides."

For Martin – who is now a minister without formal appointment – the chaplaincy offers further opportunity to draw alongside people in the community. The bungalow he shares with his wife Rita, sits on the Rampside shoreline, overlooking the lifeboat station. His neighbours are some of the crew members.

"I'm now freed up from the administration and paperwork that comes with ministry to do more of the 'hands-on' things with people," Martin said. "I can

meet with folk, draw alongside them and offer the pastoral care they need. That is so much of what my chaplaincy is about."

The RNLI was formed in 1824 by Sir William Hillary; 40 years later Barrow had its first lifeboat station. The town's newest station was completed in 2001, costing £3 million, and its latest lifeboat – a Tamar class – arrived in 2008. It's estimated that more than 1,000 people have been rescued by Barrow crews over the years.

Operations manager John Falvey oversees the day-to-day running of the station and acts as 'launch authority', paging crew members to

respond to a 'shout' when contacted by the Coastguard.

Naturally, there are always risks when out on a rescue; there's an understanding that Martin's chaplaincy is always there to support those who may be putting their lives on the line.

John said: "Talking as a Christian, the chaplaincy is of paramount importance. It gives the crew a feeling of security that somebody is looking after them."

"They may not appear to be particularly religious – they may not go round talking about faith – but there's an unspoken sense among them that they know there is something there keeping them safe."



Weekend of celebration

A WONDERFUL weekend of music and worship will mark the 850th anniversary of the consecration of one of Cumbria's landmark places of worship.

Lanercost Priory, near Brampton, was consecrated in 1169. The anniversary will be celebrated with a programme of music from 10am to 5pm on Saturday, July 21, with a final concert featuring the Brampton Community Choir League of Ukulele Gentlemen at 7.30pm.

Proceeds will be split be-



Lanercost Priory:
Consecrated in 1169

tween the priory's restoration fund and Eden Valley Hospice.

Meanwhile, a special Holy Communion service led by the Bishop of Carlisle, the Rt Rev James Newcome will be held on Sunday, July 22, at 4pm.

Cumbria County Council

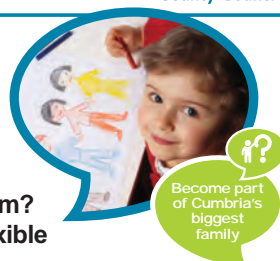


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Joyce smooths the way for mission community

Q Please tell us a little bit about yourself.

A I was born in Carlisle and was brought up as a Methodist. I trained as a teacher and my second post was at John Ruskin School in Coniston. It was such a lovely school. I lived in Ulverston which is where I met my husband and, between us, we have four children.

Though I was raised as a Christian I'd moved away from church to a degree. I had a group of friends involved in alternative church and things such as Youth With A Mission. But after my daughter was born I felt called to go back to church; I wanted her to experience the kind of Christian upbringing I'd had.

We moved to the Eden Valley and we still live in Warcop. I became chair of the local school's governing body. Through that I became more involved with the local church and decided I wanted to be confirmed. I ran the monthly Sunday Children's Club and helped develop other youth projects. I'm also Cumbria's first national leader in school governance, supporting other schools.

In January 2018, I started work as the first mission community administrator in Cumbria.

Q What is involved in your new administrator's role?

A I work in the Heart of Eden Mission Community which takes in the northern part of the Appleby Deanery and is aligned with Appleby Methodist Section.

When I saw the job advert, I realised all the roles and responsibilities highlighted were skills I already had, be it as a PCC treasurer, chair of school governors or booking secretary for the village hall.

I am contracted to work 17 and a half hours each week and am based at an office at The Hub in Appleby.

My role is to relieve the clergy of any tasks that can be done by anyone other than themselves.

Obviously, I can't prepare for or take services but I can oversee all the administration. For instance, I send out fee notes for weddings, meet with couples, take church booking and fill in all the necessary paperwork. I also oversee communication between the whole clergy team so everyone is aware of what's going on.



Joyce Keetley: 'It's important the mission community council is able to remain strategic'

DAVE ROBERTS

■ Cumbria's first mission community administrator, Joyce Keetley, is the latest person to be featured in The Way's regular Focus on Faith

Q What part of your job do you enjoy the most and why?

A I like meeting and spending time with people, so it's a real joy to meet the wedding couples and learn of their varied backgrounds.

It's also been wonderful to draw alongside many of the couples who may not be local; I help them to form a connection with the church in which they're going to get married.

Being able to introduce them to congregations is so satisfying.

It's particularly pleasing to see some of the couples become so involved in the life of the church; I recently met one couple who told me they were due to give a reading in church the following week.

Q What can prove a challenge?

A Time is always lacking. Only the other day I was thinking I needed some compliment slips but I've not got the spare hour or so to sit down and design them. I do more hours than I'm employed for but that tends to be the norm with so much of church life.

Managing everyone's expectations can also be tough and I have to demonstrate a lot of diplomacy.

Q Why is the administrator's role important when considering the formation of a mission community?

A The formation and development of a mission community is something that takes time and there's a lot of work that

goes with that. There is a mission community council which I attend and prepare the paperwork for. It's important the council is able to remain strategic, and having an administrator allows that to happen.

So council members need not be worried about setting up a website link for this or that document; I can make sure that happens.

This allows them the space they need to ensure the mission community is developing in line with the stated aims and objectives.

I enjoy working with our ecumenical colleagues, and being able to work alongside the Methodist Circuit administrator provides even more support.

Q How does your faith play out in your role as mission community administrator?

A Sometimes all the operational bits and pieces of the job mean I can forget why I'm doing what I am! But at the same time my role, in unity with faith, allows me to focus on the God for All mission. This is why we've created a mission community and, yes, we need to do it as effectively as we can. So in faith terms I'm able to think about how we're reaching out in new ways to new people as well as caring for our existing congregations.

Q What is your prayer as your role continues?

A My prayer would be that everyone, of all denominations, can continue to work together and that ecumenism remains at the heart of God for All.