

The Solway Plain United Parish

Churches working together with Ministry and Mission
Looking north from Longlands Fell across the Solway plain.

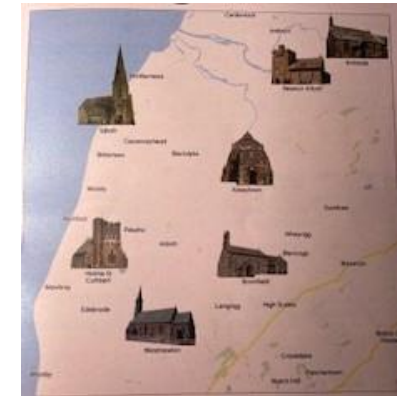


The Solway Plain United Parish

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Who we are – The churches
- 3 Where we are going
- 4 You and your role
- 5 Living here



The Solway Plain



The Solway Plain covers an area of 40 square miles in one of the loveliest and most unspoilt parts of England. The area, located between the sea and the Lake District fells, and somewhat misleadingly known as the Solway Plain, is anything but flat. Among the hills and hollows of the lovely undulating landscape are scattered hamlets and villages, each with their own character. The Solway Firth coast forms the northern border of the Team and is part of the Solway Coast National Landscape.

The A596 Carlisle-Wigton - Aspatria road roughly defines the southern border.

Archdeacon: Ven. Stewart Fyfe (West Cumberland)

Rural Dean : Revd. Ian Grainger (Seaton)

Mission Community Leader : Revd. Richard Corrie (Wigton)

The Solway Plain United Parish

1. Introduction

A message from the Bishop



Thank you for your interest in this exciting role in the Diocese of Carlisle. The Diocese of Carlisle is committed to the God for All vision. Launched in 2015, it is underpinned by a commitment across four denominations in Cumbria

(the Church of England, Methodist Church, The Salvation Army and the URC) to see God's Kingdom flourish across the county.

The vision is based on four values:

- Follow Daily (helping each other to follow Jesus more closely);
- Care Deeply (serving our communities and challenging injustice);
- Speak Boldly (sharing our faith in Jesus in everyday ways); and
- Tread Gently (seeking to sustain and renew the life of the earth).



Mission Communities are the way in which the Church in Cumbria seeks to live out the God for All vision. They are deeply collaborative groupings of churches- between denominations, between clergy and laity, and between different communities- working together to proclaim afresh the gospel to each generation, faithful to its tune but improvising together to create new melodies for our place and time.

We are looking for clergy who resonate with this, who love God and love people, who will look outwards into the community in mission, help people grow in faith and who will enable the faith and gifts of all. If this stirs something in you, we'd love to hear from you.

+Rob
Bishop of Carlisle



2. Who we are – The Area

Apart from Silloth, which is a seaside town, the other parishes are in a rural setting with scattered populations. All of these “parishes” are predominantly agricultural – mostly milk production – although now few people are employed on the family farms.

The major employers are located in the market towns of Wigton, Aspatria and Maryport, and in the larger towns of Workington and the City of Carlisle.

Silloth is also a port whose imports include cereals for the flour mill, located in the dock area. It also employs staff throughout the Team area.

Retired people moving into the area, occupy many properties made vacant by the amalgamation of smaller farms into larger mechanised units.

Seven individual parish churches now make up the Solway Plain United Parish. The Solway Plain team was established several years before it became a single PCC in 2019. Making its governance more manageable for its incumbent.

It is part of the Church of England in Cumbria. The Diocese of Carlisle has signed a 'Declaration of Intent' becoming an Ecumenical Diocese – now working with the Cumbria Methodist District, United Reformed Church in Cumbria and the Salvation Army.

As part of the 'Growing Together' of the denominations, the Solway Plain Team are working with the neighbouring churches to forward the ministry and mission of the church in this area and the formation of the Solway Mission Community.....



Holme Cultram, St Mary's



St Mungo's, Bromfield



Holme St Cuthbert's



St Bride's, Kirkbride



St John's, Newton Arlosh



Christ Church, Silloth

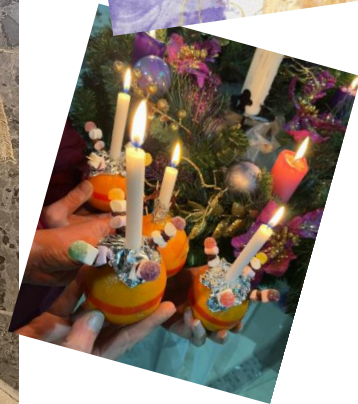


St Matthew's, Westnewton

St Mary, Holme Cultram Abbey, Abbeytown

Holme Cultram St Mary was built in the 12th century, a former Cistercian Abbey, founded by monks from Melrose Abbey. It is one of the few remaining Cistercian abbey churches still used as a place of worship. It is the resting place of the Earl of Carrick, father of Robert the Bruce.

Following a fire in 2006, major renovations were started, with worship continuing throughout The Abbey re-opening 2014. Some restoration work continues



Holme Cultram C of E Primary School



From The Head: This is a small, rural Church school where every pupil knows how valued they are and all are encouraged to reach their full potential where our Christian ethos is evident in everything we do.

The school takes an active part in village life, through our strong links with our church, and with our wider community members of the ministry team visit the school on a regular basis – conducting school assemblies, running clubs like Eco/Gardening club and at special times of the year - concerts are held in the Abbey; Posada figures (Mary and Joseph) go around the village spending a night with a family, finally reaching “Bethlehem” as part of the Christingle celebrations on Christmas Eve



Eco Church
in school
planting bulbs
and cooking



Looking after flowers
by the bus shelter



Whole school in
church for their
harvest festival



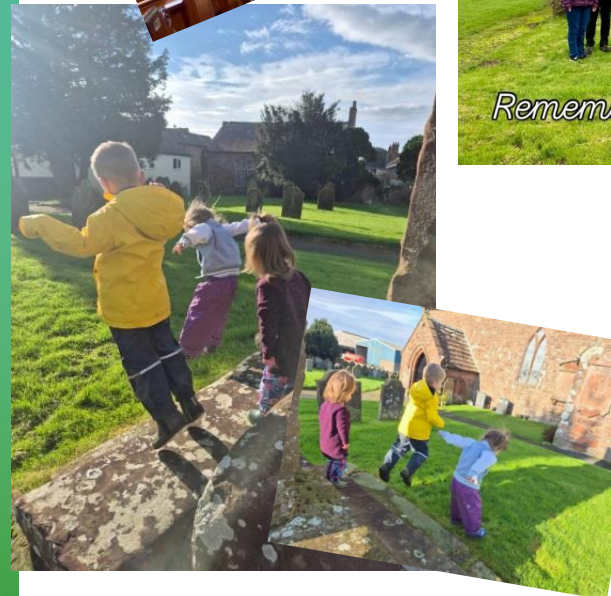
St Mungo's Bromfield



Church School made and decorated the Christmas tree



Remembrance Sunday



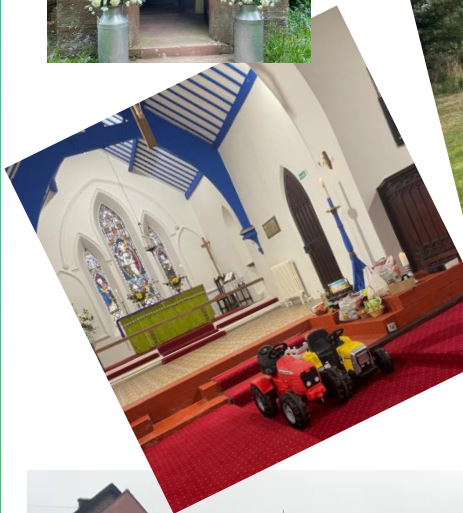
One of eight churches in the northern part of the Diocese of Carlisle which are dedicated to St Mungo (St Kentigern). A wooden church may have been here during the 3rd century, replaced by a stone building before the Romans withdrew from the area in 449 AD, and rebuilt in the time of St Mungo c670 AD. The oldest relic is an ancient British Cross, said to date from 400 AD, and a Saxon hogback stone over the porch.

Our oldest church in the team – situated in the heart of Bromfield next to the Greyhound pub and a farm or two! It has a small but very active church community. They enjoy leading their own style of worship, when the need arises.

Bromfield hosts “church school” with children up to 5yrs (from the Nursery in Westnewton), having their sessions are both inside and outside. The village pub, hosts many an evening with all enjoying the pies and peas or carols in the pub at Harvest and Christmas

Holme St Cuthbert

Officially called Holme Cultram; St Cuthbert's, this church was originally part of the Parish of Holme Cultram. In 1840, the Vicar of Holme Cultram raised funds to enable the present church to be built together with the school and school house. It is situated in the centre of a rural farming community and the parish consists of small hamlets and settlements of approximately 200 houses. The school is involved with the church during the year – for the school leavers the highlight is going up the church tower (with all the risk assessments in place !!). The regular congregations are small, but have an enthusiastic team to support the church whenever they can - 100 club; "Little tin cans"; carol singing around the area - finishing in the Pub; Christingle and a Tractor service. This Church is the only place of worship in the Parish that never closes. It has been described as "a place of calm in a very busy world."



Holme St Cuthbert School



Together we Share, Care, Learn, and Grow



Holme St Cuthbert is a small and popular school next to Holme St Cuthbert's Church, situated just outside the village of Mawbray on the Solway Plain.



St Bride's Kirkbride

This hidden gem, is nestled in the tranquil Cumbrian village of Kirkbride, dedicated to St Bridget who was one of the Irish patron saints, who inspired a love of creation; she was an Abbess of both men and women; and Bridget's spirit of hospitality is legendary. For Bridget, "Every guest is Christ".

Located on an elevated site overlooking the River Wampool estuary and the Solway beyond, with its peaceful setting has a colourful, deep and layered past. The church was first mentioned 1189. But St Bridget suggests a much earlier Christian foundation, built directly upon the footprint of a 1st-century Roman fort and with a Roman road running just below the church floor.

Kirkbride is small village of around 500, being shaped by agriculture and its proximity to the Solway Coast. The Village still retains a pub, a shop, post office, church hall and primary school. St Bride's maybe tucked away, but has a very supportive community.

This lovely little church could very easily be missed!



Kirkbride Primary School

Explore. Learn. Grow

Where everyone feels valued, celebrated and respected.
A friendly family of learners close to the northern lakes and fells.
Our school is at the heart of the community with strong links to St. Bride in particular.



Grandparents afternoon in school



Kirkbride Primary School
Explore. Learn. Grow

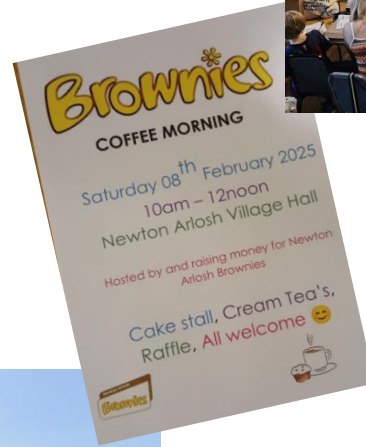


We believe education is a joint partnership between children, parents, staff, governors and the community.

St John the Evangelist Newton Arlosh

This unique parish church is one of the most complete fortified church within the Solway Plain. It was fortified in 1304 so that treasures from Holme Cultram could be kept safe (having crenulations and very small low doors to aid in this) from raiders coming across the Solway. In 1844 Sara Losh (a local architect and designer – who lived, worked and died in Wreay – a village near by and who has also strongly associated with St John’s) extended, repaired and restored parts of the building and put in much of the carved wooden features and the lectern.

Newton Arlosh, has a pub, village hall and play area showing it is still a vibrant little place to live The Village Hall which is across the road from the church hosting all the village events and is the hub of the village.



Christ Church Silloth

It is the only town in the Solway Plain Team Christ church was built in the late nineteenth century, consecrated in 1870. It is Victorian Gothic in style although built in stone and brick, and possesses an apsidal east end. It's interior

was re-ordered in 2024, and now boast's a lovely kitchen, internal toilets, loads of storage space and the nave being multi functional – but still retaining its Victorian charm

The main industries are Carr's flour mill, (now owned by Whitworth (the milled flour going to McVities (owned by Pladis)in Carlisle, transport and storage companies, the docks, two large holiday camps, six caravan sites and four residential homes.

There is a primary school and a secondary school, a variety of shops, supermarkets, restaurants, pubs and a hotel. Along with a doctors surgery, dentist and chiropractor

Living by the sea – there is super ice cream too!

The town also has a renowned 18 hole links golf course.

Situated in the heart of the town it is the spiritual heart beat of the area



Men's Breakfast



SILLOTH



Carnival Day



Ready for Tea!



Christ Church – Silloth continued

Christ Church dates from the nineteenth century when the town of Silloth was founded. It is under the patronage of the Simeon Trust. It was intentionally built in a Renaissance style (Victorian Gothic) and is faced on the outside with granite brought from Ireland as shipping ballast. With its flexible seating and modern kitchen allowing community groups to use the church.

These include Pensioners coffee mornings and sales, craft groups, RNLI fundraising events, St John’s Ambulance training sessions, Rotary Club events including Christmas activities, and a Mens’ Breakfast group which attracts around 30 guests a month. Network Youth Church Cell meeting once a fortnight Also hosting a new town venture “Silloth Share and Support” opening up in April



James Smith



Silloth Primary

Children Come First

Each year, we are warmly welcomed into Christ Church for our annual Harvest Festival and Christmas Carol Concerts. These occasions are treasured by pupils, staff and families, providing moments of celebration, reflection and togetherness. The church’s beautiful setting adds a special sense of significance to these events. This year, our School Council were also honoured to take part in the Remembrance Service at Christ Church, representing the school with respect and maturity.

We greatly appreciate the involvement of visitors from Christ Church, who are always welcome to lead some key assemblies. Their presence strengthens the children’s understanding of faith, values and community, and further supports the strong relationship between the school and church.

Secondary Schools

Part of the Cumbria Futures Federation

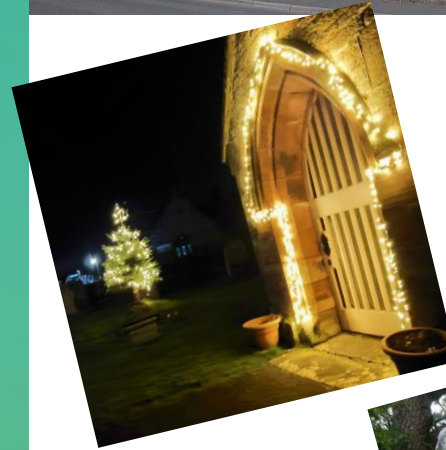


About our school

Solway Community School is at the heart of the community in Silloth. Established over 50 years ago, we have a reputation as school where students of all abilities excel. Our big strength is our small size – everyone knows everyone else; yet we are able to provide a wide range of courses to match learners’ strengths and interests. We know everyone – and we help them develop into unique and self-confident individuals. We are small but mighty.



St Matthew's Westnewton



The Church of St. Matthew's in Westnewton is a typically small rural Cumbrian church with a big heart and hard-working congregation. It was consecrated on 1st July 1857 by the then Bishop of Carlisle.

It had a total parish population of 224 and is now part of the Solway Plain Parish. It comprises about 120 dwellings and covers an area of several square miles.

There is a Church Primary school and Nursery. The primary school has a cohort of about 50 pupils and strong links with the Church. There is an active Village Hall, which the church uses for it's various money raising activities.

The Church is fortunate to have an active Local Licenced Minister (LLM), has a small but faithful congregation and is well supported by Aspatria and surrounding villages. But like most of the churches today making ends meet with a dwindling population is hard

St Matthew's C of E Primary School

Together we can Shine

"Life in all its fullness" John 10:10

St Matthew's C of E School is a small school comprising of 50 pupils. Our pupils largely come from outlying villages and the nearby towns. The school is chosen because of its size, ethos, academic success and caring nature, whilst being at the heart of our rural community. St Matthew's is a Church of England school and we have strong links with St Matthew's Church, which is situated next door to our school. The last minister was a regular visitor to our school; he took collective worship with our pupils.



From the Preschool - Church School is our weekly outdoor visit with the forest school leader, Jenny. Here the children enrich their understanding of the world exploring one of our local churches (Bromfield) and surrounding areas. The church provides

shelter and the perfect place to eat our pack lunches. The children go out in all weathers and they enjoy exploring, investigating and noticing, flora, fauna and farm animals. Games they enjoy are hide and seek, parachute games, mini fencing as well as craft activities.



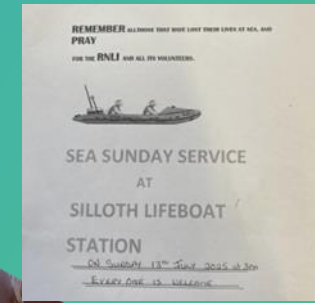
3 Where we are - The Team

THE PCC

The PCC meets approximately four times a year and is chaired by the Rector. Membership comprises two representatives from each church, the ministry team, the Secretary and Treasurer and parish representatives to Deanery Synod. The churches having sub-committees, who have responsibility for the day to day running of their church.

During our interregnum the members of the Ministry Team have undertaken to take services within the Solway Plain - we have Laity; LLM's; a Lay reader and retired clergy .

We have United services around the Parish, with our choir., when there is a fifth Sunday or other special services.



A farewell service for our incumbent with cake !!

The Mission Community.

This is part of the ecumenical alliance of different churches under the title God For All. <https://godforall.org.uk>

we are at the forefront of sharing each others' worship and uniting people and resources in local areas to organise groups and events to grow disciples where individual churches would not be able to do it unsupported. The Solway Plain Parish is part of the Solway Mission Community which, also includes churches in Wigton and Aspatria, with further links to Maryport, Brugh by Sands and Caldbeck

Regular Activities include:-

- †NYC cells in Silloth, Wigton and Aspatria;
- †Soulway – an informal worship and social service group meeting in Aspatria Rugby Club;
- †Mens' Breakfast in Silloth.
- †Silloth Share and support – coming in April



Solway Network Youth Church

Solway Network Youth Church (SNYC) is a church in its own right within the Mission Community, designed for young people aged 10-18, made up of a networked group of cells, who enjoy coming together for residential and reunions. It runs small groups, discipleship groups, schools work and well-being groups. SNYC also trains and supports volunteers, works with clergy and churches across the area with mission events, schools work, confirmations and much more.



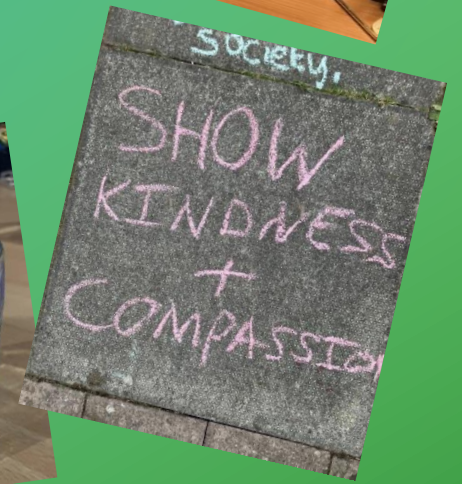
Advent calendar Packing



Working with schools (Rosley)



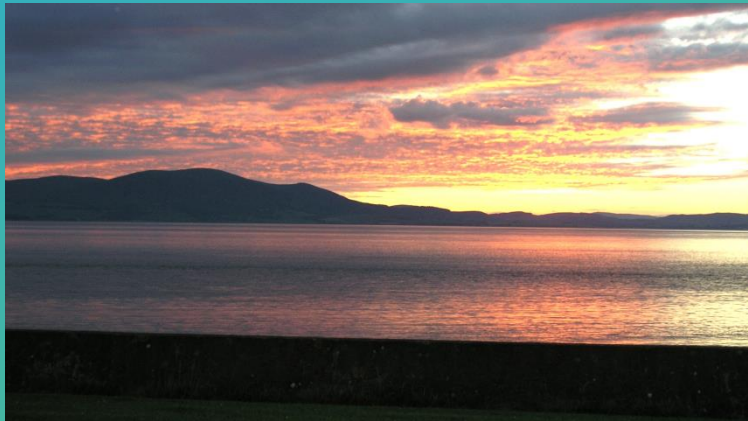
Cell sessions



4. You and your role

Key areas of focus

We expect you come with your own vision and strategic approach, but we have also been praying and thinking about core priorities for our common life and mission together. This is what our community would like.



A fuller Diocesan job description accompanies this profile.



Develop fellowship within each of the churches of the Parish

Connect in new and deeper ways with our communities

Reach younger people, particularly through schools and the Network Youth Church

Deepen our discipleship, particularly through home groups, Bible study and prayer



Develop our online presence and outreach through digital media

Develop a pastoral care team to connect with those feeling isolated

Build links with the wider Mission Community further develop new ways of being church and imaginative forms of mission

5. Living here



Rear view



The Vicarage:

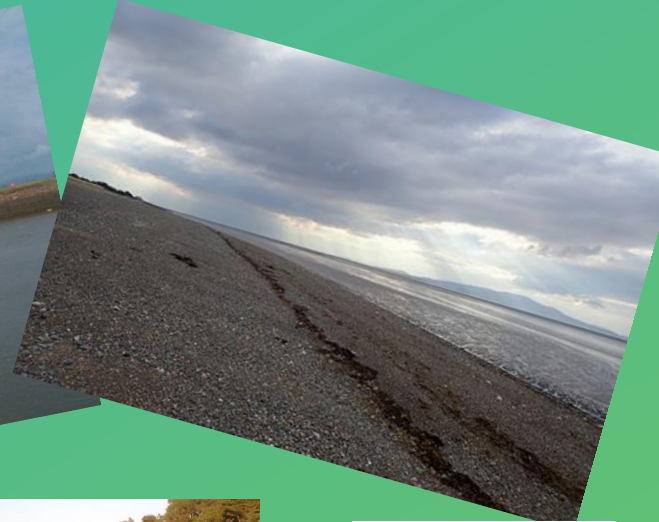
Silloth vicarage is on the edge of the town, a few minutes walk from Christ Church and the shops. Postcode CA7 4NJ.

It is a modern purpose-built home set back from the main B5302;(Wigton Road) It has a substantial garden and large parking area..

The ground floor consists of a study, toilet, dining room, kitchen and large living room suitable for meetings.

Upstairs are 4 bedrooms (3 double & 1 single) and a walk-in attic storage space.

There is a sink in the largest bedroom. A bathroom and a separate shower room with sink.



Silloth is a seaside town by the Solway Firth, facing the hills of southern Scotland over the Firth (renowned for sunsets) and looking inland to the Lake District fells.

The best walks are along west beach, the promenade and slightly longer around the Grune



Christ Church is in the center of the town with its spire dominating the landscape.



Living here...

Main employers are Carrs Flour Mill served by the harbour, some light industry and transport companies (on the old airfield). Also two very large and several smaller holiday sites and four residential homes.

There are two schools (both within walking distance of the vicarage)

Silloth Primary and Solway Community School with the Rector taking monthly assemblies and the schools hold Harvest and Carol services in the church.

Typically for a small town with all the amenities you need all within walking distance - as mentioned before

There is a “Park Run” along the promenade and the local (links) golf course is high in world rankings.

The area opposite the church “ The Green” hosts many of the larger scale annual events – Vintage Car Rally, August Bank Holiday carnival, Beer and Music festivals and even Silloth Pride

Transport links:

- A bus service to Wigton (10 miles)

- Nearest train station Wigton (10 miles)

- Nearest hospitals Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle and West Cumberland Hospital ,Whitehaven

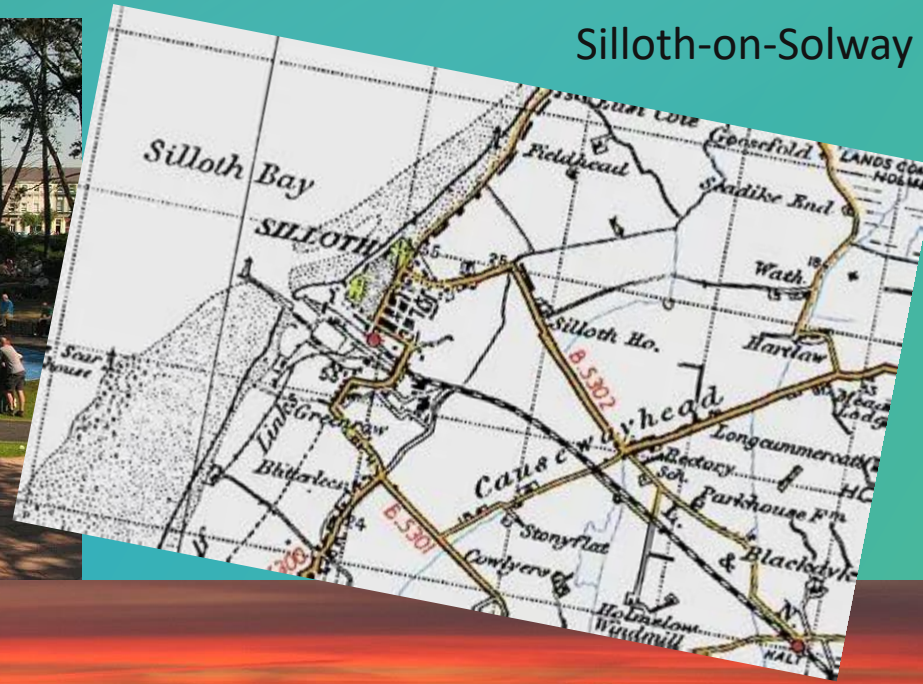
Other towns are Aspatria (9 miles); Cockermouth (18 miles). Carlisle (23 miles) Workington (19 miles) Penrith (34 miles)

Other churches in the town were the Roman Catholic, Pentecostal and Free Evangelical

“Churches Together in Silloth” is an active organisation including residents from the Methodist and United Reform churches though they now have to worship outside the town too.

Joint services are held at Easter and Christmas and other occasions along with bible-study courses and committee meetings.

Silloth-on-Solway



Thank you for showing an interest in the Solway Plain United Parish



We come with our faith and doubts :
We come with our hopes and fears.

We come as we are, because you invite us to come:
and you promised never to turn us away
(from the Iona Worship Book – reprinted 2017)



Silloth Harbour