

# Kendal

# United Reformed Church



June and July 2018

**Kendal United Reformed Church**

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Our Coffee Morning charity in June is “Days for Girls”. This is a global movement that prepares and distributes sustainable menstrual health solutions.

In July, we support Sightsavers, an international charity working to prevent avoidable blindness, support equality for people with disabilities, and advocate for change.



**Revd Pam Noonan writes**

Dear Friends,

A big thank you to the large number of our members who attended our Special Church Meeting on 6 May when we unanimously voted to accept the tabled offer for the church, the large hall and the land to the rear. We also agreed to lease the purchaser two parking spaces and to donate £5000 from the proceeds of the sale to Synod.



I don't know about you but when the result was announced, I personally felt the emotion of the occasion. The decision will have life-changing implications for us and all those who will come after us. With an upgraded Lecture Hall and 106, we will have a more modern and accessible space in which to meet for worship and for our activities and outreach.

Your ministers and elders are committed to keeping you, the congregation, abreast of all the developments and where appropriate to seek your opinion. Hence there will be more afternoon tea and cake gatherings, or perhaps sandwich lunches after worship to discuss the future together in a relaxed setting. It is important that we all work together in whatever ways we are able to see our transition through with as little disruption as possible.

However, our future is not just about the space we will worship in. It is about having a heart to share the love and knowledge of Jesus with others. Was it a coincidence that I read on the afternoon of our vote in Reform magazine these words?

"So often, in churches, people are holding on to something that used to keep them afloat, and don't realize that that is the weight that is sinking them."

How I thank God that you as a congregation are willing to let go and to embrace the new as God through his Holy Spirit leads us forward. How thrilling it is to know that some of our friends at Stricklandgate are also excited about the future and have begun to talk of perhaps doing something together in our new space.

We have a vision for the future. It is of a place where God is worshipped in ways we recognise and in ways we accept because of the new people that are coming across our doors to our different activities.

Some may have an interest in spirituality, some may not. Some may want to learn about God, to have a good discussion about him, others may not. Some will just come for our activities. Whatever the reason, we will be there for them in Christ's name, praying that through us they might meet the living God for themselves.

We can only give thanks to God for calling us to a new leg of our journey together and continue to look to and trust him each step of the way.

Your friend and minister,

**Pam**

### **Secretary's Ramblings**

Firstly, it is with great sadness that I have to report the death of two of our congregation, Jean Orton who died on 14 March and Viv Birkett who died on 15 April. They will both be greatly missed, having served the Church faithfully for many years. Please keep their families in your prayers.



Secondly, we had an excellent turn out for our church meeting on 6 May, when 48 members voted unanimously to sell the church, main hall and garden up to Garth's Head. We also agreed to lease two parking spaces to Mr James Waite a property developer, who intends to build luxury apartments on the site.

We currently have 63 members, so allowing for those on holiday, those who were not well and those too frail to attend, it accounted for the majority of our members. The fact that the vote was unanimous is very reassuring for your Elders as we strive to be a Church that looks to the future.

You will see from Pauline's article that we have engaged a local architect, Mr Paul Grout, who has redeveloped many churches in the past. We have told him that we need a suitable multi-use worship space for approximately 80 people, to include accessible toilets and replacement kitchen facilities, and also storage for lightweight tables and chairs. As soon as we have sufficient information and drawings to share with you we will have either an informal lunchtime or afternoon meeting so you can comment on the proposals.

When the redevelopment works go ahead we will probably have to move off site, especially for our Sunday worship services for a period of time. Some of our groups may still be able to meet in 106, depending on exactly what is being redeveloped. Again once plans are formed we will keep you informed, either by regular updates after Sunday worship, articles in our magazine, or church meetings. There will inevitably be disruption whilst we clear out the church and main hall. If you personally have anything of value kept in the church or hall please arrange for it to be moved. We will be able to store some items in 106 and the lecture hall; but, as with any move, we will need to downsize.

Following your feedback during April and at the Coffee & Cake afternoon, the most popular suggestion for "Frothimoon" is that these premises should be known as 106.

Hopefully over the past couple of weeks you will have seen some of the information about the Heritage Company who are buying our church and have told us that "they are looking forward to bringing new life to the church and looking after it for everyone in the future". It will be great to see inside it once it has been turned into apartments. We hope to be able to put up a link on our website ([www.kendalurc.org.uk](http://www.kendalurc.org.uk)) to some of the conversions that they have previously done around the country.

The Elders have also been considering very carefully the future requirements for caretaking here at Kendal URC. Once the church, main hall and land behind are sold, the size of the estate we are responsible for will reduce by over half, and we will be leaving the site completely for a while during the redevelopment. We have also realised that many of our current hall users who hire the halls from us will have to find alternative premises. We do hope that some will come back to the redeveloped site, but we don't think there will be as many as before. After much discussion, the Elders have realised that the duties carried out by our caretaker will vastly reduce. We have taken legal advice from the Synod's solicitors about this, and I have to tell you that we told Andy that his role will become redundant. We have prepared a redundancy package for him which exceeds the statutory minimum by a significant amount and will be serving him a notice period which greatly exceeds the statutory period.

Please speak to your Elder, Pam, Martyn or myself if you have any concerns.

**Sheila Andrews**

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**From the Secretary of the Sale and Redevelopment Group**

In October 2017 (not being permitted to have a fallow sabbatical as a Serving Elder!) I was asked if I would take on the role of Coordinator / Secretary of the Church and Large Hall Sale Group, both to action decisions of the Group and to be the interface between the selling agent and those involved in the sale. I was given a brief job description by Revd Pam Noonan.

I was aware, having worked in Carlisle for a decade, that the St George's URC building, in Warwick Road, a central location, had been sold through the local office of Hyde Harrington in the City. The reason given for the sale was that the buildings had become unmanageable. I attended the service of dedication of the new church in November 2015, in a smaller building in the cathedral precinct, which was formerly a resource centre, a not dissimilar size to our Lecture Hall. I was also conscious that Trinity URC, Lancaster, a Listed Building, had its site for sale last year, as a participant in a group which used the premises.

An SLDC officer in March 2017 advised, at a meeting, the use of a local agent who knows the needs of local organisations. I made an approach to Hyde Harrington in early December 2017 as advised by the Sale Group. A meeting was convened of the Sale Group on 17 January 2018 and Hyde Harrington, Stricklandgate, was appointed as the selling agent. The previous Manchester agents were informed of this fact. Within a week an instruction was given to a firm in Lytham St Annes to carry out an Environmental Performance Assessment of the Rear Hall, as this required an EP Certificate. The result was a good one, grade 'C'. The church building was exempt. The certificate is displayed on the wall of the hall near the door.

I have obtained and handed over requested plans of the site and buildings, including sectional drawings, both to Hyde Harrington for prospective buyers and more latterly to Mr Paul Grout of Angel Yard, the Kendal conservation architect recommended by an architect friend of mine, for his information and use in developing ideas and plans for the alterations and adaptations to the range of westerly buildings which are available to us, including number 106 and the Lecture Hall.

Having had members vote unanimously for the sale of the rear of the site we enter an exciting phase in the evolution of our church. Suddenly progress for the future seems possible.

***Pauline Goodridge***

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## **Church Diary**

### **June**

Sunday	3	10.30 am	Worship with Communion, in the Church, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	5	10.00 am	Prayer Shawl Group in the Lecture Hall
Wednesday	6	9.30 am	Coffee Morning in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	10	10.30 am	Worship in the Church, led by Revd Lis Mullen
Thursday	14	2.30 pm	Afternoon Communion in the Lecture Hall followed by tea/coffee and chat
Sunday	17	10.30 am	Worship in the Church, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	19	10.00 am	Craft Group in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	24	10.30 am	Joint Worship at Stricklandgate Methodist Church
Wednesday	27	all day	Rainbow Roundabout
Thursday	28	all day	Rainbow Roundabout
Friday	29	all day	Rainbow Roundabout

### **Mid-week Communion**

Our mid-week Communion service continues to be held once a month on the 2nd Thursday in the month at 2.30pm in the Lecture Hall. This is a quiet, contemplative service lasting approximately 30 minutes, followed by tea and biscuits and a time for a chat. All are welcome to attend, and especially if you find yourself unable to get to our main Sunday morning communion service this may be a suitable alternative for you. If you would like to come and need transport please speak to Pam or myself.

### ***Sheila Andrews***

**From the editor:**

Thank you again to all who have contributed to this magazine.  
Please let me have any items for the next issue by Monday 16 July.

**July**

Sunday	1	10.30 am	Worship with Communion, in the Church, led by Revd Lis Mullen
Tuesday	3	10.00 am	Prayer Shawl Group in the Lecture Hall
Wednesday	4	9.30 am	Coffee Morning in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	8	10.30 am	Worship in the Church, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Thursday	12	2.30 pm	Afternoon Communion in the Lecture Hall followed by tea/coffee and chat
Sunday	15	10.30 am	Worship in the Church, led by Revd Pam Noonan
Tuesday	17	10.00 am	Craft Group in the Lecture Hall
Sunday	22	10.30 am	Worship in the Church, led by Revd Martyn Coe
Sunday	29	10.30 am	Joint service at Kendal URC, with Stricklandgate Methodists, in the Church, led by Revd Sarah Moore

**Discussion Group**

The discussion group has been meeting every month until March at Pam's house. Each month a varying number of people come to these meetings, usually around eight people attending. We have been using a book called "Imagine Church – Releasing Whole-Life Disciples" by Neil Hudson as the basis of our discussions and have enjoyed working through the ideas contained in it. The group will recommence in September with a different book to work through. We are going to look at "Fruitfulness on the Front Line" in the Autumn.

***Nick Andrews***

**Interview with Revd Martyn Coe**

**Martyn, you have been a part of the ministry team in the South Lakes Group for more than four years; but how do you see your role now, particularly as the only stipendiary URC minister in the Group?**



Well, I try to provide leadership and to encourage church members to become involved in:

- worship – and not just on Sunday mornings,
- church governance and the discernment of a vision for the future,
- pastoral care, and
- outreach and mission.

**It must be a challenge to make this work with several churches.**

It is – but it is also a challenge for church members. The total membership of the three churches in Kendal, Grange and Windermere is just about the same as the size of congregation at Carver when Alan Gaunt was minister there. The ratio of URC ministers to members is almost unchanged since twenty years ago, but both ministers and members are more thinly spread across churches.

Also, the more active members of the congregations often have more family commitments now – sometimes still having responsibilities both for elderly parents and grown-up children. This makes it harder to expect people to volunteer to work for the church.

**Can you point to any strategies for managing this situation?**

Sometimes it is right to appoint paid employees – Kendal URC have already appointed an administrator, and Carver have plans to do so.

Obviously, I cannot be everywhere to lead worship on Sunday mornings, but this is an area where other people have become involved. Revd Pam Noonan makes a substantial contribution in Kendal, and ministry in Grange is shared with the local Methodists. In the congregation at Carver, there are quite a number of people who are able and willing to lead worship.

**But what about pastoral care?**

Well, routine pastoral visiting is difficult to provide and is not necessarily purposeful. It is good that people in church should feel befriended and cared for, and the elders can play a strong part in this – but it is important to identify what people want and need.

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Sometimes, this may be a matter of managing expectations: most visits will be intentional and for a reason.

At Carver in particular, those members with an aptitude for pastoral care are very busy; and this is why the church has plans to employ a lay pastoral worker.

### **How is outreach part of ministry?**

Outreach, in the sense of meeting people and making contacts within the local community, is difficult when the minister does not live locally. It is easier for me in Grange, because I do see people around the town; but I am aware that, especially in Windermere, some people miss this informal contact with a minister.

But outreach is part of Christian faith. It is about living the Word, and it is the foundation for mission. It may be about supporting people and groups in the community, about addressing issues whether locally or nationally in the explicit light of faith, or sometimes just having events at which everyone is made welcome.

Outreach lays the groundwork for mission; but it does not necessarily lead to an increase in church membership. For our churches, there is a level of urgency about mission and a need to find a new vision. Future generations are unlikely to follow our pattern of church attendance or to worship in the style that we have known.

### **What value do you see in the development of Mission Communities?**

Despite frequent protestations to the contrary, this development is in some sense a way of managing decline. We face the reality of aging and reducing congregations. Bishop Robert was very much the driving force behind Mission Communities and the “God for All” branding; and we look forward to working with his successor, Emma Ineson. The Church of England plans to halve the number of stipendiary ministers in Cumbria.

The situation is challenging, but the plans would mean that there would be an ordained minister, of some denomination, living and working in each community.

### **How does all this affect our management of church buildings?**

Kendal URC are planning radical changes to the use of buildings, and I am really impressed by the way in which these plans look to the future.

All the congregation can play a significant part in this, whether in practical ways or by prayers and words of encouragement. The plans allow for different groups gathering at different times, perhaps forming a network of “micro-churches” – and all might come together occasionally for a special event or a day of celebration.

In Grange, the Methodist and URC congregations worship together; and, for the time being, this substantial congregation has given the church a new sense of energy. I anticipate that we will work towards bringing the two denominations together as a single congregation in one refurbished building, with a renewed and different vision for the future.

Carver Church has an attractive worship space, and the premises are maintained to a very high standard. Yet the level of continued expenditure needed to keep these facilities in their present form may possibly become inappropriate and unsustainable. We need first to envisage a future for Carver Church and how different groups might be part of the church in their own way; and we can then ask questions about the buildings and their fitness for purpose.

**Is there still a place for a forward-thinking, liberal, engaged church in Cumbria today?**

Yes, certainly we need some of that – but we also need to contribute positively to the community, to do good in the name of Christ. Making members of existing churches is not essentially what evangelism is about: it is about engaging people with the Word of God, expressed in Christ’s message and ministry.

Church activities and worship do not have to be age-inclusive; but we do have to respect and validate what other groups do and how they become church in their particular way. There is some merit in the idea of “fringe church”. And we need to recognise that buildings can give glory to God only if they are serving God’s purpose.

**Are you enthusiastic and optimistic about the future?**

Yes. I very much subscribe to the notion that “the Lord has yet more light and truth to break forth from his Word”. Things may not always go well, but I know that I am called to this ministry. Indeed, we are all called to do God’s work enthusiastically, in whatever way we can, in this generation and for the next.

***Martyn***

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**A Prayer Diary for June and July** (contributed by Joan Ratcliffe)

**Week beginning 3 June**

Pray for all young people facing exams this month.

**10 June**

Galatians, chapter 5 verse 22, tells us that the Spirit produces love, joy, peace... We pray for peace in our families, our town, our country and our world.

**17 June**

**Fathers' Day**

Jesus taught us to pray, saying "Our Father". We use his prayer as our focus this week.

**24 June**

**Rainbow Roundabout Week**

Pray for all who plan, present and attend this very special week.

**1 July**

**Mayor's Sunday**

We pray for our mayor and newly elected councillors, that they will make decisions concerning our town wisely.

**8 July**

Give thanks and pray for all who are working so very hard in many different ways, preparing and planning for the future of our church.

**15 July**

In Galatians, chapter 5 verse 22, we read that the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience... As God is patient with us, so may we be patient with others.

**22 July**

As schools break up for summer holidays, we pray for the safety of children, wherever they may be.

**29 July**

As we move from July into August, give thanks for times of rest and refreshment.



## Recent Scottish tour memories

I spent a week in April on a study tour of the North West Highlands with a group from Lancaster and Morecambe U3A. We stayed at Holiday Fellowship's house, Alltshellach, which is located beside Loch Leven. What fascinated me when I first entered the house were the pictures in the main staircase window.

The picture on the left is of St. Columba and that on the right is of St. Patrick, with the Bishop's mitre visible at the top of the middle window. The date of the window is 1889. The Latin phrase *nec temere nec timide* (neither rashly nor timidly) was also displayed there. I discovered that a popular Bishop of Argyll and the Isles lived in the house, which had a private chapel.

I picked up a Diocesan Conference newsletter in a local church. There was quite a lot of information in it which was in accord with the way the URC has been thinking and exploring in recent months. The introduction talks about the need to keep our eyes fixed on one goal: to share whatever it is that makes us Christians and to do it in such a way as to have meaning for the current generation. It mentions the renovation of an Edinburgh church where the building has been transformed into a space suitable for any kind of worship.



It goes on to state that the Synod was given the task of discussing Mission and the task of communication which embraced creating opportunities. The Bishop talked about how one hundred and fifty years ago the mission of the Scottish Episcopal Church was to build a church in every community; the legacy in the form of buildings which are not fit for purpose in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a problem today. Buildings need to be open and fit for Kingdom-building today and in the future.

As disciples, as Kingdom-builders, our first responsible act is to celebrate the glory of God's creation and our part in that glory: celebrate natural beauty surrounding us, thankfulness for our jobs and our security at home and in our communities, peace in our nation and our prosperity. The Lent Appeal in that Diocese was for money to alleviate child poverty, a subject which we try to address, to some extent, with contributions towards food bank boxes and shoeboxes for Romania.

***Pauline Goodridge***



#### **The end of an era**

Half a lifetime spent collecting house-to-house for Christian Aid has come to an end. My feeling as I followed the familiar route

yesterday, delivering notes saying we were no longer collecting, was one of sadness. This was closure. The azaleas were beautiful as ever, the cherry tree with a hollow trunk and only half a ration of bark was bravely flowering again, and the people I talked to were friendly. The money will come in other ways.

However there are things which will be lost. Building bridges between churches as people exchanged news of their church and you told them of your church activities. The sight of Christians blatantly exhibiting the red Christian Aid bags as they walked down the street knocking on each door - to me these were my "front line".

These spin offs will not be replaced - the bridge building and the lost length of "front line".

***Anne Wilson***

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We're proud that Kendal is a welcoming place for all who want to live, work, study or visit.

To celebrate diversity within our community, the first **Kendal Unity Festival** will take place on Saturday 23 June 2018.

The main programme will take place between 10am and 4pm in and around Kendal town centre, with music performances and entertainment from around the world taking place in the nearby Brewery Arts Centre and other venues.