

## South West Cumbria United Area Trustees' Annual Report (September 2021 – August 2022)

This year's report starts with thanks to the people who have supported the United Area in 2021/22 when we had only one full-time minister, our incoming Superintendent and Lead Minister, Rev Dr Helen Hooley. The Trustees are grateful to Rev Les Hann, whose pastoral care and preaching has been greatly appreciated by the congregation at Millom; to Rev Stephen Tudway, who has given pastoral care to the Kirkby folk while developing ecumenical fellowship groups and youth work at our Broughton church; and to Rev David Edmondson, who has not only given pastoral care in Dalton and Askam but has grappled with a building project and a church merger, as well as preaching regularly. In the autumn, the URC fulfilled their long-term ambition to bring a minister to the Area, providing us with our second minister. After several Zoom meetings, Rev Kate Hunt visited on a very busy weekend at the start of December and subsequently accepted our invitation to join us in 2022/23. A packed Beacon Hill hosted a wonderful welcome and ordination service on 20<sup>th</sup> August, followed by a faith tea. It's not often that a charabanc full of worshippers arrives at one of our churches! These were from Kate's home church. Kate will have pastoral charge of Ramsden Street, Dalton, Askam, Kirkby and Millom, with links to the work at Broughton, and will also be active in the URC Cumbria Partnership. She and husband Stephen will live in Dalton and we wish them a happy and fruitful time among us. Thanks, again, to David for agreeing to stay on to support Kate as she learns more about Methodism and for continuing to oversee the Dalton building work, which is happily going to plan and will hopefully open up new opportunities for outreach in the town.

Our lay staff continue to play an important part in the UA. Alongside his work in *re-new community charity shop*, Tim has grown as a trainee local preacher and, keen to develop further, has explored a course in Pioneer Mission starting in January 2023. Our initial Area administrator did not remain in post for long but was swiftly replaced by Rebecca Blackett, who has been doing a great job in producing preaching plans, agendas and minutes, distributing information and generally keeping things running smoothly. *May we hold all our staff in our prayers and support them wherever and whenever we can.*

In September, there was a real sense of church life re-starting properly after the constraints of 2020/21 and many church fellowship groups and lettings have resumed and been as popular as ever. However, it should be noted that there was also a sense of tiredness and uncertainty in some places, partly due to the reduced number of members; and, of course, some groups and activities have not continued. It is disconcerting when a group which had previously flourished and served the community well suddenly seems no longer to be in demand. So, it seemed very pertinent that Helen's questions to every church council in the autumn were: *How does this church community feed your spiritual life?* and *What does this church do really well in its community?* We can be thankful for the blessings of the past but should remember that, when something comes to an end, though sad, it might be to enable us to start something new and potentially exciting. Some new initiatives this year have been Hartington Street's and Ramsden Street's engagement with Love Barrow Families which has led to a number of actions. Something that particularly 'captured the moment' was Trinity's hospitality to Ukrainian refugees through their coffee mornings; and many of our churches held special events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, often inviting their community to join in. Although there was no Area-wide charity initiative this year, individual churches have continued to support good causes, including Christian Aid, All We Can, Lebone, Leprosy Mission and the Foodbank. Whether ongoing or new activities, it is clear from the reports in the new South West Connections that the Spirit is moving in the United Area and there is a longing for it to flourish and grow.

Trinity took a momentous step this year when the members decided – after some years of reflection – to close their building and look for a new way to be a worshipping community. Trinity's building will hold its last service in September 2022, but Trinity Church will continue to worship at Abbey Road Baptist Church, with whom they have built up good relations over recent years. They plan to worship separately, but to hold some joint services. Askam, as a smaller church which does not have a church council, made plans to merge with Dalton, but will also continue as a separate worshipping community. Other UA churches have continued to develop strong ecumenical relationships with neighbouring churches: for example, Kirkby with St. Cuthbert's, Vickerstown with St. Mary's and Millom with the Baptists and Salvation Army.

Finances have been a consideration in some of the above. With fewer members and possibly fewer lettings, money is tight in all of our churches – and likely to become tighter with spiralling heating costs. In some cases, a realistic reappraisal of our rental fees has been necessary; and a willingness to share services with another church and only heat one building *may* become necessary as the new year progresses. the need to do some things differently is a theme that resonates across all levels and denominations of the Christian Church, not just here; but the Church has experienced many challenges over the centuries and has evolved and gone forward. So, while we must be realistic, we should remain hopeful. There are green shoots to be developed and, with money in reserve from the sale of the manses, the potential to develop new projects, find a way to be sustainable for the future and hopefully grow God's kingdom. The Trustees began 2021/22 with a day to look at where we were and what we hoped to carry forward, with the resolve to use the year for ongoing discussion and reflection and to listen to where God might be leading us. Early in 2022/23, we will hold a Vision Day to pull our thoughts and ideas together, with the aim of writing a new Mission Plan for the United Area.

*Please continue to pray for the life and work of our churches and those in them; and have faith in God's wisdom and His plan for our United Area.*

# South West Cumbria United Area

## Financial Activities

September 2022 - August 2023

	TOTAL
Income	
All Other Income	
Broughton Income (includes balance transfer)	627.05
Interest	1,428.28
Roose Interest	39.39
Trust Interest	11,553.67
<b>Total All Other Income</b>	<b>13,648.39</b>
Assessment Payments	
Askam Methodist Assessment	7,303.75
Beacon Hill Methodist Assessment	20,660.04
Dalton Community Church Assessment	20,033.92
Hartington Street Methodist Assessment	7,592.08
Kirkby Methodist Assessment	4,075.00
Millom Methodist Assessment	10,020.36
Ramsden Street URC Assessment	9,145.80
Trinity Church Centre Assessment	36,409.20
Vickerstown Methodist Assessment	9,204.90
<b>Total Assessment Payments</b>	<b>124,445.05</b>
Charity Shop Income	
Charity Shop - Colltex Ltd	155.63
Charity Shop Gift Aid	1,269.46
Charity Shop Grants	784.32
Charity Shop Takings Card	15,115.09
Charity Shop Takings Cash	12,971.46
<b>Total Charity Shop Income</b>	<b>30,295.96</b>
Manse Sale	-67,110.96
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£101,278.44</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£101,278.44</b>
Expenditures	
All Clergy Costs	
Clergy Expenditure	
Clergy Other Expenses	51.48
Clergy Stationery & Software	211.92
Clergy Telephone	
Carlton Avenue Telephone/Broadband	657.87
<b>Total Clergy Telephone</b>	<b>657.87</b>
<b>Total Clergy Expenditure</b>	<b>921.27</b>
Clergy Salaries, NIC & Pension	45,390.19
Methodist Apprenticeship Levy	162.09
<b>Total Clergy Salaries, NIC &amp; Pension</b>	<b>45,552.28</b>

# South West Cumbria United Area

## Financial Activities

September 2022 - August 2023

	TOTAL
Clergy Travel	7.20
David Edmondson Travel	795.50
Helen Hooley Travel	921.65
Les Hahn Travel	357.70
<b>Total Clergy Travel</b>	<b>2,082.05</b>
<b>Total All Clergy Costs</b>	<b>48,555.60</b>
All Manse Costs	
Insurance	763.02
Manse Council Tax, Gas Service & Water	2,751.14
Manse General Repairs	2,740.00
Manse Quinquennials	360.00
<b>Total All Manse Costs</b>	<b>6,614.16</b>
All Other Costs	
Administrator Wages	4,841.00
Area Photocopier Costs	381.50
Broughton Expenditure	1,371.38
Church Literature	1,679.92
Church Quinquennials	2,640.00
District Assessment	27,500.00
District Levies	19,633.44
Flashbacks	150.38
Misc Costs	53.82
Payroll & Bookkeeping Costs	417.60
Service Expenses	491.70
Staff Training	475.00
Trust Admin Fees	821.48
URC M & M	25,168.00
<b>Total All Other Costs</b>	<b>85,625.22</b>
Bank Charges	65.22
Charity Shop Costs	
Charity Shop Repairs	76.20
Charity Shop Running Costs	152.12
Charity Shop - Morplan	142.08
Charity Shop Card Fees	81.96
Charity Shop Electricity, Water & Insurance	3,643.87
Charity Shop Manager Salary	24,233.18
Charity Shop Misc Costs	661.67
Charity Shop Phone/Broadband	643.38
Charity Shop Postage	100.00
Charity Shop Rent	6,000.00
Charity Shop Waste Disposal	1,102.16
<b>Total Charity Shop Running Costs</b>	<b>36,760.42</b>
Charity Shop Set Up Costs	600.00
Stock for Sale	5,872.87
<b>Total Charity Shop Costs</b>	<b>43,309.49</b>

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## Financial Activities

September 2022 - August 2023

	TOTAL
From Reserves	
Expenditure on Churches	1,975.00
<b>Total From Reserves</b>	<b>1,975.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>£186,144.69</b>
NET OPERATING INCOME	<b>£ -84,866.25</b>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	<b>£ -84,866.25</b>

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