Happy New Year to everyone! Here we are in the darkest and coldest months of the year and you find yourself reading an article on dementia, but just as we have the promise of a brand new year to look forward to with spring just around the corner, we also have good news of hope and support for everyone living with dementia in Cumbria.

Cumbria is an amazing county with amazing people. It is attracting the attention of many other counties in the UK after an initiative was started some time ago to make every church in Cumbria dementia friendly. Initially, being dementia friendly was about churches welcoming people living with dementia and their carers, making sure that services were appropriate and also making sure that buildings were safe and secure.

Those were, and still are, the main aims of the initiative but being dementia friendly has turned out to be much more enriching than that. In order to make every church dementia friendly 104 volunteer Dementia Enablers have been appointed and trained throughout Cumbria. Their job is to be the point of contact within communities. They are able to give information and offer support to assist people living with dementia and their carers. Dementia Enablers work in large and small communities, are based in the local church and prepared to support the needs of the community. They are responsible for organising Memory Cafes, Music for the Mind meetings, Tea Services and much, much more. The wholehearted enthusiasm for this project comes from an alliance between various denominations including Anglican, Baptist, Salvation Army, Catholic, United Reform, Methodist, Church of Scotland (Border Kirks), Quaker and King’s Church Evangelical. This is an initiative which cuts across religious boundaries just as the disease disregards all boundaries.

Each of the Dementia Enablers is likely to be a Dementia Friend and many will have done further training with the Alzheimer Society to become a Dementia Champion. These Champions will be able to run information sessions for groups of people within the community who want to know more about this disease and how to help and support people with dementia and their carers.

This is a great initiative, not designed principally to attract people into churches (although a sincere and loving welcome would be extended) but for the church to reach out to give active and caring support into the community. Cumbria is taking a lead across the country and other counties are starting to follow the Cumbrian model. Let’s not stop at just making the church dementia friendly, let’s make every street, every village and every town in Cumbria dementia friendly. Let’s raise awareness of the nature of this disease. Let’s gain strength, courage and confidence in the way that we support people living with dementia and their carers – those accepting, courageous and wonderful people who are an integral and valued part of our community.

Dementia Champions based at St. Michael and All Angels, Beetham, are Sarah Easton and Vivien Stirrup.
‘Reconciliation’ & The Beetham Crib

In 2012, the late Revd Canon Sandy Lofthouse received an enquiry from Cumbria Magazine concerning the carved wood Beetham Nativity scene placed on display each year. It was made by German Prisoners of War from the Bela River Camp at Elmsfield, and a certificate signed by the camp commander and the camp chaplain and dated Christmas 1946 states: “We German Prisoners of War from Beela River Camp are giving this stable and the figures of the Nativity story, which have been made by Bruno Baumann and his assistant Gabriel Fabian as a gift to the Parish of Beetham. By doing so we will express our gratefulness for having been able to realize the real spirit of Christian brotherhood, which has been proved to us by the Hon. Rev. A. Macleod Murray and the congregation of Beetham.”

Other than this little was known about the history of the Crib and Sandy began to research the story behind the gift. Written accounts in parish magazines, minutes, and the press uncovered some facts, but Sandy then contacted Andrew Murray, son of the Revd Alexander MacLeod Murray, and was able to complete the jigsaw puzzle of a very remarkable story.

It is with grateful thanks to John Lomax that this comprehensive research has now been compiled into a fascinating 28-page booklet, telling the moving tales of the PoWs, Revd MacLeod, and the compassion of the people of Beetham. The booklet is available in church, price £3.

Postscript by Revd Alexander MacLeod Murray following the closing of the Bela River Camp:

“So I will close my story as seen by a Vicar of Beetham, a story which has had to be compressed, omitting a good deal. However, the attempt at integration did seem to mean that the PoWs felt that they had received an understanding welcome as part of the Parish, and that enmity of any kind had been cast off”.

Preparing the Church for Christmas

Every year Beetham Church welcomes many additional visitors during the Advent and Christmas season. Preparing the church for this period involves plenty of hard work from dedicated teams of people behind the scenes.

The music is planned well in advance, and practices with a specially augmented choir are scheduled for several weeks beforehand. Orders of service are agreed and volunteer rosters for leading the worship, reading, sidepeople, offertory, candlelighters and refreshments for each service are finalised.

Thanks go once again to Antony Wood and his family for providing the full height Christmas tree which always looks so magnificent. Decorating the Christmas tree is a social occasion, and thank you to Harry Parrott for leading the team to secure the tree in position, install the lights, and complete the decorations in time for the School Carol Service, as well as mounting all the candles on every windowsill around the church.

Thank you also to Dianne Lomax for organising the flower arrangers and for creating the Advent Candle wreath. This year the flower ladies were joined by two intrepid teams of ‘flower men’, vying to produce the most elegant displays, and successfully telling the stories of the Nativity and All the Bells on Earth Shall Ring respectively - thank you gentlemen.

Continuing the preparations were the church cleaning team and all the brasses beautifully shone by Sheila MacInnes. Bakers busily made mince pies and delicious cakes, and mulled wine was prepared by Brian Smalley for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

Finally to the washer-uppers, who tirelessly washed and dried after every single event - a very grateful thank you from all of us!

Beetham Christingle

The Christingle Service was held on Christmas Eve with a packed church of 235 people. The service was led by Revd Canon Dr David Peacock, and the children were told the Christmas Story by head teacher Wendy Nicholas. The story of Christingles was told by Jenny Markis and 150 Christingles were distributed.

The collection at the service was in aid of the Children's Society, and a wonderful total of £384 was raised for their work in helping vulnerable children across Britain.

During the lighting of the Christingles the newly formed Beetham Community Band performed several carols. The Band is an enthusiastic group of adults who mainly learnt to play a musical instrument at school and had not opened their music cases since then, but have now decided to dust them off! If you can bring anything from a comb-and-paper or triangle to a double bass please come and join in at 10.30am on any Saturday morning in church.

Thank you to Booths Milnthorpe for again providing all the oranges, and to the team of Christingle makers who resisted eating all the sweets and raisings...

Christmas Carols

A joyful season of Christmas Carols included the traditional Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in the church on Sunday 17th December, where it was lovely to welcome so many visitors to join the congregation. During the evocative candlelit service, the augmented choir sang several beautiful carols, the congregation joined in the traditional carols and the Nine Lessons were read by representatives of various church groups. The handbellringers rang carols during the refreshments at the end of the service.

The Church Carol Singers (plus one recorder player) were out in force this year. Despite the wet weather, there were 17 carollers on Tuesday 19th December singing around Slackhead. The following evening there were a record 18 carollers singing around Beetham village. A solo caroller who still had a voice left also accompanied the handbellringers on the Thursday evening at Booths in Milnthorpe. The chosen charity this year was again Crisis at Christmas, and the donations from the three evenings raised a record £433.14. Thank you for donating so generously to Crisis, and also for the mince pies, sausage rolls and mulled wine given to the carol singers on their way round!

As well as Church and Booths, the Handbell Ringers were busy throughout December, ringing carols at Allan Bank Grasmere, Hartland House, Elmsfield House, Lunesdale House, and Greyrigg. Thank you to all who sang along.
On the twelfth month of School Corner...

1. A Pupil on a Borwick Tree

2. Smiling Pedallers

3. Winter Fairers

4. Calling Rowers

5. Golden Tickets

6. Paddlers Playing

7. Cooks a Chopping

8. Gymnasts a Leaping

9. in the Maize Maze

10. Making Music

11. Sheep & Shepherds

12. Victorians Studying
Happy New Year from Beetham WI!!

Our Christmas party was full of fun and fine food; hopefully a good time was had by all. A few days later some of us attended the Cumbria-Westmorland Federation Carol Service in Kendal, where we all sang heartily.

Our plans for Beetham WI Centenary in 2018 are coming together and it looks like we will be busy. To begin the year we are meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 9th January in The Heron Corn Mill to ‘Set the Scene’. We will be looking at all of our local archive material to help us think about the past 100 years of life in Beetham.

If any of you have any historical or even more recent artefacts or stories which would help us piece our history together, please do contact me.

Wishing everyone a wonderful 2018

Sarah Easton, WI President

Beetham Village Christmas Tree

Evening visitors to the centre of Beetham Village cannot have failed to notice a new addition to the festive spirit this year - a large brightly lit Christmas tree near to the village stocks!

With thanks to the recently formed Christmas Tree Committee, and to Beetham Sports for their sponsorship of the lights, the tree has given a lovely village focal point for several weeks. The carollers were invited to sing round the tree on 20th December, and the Committee kindly provided mulled wine and mince pies to encourage everyone to join in.

It brought an enchanting atmosphere to the village and we hope that the Tree Committee will repeat it again next year, as the beginning of what promises to become a long-lasting tradition for the community.

Thank you!

What’s On Guide

Westmorland Orchestra
Saturday 10th March
Lakes Leisure Kendal
Jack Bailey, Cello
Overture The Magic Flute – Mozart
Cello Concerto – Dvorak
Enigma Variations – Elgar
Tickets at www.westmorlandorchestra.org.uk
(no charge for aged 18 or under)

meet for talks at
The Athenaeanum
Leasgill
at 10am
1st & 3rd Thursdays

4th January : David Alison
‘South African Steam Safari’
18th January : David Mower
‘Garden Birds’

Everyone welcome. Contact 015395 52330

A reminder that there is no Coffee Morning in January

A friendly group, we meet to hear talks, often with slides, 2nd & 4th Thursdays, in The Athenaeanum, Leasgill at 10am

All are welcome!

11th January : John Acres
‘The Past, Present & Future of the Lancaster Canal’

25th January : Gordon Low
‘History and Work of the British Red Cross’

Contact Patricia McPoland 015395 62765
McPoland@btinternet.com

Beetham Village
Coffee Morning

Wednesday
7th February
in the Church

There is no charge and all are welcome

Heron Corn Mill

New Year Opening
The barn will be reopening on Monday 8th January. The mill will remain closed in January for cleaning and maintenance, before reopening on 21st Feb (half term)

Patchwork and Quilting Workshop
Textile artist Stella Adams-Schofield is on the lookout for new learners to join her Patchwork and Quilting workshops, held in the barn one Wednesday per month from 10am-4pm.
The first session of 2018 will take place on the 24th of January, where there will be an opportunity to learn all about Crazy Patchwork. Each workshop costs £35 including tea and coffee. Please contact Stella on 015395 63991 or stellaadamsschofield@outlook.com

Cratfemoons
Join Kerry for Crafternoons, a free drop-in workshop and social group held in the barn. The next workshop will be on 28th February from 1-4pm
The damage to the bus shelter on the south side of the B5282 at Carr Bank Road end, the result of a car accident on 2 October, proved fatal and the shelter’s remains were removed shortly after for safety reasons. The intention is to replace the old shelter as soon as possible with a more modern and substantial equivalent. Permission from BPC’s insurers to proceed is now awaited, with the cost expected to be borne by the third party’s insurers.

As owners of Sandside Cutting, BPC is responsible for significant stretches of (mostly dry-stone) boundary walling. Although remarkably durable, such walls do eventually deteriorate and need to be repaired. These walls are often perched at the top of steep banking, with dislodged stones in danger of falling into the cutting below. Sections in need of repair have recently been identified and repair work will now proceed, with the cost expected to be borne by the third party’s insurers.

The year 2018 will be historically important in the UK for a number of reasons. One of these is that it marks the centenary of the end of hostilities in World War 1. The commemoration might best be done, either individually or of more current European events. Any parish group or

Another important planning issue concerns the field known as the Sports Field at Beetham. This field has recently been purchased by a local resident with the stated object of safeguarding its future from development. The purchaser’s intention is to offer the lower half of the field to the diocese at cost for use as a playing/sports field for Beetham School and to provide much-needed open space for a wider range of school-related activities in the top half of the field. The top half of the field is to remain accessible for occasional use by the school. The prospect of an eventual pedestrian/cycle path from the top to the bottom of the entire field, as a safer alternative to Leighton Beck Road, now seems more realistic. These exciting plans are fully supported by the school and by the parish council.

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