

MISSION IN BRITAIN **MONITORING & EVALUATION REPORT**

Project title: Churches in Lunesdale family Project

Project / Grant Reference number: (41178)

Final Grant due Year 2020/2021 : £5,000 (Date of last report August 2020)

1. What have you done in order to achieve your desired *outcomes*?

A brief summary of the work you have done to date and how it fits with your plan

Since August 2020 the project has continued to adapt to the changed landscape, of life with Covid. From October to February we were able to use the Christian festivals of Harvest, All Hallows and Advent/Christmas to continue the work with families both through outdoor activities and online drop in spaces in the schools and those attending the seasons events. Through Lent and Easter we introduced additional activities including exploiting the Outside spaces as per our project development plan.

We have also worked in partnership with the community developing the Covid Community Hub, and Food Cupboard supporting families who find themselves struggling financially. Many of our church members have volunteered with this including a food fare-share scheme collecting surplus food from Supermarkets and distributing to families and members of the community. This is very much an example of our priority to create social capital and build community with people and not simply the church doing things for or to people.



During Advent the Project initiated a Community 'Live Advent Calendar' for families, inviting them to create window displays on the theme of Christmas Carols. There was very good engagement both physically, as families crafted and walked around the Town to see the windows revealed each day, and online for those unable to get out. We were pleased our MP Tim Farron came to see what we were up to.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wV6Gp2ocFvA>



Further to this we made Jesse Trees, distributed 'Bags of Cheer' to our older and isolated members of the community and involved families in donating and preparing gift bags to deliver.



We produced a Nativity Video for schools with the families and volunteers. We held online **Messy Church** making Gingerbread men as a creative telling of the Christmas story in partnership with the local zero-pantry shop who donated the ingredients. One of our volunteers created and posted online how to make a Jesse Tree throughout Advent.



Join us on the **Kirkby Lonsdale Messy Church Facebook Page** to bake Gingerbread biscuits together and to hear The Gingerbread Nativity Story!

When? : Sunday 29th November at 2pm.

What do I need? You need these ingredients:

- 225g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- ½ tsp salt
- 2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 heaped tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 50g unsalted butter
- 100g soft brown sugar
- 100g golden syrup

All dry ingredients can be found at
Address: 18 Main Street KL LA6 2AG

We have bought 20 bags of dry ingredients ready for you to collect *free of charge* at The Zero Pantry.




Story 16. Jesus

This is our last story. Please post pictures of your Jesse Trees when they are up and ready for Christmas!

After Mary gave birth to Jesus, wise men followed a star that was visible. They followed it as they wanted to worship the new-born King. They were amazed when the star stopped over the place Jesus was born. When they entered the house, they saw Mary & the child Jesus. They bowed down & worshipped Jesus, giving him the gifts of gold, frankincense & myrrh. Jesus was God come to live with his people in the body of a baby. The

The symbols for Jesse

A simple symbol for a star!

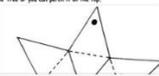
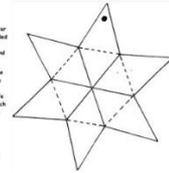
When Jesus was born a new star appeared in the sky. The star led the Wise men in the night direction so that they could find the young Jesus.

Jesus is called the 'light of the world' and his name is given to show us the best way to live. If we follow Jesus and each live a life full of love for God and for each other, we can all help to make the world a brighter place!

First cut out the star shapes with the scissor.

Colour the stars in different colours, cut them out and stick them back to back.

Your star can hang from your Jesse Tree or you can perch it on the top.



If you want to make a more complicated star, you can cut it out of the paper.

Use the paper to make a star that is made of many smaller stars. For the other two stars, the bottom shapes, each with a central hole to make it like the shape of the Jesse Tree.

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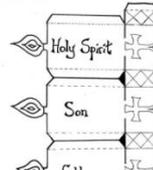
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How to print out the star



Get along the lines that have spaced the stars showing the Jesse Tree and the base of each with stars. The small ones are for the top of the Jesse Tree.

A full page of the Jesse Tree.



Put the stars on the Jesse Tree and the base of each with stars. The small ones are for the top of the Jesse Tree.

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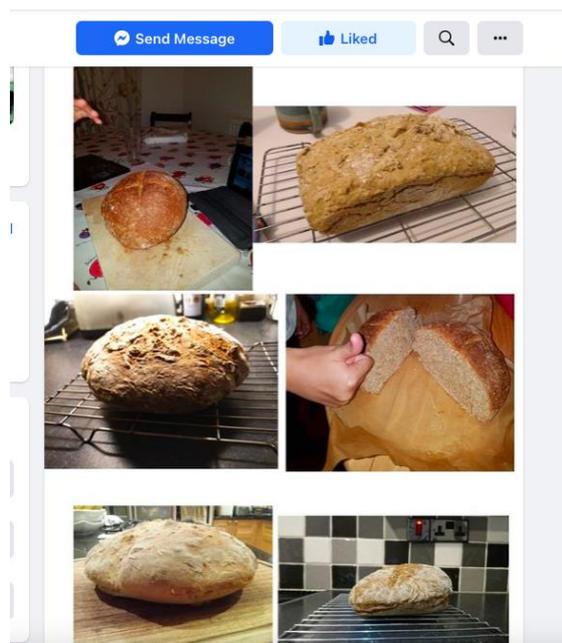
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We have continued working on our online presence and communications.

<https://familyprojectleader.wordpress.com>

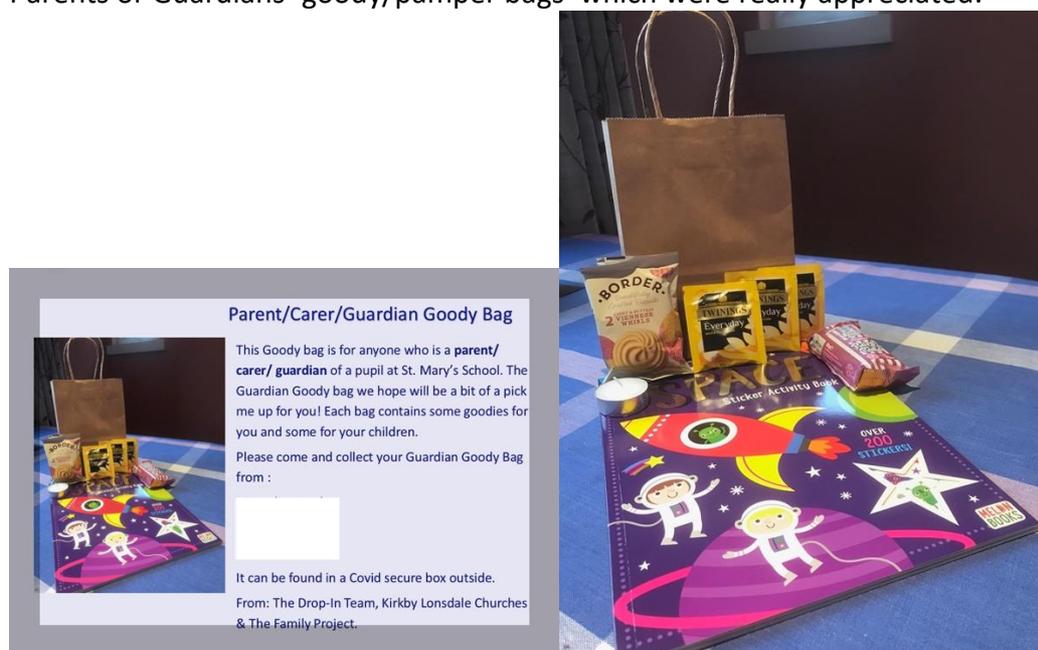
<https://www.facebook.com/familiesinlunesdale/>

Weekly online services including creative prayers and rituals and tasks that families could participate in during lockdown, many of the key activities have been online, including the Youth group, Messy Church, Storytelling and Prayer activities. The online youth club has been ambitious in its program including making soda bread!



As time living with Covid goes on it is apparent that our response will require a greater Pastoral emphasis in supporting families who are struggling with covid related stress and or

financial difficulties. The safe space listening is already and will increasingly become important. Currently we are offering online spaces for people to meet on zoom, have a cup of tea and chat about their week. This has been specifically offered to the 'See and Know' group, for parents with children under five, plus there has been an open session for parents and guardians of children who attend a local primary school. We have responded to the pressure parents/guardians who are home schooling have experienced, through the creation of Parents or Guardians 'goody/pamper bags' which were really appreciated.



Parent/Carer/Guardian Goody Bag

This Goody bag is for anyone who is a **parent/ carer/ guardian** of a pupil at St. Mary's School. The Guardian Goody bag we hope will be a bit of a pick me up for you! Each bag contains some goodies for you and some for your children.

Please come and collect your Guardian Goody Bag from :

It can be found in a Covid secure box outside.

From: The Drop-In Team, Kirkby Lonsdale Churches & The Family Project.

2. What has proved most *successful* so far, has this altered your approach?

We do not feel there is a single notion of what has proved most successful, the different activities give different opportunities for engagement. I would say that it is the combined effect of everything that is working. There is a growing interest and engagement in activities which relate to the outdoors, and that which enables families to reflect and connect with the natural world. As stated in our previous report this is due to a growing impetus and urgency to respond to Climate change and create a sustainable future. There is opportunity to explore God's creation and the theological questions about our responsibilities as stewards and what the social gospel, including care of the Creation means. As already stated in the report above, during Covid the need to facilitate outdoor activity has come more to the fore especially as it is more of a challenge to meet in buildings with children. This kind of engagement appeals to volunteers, families and other stakeholders.

We have had opportunity to partner with the Studio School which is the first Rural Studio school in the country. The students created and set up an installation 'Social Butterfly' in the grounds of the Church. Raising awareness of mental health and well-being.

Social Butterfly

Please Help!
To show your support, would you be willing to display handmade original butterflies in your shop, car or home window? These have been made by our students & will be available for collection from the porch of St. Mary's Church from 2 April. Please support us!

Follow Us!
@L1LT_SocialB
Social_butterfly_2021
We Are Kirby Lonsdale
Around Kirby Lonsdale

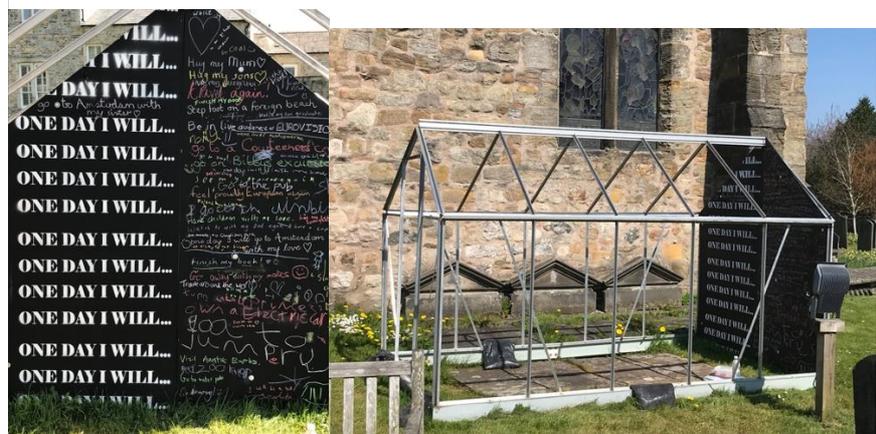
Art Installations
Interactive art installations will be placed in the three outdoor church spaces in Kirby Lonsdale. These will be completed by 2 April and ready for the local community to engage with. Please get involved!

Supporting Each Other
The aim of this project is to unite young people with the local community through the medium of art, offering spaces to reflect together, following the emotional impact of Covid-19.

Special Thanks To:
The Big Vision
THE CHRISTOPHER HORNS CHARITABLE TRUST
ZEBRA ELECTRICAL

Donations
All funds raised will be donated to Brathay Trust's 'Young Minds Matter' charity. If you'd like to donate to us, please visit: www.brathay.org.uk/youngmindsmatter
HUGE thanks in advance.

QES QESudio
A Whole Schools & Community Project
Reflecting on the Emotional Impact of Covid 19



Muddy Church was launched in February with a treasure hunt to discover painted stones hidden around the Town. This will continue through the year; the families have been decorating and erecting Bird boxes around the Churchyard and Glebe and are looking at making Hedgehog boxes and Bug Hotels! This is also providing a link into the local Scouting group.



In time for Holy week a Churchyard trail was set up in the form of an 'Easter egg Hunt' telling

the Easter story using prompts, QR Codes and props.



We invited families to create an Easter tree, decorating eggs supplied by us and writing messages of hope and hanging on a tree in the Church yard.

E A S T E R T R E E

- Pick up a craft egg from St. Mary's Porch.
- Take it home and decorate it.
- You may want to write a hopeful message on it!
- Return and hang on our Easter Tree in the Churchyard by the 4th April to remind us of Easter, hope and new life.

Together we can create a colourful Easter tree filled with our communities hopes and dreams.



As we go forward, we can see the outdoor opportunities being a key part of the project along with developing the partnership with the wider community in curating the historical sacred spaces and buildings, and interpreting the heritage and story of people and faith in this Town.

Alongside this the activities that involve story-telling, both traditional folk stories and biblical stories seem to have connected with families and provides a way to consider moral, ethical and spiritual issues. We have used professional story tellers for a couple of events.

Re-framing Halloween, an event with Storyteller in the Church yard using stories to explore the people, their stories and lives. How does faith make a difference? Using the Glebe Land again to have a fire pit to share food and story-telling.

One of our team members focussed on Storytelling during her sabbatical with a view to employ this medium in our work.

On Good Friday we created a Labyrinth in the Churchyard, inviting people to use it for quiet reflection, focussing on 'journey toward God' carrying with them a stone to leave at the foot of the cross (fixed to a tree in the centre of the Labyrinth). This has created a lot of interest amongst all age groups in the community including visitors. The pile of stones has mounted, and it has been very powerful and humbling to witness people engaging with this Ancient Spiritual practice. I think it has been a timely activity to focus people's sense of loss, anxiety and give them permission to grieve, to let go and to look forward as they leave their stone at the cross of Christ.



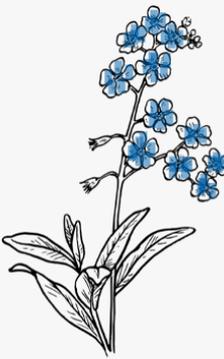


When we have undertaken activities for the whole community new families have joined in with idea of **loving and blessing** our community. An example of this was the Forget-me-not project. Where we printed envelopes with a message and filled with seeds and they were delivered to every house in the town and surrounding villages. The idea was to invite people to grow their Forget-me-nots as a memorial to all we had both lost but also gained this last year looking forward in the Easter Hope Christ brings.

Forget-me-not!

This year has been truly extraordinary, it's a year we will never forget! It has been a time of loss and pain, but we have also witnessed great love, compassion and community strength. Plant these seeds as a sign of hope and a reminder that we will never forget all that we have both lost and gained.

As we celebrate Easter we are reminded God is a God of Healing, Hope & New Life!
 May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace.




A gift from ki.church
 (the churches in and around [Kirby Lonsdale](http://KirbyLonsdale))

Emerging from Covid reveals people are cautious and reluctant to commit in advance to activities. We have discovered at present that people are more responsive to activities they can dip in to and decide to join at the last moment. This seems to resonate with the behaviour of people within church as they decide what roles and activities to take on after a long period of not meeting physically. We hope that after a period, confidence will increase as people re-connect and life finds a new level of normalcy.

Recently a Summer Churchyard Bee trail, beautifully illustrated by a member of one of our churches, provided Godly conversations about the life of Bees, conservation, and reflections about faith. It was very well received by local families and visitors who engaged with the installation.



3. What *problems* have you had and how have they been overcome?

Clearly the work has had to adapt in a significant way during life with Covid. See 4. This is likely to present an on-going challenge requiring further creativity, innovation and boldness to try new things.

Prior to Covid, we were working hard to recruit and mobilise volunteers. This is probably the most challenging aspect of sustaining the project, we have expected a lot of them this year and we will need to be mindful of pacing events and activities. Managing the well-being of volunteers alongside developing the work is paramount! Those who have engaged in the leadership of aspects of the project have grown in confidence, having been supported and resourced by the project leader. The Youth group for example is now self-supporting with the project leader having stood back to focus on other aspects of the project. Some consideration will be given to developing discipleship with possibly a tailored and contextual discipleship course which we may write ourselves or using a recognised course such as Alpha.

4. How has *coronavirus* affected your work? How have you done things differently?

Taking activities online has been a challenge, Lol the project leader adapted quickly along with the rest of the team who have continued to work as an ecumenical team to deliver the outcomes. These developing skill sets have become more familiar and consolidated. There is a general sense that people are 'zoomed out' which makes the outdoor opportunities so much more necessary. Whilst all people groups have been impacted by covid we are very aware that families with children have been impacted in a significant and particular way. We have sought to respond to this by all of the above. We have achieved to some level involving families in the filming and creating, to encourage active participation and partnership with families. We are in an ongoing learning environment.

Lol worked hard to stay connected with families through social media and messaging. She and the volunteers produced material for families to use at home and developed new skills in simple animations for storytelling and participated in services using creative forms of prayer. See:

<https://www.facebook.com/familiesinlunesdale/videos/289868042174764>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leimg9cUf0s&t=10s>

Our parent/carer and Under 5's group has now restarted with physical gathering. We have gained many new families with 30-40 parents attending in recent weeks from the middle of September. This is encouraging and a sign that parents are seeking to engage with our activities and enjoy the spaces our buildings offer.

5. Is there anyone you could approach who could help you to have a *greater impact* (including communications)?

e.g. through providing training/equipment enabling you to work more effectively

Several of the team have accessed online training sessions on media provided by our institutions and Diocese, but we have found that active trial and error has probably taught us more. We have recently connected with the New Diocesan person employed to facilitate and support digital comms across the district.

6. Please give a numerical indication of your project's *impact*. Is this in line with what you planned? How are you addressing this? Please refer to your agreed activity plan and provide comments for each activity.

e.g. number of people visited, change in the congregation size, percentage increase in youth projects etc.

Prior to Lockdown our outdoor activities such as Graveyard stories at All Hallows had increased attendance from a handful of families to 60 families. This activity is scheduled again in 2021.

The physical activities in the churchyard have been seeing equally good engagement.

The Youth group began from a standing start and has had regularly up to 12 young people some of whom have continued meeting online. The numbers have dropped during Covid but we are now reviewing, and reconnecting with physical meeting.

Whole school engagement with 'Open the Book'

130 attendees including families attended the Open-air service on the Glebe on Easter Sunday

Online engagement

Up to 1000k views for one Messy Church online.

The Labyrinth has had 1.9 k engagement.

One of the stories reached over 3,000 views.

Core of around 48 families connecting with the online story-time.

Weekly worship settled to an average of 120.

We now have strong connections with the schools and other key organisations across the

Town who are increasingly aware of and engaged with the values of the Family Project.

Due to our relationship with St Mary's Primary School we currently have 2 classes using the Methodist church this term for teaching whilst the school roof is being repaired!

7. Please give us a *qualitative* indication of the impact of your project.

e.g. an increase in commitment shown by volunteers, improved feedback from those benefiting from your work, a deepening of discipleship or spirituality, churches reporting positive response from attendees, etc.

There is a growing awareness and appreciation of the role of the church and the project in the Town. The other organisations such as the TC and Community Interest company and the New Studio school have been pro-active in partnering with us. There has been a distinct change of attitude and openness for dialogue. When issues are discussed in the Town we are now perceived as being an essential member around the table rather than irrelevant or an occasional contributor.

Our new parents have stepped up into roles and are initiating not just 'helping'.

There is a real openness to talk about faith and human flourishing and especially in recent times people reaching out for reassurance and prayer.

Two of our smaller very rural village churches had an increased attendance from local families at Christmas Open air Carol services.

An important aim and core value which has developed through the project and the Big Vision is that we don't want to do things **for** people, but to do things **with** them. This is quite a different approach from traditional models of mission. We are discovering that to involve people from the outset in planning for activities and events and birthing ideas is more effective. People are keen and willing to be involved if they have been part of the process. The conversations about faith then become a natural part of the process, introducing prayer in committing plans to God and discussing the value and effects of activities afterwards with those involved.

The Project leader is also now contributing to the learning and development of the District's

Pioneer work, sharing lessons learned, good practice and resources.

8. What single story would you tell people to convince them to support your project?

Please note: stories about successful projects are extremely helpful in aiding fundraising and may be used in Methodist publications. Any relevant photos you have which we may use would also be a tremendous help, please ensure you have the relevant permissions.

St.Patrick's Youth Group moved online at the very start of the pandemic. We were keen as a team to offer support to these families and young people during such a fast-changing time where everything else they knew was altering. Our numbers have altered online. They are not as consistent as our numbers meeting in person, some weeks dipping as low as 2, but we have continued to meet and simply be there regardless of the numbers who showed up each week. Offering space for conversation, group challenges, a space for creativity and art, prayer and faith conversation seems to have been important and it has been received and appreciated greatly by these families.

Six months into offering this, the team received an email from a parent saying how much of a lifeline St. Patrick's Youth Group had been to one of the young people. Just before the pandemic this young person had moved schools. This young person had only met their new classmates for a few weeks before all learning moved online. Making new friendships online was tricky for this young person as different social pressures were appearing amongst this peer group than this young person had encountered before. Some of this we already knew, as at youth group, during the sharing time, this young person had asked the group for advice on how to handle a situation that had occurred online. On paper this situation wasn't significant, it was merely how to handle creating friendships in a new space where the peer group had different rules or ways of accepting this person than they had experienced before. What was fantastic to witness as a leader, was all the advice that was given, came from their current peers at Youth Group. Friends this person had known from Youth Group for at least two years, some of them were also friends from their previous school. The Youth Groups wisdom was wonderful to see. They affirmed this young person and also prayed for them. It was a genuine outpouring of love and care. The leaders simply sat and listened.

St.Patrick's Youth Group's transition online was hard at the start, with many young people missing the physical games we offered in person and also some finding Zoom simply too tiring. Yet. in time we also saw an increase in young people willing to pray out loud for the first time. They also used the whiteboard function on zoom to draw their prayers and were happy for these prayers to be used in our church online services too. They seemed more confident and able to pray online. We are still unsure why this is. It may be a combination of combining their home space (where they physically are) with the space of Youth Group (online). Either way it feels a privilege to witness, and we believe as a team these roots will continue to develop and grow when we are able to meet back together in person in the future.

9. What is your current exit strategy?

e.g. what actions are you taking to find other sources of funding? Will volunteers need to complete the project in your absence? What are you doing to prepare for this? What will

happen to your project when Connexional grant-funding comes to an end?

We have begun the process of forward planning. Due to the project starting later due to recruitment and in particular the changing nature of physical activities during Covid the projects actual operating costs have been less than expected. We have agreement to carry funds over and extend the initial contract period by 1 year to September 2022 with the permission of our Grant Bodies. The financial commitment from the Parish/Diocese has been confirmed for the next 4 years to 2026, work will now begin on plugging the funding gap. The Churches are reviewing the project on 16th October and 20th November. The aim for the next year is to allow for the development of volunteers to continue the various groups and activities at the end of the current funding period. Very significantly alongside the Family project the churches are working on a second project 'The Big Vision' this is an important and bold project which we believe will be an exciting opportunity for the development of buildings, heritage, sacred spaces and outside spaces to increase the opportunity and impact of the Family project. The Big Vision project is being undertaken in partnership with the community. Kirkby Lonsdale is a unique place for many reasons, it has become a very popular destination for visitors. Our local Parish church is a medieval building in a beautiful setting and is valued greatly by community and visitors alike. The Big Vision includes the aim for the buildings and land to be used much more creatively. The setting lends itself to the Creative and performing arts and Heritage, and Education. This is a huge opportunity to open up the Family project further to involve families through these mediums in exploring faith, community development and well-being.

The developing work of the Family project is linked to the potential of the Big Vision to develop the buildings, sacred spaces, and land for the Spiritual, social, and economic well-being of the community. We have developed a strong relationship with key stakeholders such as The New Studio School, Community Interest Company Town Council, The Rugby Club and others. Our project sits well with the Morecambe Bay Curriculum, Emerging 'Eden lifestyle' from Eden project Morecambe Bay, and our relationship with our local schools. *'This helps to shape the dominant ways of learning in the programme which include learner-driven study, community collaboration, intergenerational activity, playfulness, full bodied play and expeditions. In addition, it will involve learning that is inquiry-based, experiential, situated and outdoor, sensory and immersive, project-based, challenge-focused and learning which follows curiosity.'* <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/arts-and-social-sciences/engagement/morecambe-bay-curriculum/>

It is important to note that the churches signed a significant Ecumenical Covenant in May 2019.

Big Vision Statement

That the Churches, the surroundings and the Rectory buildings are creatively and sustainably utilised for the benefit of the local community, visitors and the Ministry and Mission of the church.

A covenant between the Parish of Kirkby Lonsdale (known as the Rainbow Parish), Kirkby Lonsdale and Cowan Bridge Methodist Churches and St Joseph's Church, Kirkby Lonsdale. Jesus prayed "that they all may be one ... that the world may believe that You sent Me. John

17:21

- We celebrate and affirm the journey of prayer and collaboration over many years that has strengthened the relationship between our churches and enabled our work together to grow. We commit ourselves to continuing that journey together.
- We offer the treasures of our different traditions to help and encourage us on our journey together, at the same time we recognise the need for new expressions of worship to grow and flourish alongside.
- We commit to growing as disciples of Christ and in service to our communities.
- We commit to sharing and developing ministries, resources, and buildings for the benefit of all.

Jesus said "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly". John 10:10

- Together we seek to help everyone in our communities discover more of God and God's purpose for their lives.

10. Please provide a *financial report* showing your funding balance at the start of the year, income, expenditure and balance at the end of the year. Does this match your original budget, do you need to take any action?

Please show whether there are grant funds remaining or unused. You may be asked to returned unused funding if it is not needed.

Attached.

11. Please report against any specific conditions which are listed on your grant agreement

N/A

COMPLETED BY / MAIN CORRESPONDENT:

Name: Rev Wendy Thornton

The Vicarage, Vicarage Lane Kirkby Lonsdale, Carnforth LA6 2BA

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Mob: 07788653000



Please return your completed report to grants@methodistchurch.org.uk
and send a copy to your District Grants Officer.

Thank you