

A
NEWSLETTER
FROM THE ANGLICAN
CHURCHES OF
LANERCOST WITH WALTON,
GILSLAND AND
NETHER DENTON

Inside this Issue

Walton and Leeshill School	3
Communicating with God	4
Letter from Rev,, Tricia	6
Treading Lightly	8
"He gave us eyes to see them"	9

As the King told us, "Wise men say, only fools rush in, but I can't help falling in love with you." Elvis must have been referring to the poet Alexander Pope who wrote, "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

Sadly, although this is a season in which the bible regularly refers to angels, there is no record of them dealing with fools. On the other hand, the bible does have a lot to say about fools. "Fools despise wisdom and discipline," Proverbs 1.7, "The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice," Proverbs 12.15, "Fools mock at making amends for sin," Proverbs 14.9, and my favourite, "The fools says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" Psalms 14.1 I think I would say, the wise man knows he has sometimes been a fool and is always at risk of making the same mistake again.

The wise men whom we celebrate in this season are known for seeking out a new king, following a star, asking for advice, recognising one worthy of

worship, and laying their gifts before him. All we are told about these Wise Men is that they were Magi from the east who came to worship the King of the Jews because they had seen his star. That means that they were probably foreigners of a foreign religion and star gazers; astrologers or astronomers. Yet still they were eager to worship Jesus.

Jesus came for all. Wise people search for him until they find him, no matter what their culture or background. When wise people find Jesus they bow down to worship him as the only proper response to meeting with God and then they lay their treasures before him.

If you have not found him, seek him out. If you have found him, worship him and offer him all your gifts. As we get going into this new year I pray that many will seek and many will find, that we will give all we can to him and he will bless all of us. Happy New Year.

Rev. Ben

Benefice of Lanercost with Walton, Gilsland and Nether Denton

Services in February and March 2026

February Lanercost: 11am

1st Morning Worship
 8th Holy Communion
 15th Holy Communion
 18th 6pm ASH WEDNESDAY:
 Holy Communion
 22nd 1st SUNDAY OF LENT:
 Holy Communion

Walton: 11am

1st Holy Communion
 8th No service
 15th No service
 18th ASH WEDNESDAY join with
 Lanercost 6pm Holy Communion
 22nd 1st SUNDAY OF LENT:
 Morning Worship

Gilsland: 9.30am

1st No service
 8th Morning Worship
 15th No service
 18th ASH WEDNESDAY join with
 Lanercost 6pm Holy Communion
 22nd 1st SUNDAY OF LENT:
 Holy Communion

Nether Denton: 9.30am

1st Holy Communion
 8th No service
 15th Morning Worship
 18th ASH WEDNESDAY join at
 Lanercost 6pm Holy Communion
 22nd No service

March Lanercost: 11am

1st Morning Worship
 8th Holy Communion
 15th MOTHERING SUNDAY:
 Holy Communion
 22nd Holy Communion
 29th PALM SUNDAY
 10am Holy Communion with the
 Northern Cross Walkers

Walton: 11am

1st Holy Communion
 8th No service
 15th MOTHERING SUNDAY:
 Morning Worship
 22nd No service
 29th PALM SUNDAY: Join at Lanercost
 10am Holy Communion

Gilsland: 9.30am

1st No service
 8th Morning Worship
 15th No service
 22nd Holy Communion
 29th PALM SUNDAY: Join at Lanercost
 10am Holy Communion

Nether Denton: 9:30am

1st Holy Communion
 8th No service
 15th MOTHERING SUNDAY:
 Morning Worship
 22nd No service
 29th PALM SUNDAY: Join at Lanercost
 10am Holy Communion

Wednesdays at 10am

there is a short service of Holy Communion alternating between
 St Martin's Church, Brampton and the Priory Church at Lanercost

Brampton: Feb. 4th, 18th & March 4th, 18th ----- Lanercost: Feb. 11th, 25th & March 11th, 25th

All are welcome at any of the services

Vicar, Rural Dean and Mission Community Leader: Revd Ben Phillips

Mobile: 07936 099 123

email: ben@lanercost.net

Walton and Lees Hill CE Primary School News



Caring, sharing and always learning

www.leeshill.cumbria.sch.uk



If we think back to the end of November, the last part of the term and year flew by being filled with excitement and fun filled Christmas fun.

The children and staff then began the worked hard of putting together and rehearsing for such a great Christmas performance for all our families to enjoy, what an amazing performance it was. All pupils were fantastic and really brought the festive cheer.



To begin our Christmas fun, all the children from Reception-Year 6 Pupils headed off to Keswick where they attended Keswick Museum in the morning then headed over to Theatre by the Lake to see the performance of The Wizard of Oz. The performance was mesmerising and was such an amazing Christmas treat.

Pupils and Staff then headed to Walton on December 16th where they had a visit to Walton church and then sang carols around the Village. Lesley from Berry's Tearooms also treated all our children to a hot chocolate to warm us all up. We all enjoyed such a festive afternoon filled with lots of songs and laughter. We hope you enjoyed our carols, and it brought you some well-deserved Christmas Cheer.

Our children then had their annual Christmas party, where we all got together to celebrate the joy and excitement of Christmas together. All the children had such a special fun afternoon together filled with games, dancing, and a yummy Christmas Buffet. Much to the surprise of all the children they had a very special guest all the way

from the North Pole who delivered each child an early Christmas present.



A massive Thank you to everyone who has attended any of our community events this year or who came out to listen to our amazing carol singing. We hope you enjoyed them as much as we did. Look out for more upcoming community events in the future.

The forth coming weeks are promising to be just as exciting, filled with trips out, special visitors and many new learning opportunities inside and outside of school.

We are continuing to grow our amazing Nursery; we continue to have full day and half day places available for both two- and three-year-olds.

We are also recruiting a Teaching Assistant to join school, The role is to support the learning and development of the children in our nursery, who are 2 & 3 year olds, by maintaining the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning spaces and helping children to develop positive routines, although this role is predominantly to work in our Nursery setting, there may be occasional requirement to work with KS1 & KS2.

Please contact the school office by Phone – 0 1 6 9 7 7 2 5 7 7 or Email – admin@leeshill.cumbria.sch.uk if are interested in yourself or your child joining our school family.

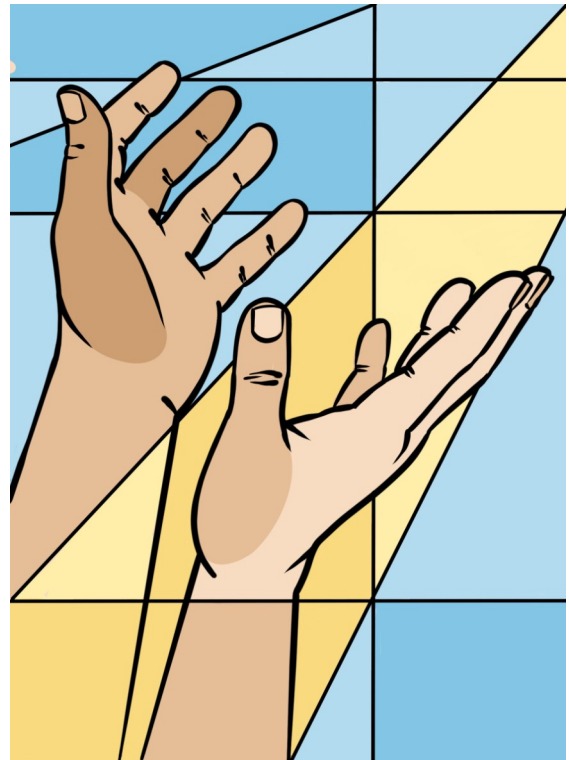
Communicating with God, or Prayer

I have never forgotten attending a service at which a bishop preached a sermon. In it he asked us to consider whether our church was a God – the - Father - church, a God – the – Son - church or a God – the Holy Spirit - church. I thought about this quite a bit and felt that the question also applied to us as individual human beings. Each person is different from every other, with their own genes, upbringing, experience, views and abilities. So it doesn't surprise me to find that these differences affects so much in life, even our picture and experience of God. Are you personally more drawn to God as loving Father Creator, Son and Saviour or Holy Spirit?

So in thinking about prayer it would seem natural that we all approach the subject in our own way. When I knew I was to write this article I prayed about it and nothing seemed to come up except "Make it about prayer" so that what I'm doing here.

I kept thinking and praying about the article but it didn't get written and this afternoon was going to be THE DAY! (I have to hand it in in two days!) However before that, this morning, off I went to sing with the Taize Choir in a service held for the Week of Christian Unity in the Catholic church of Our Lady and Saint Joseph in Carlisle. It was lovely to see so many folk there and to take part in a service led and attended by people from different denominations. Canon Luiz Ruscillo led the service and gave the Homily. In it he referred to the Gospel reading from John 12. 31 – 36. Jesus says that after his death he will draw ALL PEOPLE to himself. The talk went on to speak about the universal love and inclusiveness of God, and warned us against thinking that "our way" is the only and right way. I just felt as if he was "speaking to my condition" as Quakers say, and giving me confirmation of the first paragraph of this article.

What is Prayer? Maybe it could be called "Communication with God". True communication isn't lecturing or begging, it isn't one sided with a dominant participant laying down the law, though it can include all this and much more. True communication is where there is willingness to listen and respect the other, time and space



for both to be heard, with minds open to accept differing points of view or experience and readiness to change behaviour and opinions if that becomes clearly appropriate.

The early Jews believed that God spoke directly to people. We have the lovely story of the boy Samuel responding to God's call in the night and Elijah hearing the quiet voice after the storm had died down. In the New Testament the voice of God is heard by Jesus and by those around him on several important occasions, at his baptism for instance, though some of the listeners don't always realise what's happening and interpret God's voice as thunder or angels singing.

In our western Christian culture direct communication with God was at first through a priest as intermediary until religious movements in later centuries urged people to pray for themselves, building a personal relationship directly with God.

So where can this take place? When I was at a High Anglican secondary school my headmistress was horrified to hear that I prayed in bed, but I must admit I still like to say two prayers as I go to sleep and I always pray in the shower. Others find their closest communication with the divine on a mountain top, as Jesus liked to do. For many

it's while listening to music that they find themselves transported out of their everyday selves. Or we may draw closest to God in a church or temple, or at a little shrine which we create at home.

And how to do it? At a Quaker meeting such communication takes place during an hour of silence or through a short, spontaneous Spirit led piece of ministry during the silence. Many of us love prayers which we've prayed often during the litany of a church service – I particularly love the Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Of course probably the most well known, loved and prayed prayer is the one that Jesus taught – the Lord's Prayer.

All of these are word based but many people draw close to God through singing or dancing – it is very interesting to an outsider to experience the dance of the Muslim Sufis. Many cultures use repetition, repeating a short prayer over and over again as members of the Christian Meditation movement do and as we do in song in the Taize movement. Many followers of other faiths favour repetition, both internal and said or sung. To whom do we address our prayers? All are part of communication with God, the divine, but to return to my first paragraph, as we're all different we may find it comes naturally to pray as if speaking to one aspect of the divine rather than another. Many Christians love the Hail Mary prayer, as they prefer to speak through a feminine helper. The Lord's Prayer begins "Our Father.." which may be difficult for those who have sadly not experienced love from a father. Many have the good fortune to experience a personal relationship with Jesus and would speak to and through him.

Well, this article has rambled on as I explore the subject of prayer. Why am I doing it? Well, because I felt that that was what I was called to do. Hopefully you may find it interesting, thought

provoking, encouraging or helpful. Because what I hope you already do, or will be inspired to do, is to pray yourself, in whatever way brings you closer to God. You may not hear a voice from the sky in answer, you may not have all your requests granted, you may have times when God seems far away and even to be ignoring you, but doing anything worth doing requires perseverance so don't give up. Ask for help, pray privately, with your friends or in a congregation, join a prayer group or go on a silent retreat but remember, God is waiting for you and loves to hear from you so KEEP PRAYING!

Jo Grundy

Hop on over for our

EASTER Craft fair

Lanercost Dacre Hall

Thursday 2nd April 2026 -
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A letter from Rev. Tricia

Dear Friends

What do you feel about change? How do you cope with it?

For some people change is very difficult and they find it disorientating, whereas others welcome it, as it means they can start again on something new.

However you view it, change is a constant part of our lives. We only need to look in the mirror to see that. After a recent funeral, the family had put out old photograph albums and a slideshow on a projector screen with photos of their loved one and family. It was really interesting to see how each decade had brought change: in clothing, babies being born, house decorating styles, and grey hair appearing !

As I write this letter we are already part way into January 2026, - a new year; and there is the sense of change and a beginning again.

Change is happening in the Church too. I will have moved on by the time you read this and have started my retirement. Hopefully before long a new Rector will begin as part of the Brampton Deanery Area Ministry Team.

Sometimes we need to move on not quite knowing where we will end up, or what things will eventually look like. We have to let go of the familiar and open our mind to new possibilities. As comfortable as it is sometimes to stay put, our faith calls us to move on, to go forward.

When we move on it doesn't mean we lose all that we had before, inevitably we take some of what we had with us. For me it will be the friendship you have shown to me in these last few years... amongst many, many other things.

As much as change is sometimes uncomfortable, change is part of God's world and part of His plan for us. But we can rejoice that some changes can be very positive and hold on to the words found in Jeremiah 29:11

"I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord . "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

So let the changes come. We will not walk in fear, but in faith! We will trust God with all the changes ,and know that He is more than able to help us and that He even has plans to bless us.

With love and prayers

Tricia



USED POSTAGE STAMPS AT THE PRIORY CHURCH

- I have now decided to ask you all to stop collecting your used postage stamps for the Priory Church. Thank you to everyone who has donated their old stamps in past years. It is more difficult to find charities that now easily accept used stamps and postage rates have increased. I have a large number of stamps still to process – I think everyone had a good clear-out during the Covid lockdowns!
- Barbara Riches tel. 016977 42761 or email barbara.j.riches@gmail.com
- If anyone knows a good collection point for used stamps and/or would like to continue collecting and passing them on to charities, please get in touch - contact details above.
- Thank you.

Emmanuel

'God is with us!' The scriptures proclaim,
A reminder especially at Christmas time.
The birth of a child - any child – reason for joy;
A miraculous event surrounded by mystery.

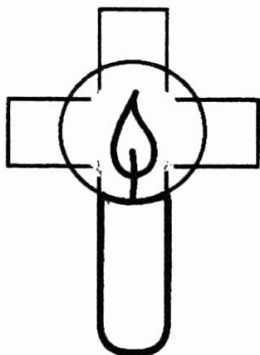
Now is the time, the only time there is,
A continuous event, born in us today.
Thousands of years old, but forever new;
The child – a guiding light for all to see.

The unthinking child in each of us
Enables a pause in ordinary consciousness,
Revealing an awakening to the Light of Love
Which pervades the world and all in it.

A realisation that we are all one body,
And our soul is in touch with that of all creatures.
The assurance of an indestructible and immortal
life,
Gives a joy immense and inexpressible.

All this because a child is born.
His name, our name, is Emmanuel.

Bob Morley, December 2025



From the Registers Funerals

Nether Denton

15th Nov. 2025 Margaret Gail Philipson

Gilsland

2nd December 2025 Doreen Little

Lanercosted@gmail.com

Walk the Wall Good Friday Walk of Witness April 3rd

It is several years since members of the local churches joined together to carry a cross walking beside Hadrian's Wall the six miles from Gilsland to Lanercost but this year it will be happening again.



Starting with a **9am breakfast in Gilsland Village Hall** (eggs and hot cross buns) we will be setting off from **Gilsland School car park at 10.30**, crossing the Irthing on the Millennium Bridge at Willowford and then making our way along the road towards Banks Turret car park. Here we will pause for a lunch break and to meet up with anyone who would prefer a shorter walk. We will arrive at Lanercost in plenty of time for the Deanery service.

If you would like to join the walk, please email Alison.marymag@gmail.com—just to let us know you are coming and where you will join us.

If you would like breakfast please book your egg(s) and bun(s) by emailing Alison as above.

PLEASE COME AND JOIN IN

Treading Lightly

Are you looking for simple ideas on how to take action for the climate and nature?

Sustainability isn't a one-time effort; it's a continuous journey. Small actions can lead to significant impact. So, throughout the year fresh ideas will be published in each issue in the hope that this will help you to undertake those small actions that can really make a difference.

So here are two ideas for you to try out over the next two months.
These ideas are taken from La Rocha UK's Easy Eco tips calendar.

February

This Lent, take part in Climate Steward's Carbon Fast. Lent is a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God. The Carbon Fast will help you consider ways to live more simply, give you new ideas to cut your carbon footprint and invite you to focus on God and consider the whole of his creation. Beginning on 5 March, you'll receive a weekly email containing key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint and a prayer to lead you through this Lenten season. Each week features a different theme designed to help us take climate action in manageable ways that bear witness to a God who has promised to restore all of his creation. Find out more and sign up at climatestewards.org/resources/carbon-fast/



March

Take part in a local litter pick or beach clean during The Great British Spring Clean (Friday 13-Sunday 29 March), the nation's biggest mass-action environmental campaign. Litter picking benefits the environment by removing rubbish that can be hazardous for wildlife and helps bring people together. See if there's a litter pick in your local area or consider organising your own - after church on Sunday or with a youth group for example. Pray for your local area as you do the litter pick and ask God for opportunities to share why you are doing it. Find out more and pledge to pick up a bag at keepbritaintidy.org/our-work/eliminating-litter/great-british-spring-clean



For more practical ways to enjoy, nurture and defend nature, sign up to A Rocha UK's Wild Christian email: arocha.org.uk/wild-christian

What will you do for Easter 2026?

Share the fellowship of walking towards one of the most memorable Easter celebrations you'll ever have. Walking from Carlisle to the holy island of Lindisfarne, arriving at Beal on Good Friday ready to cross the pilgrims way onto the island and a weekend of celebration.

This years dates are 28th March – 5th April 2026 and we have spaces on the Carlisle leg.

You can find out more at <https://northerncross.co.uk/about-us/>

If you'd like to join us please contact us by emailing walk@northerncross.co.uk



God in the Arts— “He gave us eyes to see them”

Have you ever thought how an actual church building might provide a series of visual aids to spiritual meditation? The Revd Michael Burgess has written a series of articles leading us on a journey through the church building.

The Church Door

George Herbert is a much-loved Anglican poet, who died just 40 years old in 1633. His volume of poems ‘The Temple’ was published later that year. In it the poet leads the reader through the church door into the building to meditate on all that is seen inside. That procession through the church is the theme of our monthly articles this year. We shall visit a variety of English churches as we make our way from the font to the altar. We begin this month outside the glorious Norman building of St John’s Church, Adel, near Leeds in West Yorkshire.

The church has a very fine south doorway with ornate carving. The oak door is a Victorian copy of the original door; the Sanctuary Ring is a replica of the Norman ring/knocker. It shows a monster about to swallow



Credit: Tim Green, Wikimedia Commons

low a man, but open the door and there is safety and protection away from the harms of the world. It is the theme in St John’s Gospel of Jesus as the door to the sheepfold. Enter through Jesus, we are told, to find the safety of the flock, and also to find nourishment and renewal. We can stand at the door of this beautiful church or at the door of our own churches. It opens and welcomes us to enjoy the friendship and refreshment within.

The door could stay closed, protecting us from the storms of life without that threaten us like the dark creature in the Norman sanctuary ring of Adel church. But we know that in the church building we have no abiding city. Our worship ends and the door will open once again to lead us out into that world. Within we have found nourishment in the sacrament of the altar, in the word of scripture, and in the fellowship of the flock. We go out to share those gifts with the world that others may come to know Jesus as the door that leads to life eternal.

Lanercosted@gmail.com

The Font

Open the door of that church or any church and the first thing to greet our eyes is the font. It marks the beginning of Christian life in the church. Many fonts have fine carvings of the seven sacraments that nourish the Christian. Others are octagonal in shape: a reminder of Noah and his seven family members saved in the ark from the Flood.

This month’s font is a symbol of the ship sailing the seas of life. It is in St



George’s Church Anstey, in Hertfordshire. Around the font are carved mermen - mythical, pagan creatures that belong to a pre-Christian age which the newly baptised is called on to renounce. When it was carved in the 11th-12th centuries, baptism occurred within eight days of birth. Babies would be immersed three times into the waters of the font: dying to the old life symbolised by the mermen, and rising to new life, to be clothed in a white robe and given a lighted candle as a guide through life. They would then grow up in the church, moving from that west end through the upturned boat of the nave to the altar at the east end.

That movement is a sign of the pilgrimage we are all called to make. Like a journey on the seas of this world, we may sail through tranquil waters and peaceful days. There may be times when the skies are cloudy and the waters stormy. Martin Luther, when he was faced by struggles like that in his life, would say the words ‘I am baptised’ to strengthen and reassure himself. ‘I am baptised’ we can say as we travel in faith, knowing that there is always a light to guide and a goal that is sure and eternal.

The Revd Michael Burgess

PANCAKE DAY

TUESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY

Fancy savoury or sweet pancakes
on Shrove Tuesday? (or both!)

Come and enjoy delicious food
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From 11.45 until 12.45

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Green Door Centre

during term time
for those in Secondary school

play
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school aged
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followed by Extra 8.30-9.00pm
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Each time there is some spiritual food for thought

For more info contact: Ruth Hutchinson, Green Door Centre,
Main street, Brampton, CA8 1RS. Office: 016977 42123

Fixed Term, Part Time, Teaching Assistant Walton and Lees Hill CE Primary School

Lees Hill, BRAMPTON, Cumbria, CA8 2BB

PCD5 £25989.00 (A), per annum, pro rata, term time only

The Governors of Walton and Lees Hill CE Primary School are looking to appoint a dedicated and enthusiastic Teaching Assistant to work in the governor led nursery at our friendly, rural school. This post is to start on Monday 23rd February or sooner until 17th July 2026 and will be 32.5 hours per week, over 5 days, 8.30am – 3.30pm with some scope for flexibility. The role is to support the learning and development of the children in our nursery, who are 2 & 3 year olds, by maintaining the stimulating indoor and outdoor learning spaces and helping children to develop positive routines, although this role is predominantly to work in our Nursery setting, there may be occasional requirement to work with KS1 & KS2.

-This appointment is due to budgetary funding and pupil numbers.


Walton and Lees Hill CE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our young people, all appointments will be subject to satisfactory references and enhanced DBS check.

Closing date: Friday 6th February 2026 at 12 noon

Interviews shall be held: w/c 9th February 2026

Visits to the school are welcome and can be made by contacting school on 016977 2577

Further details, including an application form, job description and person specification and available to download from our school website: www.leeshill.cumbria.sch.uk

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Reader with Permission to Officiate	David Bamford	01697 508157	
Local Lay Ministers with permission to officiate	Jo Grundy	01228525284	
Retired Clergy	Rev'd Malcolm Riches	016977 42761	
Wardens: Lanercost	Chris Angus	Burtholme East, Lanercost CA8 2HH	016977 41504
	Barbara Riches	13 Edmondson Cl, Brampton CA8	016977 42761
Walton	Philip Knowles	Emeritus	016977 41232
	Charlotte Shaw	The Old Vicarage, Walton, CA8 2DH	016975 43002
Gilsland	Alison Higgs	alison.marymag@gmail.com	016977 47409
	Owen Wilkins	Owen.stmarymag@gmail.com	
Nether Denton	Amanda Nixon	amanda.nixon67@gmail.com	07968 983664
	Allan Cathers	Allergarth, Banks, Brampton CA8 2JH	016977 41645

Safeguarding Officers for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Lanercost with Walton

Charlotte Shaw 016975 43002

Gilsland:

Keith Nightingale 07736725143

Nether Denton

Amanda Nixon 07968 983664

Carlisle Diocese Safeguarding Advisor

Joanna Van Lachterop 07458 016884

safeguarding.adviser@carlisle-diocese.org.uk

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Electronically: this is a two stage process!

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Please state whether you want a paper version or digital (PDF) version. Both are available.

Make sure to include an address for delivery/ collection or email address as appropriate

Deadline for the next issue 20th March

Please submit copy to Alison Higgs, editor at :

Lanercosted@gmail.com