

We were pleased to welcome Revd Jim Booth and his wife Carol to our February lunch meeting. He spoke about Christian Unity, which was the title chosen for his original date during the week for Christian Unity in January.

He began with a reading from John ch17 which talks about Christ's relationship with God and our Unity in following Christ. He felt that there was a difference in Unity in Christian people and Unity in Church buildings and that the two are often treated as one, which is not the case.

First of all however Jim told of his life in Côte d'Ivoire in Western Africa. There was a strong following of Methodism there and in 1978 he and Carol volunteered for service, she as a teacher and he as a youth worker. They worked there for three years and then returned home when Jim took holy orders but both returned in 1984.

He found that the Christians there were confused as different denominations seemed to be preaching differently. The coming together of all Christians happened at the annual Remembrance service where the message was that there were differences but that all should aim to be "the best they could be regardless of denomination".

He then worked in Windsor where he oversaw the renovation of the Methodist church, using the Catholic one whilst theirs was out of action, and was very proud when the Queen opened the renovated building. He was moved when a member of the congregation, at Easter service, looked at the plain cross of Methodism which was on the altar just below the Catholic crucifix and realised that we are all followers of Christ but just had different traditions..

He then went on to serve in Liverpool where there was a great coming together at the priestly level but not so much at the ground level.

Jim finished his talk with the reminder that we should respect diversity in worship, and use our Christian faith to guide our service to the world.

The vote of thanks was given by Richard Starkey who remembered attending ecumenical services in various parts of the world and thanked Father Jim for his enlightening talk.

Ann Wren then advised us of the World Day of Prayer service to be held at Dunscore church on March 4th at 2.00.

We were very happy to welcome a number of visitors, men and women, to our meeting and an open invitation is extended to all to attend our meetings.

DATES for your DIARY

26 March. Diocesan Spring Council on ZOOM 10.00 ask for details

5-7 April. Provincial MU retreat at Kinnoull, Perth

21 April. Postponed Christmas Lunch, Edenbank meet at 11.45
With talk from Women's Aid representative

23 April. Provincial Gathering at Inverness

9 June. Outing to Ellisland followed by afternoon tea

14 July. Strawberry tea at Sanderling, Glencaple 2.30

21 July. Strawberry tea at Damson Hill, Oakfield Brae 2.30

10 September. "A Conversation with God" our prayerful day 11.00-3.30

19 November. Centenary Thanksgiving Service for MU at St. John's

MU report for March meeting

At our March meeting we were pleased to welcome Lynn and Yosie representing and talking about training Guide Dogs for the Blind. Lynn and her faithful dog, Yosie, travelled down to see us from Glasgow on the train and she was very clear how her life is changed by having Yosie by her side. Training takes over two years and the dog is subjected to many tests to ensure that they can stay focussed and not be distracted by any strange or sudden noises or other dogs. They have to be very reliable as their owner is wholly reliant on their behaviour. Lynn talked fluently for about forty minutes and then answered a variety of questions. The cost of the training for one dog is almost £60,000 and there is a long waiting list of sight impaired people for these wonderful dogs. Yosie is a golden Labrador crossed with a retriever and has an exceptionally placid nature. Lynn told us that these breeds are the best choice, together with German shepherds but she said that chocolate labradors are avoided as they are too excitable. As a charity MU is not allowed to make a donation but individual members made a collection for Lynn to take back to her charity. Glenis Cullen, a great dog lover, gave the vote of thanks and told us that she had sheltered over 60 rescue dogs over the years.

Our April 21st meeting will be held at the Edenbank Hotel when we will gather together for our postponed Christmas lunch and have an update on Women's Aid from a representative of that organisation.

If you would like to join us, please get in touch with our treasurer, Kim Tofield, as soon as possible.

Carolynne Sorrell
Branch Leader