

## A Stitch in Time...

...may save nine... or it may be the first of several thousand... when it comes to cross-stitching church kneelers! Each stitch is a thanksgiving and a prayer.

Cross-stitch art and craft is a mark of Christian faith. It is educational and therapeutic. Requiring concentration, it takes you away from whatever has been causing you stress (didn't Jesus do just that?). It requires an ability to count – in 3's, 7's, and 12's (key biblical numbers). Being able to sort the correct shade out of a multitude of likely options is a gift of discernment; enduring to the end is a mark of forbearance; the completed kneeler is a blessing.

Churches throughout our diocese have been adorned by colourful, picturesque kneelers, often telling a multitude of local stories as well as the gospel ones. One such church is in Howick, Northumberland, where dozens of cross-stitch kneelers rest as a blessing and a witness to the local community of creativity, commitment, resilience, team-work, and back-ache. Each kneeler is unique; each stitch a prayer.

Kneelers can be an effective way of giving a message to those who see them. Here is one stitched by Mothers Union Deanery Leader, Helen Cooper. Depicting wild flowers at harvest time, it reminds us of their vital importance to bees and to the welfare and survival of future generations.



**Mothers Union is currently remembering our 140-year shared history with Newcastle Diocese and Cathedral, and we have been asked to stitch some kneelers for the Chapel of the Resurrection.** If you would like to help make these or to support the costs of materials please contact Jackie Moore (Faith & Policy).

*He gave us eyes to see them, and lips that we might tell how great is God Almighty, who has made all things well.*