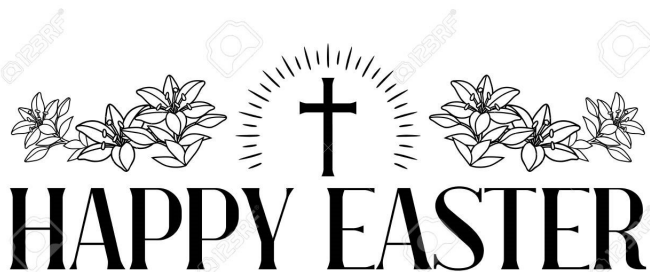


Ponteland Methodist Church

Cornerstone



April 2020

REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES

The regular weekly activities within the Church are outlined below.
There are phone numbers given to ring if you need further information.

SUNDAY

10.00am Morning Service and Sunday Club
6.30pm Evening Service
Holy Communion, morning and evening as announced

MONDAY

1.15pm Prayers
1.30pm Carpet Bowls
1.00pm Open Door
2.00pm Open Door Lenten Bible Study

TUESDAY

2.30pm Women's Fellowship (fortnightly)
6.00pm Boys' Brigade - Anchor Boys
7.00pm Boys' Brigade - Junior/Company sections

WEDNESDAY

5.45pm Girls' Brigade - Explorers (term time only)
6.00pm Girls' Brigade - Junior/Company sections

THURSDAY

9.30am Toddler Thursday (term time only)
7.30pm Women's Focus (fortnightly)
7.30pm Men's Forum (monthly)

FRIDAY

2.15pm Carpet Bowls

SATURDAY

9.30am Meanders (fortnightly, tel: 871844)
10.00am Mini-Meanders (monthly, tel: 821845)

For details of House groups phone Chris Cogan on 0191 271 2637

Minister: Rev Jona Sewell
61 Cheviot View, Ponteland, NE20 9BH. Tel: 822057
E-mail: revjsewell@gmail.com

Church website <http://www.ponteland-methodist-church.org.uk/>

MINISTER'S LETTER

As I write this the nation is on, what's been termed by some, 'lockdown'. It's strange to be planning for 'virtual' Easter services that will be pre-recorded and not delivered in front of a live congregation. It's strange to be exercising ministry via telephone, internet and in the 'virtual' world. It's strange to be sitting in my study hearing barely any traffic pass by on the main road. But these are strange times; unique times, unprecedented times.

We're in a season where people are being told to self-isolate and, if you must go out, to 'social distance'. We've responded by producing pre-recorded worship which is posted online, and by producing a printable 'hard copy' for those without the internet (please let us know if you're not receiving either). But church is about more than worship. As I reflected in a recent video post you may already have seen, the danger as we take these steps to physically care for each other is that we unintentionally cause emotional or mental harm; to ourselves and other people – and our emotional and mental wellbeing is of vital importance too. I came across this quote from Rev. Dr. Inderjit Bhogul, former president of the Methodist Conference and one of my tutors from training:

"I dislike the term "self-isolate". We don't want anyone to isolate or exclude anyone. Of course we want everyone to take care of themselves and others. We are all used to the idea of staying at home for the sake of health. We want to watch over others with love. The commandment to love God, and your neighbour as yourself is best practised in reverse order. Love yourself first. You are number one. Be a sanctuary to yourself. This is not a selfish thought. If you can love yourself and be gentle with yourself you will better be able to love and look and provide sanctuary to your neighbour. As we are advised on aeroplanes, in case of emergency put your own mask on first before you assist others. If you don't you will not be able to help others.

"If you love yourself and your neighbour, you are expressing your love of and for God. This is true spiritual devotion. And remember that Jesus only ever mentioned one number. He said "where two or three are gathered together in my name I am there in the midst of them". Be in touch and in communion with two or three. This is the beginning and deepest form of Church and community. Such contact is manageable whilst worship centres are closed."

I want to remind us all that the church is not the building but the people, and that we can worship God anywhere. I want to encourage each of us to 'be in touch or communion with two or three', and, in that spirit, whilst our usual place of worship is closed, to each take responsibility to call two or three people each day. This will be good for you, and good for them. And in doing so, you will also be expressing your love for God.

If you are struggling, then please don't suffer in silence. Give someone a ring and, if you don't know who to call, call me! I'd love to chat.

May God Bless us all in these extraordinary times.





SHE DESERVES
A LIVING INCOME

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2020

“It’s more than a logo; behind the logo there are families.”

The fortnight got off to a blustery start, with the weather causing the postponement of the information stall outside the Co-op on Broadway. However, when it took place two weeks later it was a huge success with over 100 leaflets handed out to adults and “Storybombs” given to the children. These contained book-marks and a child-friendly story of Edith, a cocoa farmer. Many people told us how they bought Fairtrade goods from their churches, one young man immediately made the connection to what he was learning at school, several people came out showing off a Fairtrade item which they had bought and one elderly woman was very grateful for the reminder that she needed to buy teabags.

The weather again tried to disrupt things for the Traidcraft stall at the Open Door. Many thanks to all those who braved the snow and bought items. £88 of stock was sold. The profit from the stall together with a donation from the Open Door funds were donated to Traidcraft Exchange, £64 in total.

The highlight of this year’s Fairtrade Fortnight was the “Big Brew” held at St Matthew’s Church Hall, when Hugo, Javier Guerrero, a coffee farmer from north-western Peru was welcomed to Ponteland by Deputy Mayor Christine Greenwell. Hugo showed the crowd of over 80 people, crammed into the hall, photos of his coffee-farming family and community in Peru and how their lives had been changed by Fairtrade accreditation. He explained how they had been trained in new farming methods to produce organic coffee, sustainably, and how the increased price paid for their Fairtrade coffee had improved their lives.

Those present were deeply affected by the authenticity of his presentation and his personal witness of the value of Fairtrade accreditation in improving people’s lives, simply by being paid a fair price for their hard work in producing high quality coffee.



Hugo thanked the people of Ponteland for buying Fairtrade coffee from the supermarkets and from church Traidcraft stalls. Hugo was taken on a quick tour of Ponteland to see the river and the Pele Tower, before he returned to London.

The 'Big Brew' made a profit of £817 which was donated to Traidcraft Exchange. This is the Fairtrade development charity, which helps farmers like Hugo to gain Fairtrade accreditation and work their own way out of poverty.

A thoroughly successful Fortnight which saw representatives of all the churches working together with the Fairtrade Town Steering Group. However, the last word must go to Hugo as he summed it up by saying that Fairtrade is, “ **more than a logo; behind the logo there are families**”.

Thank you for your support.

Bev

TRAIDCRAFT

Many thanks to everyone who placed orders recently. As a result, a donation of £46.95 has been made to Traidcraft Exchange.

Also, the Traidcraft online shop continues to do business. If you haven't before browsed their full range of goods, maybe take time in the current circumstances to have a look at

<https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk>

Don't tell anyone, but they still have loo rolls and pasta in stock!

Bev

CORONA LOCKS DOWN COLOMBIA

As the UK entered lockdown, so too did Colombia, even though at the time the measure was announced there had been no fatalities and only 145 cases of COVID 19 in the country. Please remember Tatiana and her family in your prayers and indeed all those in countries where there is not the same free access to health care that we often take for granted.

Bev

CORNERSTONE IN BENWELL

SERVING THROUGH THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Cornerstone has been supported for over 30 years by the Newcastle West Circuit and the Anglican Churches of Benwell in serving people in one of the most deprived areas of the UK. As many of you know, over the past couple of years we have overcome the loss of a third of our income by restructuring. We were about to start growing our service by opening a café when the coronavirus struck.



Most of the people who use Cornerstone, as well as many of our volunteers, immediately had to take precautions because of age and/or underlying health issues. Thus, we had no real choice but to close Cornerstone on Tuesday March 17th. However, we knew that the need for our support would not go away; rather it would grow.

I was concerned that if we and similar organisations in the city just jumped in doing our own thing, the support of those needing help would be neither as efficient nor as effective as the situation demanded. A quick check with a few organisations in the area confirmed this view. I approached Councillor Hazel Stephenson (a ward councillor for Benwell and a church member at Denton Burn) who immediately opened doors for me with the City Council.

Yesterday, Tuesday March 24, the City Council launched **Citylife Line** (<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/public-health-wellbeing-and-leisure/public-health-services/coronavirus-covid-19/citylife>). Cornerstone is one of the organisations ready to provide support through befriending by phone and/or internet; provision of ready-to-eat-meals at home, delivery of groceries and medicine. The City Council will be the point of contact between us and those needing support, so those we support will go beyond our regular clients and volunteers. At the moment we have no idea how much support will be required of us.

But we are getting ready to start, taking account of the crystal-clear social distancing requirements. Accordingly: Nobody over 70 or with underlying health issues or who is pregnant can work outside of their home. However, they can do befriending. If you would like to join us in this service, please let me know.

To ensure social distancing in our 5-star hygiene-rated kitchen there can be only one person. We have a chef volunteer for two days per week. If you know a qualified chef who would like to work with us, we could open for more days if required. We will be providing soup and sandwiches (£3) or a 2-course meal (e.g. pie and veg, dessert; £4); some will get food free. Sandwiches will be made by at least a second person in our dining area outside of the kitchen. Having at least two people well-separated ensures regular safety cover.

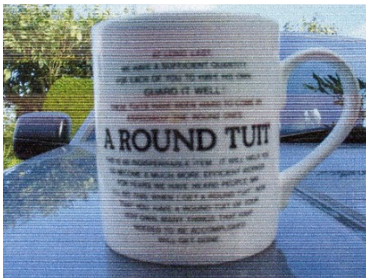
Meal delivery and the delivery of groceries and medicines can be done using our white van. We have a volunteer husband and wife team to do this. If you know someone who would like to help as a delivery-driver we could make the van available to help other organisations as well (the van can only have one person unless a second person is from the same household).

As we have talked of “Risk-Taking Mission and Service” as part of the five principles of fruitful churches we surely did not have the coronavirus pandemic in mind. We will do everything we can to avoid any medical risk as we serve. It has been a tradition of the people of God to serve in times of plague and pestilence. Our NHS has made that tradition of service available to all and we rejoice in that. We have an opportunity to augment the service of the NHS in these challenging times and we accept that with determination. We will serve all who come our way to the very best of our ability and resources with God’s loving care in our hearts and our actions.

Peter Hindle
peter@familyhindle.net
Chair of Trustees

A ROUND TUIT

We all have a huge memory bank full of tasks which we intend to do or have set out in the past to complete. Invariably our good intentions are often thwarted by something else which crops up and temporarily takes priority. I was reminded of this a couple of weeks ago when I took my favourite china mug from the cupboard to make a cuppa, I prefer a china cup or mug for tea or coffee, and I immediately fell into digressive mode and my thoughts were diverted to earlier memories of the Meanders' annual trips to the Lakes and finding John Waddell shared the same strong preference for a China cup for his picnic cuppa! I also had a clear image of Les Danby sitting in the fog above Allenheads with his picnic laid out on a Tea Towel as his tablecloth. Standards were obviously very high on our Meanders. I was brought back down to earth earlier this week when Andy made a plea for articles for Cornerstone and I determined to return to my original intention and share with you the story of my favourite China Mug. One of our friends was aware of my China Mug fetish when she presented me with my Round Tuit some years ago and I have held the story in my memory bank all these years.



*At long last we have a sufficient quantity for each to have his own – **GUARD IT WELL!** These Tuits have been hard to come by especially the Round Ones. This is an indispensable item. It will help you to become a much more efficient worker. For years we have heard people say "I'll do this when I get around to it". Now that you have A Round Tuit of your*

very own many of the things that have needed to be accomplished will get done.

John Turner

TOILET PAPER CRISIS

Ran out of toilet paper and now using lettuce leaves.

Today was just the tip of the iceberg tomorrow Romaines to be seen.



CORONAVIRUS COMMENTS

Week commencing March 23rd

Boris Johnson last night delivered the government list of “dos and don’ts”. Each and everyone of us is now re-scheduling our daily lives in and round the country, certainly in Ponteland, telephone lines have never been so busy as it’s a great time to “phone a friend”. This is when we realise what wonderful friends we have and the Christian love and practical help are so very touching and warming.

Amazingly we are having some really warm Spring sunshine. I’m sitting writing this in my garden. Two pussycats are roly-polying in the sunshine and the bird song is wonderful. But there’s something very strange and that is the sound of silence. Not one aeroplane, not a lorry or car. Only one bus. Also the footpaths along the side and bottom of my garden only have the occasional walker on them, so no sound of voices. Far off in the distance a dog is barking, breaking the silence.

Many of us are being contacted by neighbours whom we have not even met, offering shopping help, posting letters and two lovely leeks have arrived plus potatoes, to make soup.

Today, Wednesday, I saw my Doctor Lily Lamb being interviewed on TV and she is now suffering from the virus and somehow hearing this – the first case in Ponteland - truly brings the situation right up close. I trust she makes a full and speedy recovery.

On the credit side, I feel I have been given the gift of TIME!! It is an amazing experience to actually be in one’s home and to have quality time to catch up with correspondence, reading and Spring cleaning!! For those of us with gardens, this good weather is enticing us outdoors with secateurs, forks and trowels in hand, to make a start. This is a beautiful Spring and the flowers are glorious. Amongst my Primula collection is a very pretty yellow one which was delivered by someone from Church with a lovely little card for Mothering Sunday - what a lovely gesture and such a nice surprise. Thank you.

And now Thank-you to Andy for collecting this article. “All the Best” to everyone who reads this.

Jean Tweedie

NEWS OF SHADE AND NORTHERN KENYA APRIL 2020



Dear Friends,

Greetings from Kenya. I hope you are all keeping safe and well. We are also trying to keep safe and stay at home. Like UK students, Wesley is now having to do online school learning. What a crazy start to the year this has been for Kenya. It's been like one Biblical plague after another. Following exceptional flooding



came a plague of locusts and now coronavirus. It really does make you wonder what more challenges people can cope with, especially those who are already hand to mouth with no resources to fall back on. Mark has been very busy responding to all the crises! Chasing locusts and coor-

ordinating spraying, and now coordinating coronavirus awareness and mitigation in Samburu...he has hardly had a day off for months!

In Kenya the current number of COVID-19 cases is still low (although confirmed cases are 38, the actual number could be higher due to limited testing). Thankfully the Kenyan Government and most people are taking the threat seriously. No-one is shaking hands anymore which is amazing as it's a 'must' social greeting here! The Government has quickly put in measures to curb the spread including curfews, encouraging social distancing and there are handwashing points/sanitizers outside shops everywhere. Or should I say, everywhere urban. In remote and rural places like Loonjorin, there are no such facilities. In close-knit semi-nomadic communities the virus could spread rapidly. There is fear in such remote communities that are hearing about coronavirus but with limited information. Communities like Loonjorin do not have TVs but many people have mobile phones and may have seen much misleading information on social media. The Loonjorin Health Centre nurse and local community health worker (CHW) have been trying to educate and prepare Loonjorin community for if/when the virus arrives in order to minimise transmission. One of the main ways of preventing spread as we

know is frequent handwashing - all very well when you have plenty of water on tap which Loonjorin doesn't. Although there are a few places to wash hands communally, households do not have water on tap, relying on collecting water in containers. When the nurse and CHW told people they need to wash hands frequently they were quick to point out the difficulty of doing so. Washing from containers without a tap poses its own difficulties and risks. So SHADE is looking into purchasing refillable, portable handwashing units with flip taps so that each homestead will have access to at least one. There are 87 homesteads in Loonjorin, each with a number of households living in traditional Samburu huts.

There's good news on the goats SHADE donated through Present Aid. They have now produced three lots of kids each and the scheme will continue to benefit more and more families.

We are grateful to everyone who has been raising funds for the Steve Gray Meeting House; a multi-functional building to be built in Loonjorin. It will be a great facility for so many uses, including seminars, workshops, women's meetings, literacy classes, youth and church meetings. Although construction will have to wait until after the current COVID-19 crisis, we can be raising funds in the meantime, albeit without social events! Now that's a challenge!

Our thoughts and prayers are with you as I'm sure yours are with us. Take care, keep safe and God Bless.

Alison Lesingiran

HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you need any practical help of any kind (e.g. shopping, collecting prescriptions etc.) then please contact Pete Cowey who is coordinating our Church response.

If you wish to volunteer to run errands for others then please pass your details onto Pete.

Pete's contact details:

Email: mrpetecowey@btinternet.com

Tel: **07771 8575**

HANNAH WITNESSES AGAIN

You asked last time about the time when we had two of the Rabbi's men staying, Judas and Philip. Yes, you are right about Judas, he did keep in touch with my husband Baruch, even though they never saw eye to eye about the purpose of the Rabbi's mission. Judas was a driven man and liked to control things.

As you know, Baruch was a thorough-going Zealot and would dearly have liked to encourage Jesus of Nazareth to head a successful revolution. You do not know how thankful I am that my man didn't succeed. I'd be a widow or dead now if he'd let loose the Zealot mob against Rome and the lick-spittle lot who call themselves leaders of Jewry, Scribes, Pharisees, High Priest and all.

Judas is dead now and so is Jesus, but I remember the talk that went on over our dining table whenever Judas came to see us, Baruch sure that the Kingdom was to come with Jesus triumphantly leading to military victory here for God's own people, but Judas sure that the Kingdom was of the Spirit and was Peace and Love and even suffering, as Isaiah prophesied. I remember him saying that if Jesus went Baruch's way he, Judas, would denounce him to the authorities. But he was sure that the Rabbi's Kingdom was not of this world, said that Jesus had told the Twelve that and was totally sincere. If ever he saw Jesus leading a triumph he would be horrified and have to act.

It was two or three years after we first met Judas that a group of Zealots met here in this house. They had heard that Jesus was likely to come to Jerusalem for Passover (he usually did if he could). This was the time for a successful revolt, Baruch believed, and I heard him dictate a letter to one of his following addressed to the Rabbi as 'Son of David' and 'King of Israel' promising a thousand spears to bring about the overthrow of Rome and the enthronement of Jesus as Lord. There would be a sign: the Zealots would leave a warhorse at an agreed place on the road into the City and when Jesus mounted it the Zealots would rise in their thousands and bring in the Kingdom.

"What if he refuses the Kingship, as Judas told us he did up in Galilee?" someone asked. "Then we wait for another opportunity," said Baruch and told the scribe to add that there would be a donkey alongside the warhorse for Jesus to choose if he wanted.

“Are you going to send to Judas to explain these contrary signs?” I asked, but nothing was done about that. Women have no influence in our house!

“Don’t you realise that this is my chance to have some power in the new Kingdom of Israel” was all Baruch said.

Well you know how it all went wrong. Judas chose suicide when he saw the outcome and Baruch went into hiding for years. The People of the Way as they call themselves, claim Jesus as King of Love and that he rose from the grave. I don’t know what to think.

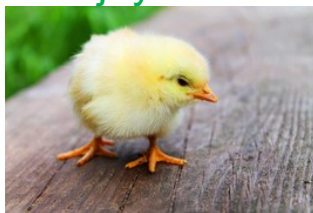
(Derived from “The Man born to be King” D L Sayers 1943)

John M Gill

A Prayer for Easter 2020 **The year of Corona** ASC

This strange Easter our hearts give thanks for -
new life in gardens & beauty of sky;
safety of home & love shared;
those providing health & social care, food, wa-
ter, fuel, communications;

This strange Easter our hearts long for-
the pandemic to end;
tests, cures & vaccines to be available;
healing of the world in body, mind and spirit;
that the kingdom of God will come and resur-
rection joy will be ours!



Ann Cooper

HAVE A 'HAIKU MOMENT'
when your mind stops and your heart moves

Originating from Japan, a Haiku is a 3 line poem, 17 syllables long. It should be 5-7-5 ie first line of 5 syllables, second line of 7 syllables, third line of 5 syllables.

You need to pay attention in the moment – a sacred moment with God- which is captured a bit like a photograph in words. It might give a sense of place, time of day, the season. It can help God know we are paying attention. The Japanese long to write 'the perfect Haiku' eg-

The quiet old pond...

From the shore, a frog jumps in

To a fresh kersplash! Matsuo Basho 1670

Here are some of my efforts – it's fun to do them and brings back memories of the moment – some happy, some sad, but all alive in God's presence. Hope you enjoy reading them and then HAVE A GO YOURSELF!

Corona virus

zaps bewildered human world

garden shines in sun Ann Cooper 2020 Ponteland

'Who touched me?' he asked

trembling woman tried to hide

loved and healed she stood Ann Cooper 2019 Minster
Acres

Anniversary -

coffee for two on big settee

in best hotel room Ann Cooper 2014 Matfen

He breathes so gently

on white pillow-case blown dry

by sweet breeze of Spring Ann Cooper 2016 Matfen

Paddling in warm waves

seaweed tickling hot tired toes -

the smell of cut grass Ann Cooper 2014 Holy Island

**Sharp winter wind blows
ten brave little boys chase ball
joy in churned up mud** Ann Cooper 2015 Killingworth

**Quiet winter sky
untidy house warm and still
girls on computers** Ann Cooper 2015 Morpeth

**Early Spring sunlight
warms green plants in garden room
three ageing friends smile** Ann Cooper 2015 Leamington
Spa

**flecking yellow light
falls on silvery altar
bread and wine transformed** Ann Cooper 2015 Liverpool

**Hottest day of year -
tattooed girl drinks pint with friends
in her winter hat** Ann Cooper 2015 Birkenhead

**Mid-summer sunshine
gently hammers giant lake
trees pepper hillsides** Ann Cooper 2016 Ullswater

**Holly berries red
pale brown oak leaves crunch under her feet
Startling the pony** Ann Cooper 2017 Shepherd's Dene.

**Woman's feet echo
in dim blue art gallery
she stops at portraits** Ann Cooper 2019 Newcastle -Laing

To find out more, read 'Haiku - the sacred art' by Margaret D McGee obtainable from Amazon or ring **Ann Cooper** 824347.

Name the Beach / Resort

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



11



8



12



9



13



10



14



Quiz Questions

All linked to the "Name the Beach / Resort" pictures

1. Which famous Footballer linked to the Football Club from this town was known as "The Wizard of the Dribble" and "The Magician"?
2. There is a Museum to a famous Lighthouse keeper's daughter in this village. Can you name her?
3. The Film "Atonement" was filmed in nearby Redcar. Which star of the "Pirates" series of films played the leading lady, Cecilia Tallis?
4. Which Pop/Rock Group sang about the "Tunnel of Love" located in this North East Landmark?
5. Which North East Actor stars in the ITV Comedy Series with the name of this resort?
6. Who won the Formula 1 GP in this place in 2013?
7. Who played the Sheriff in a Sky Atlantic TV series based in this US Resort?
8. What is the name of the Football Stadium of the most famous club that is based in this city?
9. Which famous circular structure is located in this city?
10. Which famous rowing boat comes from this City?
11. Which famous avenue connects the Place de la Concorde and the Napoleonic Arc de Triomphe in this City?
12. Name the building which is located in this British seaside town.
13. A lager in Britain/A beer on the Continent gets its name from a river which runs through this City. Name the lager/beer.
14. The "hills came alive" around this city during the production of which Musical?



Matthew Cooper

HELLO FROM ALISON

Well this month's report comes from the study in my home!! Grounded as we all are by the virus which is causing chaos around the world and in our lives.

However before this all kicked off in March I was busy with my usual routine of the Brigades, Toddlers and schools work.

At Richard Coates I continued with assemblies and lunch club, which this half-term was with the year 5s & 6s and we were looking at Lent and how we can prepare for the impact that Easter has on our lives. We made a kindness mouse (with an extra long tail and every time we did something kind for someone we tied a knot in the tail), we also painted jars which we put sticks in with questions to ask ourselves each day, like what am I thankful for? How has God blessed me this year etc...? The kids really engaged with it and were keen to see what we would do each week.

The Brigades continued as normal and in n:vestigate we were starting a new badge called God's people looking at how different we all are but totally loved by an amazing and loving God. We were also looking forward to our camp in May which obviously has been cancelled but will happen, I am sure in the future when everything has settled down.

Obviously all the Easter activities planned have been cancelled but God is still with us and we can still celebrate the fact that Jesus died and rose again for each and every one of us. These things can always happen next year when we are back to a more normal style of life, never lose hope.

I'm missing the groups as I isolate at home but continue to pray for and remember those who attend all these things. So keeping myself amused and busy during this time involves a double length quiet time, reading and studying which I'm really enjoying and in those other times reteaching myself to crochet (please don't look for miracles I may be able to produce a couple of squares eventually) and building Lego structures - finished Hagrid's Hut from Harry Potter and half way through the London Bus!!!

I hope that you are all managing to keep yourselves busy and occupied during these tough times. I am seeing lots of great things (on social media) happening in Ponteland from support to help with all sorts of things by many of our congregation. So keep up the good work, try to check in with a couple of people each day and look after yourselves.

Blessings to you all



THE OPEN DOOR

I have chosen a recipe that uses everyday ingredients that most people have in their cupboards. No need to go shopping. I hope you enjoy them.

Judith

Easy Easter biscuits

140g caster sugar
250g butter
1 egg, separated and beaten
1tsp nutmeg
Zest of a lemon
300g plain flour
60g currants



Preheat the oven to 180°C/160 fan.

Cream together the butter and sugar.

Add the egg yolk, lemon zest and nutmeg and beat together.

Stir in the flour and currants to make a firm dough.

Wrap and chill in the fridge for 30 mins.

Prepare 2 baking sheets.

Cut the dough in half and roll to ½ cm thickness.

Cut out biscuits using a 6cm cutter.

Place on baking sheet and repeat with remaining dough.

Chill for 30 mins.

Bake for 7 mins then remove from the oven and brush with egg white, sprinkle with a little extra sugar and bake for a further 7-8 mins until lightly golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

HELLO!

Our friends at St Mary's have made the following suggestions to keep us going through these challenging days.

- ◆ Read that book you were given three Christmases ago and haven't got round to reading yet.
- ◆ Heave out of storage all those old family photos that you said you would sort out and put names on the backs of the photos so that the next generation know who they are looking at.
- ◆ Dress for dinner! Make yourself look good!
- ◆ Use all that spare paint in pots in the garage to touch up worn areas in the house, doing the very small repairs that ordinarily you would keep on forgetting or ignoring.
- ◆ Use the shortage of specific foods to experiment with what you have (that's how 'Eton Mess' and also 'Tarte Tatin' were created!).
- ◆ Take out the games you may only play at Christmas and give them a whirl.
- ◆ Pick up the phone regularly and ring around all those dear old friends that you don't often see. What a chance for long talks and catching-up sessions! Phones were invented for communication. And talking to old friends is so rejuvenating!
- ◆ Make a note of all the local small businesses who will have suffered during this period so that when all this is over you might go along and support them as they try to get back on their feet.
- ◆ Go through your wardrobes and do those repairs that you never have time for or sort out those things you want to get rid of.
- ◆ Spend guiltless hours on the internet enjoying discoveries and learning new things without having to stop because it's time to go somewhere or meet someone.
- ◆ Choose to watch something on TV that you would not normally ever choose, for it is sometimes good to be out of one's comfort zone!

DONATING to the FOODBANK

It may be that during these difficult times you may want to donate money rather than food to the FoodBank. However, if you do want to still give food there is a donation point at Waitrose. If you would like to give money, then click the following link <https://newcastlewestend.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/>

Then click on the red 'Donate' box (under Virgin money giving). Then click on the same red 'Donate' box on this page. (on the right-hand side). This will give you the option of donating a 'one-off' gift or giving at a regular interval. For those of you familiar with online Bank to Bank transactions the FoodBank's bank details are:-

Account Number: 00023623, Sort Code: 40-52-40

Sainsburys also have a foodbank collection point.

If you are unable to do any of the above, Peter Michell has agreed to receive cash or cheques (payable to Ponteland Methodist Church). If you can't easily find a way of getting this to Peter, then contact him via email or a phone call with the amount you wish to donate. He will then pay these donations to the Foodbank out of Church funds and will recoup it from you when this emergency is over.

Andrew Pay, Peter Michell, Rev Jona Sewell

FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED

Heard a Doctor on TV say to get through the boredom of self isolation we should finish things we start and thus have more calm in our lives. So I looked through the house to find all the things I've started but hadn't finished...so I finished off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of Chardonnay, a bottle of Baileys, a bottle of wum, the remainder of Valiumun scripts, and a box of choclets. You have no idea how fucking fabulous I feel right now. Send this to all who need inner piss. And thank you.

Understanding
chromosome
disorders



UNIQUE

A message on behalf of Unique, the Charity that supports families affected by rare chromosome disorders.

Up and down the country, indeed globally, there are families struggling to look after their mentally and physically disabled son or daughter. The place of care where they may normally live is short of staff or has had to temporarily close, thus CV-19 is putting huge additional pressures on families who themselves are often unwell or unable to cope.

The present situation presents enormous challenges for all of us, but I ask that you may spare a moment to be mindful of these particular families.

Unless continuous care for profound disability has been experienced there is generally little understanding in our world today of how truly difficult it is.

We have Stephen living with us at Thropton for however long we are under threat of CV-19. He is a very vulnerable adult and so we are in isolation to protect him as much as ourselves. Stephen needs constant mental and physical care but he is much more manageable than many families I know in a similar situation.

Stephen's diminished sense of consequence combined with his freedom to roam presents its own problems in times of restricted movement. How much greater then, are the problems of those families having to handle severely challenging behaviour. If you know of any households, (not supported as we are), please reach out to them in any practical way you can. They are certain to be struggling with the physical and emotional effort demanded of them. They can be hugely distressed even at the best of times.

Please remember them.

Isobel Hindle

MARCH 2020



It was March 2020 ... The streets were empty, the shops closed, people couldn't get out. But Spring did not know, and the flowers began to bloom, the sun shone, the birds sang, the swallows would soon arrive, the sky was blue, the morning arrived early.

It was March 2020 ... Young people had to study online, and find occupations at home, people could no longer go shopping, or go to the hairdresser. Soon there would be no more room in hospitals, and people continued to get sick. But Spring did not know, the time to go to the garden arrived, the grass greened.

It was March 2020 ... People have been put in lockdown. to protect grandparents, families and children. No more meetings or meals, family celebrations. The fear became real and the days were therefore similar. But Spring did not know, apples, cherry trees and others bloomed, the leaves grew. People started reading, playing with their families, learning a language, singing on the balcony inviting neighbours to do the same, being supportive and focusing on other values. People realized the importance of health, of suffering, of this world that had stopped, of the economy that has plummeted.

But Spring didn't know. The flowers gave way to the fruit, the birds made their nest, the swallows had arrived. Then the day of liberation came, people found out on TV, the virus had lost, people took to the streets, sang, cried, kissed their neighbors, without masks or gloves. And that's when Summer came, because Spring didn't know. He continued to be there despite everything, despite the virus, fear and death. Because Spring didn't know, he taught people the power of life. Everything's going to be fine, stay home, protect yourself, and enjoy life. xxx

Sue Kirtley

MARJORIE ANDERSON

Sadly Marjorie died earlier in March. For her funeral different people were asked to talk about her many interests. Alan Groves was asked to contribute a piece about her Meandering with the Ponteland Methodist Church walkers. Due to the current restrictions Alan was unable to attend.



I with my wife Pauline and family moved to Ponteland in 1974 and went along to the Methodist Church. It was a very friendly place and our first Pastoral Visitor was Marjorie. She and her husband David were very active in the church and over the years we got to know them well. Marjorie was an excellent Sunday School teacher, was interested in overseas missions and went on to be a local preacher but I

have been asked in particular to tell you about her involvement in the church walking group.

It was in 1985 that a church walking group called the Meanders was formed. The first secretary was Margaret Cowan who reminds me that David and Marjorie were members right from the beginning, leading many interesting walks. We walk every two weeks throughout the year. In 1989 we organised a walking weekend away staying at Patterdale Youth Hostel. About thirty of us enjoyed the friendships but it was marred by the torrential rain so often experienced in the Lakes. We tried again the next year but some of the group would have preferred slightly up-market accommodation!

So in 1991 Marjorie, who had then moved to Wylam, came up with a better idea. Wylam Methodist Church had booked a weekend staying at the Keswick Convention Centre but were about to cancel. She wondered if before they did so the Meanders might like to take over their booking. We had a look and in May we all enjoyed the stay there with real beds instead of hostel bunks. Since then we have been there every year. We walk in the day, have a meal together and sometimes stroll into Keswick afterwards. Often it was the weekend of the Jazz Festival so Marjorie and her friend Lorna would visit various pubs to lis-

ten to favourite performers. We also have our own short service before walking on Sundays and Marjorie led a couple of them. This coming May we are due to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our Convention Centre weekends and I am sure Marjorie would have loved to be with us.

Over the years Marjorie has led walks for us and joined in many others. She also liked to attend our annual dinner each January. As her friends know she had many interests and was always interesting to chat to, if you could keep up with her! We appreciated Marjorie's valuable contribution to Meanders and she will be sadly missed.

Alan Groves

VILLAGE NEWS

Proposed Zebra Crossing Broadway

Northumberland CC has announced that it intends to install a Zebra Crossing on Broadway. Comments are requested by 19th April. Details are available on the Council's website.

New Micropub 10 West Road

This application has been approved by seven votes to one. Ponteland Town Council had objected because of its proximity to housing.

Northumberland Local Plan

This plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Local Government in May 2019. It is currently being examined by a Planning Inspector and one issue being looked at is if the needs of older people are being met.

Improvements to Flood Defences

Initial work to improve the existing flood defence in Ponteland has got underway and future work is due later this year. 40 trees will be felled as part of the programme but 200 new trees will be planted. The Environment Agency is asking residents to suggest where these saplings should be planted. Call 03708506506.

Jennifer Hardy

REMOTE

Learning to live with solitude

How to fill solitary hours with
meaningful activity, tests
the brain as well as the soul.
Moving through that doorway
of stillness, towards hopeful
positivity, within empty space.

A gregarious person by nature
suddenly forced into isolation,
aware of life-changing moments,
I struggle to find the momentum
as significant silence breaks down
into empty loneliness or chill calm.

In quiet spaces, I search for strength
to generate hope and gentle acceptance.
For this is frozen time to surrender,
to build a fortress of defiance,
otherness and oneness, a special
inner sanctum of hushed control.

I believe there'll be bright light in
this remoteness of interior peace.
Be watchful for new friends who will
unite, to contemplate power emerging,
for hidden souls to grow stronger
in relationship, with kind strangers.

Rosemary Gray

Getting Better

Getting better day by day
With our Lord looking after me, what more can I say?
We cannot see Him...don't know what He does
But to all of us sends His unfailing love
Let Him into your heart , and right from the start
You'll feel better in body and mind..

Noreen Green

GARDENING FOR APRIL 2020

It is a long time since we had over a week without rain (writing on 26th March). This is enabling the soils to drain but parts of our vegetable area are still quite wet and blocking up the Mantis tiller – I haven't dug in the garden for many years and now with reduced mobility it is even more difficult. So far I have managed to cultivate two main beds and two smaller ones. Nothing has been planted. Those of us with gardens, large or small, are very fortunate in this time of "lock down" - Margaret and I consider ourselves vulnerable and have not gone out for sometime – thankful for the free delivery of the newspaper and the help given by neighbours. We are not short of something to do and have found these last two weeks have given us an opportunity to catch up on garden work that could not previously have been attempted with all the rain and some partial flooding. Margaret has already cut the grass twice but the blade on the rotary mower has not been lowered to the normal summer cutting height yet – keep it a little higher until May



but don't neglect treatment for the moss that has developed. Tru-green has already treated our grass.

Most Garden Centres and Nurseries are closed. Many of them will have built up stocks of plants to cover sales for Mothering Sunday and Easter. They will be continuing to water them in the hope that gardeners will contact them by telephone or on line to order and many will be willing to deliver to your home. Some are offering "click and collect" but this will not be applicable to everyone. Another alternative is to order for delivering by post or courier. There are plenty of adverts in the press or gardening magazines, for example Garden News this week shows a wonderful selection. Well-known seed and plant suppliers such as Suttons, Dobies, Mr Fothergill, Marshalls, Hayloft, You Garden, Thompson and Morgan, Woolmans, Dobbies and others can be googled to find their websites and orders placed either on-line or by telephone. Locally you could contact Dobbies, Cowells, Plants Plus, Halls of Heddon, Wylam Nurseries etc. There is no need not to get what you require.

The discussions about gardeners not using peat any longer roll on. There is a long article in the March issue Gardeners World which you can read. It is important that you are aware of the

many composts that are now available that are peat-free. I included “Sylvagrow” by Melcourt which now has a range with growbags, ericaceous and tub and basket compost. Many people will have used B & Q Verve composts in the past – they have a new one, Westland New Horizon revamped will be appearing in garden centres. Dalefoot blended from bracken and sheep’s wool (Herdwick) compared unfavourably with peat-based multipurpose composts in previous tests. Some of the new ones are untested. Cowells have launched their own brand of multipurpose compost – it is very friable. I bought two bags on a 2 for 1 offer that they sent out in a leaflet.

The test results on Composts for Patio pots are published in the April issue of Which? The highest-rated peat-based composts are Thompson and Morgan Incredicompost (80% peat and 20p per litre) and Bord Na Mona Growise Pro 5 All Purpose (90% and 14p). The best performing peat-free was Sainsbury’s Peat-Free Multipurpose compost but it is only available in 20 litre bags costing £2 (10p per litre) – maybe suitable for those only able to have one or two planters. Controlled-Release Feeds are often used by growers and nurserymen when potting up plants for sale. There are three makes listed as Best Buys by Which - Chempak Year-Long Fertiliser (£8 per 750g – over 1p per gram) Miracle-Grow All Purpose Continuous-Release Plant Food (£5 for 1 kg – 0.5 per g) and Osmecote Controlled-Release Plant Food (£6 for 75g – 0.8 per g). I have been using Miracle-Grow for some time in mixes but now add a sprinkling when planting smaller plants in planters. In autumn 2019 all the pansies (8 troughs and 4 planters) were treated and despite the rain the pansies look particularly good. The tops of the packs have one section with holes to allow the material to be gently sprinkled. I have read that these are even used in potato trenches!! Year-Long will be more suitable for perennial plants. I also use controlled-release to recycle last year’s tomato compost with grit but never for potatoes.

The Church Plant sale planned for 9th May has been cancelled. I expect to have some plants for sale about that time – more about what I have available and how you can acquire them in the May issue.

Good gardening in April and keep well.

Syd Cowan

CHURCH SERVICES

Most morning services are recorded and may be listened to by going to “Listen Again” on the Church website. Tim Woolley and his son Ben have been recording video services since the closure of the Churches and these are available on the internet from YouTube. There is a special group set up called “Newcastle West Circuit” and it is the intention every Sunday to record a service from one of the Churches in our Circuit. There will be extra services recorded for Easter.

It is possible to get these on DVD if requested from Paul Mead at Westerhope. He can be contacted direct on 07400896006 or via his mum and dad 01912673558 / 07968651735 .

Andy Anderson

CARE FOR EACH OTHER

We are all appreciating the love and kindness being shown by neighbours, friends, family at this time of great worry. The words below are appropriate:

Look after each other -
The time goes by so fast,
Enjoy the moment, seize the day,
Forget about the past.
Take care of each other
In times of tears and frowns,
And seek the sunlight after rain
Through all life's ups and downs.

The road may not be always smooth
There may be rocks ahead,
But going forward, side by side,
You'll find the path to tread.
Though life may not be all you want
Be there for one another,
And sharing gifts of love and hope
Keep caring for each other.

Jennifer Hardy

FAMILY NEWS

Both the flowers and cards delivered on Mother's Day, and Jona's uplifting messages and service have been encouraging to us all at this testing time.

The phone network that has developed amongst Church friends since the restrictions were imposed has been impressive. Why not link in for a chat if you aren't already involved?

We all look forward to **Bev and Ron's** wedding which is now rescheduled for 12th September.

Brian Hardy has now moved to a care home in Mickley.

Jenny Lewis is currently in Grange Lea.

Noreen Green sends greetings. She is well again, after a recent poorly spell, and enjoys hearing news of friends from Church.

Please remember the **Turner** family, **David Macdonald**, and others who are unwell just now.

Thank you so very, very much for all your kind thoughts, cards flowers etc on my recent birthday ...it is such a milestone BDcan hardly believe it !!!

Love and blessings to you from **Noreen Green xxx**.



Congratulations to **Andrew and Christine Pay** on their 52th wedding anniversary.

Preachers April

Look for YouTube on the internet and search for "Newcastle West Circuit".

www.youtube.co.uk

Preachers March

Look on Ponteland Methodist Church site for "Listen Again"
To hear services you may have missed.

Cornerstone Distribution

We will try and distribute to all those who are not on the internet but for those who are the full colour version will be on the Church website as soon as possible. Don't miss Matthew's Bumper Quiz.

<http://www.ponteland-methodist-church.org.uk/>

Ponteland Methodist Church

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Ponteland Methodist Church

'Let the love of Jesus be known'



Welcome!

Welcome to the website for Ponteland Methodist Church.

Bumper Quiz Pt. 1

Rev. Jona Sewell



Hi, my name is Jona Sewell and I'm the minister of Ponteland Methodist Church. I can be contacted at any time using the 'Contact Us' option at the top.

From The Editors

*Don't forget that copy for the May edition of Cornerstone should be with the editor by **Friday 24th April 2020**. The editor's email address is andrew73anderson@gmail.com. The editorial committee is Andy Anderson, Jennifer Hardy, Jona Sewell and Viv Whyte.*