

# Ponteland Methodist Church

# Cornerstone



Bellingham  
Northumberland

**March 2021**

## THE (stand-in for Jona) MINISTER'S LETTER

If you look at this year's calendar, you'll realise that the whole of March falls within the 40 days of Lent. In an earlier Ponteland weekly newssheet letter, I touched on how Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness preparing for His ministry, has become a pattern for our spiritual preparation for Holy Week and Easter. Jesus acknowledged that His self-denial and self-isolation was a way to focus His mind on what was ahead.

As we engage in another period of Lent, I wonder if we become a little blasé about it all? The "Been there, done that, got the tee shirt", sort of attitude! I must confess to sometimes feeling like that about the constant cycle of the annual church calendar. Yet because some things are familiar, well-known and repetitive, that doesn't make them any less dynamic or stupendous. Take the wonder that the birth of a baby brings; babies are born day in day out, thousands every day, but to all those involved with each baby, the event is awe-inspiring. Or take a morning sunrise or evening sunset, something that happens 365 days a year. Despite their regularity, every so often, when you are in the right place at the right time, a sunrise or sundown's colours and splendour can take your breath away.

This is so true of Lent and Easter. It may come round each year, but the Easter message is as dynamic as new life, and if you look at it afresh, it can take your breath away. Lent is all about preparing yourself once again for Good Friday and Easter Day. Let me explain a little and apologise to Jona for possibly pre-empting his message for April!

First comes the incredible fact that the very Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, offered His own life up for **YOU!** In the giving-up of His life, He gave each of us the means of being forgiven for all those things which blot our lives and drag us down. His dying on the cross brings us the wonderful gift of new life – as new and wonderful as any new baby's life. If you want to understand something of this, read the story of Nicodemus in John 3:1-21.

The second amazing message of Easter is that Jesus rose from the dead. Think about it – *He rose from the dead* – He was dead, now He is alive! His rising from the dead is your assurance that **YOUR** life continues beyond the grave. John 14:1-6 explores that truth. It really is the breath-taking golden sunset that we can look forward to at the end of our lives.

But – and there is always a ‘but’ in every argument – the wonder of the Easter truths are only real for you, if **YOU** accept Jesus as the Son of God and believe in His death and resurrection. Easter will continue to come round year in and year out and will never alter, yet the fact that its message for each of us is always the same, is its glory and not its downfall.

Maybe you could think about all this during Lent as you prepare to re-encounter the events of Good Friday and Easter Day. I pray that even though Lent and Easter are old news, the coming weeks will convince you that there are new truths to be discovered.

With much Christian love,

**Robin Brooks**

### **EASTER**

As I’ve returned from my first month’s sabbatical I’ve received a few questions about when we might expect the Church to re-open for user groups and for worship. This is very understandable as recent government announcements have given us grounds for optimism that restrictions will be eased by early summer; the current falling infection rates and increase in numbers vaccinated certainly reinforce that sense of optimism. We cannot take this as a given though, as the government would undoubtedly remind us, there remain tests to be met and a degree of provisionality about each stage.

As I write this the recommendation from the District is that churches remain closed for worship for now, though this is under regular review, and that opening for user groups will depend on future government guidance. We face the coming weeks and months then with uncertainty but with renewed hope and in prayer that we will return to ‘normality’ in the not-too-distant future. The final decision to reopen for worship will rest with the Church Council who will consider all appropriate guidelines and ongoing restrictions before making any decision. I will endeavour to keep you informed of any changes via Cornerstone and the weekly notices.

*We are currently planning for Holy Week and Easter Day services to be online though I hope we will be able to hold a socially distant Easter Day service in the garden – weather permitting!*

**Jona**

## **ARISTARCHUS TRAVELS WITH PAUL(2)**

‘Why do you think Paul missed out on Ephesus when travelling up to Jerusalem?’ you ask. Well, I wondered about that myself. He had had such a fruitful ministry there, probably the longest spell he had ever given to one growing community in his ministry up to that time, so I asked him about it as we sailed between Samos and Miletus.

“I am an apostle of the Lord Jesus,” he said. “I know that He, when He struck me down on the road and sent me to the Gentiles, sent me as his servant, not a master to his people. All my three journeys with the Gospel to a world foreign to Jewish tradition have been directed by the Holy Spirit and not by my own will. I know I was overruled by the Spirit many times in these years of ministry. God forbid that I should seek my own glory: all the glory is from the Father alone and the Lord Jesus.

“If a congregation is dependent on their minister too much, and will not learn that the Holy Spirit is the inspiration and power of God in ministry and service, it won’t grow and have a spiritual life of its own and a fruitful mission in its world. So no leader should think him or herself indispensable. The church at Ephesus is very dear to me, but has strong faithful leaders of its own and will grow even stronger when they can free themselves of any idea that my presence is essential to that growth. As always, the Spirit is my guide and master in these matters..”

So at Miletus, the leaders of the Ephesian church came to the port to meet us. When he explained that he was in haste to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost there was great concern among them, for they knew how much danger there would be for him from plots by Jews fanatically opposed to him. Assassination plots had been avoided in so many places already and, as he said to them, they might never see him face to face again. So it was in tears that the Christians of Asia stood on the dockside as we sailed off to Lebanon, bound for the port of Tyre.

“They will stand firm,” he told me. “They are firmly founded in God.”

Acts 21, 22. Ephesians.

**John M Gill**

## TEN YEARS AGO

I have found a poem I wrote on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011, ten years ago today - see below. So much has changed since then. The poem reminds me that in the morning I visited my Aunt May in Grange Lea Care Home and had lunch in our kitchen with my lovely husband Bob. The poem reminds me that in the afternoon I drove to West Woodburn to take a birthday present to my friend, Diana, and in the evening I went to a talk at the library. Now here I am on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. I grieve for dear Aunt May and dear Bob. Due to the pandemic I am unable to visit Diana. And the library has been pulled down. But some things never change. I walked again this morning through a thousand glorious snow-drops in the churchyard. Special things **still** abound. Heaven is **still** all around us: we just need to keep looking!

### *One early Spring day*

*An ordinary walk to the shops  
is made special by a thousand glorious snow-drops.  
A dutiful visit to the old folks' home  
is made special by an enjoyable conversation over delicious coffee.  
A press on a door-bell  
is made special by the invitation to enter and sit and share.  
An everyday meal on the table  
is made special by the presence of another.  
A long drive to deliver a birthday present  
is made special by radiant sunshine on hills and moors.  
An unexpected telephone call  
is made special by good news that all is well.  
An author's talk at the library  
is made special by her joy and enthusiasm.  
A programme on the television  
is made special by its fascinating message of hope for those with heart disease.  
And this was just an average day.  
In a lifetime of days, special things abound.  
Heaven is all around us: keep looking!*

**Ann Cooper**

## ECG CONFERENCE – WHAT IS IT?

As some of you know I have been Chair of ECG, a national Christian Conference, for some years now. However, for many ECG is a mystery.

It began back in 2008, and was the inspiration of Stephen Lindridge, Ashley Cooper and Roy Crowne who decided to hold a small gathering of people who wanted to share in God's message and then go and spread the word in their own communities. So, they put together a team from across the UK and got to work.

From the beginning, the vision was clear. In fact, that's what ECG stands for:

- **Equipping** today's generations to bring in God's Kingdom
- **Calling** Christians to discover and renew God's unique vision and purpose for their lives
- **Going** to serve, love and lead into discipleship those who don't yet know Jesus Christ.

Since 2012, the conference has been held at the historic Scarborough Spa. It is held in the week after Easter, beginning on the Tuesday and ending on the following Sunday. It offers a full programme of worship and teaching together



with late evening fringe events that include comedy, music, film and drama.

ECG roots are in Methodism and, whilst many of our speakers and delegates are from a Methodist background, we do not choose guests on the basis of their denomination. Instead, we invite those who we feel offer real insights into Christian teaching and who can help us to



deliver what always proves to be an interesting, varied and family-friendly programme.

The Coronavirus pandemic has been a real challenge. We were forced to cancel the conference in 2020 fully expecting to be able to go ahead this year. This was not to be and we have had to cancel again. However, we are firmly committed to 2022 and plans are underway for this event and we are delighted that Calvin Samuel will be leading the morning bible study.

As it would be such a shame to miss two years, we are delighted that, in conjunction with Cliff College, we have arranged **ECG Online** for **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April**. This will be an amazing opportunity to spend some time experiencing something of an ECG conference from the comfort of your own homes.



The day will begin with a bible study at 11.00 am led by Matt Miofsky. Matt is the Lead Pastor of The Gathering United Methodist Church in Saint Louis, Missouri. He founded The Gathering out of a belief that church could be different. Since its beginning, The Gathering has continued to see dramatic growth. The afternoon will include All Age Worship at 4.00pm and in the evening, at 7.00pm there will be a Worship Celebration. More details will be available shortly and you can keep up to date by accessing the website <https://www.ecgevent.org.uk/>

I hope you will take advantage of this unique opportunity to study, reflect and worship.

**Steve Small**  
**Executive Chair ECG Trust Ltd**



The Covid lockdown has curtailed activities in Fairtrade Fortnight this year and it has disrupted the work of Traidcraft with church stalls cancelled. But the need to help the poor farmers and workers who produce our coffee, tea, sugar, cocoa and bananas to earn a fair return for their products, continues.

Lent is a time for prayer, penance and almsgiving. Buying Fairtrade products to give their producers a living income, could

be considered as almsgiving. With Lent in mind, we have arranged a video presentation on **Zoom**, called: -

**“Live Fair for Lent”, by Matt Oliver from Traidcraft on 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 8pm.**

Matt explains what the presentation is: -

*The Lent shows are very simple. It will be about doing something for Lent rather than giving up something.*

*I will present 40 slides that will be ideas, products, producer stories, and facts about Fairtrade. The hope is not that folks will do all the ideas, but they will think, I like that one, I will give it a go or now I have something I can tell my friends when they ask, ‘does Fairtrade make a difference?’*

*After the meeting I hope there will be a fact sheet or at least a copy of the presentation available that folks can use to look deeper into any of the slides presented.*

*I plan to talk for an hour tops, but you will be free to top and tail the evening as you like, and I will stay on the call to answer any questions.*

If you would like to join in to watch this presentation, let us know by email and we will send you the Zoom link and a digital or hard copy of the new Traidcraft catalogue – state your preference (with an address if you would like the hard copy!).  
Thanks

**Bev**

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Did you know that Fairtrade Fortnight started in Edinburgh in 1997? Fairtrade Fortnight is now celebrated every year in a number of countries around the world, including Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There are over 100,000 Fairtrade campaigning groups in the UK and over 6,000 Fairtrade labelled products available for sale.

When you think of fair trade, the chances are you picture the well-known Fairtrade Mark or some of the best-known products, such as chocolate, bananas or coffee. When you pick one of them up off the supermarket shelf or add it to your online grocery order, you might think about it being sold with fairer prices for suppliers. However, Fairtrade isn't simply about the prices paid for products. It is about the Fairtrade Premium, additional money paid over and above the cost of goods which communities can use as they choose, in digging a well, setting up a school, helping to diversify their crops. Fairtrade is all about equality of opportunity. For landless women in Honduras whose husbands have all fled north to avoid the drug cartels, Fairtrade means an economic alternative to decamping to the slums where they and their children risk human and/or sex trafficking. For the small indigenous community picking wild tea in the golden triangle around Thailand and Laos, Fairtrade is an alternative to harvesting opium. For many children, particularly girls, who have grown up with the benefits of education in their communities, Fairtrade offers an escape from grinding poverty.

The focus of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight is the challenge that climate change brings to farmers and communities across the globe.

The banana farmers of Las Mercedes, in the Dominican Republic, have used their Fairtrade Premium to develop a disaster recovery fund, ready to go at short notice, to help out for-example when crops are flattened by cyclones.

Ángel Guzmán Santana, 54, knows what it's like to see his hard work swept away. The first time his banana farm was hit by storms was in 2016 and it took months to get back on his feet. After replanting in 2017, Ángel and his family were dealt another blow as Hurricanes Irma and Maria swept in. With prices for bananas so low, it is hard for farmers to build up savings for emergencies. Without the disaster recovery fund Ángel would have had to take out a loan to replant yet again and to rebuild his livelihood, resulting in large debts.



The Las Mercedes farmers are also using the Fairtrade Premium to shore up their defences against the effects of the weather in the future. They are planting trees on the river banks and also building walls around the river.

The challenges of climate change have been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic which has affected every part of the food supply chain and caused commodity prices to fall. It has become even harder for impoverished farmers to cope with and protect against the effects of climate change.

So each time you add a Fairtrade item to your shopping list, remember it is one more opportunity to show solidarity with communities across the globe, to support individuals like Ángel, and to help make the world a fairer place.

A further positive action would be adding your name to the petition asking the UK government to sign up to a green trade agreement and get serious about tackling climate change. Every year the UK spends £10 billion subsidising coal, oil and gas, reducing the cost of extracting the very fuels that harm our planet and making it harder for renewable energy to succeed. The petition can be found at <https://traidcraftexchange.org/accts>

**Bev**

## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT CROSSWORD: CLIMATE CHANGE EDITION



### DOWN

1. This is an example of a fossil fuel. (4)
2. Carbon dioxide, methane, water vapor and other human-made gases allow solar radiation to enter the atmosphere. What do we call these gases? (10,5)
3. By burning fossil fuels, we are adding more of this into the atmosphere. Also known as CO<sub>2</sub>. (6,7)
5. A process where there is no net release of CO<sub>2</sub> is known as being carbon \_\_\_\_\_. A company or country can achieve this by carbon offsetting, like planting trees. (7)
6. The amount of carbon we emit is known as our carbon \_\_\_\_\_. (9)
7. A fuel derived from renewable, biological sources, including crops such as maize and sugar cane, and some forms of waste. (7)

### ACROSS

4. Rising sea levels, shrinking mountain glaciers, icecaps melting and changes in flower and plant blooming times are all results of what? (7,6)
8. Using naturally replenished resources to create energy, such as sunlight, wind, and water, is known as what sort of energy? (9)

### Answers

1. Coal, 2. Greenhouse Gases, 3. Carbon Dioxide, 4. Climate Change, 5. Neutral, 6. Footprint, 7. Biofuel, 8. Renewable, 9. Renewable

## **JIM AND MARIAN FALCUS DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

For 20 years they helped people mark special occasions from their card shop in Newcastle's Grainger Market.



But this week it's Jim and Marian Falcus' turn to celebrate, as they reach a marriage milestone of their own – their diamond wedding anniversary. The couple married at Jesmond Presbyterian Church on Saturday March 4th 1961 when Jim was 25 and Marian was 21. They met at the Fenwick department store in Newcastle, where Byker-born Jim was an underbuyer and Marian, of Mill Hill in London, was employed in the cosmetics hall. She had previously worked at the Dickins & Jones department store in London and followed her parents to New-

castle once she had secured her job at Fenwick aged 19. Starting married life in a Fenwick-owned flat in Gosforth, they moved to Chapel House when eldest daughter Gillian was six weeks old. They had two more daughters, Louise and Samantha, before opening Best Wishes in the Grainger Market in 1977. Jim and Marian retired in 1997, moving from Fenham to Darras Hall the following year. They are active members of Ponteland Meanders while Jim, now 85, is also a member of Ponteland Bowls and Marian, 81, is a keen croquet player.

Samantha said: "Hopefully we can all get together for a family celebration when we're allowed to. But it will be a lovely surprise for them to see themselves featured in Pont News and Views!"

**Andy Anderson**

# Remembering Annie

**November 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 7.30pm**

**Go to Facebook 'Eden Wild Goose'**

The remarkable and inspirational story of Ann Livingston  
From Warwick Bridge to a Sumatran internment camp  
via Formosa and the fall of Singapore

**Eden Wild Goose** An online storytelling event for Remembrance

In the days leading up to Armistice Sunday, the new incumbent of Holme Eden, Warwick Bridge, spotted a Commonwealth War Graves headstone for my cousin Billy. Beyond was another headstone for a Charlotte Waddell, and a memorial to Annie Livingston, her daughter. Annie had died a prisoner of the Japanese on Sumatra on 18 July 1945.

Rev Graeme Skinner, the vicar, had spent some time in the Far East and was intrigued. He made enquiries locally and thence to the family tree man, yours truly, which resulted in his Facebook tribute under

### *Eden Wild Goose Story Telling*

*Annie Livingston was a missionary from Warwick Bridge, who found herself escaping Singapore in 1942 along with thousands of others in the harbour quayside as the Japanese bombed the city. Annie was eventually captured at sea and interned in Sumatra where she died a month before VJ day.*

*I will be telling her remarkable story for Remembrance this year online on November 10th at 7.30pm on Facebook 'Eden Wild Goose'.*

[Jan 2021 still accessible to everybody]

Annie Armstrong LIVINGSTON born Romford, Essex 10 Nov 1887 pupil teacher, Carlisle High School, teacher training, St Hilda's, Durham, teacher, public school, Leslie, Fife 1908-1913 Presbyterian Missionary - sailed on a German steamer for Taiwan 1913 remained there till 1941 [in Tokyo 1938 learning Japanese] posted to Singapore 1941 interned April 1942.

Annie, three missionary friends Sabine Mackintosh, Mar-

garet Dryburgh (from Swalwell) & Gladys Cullen (from the Wirral), with several others occupied garage no 9 in the camp. Margaret wrote out, from memory, mouth music of musical scores, with 4-part harmonies, and another friend Nora Chambers (from Malaya and Jersey) conducted a choir to build up morale among the prisoners. Reproduction of one of these is included in Graeme's Facebook tribute and more about their camp life can be understood from Helen Colijn's book *Song of Survival*, Lavinia Warner's, *Women beyond the Wire* which inspired the film *Paradise Road* and the BBC's *Tenko* television series.

Here is the **Captives' Hymn** by **Margaret Dryburgh**  
(sung each Sunday during church services.)

Father, in captivity,  
We would lift our prayers to Thee,  
Keep us ever in Thy love,  
Grant that daily we may prove  
Those who place their trust in Thee  
More than conquerors may be.

Give us patience to endure.  
Keep our hearts serene and pure,  
Grant us courage, charity,  
Greater faith, humility,  
Readiness to own Thy will,  
Be we free or captives still.

For our country we would pray,  
In this hour be Thou her stay,  
Pride and sinfulness forgive,  
Teach her by Thy laws to live,  
By Thy grace may all men see  
That true greatness comes from Thee.

For our loved ones we would pray,  
Be their guardian night and day,  
From all danger keep them free,  
Banish all anxiety,  
May they trust us to Thy care,  
Know that Thou our pains dost share.

May the day of freedom dawn,  
Peace and justice be reborn,  
Grant that nations loving Thee  
O'er the world may brothers be,  
Cleansed by suffering, know rebirth,  
See Thy kingdom come on earth.

And her poem for Annie's 56<sup>th</sup> birthday, which clearly shows how she contributed to camp life.

*A Happy Birthday Nov 10<sup>th</sup> 1942 Palembang*

Who is yon figure stern and tall?  
Who issues forth at 'Rations' call,  
And shares the food alike to all?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who daily does Arithmetic?  
Subtracts the number of the sick,  
Adds those returned, and totals quick?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who gauges the Camp's appetite?  
And when the stocks of rice are slight  
Demands more sacks to put us right?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who's never to be found at home?  
But constantly abroad doth roam,  
And disappoints all those who come  
To see Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who never gets a meal in peace?  
Must at each call her eating cease,  
Swallow cold rice on her release?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who superintends the errant axe?  
Who gathers up the empty sacks?  
Who gladly problems hard attacks?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who falls into the arms of sleep?  
Announces loud her slumbers deep,  
While others wakeful watch do keep?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON.

Who is the Campers' truest friend?  
Who for us all her strength doth spend?  
Who'll be remembered when wars end?  
'Tis our Miss LIVINGSTON. M.D.

**John Waddell**

## LENT GROUP



This year for our Ecumenical Lent Course we are following the '**Cover to Cover Lent Study, The prayers of Jesus**' by Amy Boucher Pye, which is available through both Amazon Prime, and from Eden Books.

**Rev Colin Barrick** (phone **853530**) is leading us. He advises that the book is not necessary for us to follow the course. However, I do have a copy if you would like to view it. Do consider joining us if you can.

Every week on Tue, **until Apr 6, at 2pm.**  
**Mar 9<sup>th</sup>, Mar 16<sup>th</sup>, Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, Mar 30<sup>th</sup>, and Apr 6<sup>th</sup>.**

Please note that because of time constraints on the Zoom account, there are two links. Use this one first :-

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81338219908?pwd=cVRZZ1ljUldvN1BKRkdMSVd4UEpYUT09>

Meeting ID: 813 3821 9908

Passcode: Lent21

And this one second:-

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/89428883203?pwd=S0NDeklXWmViMHpPenhnb0FtbldVUT09>

Meeting ID: 894 2888 3203

Passcode: Lottie9876

**Chris Cogan**

## **IF WINTER COMES, CAN SPRING BE FAR BEHIND?**

Famous encouraging words from a poet!! During the weekend the 21st Feb one of the weather men announced that it was the end of the Meteorological Winter. This is somewhat of a mystery as the Vernal Equinox on the Saturday 20th February is the first day of Spring and it has always been recognised as such. So who and why has it been changed?

Easter is early this year and Palm Sunday coincides with the start of British Summer Time. There was much hope that perhaps some easing of lockdown restrictions may by then be experienced. However the latest levels of lifting them at least brings some cheerful optimism that maybe, just maybe, we shall all be out and about and even going away on holiday. Still a case of watch this space.

Thinking of an away day in our beautiful county? Bellingham is a delightful little town. It is regarded as the capital of the North Tynedale and is famous for its sheep sales. The Church is named after St Cuthbert as it is named in the traditional way of marking one of the temporary resting places of the Saint's body on the epic journey around Northumberland before its final interment in Durham.



In the Churchyard there is a curious gravestone shaped like a long pedlar's pack of the kind used in the 18th century. It recalls a well-known local legend told by the Ettrick Shepherd who was a friend of Sir Walter Scott.

The tale is that a pedlar called at Lee Hall and no one was at home apart from a young maid. She agreed to let him leave his pack in the house while he went into the village.

Later the other servants returned and one of them noticed movement in the pack. An old shotgun was brought and several shots fired into the pack. They opened it and found a

young man dying of his wounds. He used his last breath to tell them that he was to admit his accomplices after dark. An armed "welcoming" committee was formed and the intruders were then "dealt" with. Several local robbers were never seen again!

The young man was buried in the graveyard but it is said that his body was removed by unknown persons at a later date. At the entry to the Church this curious grave can be seen to the left and is so unusual it can't be missed.

The little town itself is a delight in its beautiful moorland setting and boasts the most amazing hardware shop. Just to the north of the town is a dene leading to Hareshaw Linn which has a beautiful waterfall dropping about 30ft into a shaded wooded valley reputed to be the secret place where St Cuthbert's coffin was kept safe during its brief stay in the area. A lovely walk with a meaningful point of interest.

**Jean Tweedie**

## **A METHODIST WAY OF LIFE<sup>1,2</sup> AND THE 5 PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CHURCHES**

### **WORKING TOGETHER IN PRACTICE**

Fighting Covid-19 forces us to confront the immensity of creation. To take just one example: the nature of any virus is determined by a sizeable chemical molecule called "Messenger RNA". This is built up from just four chemical building blocks found over and over joined together in a chain. It is the ordering of these building blocks in the chain that controls the structure and operation of the virus. When, by chance, the ordering of the building blocks changes, the virus changes (*i.e.* it mutates) becoming a variant or mutant.

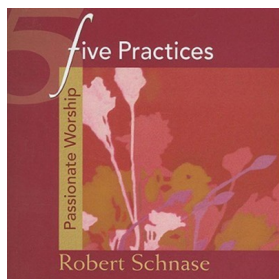
Exactly these same four chemical building blocks, but many, many more of them and now a double helix rather than a chain, are what sets *our* individual nature. It is our "DNA". In us, DNA controls the production of messenger-RNA (lots of different messengers) which, in turn, cause our bodies to produce the myriad proteins which operate a multitude of different facets of our living without any conscious thought.

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<sup>1</sup> For specific material go to: [A Methodist Way of Life](#)

<sup>2</sup> The principles in this article also apply to "Holy Habits" which can replace "A Methodist Way of Life". For specific material go to: [Holy Habits](#)

No wonder we struggle to understand how the universe operates. How much more wonder-inducing is it for those who accept that there is a creator God and that God is concerned about every single facet of God's creation including each of us as a unique individual. No surprise, then, that we struggle to describe God. We also struggle to figure out how God wants us to live as individuals and in the community of the Church. No wonder we can find lots and lots of writing about how to live and what to do when, where, how and why.



In an article last month, I provided a logical case for “A Methodist Way of Life” and “The 5 Practices of Fruitful Churches” to be viewed as fully compatible with each other as we look at God and our relationship with God through these two different perspectives. Now I want to look at how they can work together in practice.

People who work in highly stressful situations find it vital to meet with others regularly to share what they are dealing with both in their work and in themselves. I have seen this in operation among counsellors to the bereaved, to potential suicides, to those suffering substance abuse. I have also seen it occurring without specific intention among company directors, quality circles on production lines, call centre teams and I know it goes on in many other groupings. The greater the effect of the stress on an individual, the more important that the person de-stresses intentionally and they may well need professional help. This simple principle is at the root of modern psychology treatments for such ailments as anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance abuse. It is known as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). A number of early exponents of CBT were Buddhists who hold the practices of meditation and mindfulness as very important. The value of CBT has been clearly demonstrated in properly-constituted trials and seeks to measure the progress of patients toward an improved mental state and more desired behaviours.

Methodism has always held that small group, mutual learning through discussion is vitally important in the development of one's faith. It was known as the class system (where “class” is used in the sense of school, not social standing). You may re-

call the hymn: One who is all unfit to count/As scholar in thy school/ Thou of thy love hast named a friend/ Oh! Kindness wonderful.

“A Methodist Way of Life” (personally, I would prefer a title such as “Living Life with Jesus”) provides an excellent basis for “Intentional Faith Development” within the “5 Practices of Fruitful Churches”. At its best it will provide us with a safe place to share with trusted friends how we are dealing with the stresses of modern living with Jesus.

So often, when we try to cheer each other on, we stress the glory of a life lived in Christ. There is much right with that. But there is another side to life with Jesus; when we “Take up our cross and follow him”<sup>3</sup>. Reading one of Paul’s letters to Corinth, I am struck by his seemingly ready acceptance of unjust, vicious beatings and imprisonment as well as other privations<sup>4</sup> but his frustration with his physical disability<sup>5</sup>, whatever it was. A crucial part of growing in the faith is accepting our life journey for what it has been to date – after all we cannot go back and change it. What we most certainly can do is to change our future living for the better – and that, even if we have a life-long “thorn in the flesh”.

So as individuals in Christ and members of His body, the Church, we should make and take advantage of opportunities to develop in the faith – be intentional. This should have the goal of helping us to live out those practices (Radical Hospitality; Passionate Worship, Risk-taking Mission and Service; Extravagant Generosity) which will lead to the growth of disciples and of the Church, all to the glory and praise of God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Peter Hindle**

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<sup>3</sup> Mark 8.34

<sup>4</sup> 2 Corinthians 11.23b-28.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Corinthians 12.7b



## THE OPEN DOOR

A very easy recipe. This quantity will make 10-12 cookies.

You can make the cookie dough in advance and it will keep for a couple of days in the fridge. If it is fridge cold you can roll it into balls before baking.

**Judith**

### **Chocolate cookies**

125g /4oz Margarine  
175g /6oz light brown sugar  
1 egg  
175g/6oz SR flour  
50g/1oz cocoa powder  
100g/3oz chocolate chips or chopped chocolate



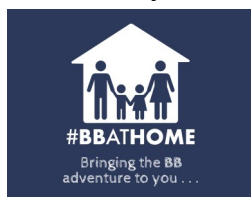
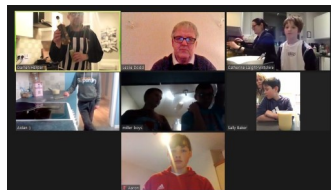
Preheat the oven to 180°C/160 fan.  
Line a baking sheet with baking parchment.  
Cream butter and sugar.  
Beat in the egg.  
Mix in the flour and cocoa powder.  
Fold in the chocolate chips.  
Evenly space 12 spoonfuls of the mixture onto the baking sheet.  
Bake for 12-15 mins until crusty on the outside.



## BB AT HOME

1st Ponteland Boys' Brigade are continuing to meet via Zoom on Tuesday evenings. We are also providing a range of activities for the boys, entitled BBatHome.

The topics we have covered so far this year have included a virtual zoo trip, along with evenings themed on Noah, Lego, Pirates and People who help us for the Anchors, while the boys in the Juniors, Company & Senior sections have learned about Continents, how to communicate with deaf people and Fairtrade. They have enjoyed playing games such as virtual rock paper scissors, guess the film soundtrack, tangrams, snakes & ladders and bean bag balance. We have also had discussions about What are you worth?, If the World were a village of 100? and If you could be Prime Minister for a day. We even cooked pancakes with the group on Shrove Tuesday.



The BBatHome activities cover such themes as, Making a jet pack and toilet-roll racing cars for the Anchors, to things such as a photo hunt, helping around the home by washing up, cooking pizza twists, making a stop motion animation and taking some wildlife photographs.

The BB have made available to everyone the activities on BBatHome, the Photo Hunt is just one example. You can find all the activities for all age groups by going to <https://boys-brigade.org.uk/bbathome/activity-packs/> Why not take a look at them and if you have any young people in your family then have a go at some of them? We would love to see what you get up to, you can share your experience on our FaceBook page, just search for 1st Ponteland Boys' Brigade.

The boys also took part in the Great Garden Bird Watch and completed a virtual sponsored walk of the Roman wall - we raised a total of £240, thanks to all who supported the boys. We are pleased to report that we have a number of new boys who have joined us in the Anchors section, which is really encouraging for the future of our Company.

We also hope that it will be not be too long before we are able to meet face to face back in the Church halls.

**Les Dodd**

junior

# PHOTO HUNT



#BBATHOME



GET  
ADVENTUROUS



45 MINUTES



READY  
TO GO



## GETTING INTO THE ACTIVITY

Get to know your house even better. Set up a photo treasure hunt for a family member to complete.

Head around the house with a camera phone, taking obscure or close up photos of things you find. Take at least 10 photos and then challenge a family member to go around the house and work out what they are. You could time how long it takes or give them a time limit.

Here are some examples:

- The corner of a photo frame
- One button on the TV remote
- Door handle
- Part of a soft toy
- Handle of a spoon
- Corner of the letterbox
- Close up of a tap
- The tip of a key



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Camera Phone



## NOTES FOR PARENTS & CARERS

Give clear guidance on which rooms you can or can't use before starting.

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## ANITA ANDERSON 1943-2021



Anita was born on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1943 to Christina and Arthur Wilson in the vibrant fishing town of Arbroath on the east coast of Scotland. Her mother was an art teacher and her father a Captain on the oil tankers, and he was away at sea for periods of time.

Anita was their second child, five years younger than Lorna.

Anita was very game to join in Lorna's various ploys. She became an enthusiastic member of the Hercu-

les Rangers, a club run by her sister, cousins and friends.

During her school years Anita was very shy and had a stammer so hated reading out in class. At school she enjoyed sport such as hockey and tennis and used to recount tales of getting up early in the morning to go for a run before school just for the fun of it. From an early age she took up the piano and loved it, practising hard and achieving Grade 8 by the time she left school. Growing up she described herself as a "latch key kid" because her mum worked as a teacher and her father was often away on a ship. When she herself had children, she vowed that they would not come home to an empty house.

She learnt to drive and bought a Mini which was her pride and joy - she loved driving. After leaving school she studied to be a primary school teacher and it was during these studies that she met a firm friend, Moira. It was Moira's idea for them both to take up posts over the border in Newcastle. But once in Newcastle Moira became homesick and moved back to Scotland. Anita decided to stay. She moved into a shared house with Liz who became another close friend and later Maid of Honour at her wedding.

Liz introduced Anita to a group of friends who went tenpin bowling once a week. Andy was part of that group and it wasn't long before he asked Anita out.

Andy joined IBM in 1970 and moved to Bosham and it was there that they decided to get married and in 1972 Anita and

Andy married in Arbroath and spent their honeymoon on a boat on the Norfolk Broads with four friends. They bought their first house in Havant and Anita taught at a Primary School in Fareham.

Their next move was to Goostrey in Cheshire where Andrea was born in January 1976, and Alan in July 1977. At this point Anita stopped work and became a full time Mum. They all enjoyed the village life at Goostrey and were part of the church community. But then in 1983 the family moved to Ponteland where Andy took on a new role in the Newcastle branch of IBM. Anita looked after the significant garden and hedges of their new home.

Once the children were older Anita took up her piano lessons again and worked hard to become a Licentiate of the Trinity College of Music. She loved playing the piano.

Anita's other pleasure was walking – particularly mountains in the Lake District; annual holidays and other breaks were spent climbing yet another peak so as to tick it off in the respective Wainwright's book. Her love of walking was not just in the UK, but also in Spain, Switzerland and Tenerife. And Anita was an avid follower of Wimbledon and she attended Wimbledon once as a spectator.

Anita became a loyal member of Ponteland Methodist Church and annually collected envelopes door-to-door for Christian Aid. She was a pastoral visitor to Minnie Shafto and was a member of Women's Fellowship, Focus and the Art Group.

Walking continued to be a hobby, now with the Meanders Group at Church and more planting-up of the garden in areas no longer needed as play areas any more. Anita and Andy also went on many walking holidays. They took up skiing with the Church youth group and really enjoyed retirement.

In 2006 Anita became "Granny" to her first grandson Ethan. More grandchildren arrived – Joshua and Logan and another wedding, this time for Alan and Sophie, and then the arrival of their children Sally and Morris.

As the children grew Anita loved playing board games with both her children and grandchildren. She encouraged and ensured a lifelong love of music in her grandchildren.

Although she might not have loved cooking, you wouldn't know it from the delicious spreads she put on, followed by delicious desserts with home-grown gooseberries and blackcurrants. And Lorna said "Anita was the best sister anyone could have. She was unassuming, kind, helpful, loyal and loving. Yet she had strong principles which she would not compromise. We never exchanged a cross word in all our years. She did not foist her emotions on others, but she did feel things deeply. Her long illness was borne so bravely, and it pained me greatly to see her suffer. My sister-in-law gave me a photo frame to hold a picture of us both. It bore the words – "Life made us sisters.... love made us friends". I will miss her everyday".

Although, sadly life had to change after Anita suffered a stroke in 2016, she met the challenges admirably. Anita also underwent further cancer treatment and faced these setbacks with steadfastness. She regularly played scrabble with Rosemary Brown, completed jigsaws with Andy and enjoyed her beautiful garden.

Anita died peacefully on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

**Andy Anderson**

## **OUR THANKS**

For the beauty of each hour  
Of the day and of the night  
Hill and vale and tree and flower  
Sun and moon and stars of light.

**Noreen Green**

## **GARDENING FOR MARCH 2021**

After the coldest January since 2010 we have now had a severe attack of “global warming”. The reasons for the severe weather are associated with the stratosphere. Suffice to say that at the time of writing the temperatures have improved and this has allowed activity in the greenhouses. For the first time ever I brought a small propagator into the house just to get some seeds started – and then the weather changed!

Although the snow has melted in the garden there are still some quite large drifts where it will take a week or more to melt. I have not lost anything in the greenhouses and have been able to pot on seedlings grown from my own collected seed and sown in August – a start for plant sales in May.

When Which? published the full list of composts they had tested there were a number of quite high-scoring peat containing-composts for sowing seeds – Levington John Innes Seed compost (17p/l, 57% peat), Wilko Sowing and Cutting (10p, 80%), Champions Blend All Purpose Compost (13p, 70%), Levington Seed & Cutting Composts (20p, 60%) and Homebase Multi Purpose Compost (10p, 50%). For raising young plants Melcourt Sylvagrow Multipurpose topped the list (16p, no peat) followed by Thompson & Morgan Incredicompost (21p, 80%) and Westland Multipurpose Compost with John Innes (12p, 45%). All the peat-free composts in this group had much lower overall ratings.

Which? has also been looking at Coir for raising plants. Their verdict was that “Overall, we think it’s worth experimenting with coir”. They were impressed with how well cuttings took in pellets and seeds fared much better in Jiffy - 7C pellets. You may have experience of coir as a growing medium if you bought packs containing a pot, compost and one Amaryllis (*Hippeastrum*) bulb. I did at Christmas 2019 (I bought bulbs in 2020). The compost came in the form of a pellet that had to be soaked in water before planting. Otherwise I have not used coir products.

There appears to be so much more interest in gardening whilst we have been restricted due to Covid-19. It may just be enlarging beds and borders whilst others have already set about some vegetable growing. Others have sourced allotment areas where there are vacancies. This is the time to do the planning for either the immediate or long-term future. Now is the time also to secure all that is necessary to carry out your planting. Last year

many seed houses, garden centres and nurseries ran out of seeds and some growing plants. Thompson & Morgan are the largest seed suppliers having recently taken over but not absorbed some competitors. Mr Fothergill's Seeds is also a large



supplier of mail order seed and plants. After Medwyn Williams (12 Chelsea golds and MBE) spoke at Kirkley Hall many years ago I have bought most of my vegetable seeds from Medwyn's of Anglesey with very good results. Perhaps "getting started" with expanding from flowers and shrubs is the most difficult. Raised beds have to be "contained" with substantial supports so that they will not collapse – treated timber

and scaffolding boards may be used. There is the need to fill the raised beds with soil. Developing an area within an existing garden, laying out beds no more than 4 feet wide (so that once cultivated you don't have to walk on the beds) with grass paths in between is the system that I have in place. For planning new cultivated areas near to a hedge I suggest a path between the beds and the hedge to avoid roots from the hedge absorbing the new nutrition in the beds and allowing for the cutting of the hedge.

In planning you need to decide what you are going to grow. I have got my seed potatoes set up "chitting" (need light but little or no heat). For spacing in beds I suggest 9-10" between "sets" and 20" between rows for earlies (5 potatoes in 4 foot beds – our favourite varieties are Lady Christl and Charlotte -you could plant Maris Bard or Red Duke of York). For main crops I use 30" between rows and only 4 "sets" per row. We grew Maris Piper, Desiree and Sarpo Mira which are all suitable for boiling, mashing, roasting and chips. I suggest that new starters might only grow earlies for the first year. You need to count up how many "sets" you need and buy them from a centre that sells them loose. Packaged seed potatoes are normally sold in 2kg or 2.5kg packs. You may not need farmyard manure but some form of organic matter is desirable either mixed into the soil or in planting trenches. Potatoes grow well with some fertilizer as well either in 7:7:7 or 12:12:18 ratios.

I will say more about other vegetables next month.

As I say good gardening in March I welcome new readers living in Cambridge.

**Syd Cowan**

## **VILLAGE NEWS**

### **Community Hub**

Ponteland United Junior Football Club and Ponteland Primary School have secured funding to help convert three former classrooms into a new space for the community. The hub will include a training and educational room, changing rooms, welfare space and café. Ponteland United Football Club has 400 players and 40 junior teams. The aim is that the space will be used by the whole community and other non-football-related activities and will be somewhere for young people to meet. The club is looking for over-15s to volunteer to help with the café.

### **Northumberlandia, Blagdon**

Work has been done on the path at this landform sculpture to repair erosion.

### **Local Government Elections and Election for Police and Crime Commissioner**

Apparently these elections are to go ahead. People are being encouraged to vote by post. Polling stations will be open with safety arrangements in place (those of us who have been “shielding” have just been told that it is to continue until 31st March).

### **Former Ponteland High School**

A planning application has been submitted to demolish the former High School. More information can be found using ref 20/03136/DEMGDO .

### **Business at End House, High Callerton, Ponteland**

A new company “Town and Tweed Ltd” has made a planning application to start a business selling fine groceries and country homeware. Northumberland CC request comments by 12th March.

### **Census Day 21st March**

We will be receiving a pack in the post  
(see [www.census.gov.uk](http://www.census.gov.uk)) .

**Jennifer Hardy**

## ALISON AND ALISTAIR STEWART

Are proud to announce:-

Walt Robin 14 days old. Brother to Ewan Peter. My two miracle boys both showing me how strong they are.



## FAMILY NEWS

Sad news - another walker, **Marjorie Scarlett**, has died.

**Lilian Smith** is home.

We wish **John Gill** a very happy 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on 7th March.

Congratulations to **Matthew Cooper**, who is celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday on 30th March.

**Sheila Browell** was able to enjoy her special birthday in February. She appreciated all the cards.

**Judith Orton** has a special birthday in April.

We wish all our children well as they restart school.

Best wishes to students, and apprentices, in our Church family. Their lives have been disrupted too.

We hope that all our young people can look forward to getting back to some degree of normality again.

We remember all our parents who have struggled these past months with home schooling.

We remember those in our Church family who have been shielding again. It won't be too long before you can get out once more!

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



### HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you need any practical help of any kind (e.g. shopping, collecting prescriptions etc.) then please contact Pete Cowey. If you wish to volunteer to run errands for others then please pass your details on to Pete. Email:

[mrpetecowey@btinternet.com](mailto:mrpetecowey@btinternet.com)

Tel: 07771 857574



## Easter 2021

Maundy Thursday 1st April  
Good Friday 2nd April  
Easter Sunday 4th April  
Easter Monday 5th April

### From The Editors

*Don't forget that copy for the April edition of Cornerstone should be with the editor by **Friday 26th March 2021**. The editor's email address is [andrew73anderson@gmail.com](mailto:andrew73anderson@gmail.com). The editorial committee is Andy Anderson, Jennifer Hardy, Jona Sewell and Viv Whyte.*