

Notices for Sunday 13th September 2020
Ponteland Methodist Church
Minister – Rev Jona Sewell (Tel. 822057)
LET THE LOVE OF JESUS BE KNOWN

24th in Ordinary Time // Education Sunday // The Good Shepherd

JONA's MESSAGE.

Dear Friends,

Our first notice sheet of the new church year is produced within a national context of much uncertainty and change. This week the Government announced tighter measures on 'social gatherings' meaning that no more than six people can meet together, indoors or outdoors, from this Monday (14th). Whilst there are some exemptions such as schools and places of work, we are still awaiting clear guidance from government and the Methodist Church as to where places of worship fit.

The stewards will be meeting virtually with myself this week. Our discussions will include making a decision on whether or not to send out the second questionnaire about worship, which was intended to be a follow up to the one sent out in July, and was planned to be shared next weekend. We will also begin to discuss whether we can offer the church for small groups, of up to six, to meet for friendship, or bible study, or prayer. We will do our best to keep you updated of the outcomes of our discussion.

Pastoral Care and Holy Communion

I am thankful for the mutual pastoral care and support that has been shown throughout the 'Corona crisis' so far and encourage us not to relax but to resolve again to continue to exercise love and care for one another as best we can.

Please feel free to get in touch with me (822057, revjsewell@gmail.com) about any pastoral situation you wish to bring to my attention or if you are struggling yourself and want/need a listening ear or a chat. Sometimes I am not aware that someone may be in need; please forgive me if you feel you have been missed.

If you would like a 'home visit' or to share in home Holy Communion then please get in touch as I believe I can now offer these within the set guidelines, but please only do so if you are happy with the associated risk of having me as a visitor in your home.

Worship

Our system of online worship will continue. If you currently receive a paper copy of the service, but would like to be able to watch/listen to the recorded service, then there are three options available:

- 1) A DVD copy can be sent to you each week - contact me to arrange this.
- 2) Services can be pre-loaded onto a laptop and delivered to your door with detailed instructions on how to watch it in this way - contact **Andy Anderson** (871844, andrew73anderson@gmail.com) to arrange this.
- 3) Services can now be shown at the church on a **Monday afternoon at 2.30pm**, for up to six people - contact **Geoff Lisle** (822532, geoffandangela@btinternet.com) for more information.
- 4)

Prayer

Throughout September the church will be open every **Thursday morning, 10am - 12noon**, for anyone who wishes to use the space for prayer; this will be reviewed at the end of the month.

I will no longer be producing a list of things to pray for in the weekly notices but I want to encourage each of us to take responsibility for our own prayer life and to set aside time each day, even 5 minutes, to intentionally spend time seeking, talking and listening with God. I pledge to spend the first part of each day in prayer - for the church, our community, the world, but most of all for God's direction and blessing.

Finally, I ask that you please pray for me, and for all in leadership roles within our church and beyond, during these challenging times.

We will do our best to keep you informed as things progress. If you want to talk about any aspect of the current situation, church, or the way forward then please do get in touch - I'd love to hear from you.

Stay safe, and may God bless us all.

Rev Jona Sewell

Newcastle West Circuit

LECTIONARY

**Exodus 14 : 19-31, Psalm 114, or Canticle : Exodus 15 : 1b-11, 20-21,
Romans 14 : 1-12, Matthew 18 : 21-35**

The following questions are from today's Lectionary using the NIV version:-

- 1) How many times should Peter forgive his brother when he sins?
- 2) How much did the 'fellow' servant owe his master?

You will find the answers on the back page.

'VIRTUAL' GREAT NORTH RUN

Don't be surprised if you see several runners out this weekend as Sunday would have been the 40th Great North Run. Competitors are instead running the half marathon on 'their own patch' so could well be going past your property including through Ponteland on a route down Callerton Lane, past the Church and up Eland Lane. If you see any, I'm sure they would appreciate a quiet cheer or clap. I have it on good authority that Tony "the fridge" will be out running in Darras Hall !

CHURCH FRONT WINDOW

If you are walking past the Church or stuck at the traffic lights in your car, take a moment to admire the new window dressings that Pauline and Judith have put up. Well done ladies!

AWAKENING NORTH

Hello Everyone. I Hope you are keeping well. A group of us are planning a Prayer Walk/Drive, visiting each of the villages to Pray on Saturday 12th September starting at 10.30am - 12.30pm. Please do join us!

If you live in any of these villages or know other Christians who do, please encourage them to join us and pray. Please find below the Villages and times we plan to do the Prayer Walk

Ponteland: 10.30am Meet on the green, in front of Saint Mary's Church NE20 9PZ

Dinnington: 11am Meet in front of Dinnington Village Hall NE13 7JW

Whalton: 11.30am Meet in front of Whalton Village Hall NE61 3XA

Stamfordham: 12noon Meet in front of Stamfordham Village Hall NE18 0PF

Westerhope: 12.30pm Meet in front of Westerhope Community Centre NE5 1NE

To track our whereabouts or if you need any help, please ring me on my Mobile 07958903668. COME let us also pray together during AN: PRAYER on Sat 12th evening at 7pm at the Ponteland Memorial Hall. * Government guidelines on social distancing will apply* Venues follow COVID-19 SECURE guidelines. With just over a week to go for the Awakening North: Encounter meetings, could I encourage you to intercede and pray in urgency please. These events are still going ahead as they will adhere to recent Government updates. For more information visit the website <https://www.awakeningnorth.co.uk>
Let's continue to pray for a revival in our villages. Shalom! *Abraham*

PRAYERS

Let your word be in our mouth, O Lord, your truth in our heart and your will in our mind. Let us think only what is good and discern your presence in all that we do. Let us at all times be alive to the promptings of your Holy Spirit; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

O Lord of majestic mountain and roaring sea, O Lord of astonishing beauty and outlandish loveliness, O Lord of the minuscule, the overlooked and the never seen, O Lord of the extraordinary and the everyday, open our eyes to see your presence, our ears to hear the whisper of your voice and, realising you in every place and every moment of our existence, may we live with justice, peace, care and hope. *Amen*

A Psalm of lament and praise in a time of coronavirus

How shall we praise you, Lord, our God? When we are locked down, how shall we praise you? When the doors to your house are barred, and your people cannot assemble? When those desperately in need of money and work cannot even wait in the market-place? When we have to circle round people in the street and to queue for shops maintaining safe distance? When we can only communicate by hearing on the phone, or seeing on the screen; or digitally messaging, or even just waving through a window? When we cannot meet our parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, or other family members and friends? When we cannot touch them in their flesh and blood, to know they are really alive? How shall we praise you? How, like Thomas, shall we not see yet believe that your son is raised among us? How shall we praise you?

How can I praise you, Lord? Are you plaguing us with this virus to punish us because we have all done wrong, or thought wrongly, or felt wrongly, or just been wrong? If so, why do only some die, and those, apparently, the ones who are the least worst or most caring amongst us? Or are you trying to teach us a lesson? If so, why is it so hard to learn? And how are we to find the answer when we do not even know the question? Or are you still the same loving God, coming to us in our sufferings and opening up the way to new life in Jesus?

Lord, I will try to praise you. Through gritted teeth, I will try to praise you. I will try to remember that you have created all things, and this virus is part of your creation. I will try not to hate it but seek to mitigate its harm. I will try to keep myself and others safe. I will work to pray for them and seek to help in whatever way I can.

Lord, when I cannot pray or worship help me be aware of all your people and your saints and angels hovering around me, lifting me up. When I feel alone, let me feel you near me, even if only for a moment that enables me to go on. Let me hear you say **“Peace be with you”**.

Lord, I will praise you. Let all the peoples praise you.

(The Revd Kenneth Howcroft)

**Please send your notices to Geoff Lisle by next Friday, 1pm.
Either by phone:- 01661 822532, by post:- 42, Ridgely Drive. NE20 9BL
or by E-mail :- Geoffandangela@btinternet.com**