

# Ponteland Methodist Church Cornerstone

*Happy Christmas*



Jack Hetherington

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**December 2021/January 2022**

## **MINISTER'S LETTER**

Against a backdrop of inflation, soaring energy and fuel prices, some empty shelves and supply chain issues, the approach of Christmas might feel more daunting than usual this year. But it's still the perfect time to remind ourselves that the best things in life don't depend on just-in-time delivery. They're not fired by oil, gas, or petrol, and they're totally immune to inflation. I'm talking about the stuff money can't buy. If the pandemic and successive lockdowns have taught us anything, it's that what we have is not nearly as important as the people and relationships we share life with and invest ourselves in.

We must also remind ourselves that virtues like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, compassion, hope and justice also cost nothing and are not dependent on the fluctuating markets or the world around us. On paper these virtues are mere words. Just blah blah blah, as Greta Thunberg might say. But put into practice? They can – and do – change the world.

As we approach Christmas we remind ourselves that Christians believe that when Jesus came into the world He showed how valuable we are to Him; He invested in humanity! We also believe that Jesus lived virtues like those mentioned, and He calls us who follow Him to strive to do the same.

Why not take a moment to be thankful for those people you invest yourself in, and who invest themselves in you? And ask yourself, what virtues am I sharing with the world this Christmas?

Have a blessed and safe Christmas, and a wonderful 2022.

God Bless,

**Jona**

## KING HEROD AGRIPPA THE SECOND

Very soon after my brother-in-law Antonius Felix handed over the praefectorate of Syria to Porcius Festus, the new Governor invited me to make a state visit to Caesarea. It was a good time to go and support him in his new appointment and to make a necessary assertion of my own regality. Rome is proud of itself but needs to acknowledge other powers in its dominions. My sister Berenice wished to come with me to see in what state her sister Drusilla had left the Palace. Women!

Soon after we had arrived at Caesarea, the Procurator was consulting me on state matters and policies when he broke off and said "There's a religious matter on which you can help me, Your Majesty. Felix has left me a prisoner awaiting trial by the Emperor and the charges seem to turn on points of Jewish faith and practice. You are more familiar with those than I am, so would you be so kind as to hear what the accused has to say and advise me how to phrase my covering letter, when I send him to Rome? The case seems to concern a dead man called Jesus whom the prisoner, a Jew with Roman citizenship, asserts is alive. Roman law is blank on things like this, so how do I frame the charges to be put before the Emperor? Paulus has appealed to Rome, as is his right."

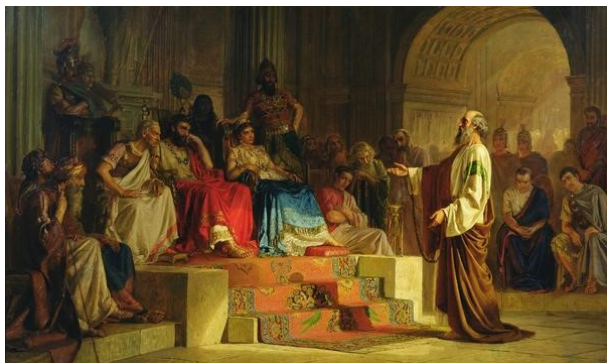
"I would like to hear the man," I said. "My sister is as interested as I am in matters Hebrew, so she was with me when Paulus, who originally carried the famous Jewish name of Saul, was brought before us and stood chained, between his guards. A small man, but he eyed us boldly as if our equal! Unexpected and a bit disturbing."

Festus said: "The whole Jewish community has petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, to have this man put to death. He has exercised his right to appeal to his Imperial Majesty."

I instructed the prisoner to speak on his own behalf. Saul was suitably conscious of my exalted rank and expressed himself as fortunate to be allowed to present his case to Royalty. He was aware that I was King of the Jews and no ordinary person or merely elected; very polite, but behind the flattery I could detect a very confident and learned mind.

He had evidently been a member of the very class of religious zealot who was now clamouring for his death. Some sort of vi-

sion had totally changed him. In the middle of a punitive expedition against the Jesus Movement he had been struck down and had heard the voice of Jesus of Nazareth telling him to change and tell all peoples, not just the Jews, that Jesus was living and would bring salvation to all nations, turning them from darkness to the light.



The result was that Saul was to preach around the world, calling Jews and gentiles, to a change of heart and righteous living. This message had been opposed by Orthodox Jewry and that is why they sought his death. Saul went on to assert that

the Prophets and Moses himself had predicted that the Anointed One would suffer and then rise from the dead and bring light to Jews and gentiles alike.

This was too much for Festus, who blurted out “Paulus, you are mad! Overeducated and daft with it!”

Saul gently said “Not mad, Your Excellency, just telling the truth. His Majesty the King understands, and the news will not come as a surprise.” He then turned to me and surprised me by asking “Do you believe the prophets? I know you do!”

That put me on the spot! The man was trying to convert me! I said as much and the prisoner had the nerve to say “I wish before God that not only you but all present would come to be as I am!” Then, looking down at his wrists with a smile he added “except for these chains!”

I could not refrain from being moved by his courage and faith. Would to God I was as good a man as he is. But if you want to stand well with Nero, the Emperor is your only god.

When we had retired to confer, we agreed that there was nothing deserving death for a man so concerned for the peace and spiritual welfare of the world. He could have been freed had he not already made the irrevocable appeal to Caesar. To Rome he must go.



## JENNY LEWIS

Dear all

It was with great sadness that we had to tell you my Mum, Jenny Lewis, died peacefully on 17<sup>th</sup> October this year in Grange Lea Care Home from a chest infection. We had a Service of Thanksgiving on 8<sup>th</sup> November that is available to listen to on the Church website. Rev Jona did a marvellous job considering the huge amount of information he was given and the fact he was just back from sab-batical. We couldn't fit all the information in. Even I learnt things about my Mum I

didn't know. If you want to see our memory book/photos please get in touch at [ravs@talktalk.net](mailto:ravs@talktalk.net) and I can send you a link.

It is not possible to thank everyone personally but truly we appreciate the constant and continuous contact Church members had with Mum; firstly when she had to leave Ponteland and move to Kingston Park and then back again into Grange Lea. Mum chose Grange Lea because they would have helped her attend Church and social events but sadly this couldn't happen because of COVID19. This did not stop many of you staying in touch. She knew you all cared. I also want to thank so many of you for coming to the service. It really helps to know how many lives she touched and to hear about her life within Church. Special thanks must go to Rev Jona for his support through this difficult time; Chris Cogan for helping me in so many ways; Geoff and Angela Lisle for the practical help in setting up, recording and downloading the service and their much-needed help on the day; Jean Tweedie for her 'Tweedie's tours' that inspired Mum so much; Ann Scott for taking Mum to Church whenever possible; Ann Redhead for helping me choose the hymns and playing so beautifully and to all of you for singing so well! I can't thank you all enough, you are all true Christians.

**Susan Johnson**

## **JENNY LEWIS**

### **Notes from the eulogy given by Rev Jona Sewell**

*1938 - 1944 (age 0 to 7)*

Jenny was born on 7th July 1938 in St Albans to Arthur and Edyth Munday. In Bursledon Arthur worked on developing the Spitfire plans; because of this Jenny loved the Spitfire, and collected all sorts of Spitfire-related memorabilia. The first time I visited Jenny I recall her telling me that her father had done this, something that was obviously a source of great pride.

*1945 - 1956 (age 8 to 18)*

When Jenny was eight, the family moved to Highcliffe, Dorset. Their father had the house custom-built to accommodate both his mother and his own family. Waiting at the train station on her first day of grammar school Jenny met Sylvia, her longest friend. Sylvia recalls a school-trip they shared to the Loire Valley. In 1953, Jenny's family moved back to Hertfordshire, first to Stevenage then eventually to another house built by Jenny's dad in Hitchin. At Hitchin Girls' Grammar School Jenny finished her school education and met another friend, Anne Musson.

Jenny would then move to London to attend Cripplegate Secretarial College where she met another friend, Hilary.

Hilary and Jenny loved tennis and would queue up overnight to get tickets for Wimbledon. Jenny would try to get tickets to Wimbledon every year. Wimbledon fortnight was the two weeks of the year she was most definitely unavailable!

Having achieved her secretarial skills Jenny worked a secretary at the LSE and met yet another friend, Janice. They became such good friends that they moved into a flat together in Earls Court. Jenny and Janice had a lot of fun and it including hitchhiking from London to Janice's parents' farm. The pair even spent one Easter hitchhiking round the Cotswolds! It's fair to say that Jenny had quite an adventurous spirit.

*1956 - 1962 (age 18-24)*

Jenny moved back to Hitchin where she got a secretarial job at Cambridge University; the family were very proud! And it was at Cambridge that a certain Barry Johnson came on the scene, whom Jenny would later marry. Barry was called to the US in Autumn 1961 to work as a lecturer and just days after he left, Jenny received a letter that basically said, "Come out and marry



me". So ensued a frantic rush to get Jenny a US visa and plane ticket, which were still a rarity in those days, and on November 1<sup>st</sup> '61 they were married in Reno, Nevada.

#### *1963-1970 (age 25 – 32)*

In the US, Jenny and Barry welcomed their first child Martin who was born on Jenny's 25th birthday. Jenny would say that Martin was the best birthday present ever. After returning to England, Jenny had two more children – Susan (1964) born in Exmouth and Adrian (1966) born in Ponteland. Three children born within four years meant that Jenny had her hands full!

#### *1970s*

Living back in Ponteland, Jenny became involved in many local activities, with her friend Gerry, whom she met at ante-natal classes. Jenny and Gerry's friendship blossomed. There are many happy family memories of this time that could be recalled including holidays, camping in Switzerland, and trips to Mersea to visit her mum Edyth. The 300 mile journey was undertaken with parents, three kids and luggage in a mini clubman... that must have been a tight squeeze!

One of Jenny's proudest achievements was to be Secretary to the Ponteland Swimming Pool group who raised funds to build Ponteland swimming pool.

Jenny was also a member of the Ponteland Methodist Church. Of course Jenny would also enjoy Tweedie's tours. Jenny kept active and enjoyed walking. Sue remembers a trip to Simonside with the dog Missie where Jenny slipped and broke her leg (she said she heard it crack). A couple of hikers patched her up and got them back to the car but Jenny still had to drive home. The next day she went to casualty to get it plastered, and joined The Ramblers Association!

Career-wise Jenny worked at the General Hospital, where she was a personal secretary.

#### *1980s*

Eventually she and Barry would separate, and Jenny made a significant move, buying her own home in Kingston Park. Jenny was fortunate to have lovely neighbours who became friends – including Bill, John and Pauline, and later another Jenny.

## Grandchildren and later life

### 1990s

Whilst at Kingston Park Jenny met her future husband Brian Lewis, whose children became very much part of the family as her own children did of his. They got married in 1997. Brian's children have kept in touch with Jenny with updates on their own lives which she was always delighted to hear.

Sue said, *"Brian was the love of Mum's life. Brian worshipped Mum and she loved him back"*.

There was further joy when Martin married Margaret, bringing into the family Margaret's children, Catherine and Oliver.

She welcomed Sue's husband Robin into the family in 1995 and later grandchildren: Tom (1993), Vicky (1994) and Anna (1997). Very helpful with babysitting. Family really mattered; she loved and cared deeply for them all, was very proud of them and would help wherever she could.

### 2000s

In 2002 Adrian married Nevada. They lived in California so the whole family went to the wedding. Jenny, Brian and Janice then travelled on to Canada for another wedding - Sean and Jill's.

Adrian and Nevada had two children: Ava and Julian and his job took them to Sweden for two years, which gave Jenny and the rest of the family the chance to see them again.

Although by now in the noughties the world was changing that didn't stop Jenny, as her grand-daughter Vicky said, *"Grandma was always very good with the computer. Despite hair being blonde, she was very much a "silver surfer"! She used to write and print "Santa letters" for us grandchildren with clip art, borders and fancy fonts."*

### 2010s

She welcomed great-grandchildren Alfie and Freya into the fold as Tom and Emma had their own family. Sadly in 2012, Jenny's world was turned upside down with the sudden death of Brian; a great loss to her, but... The following year saw a day for celebration on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2013 as it was both Jenny's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday AND Martin's 50<sup>th</sup>. Tennis enthusiasts may recall, this was also the day Andy Murray first won Wimbledon – a perfect way to top off the celebrations.



2020s

Jenny's health was suffering and that meant a move to Grange Lea. Jenny passed away on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021

That's some info and detail about her life but Jenny was so much more than that... did you know that she knew how to fly a plane having got her pilot's licence in America?

She also:

Had a lifelong love of Scrabble which she shared with her mum and then friend Kay. Good at knitting and tapestry. Very much a pudding person – made great cream cakes. She loved animals and had many pets throughout her life from Fergus the Red Setter to Liam the greyhound, Mac the cat, and Clarrie the guinea-pig! Great host – would host people when they came to Newcastle for a visit. She was great at staying in touch with people, and so many of her friends and relatives were great at staying in contact as well. The number of names here is testament to how well her friends and relatives stayed in touch, something Jenny appreciated no end.

She was kind, loving, caring, welcoming, sincere, and she wasn't the sort of person to bear grudges, criticise or judge unfairly. She valued people and adventure over people and things... a lesson there for us all.

Faith is not just about what we believe, it's about how we live..

Jenny seemed to get that! We can be confident that she is held in God's eternal presence, and be grateful for having known her and all that she meant.

**Rotary**  
Ponteland



## **CAROL CONCERT**

With

**Bedlington Salvation Army Band**

At

**Methodist Church, Main Street, Ponteland**

**Thursday December 16<sup>th</sup>**

**7.00pm**

(Doors open 6.30pm)





### PONTELAND EXHIBITION OF HOPE

For two wonderful days Ponteland Methodist Church (all of US!) hosted a colourful exhibition of creative arts inspired by lockdown memories and future hopes. The exhibition was formally opened on Sat Nov 6<sup>th</sup> by the Mayor of Ponteland, Christine Greenwell, speaking of the fantastic way the community had pulled together to support one another through Covid isolation, with many acts of kindness. Our minister, Jona, said despite tough times hope is shining through as depicted in the many glorious exhibits.

The journey through the exhibition began with pre-school children's 3D depiction of heaven, using a masked teddy in a swing floating through dozens of hanging fluffy clouds each trailing colourful streamers to gently brush heads as people walked through to arrive at a fabulous handprint sun proclaiming clearly 'We're walking on sunshine'. Other fabulous pre-school exhibits included a collage made with face masks entitled 'Up in the Air', more gorgeous clouds of tinsel, and some amazing huge group paintings.

All five Ponteland schools took part with high-quality writing and drawings on many themes, including the NHS. Some were simple, some profound, but all thought-provoking and moving. Richard Coates school sent in two short videos which moved everyone to tears. One showed children in lockdown singing together on Zoom and one showed teachers at home each giving messages of rainbow hope. It brought back how sad and lonely lockdown had been, with everyone trying to encourage one another that we would meet again.

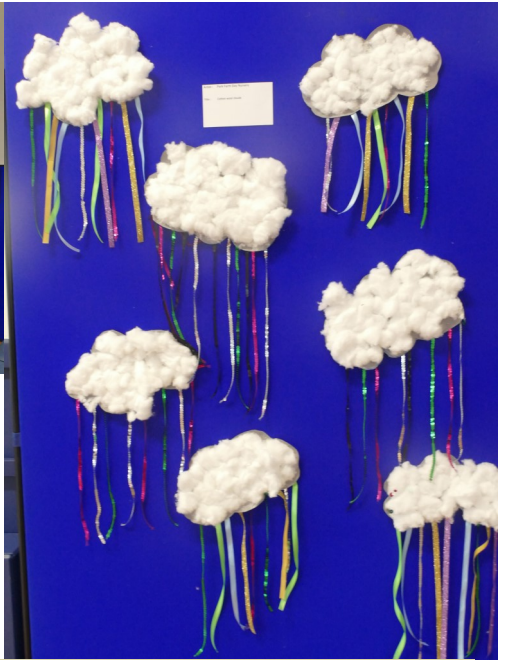
The emotional journey took you through to paintings and poems by grown-ups, as well as flower displays, wood-turning, knitting, all done in lockdown with meaningful messages. A cat poem said that it wasn't just the owner who was lonely but the cat was missing company just as much! Exhibits were sometimes serious, often fun: who would have known just how creative people can be? The journey ended with welcome refreshments and lively conversation. People lingered to savour this 'almost normality' but the silent film playing in the background, a tribute to the NHS and other front line workers, reminded us of the hard times and of our immense gratitude.

The event was a real team effort. Led by Pete, Rosemary and Ann, dozens of helpers did their bit. Some Church folk created exhibits, many attended and brought friends. Some liaised with schools and other organisations. Lots of people were involved in setting up and taking down the exhibition. People provided flowers, table cloths, cakes, lights, printing, showing of films, decorating of church window, acted as stewards, worked in the kitchen...the list is endless.

The exhibition features in December Pont News & Views and was in the Hexham Courant on Nov 13th. All the feedback was highly positive. One person wrote:

**Well done and a big thank you to all the volunteers who organised the Exhibition of Hope. I visited on my own and appreciated you reaching out. I enjoyed meeting some of you who were on duty. The exhibition brought back memories of the fear and isolation felt by so many during the first few days of the first lockdown. Seeing the positives people and especially children had taken from their covid experiences has given me hope.**

**Ann Cooper**



## The Art Exhibition of Hope









## THE OPEN DOOR

I made this soup with left over chicken but I'm sure it will serve as a tasty way to use up your turkey after Christmas.

Serves four.

**Judith Orton**

### **Creamy Chicken Soup**

Left-over chicken chopped

1 onion, chopped

2 leeks, sliced

2 sticks celery, sliced

1 tsp mixed herbs

1 litre chicken stock

150ml double cream

Salt and pepper



Prepare the vegetables, then place in a large pan with the mixed herbs and seasoning. Add the chicken stock.

Bring to the boil then simmer for 30 mins until the veg are soft.

Allow to cool for approx 30 mins.

Blitz with a blender or in a food processor.

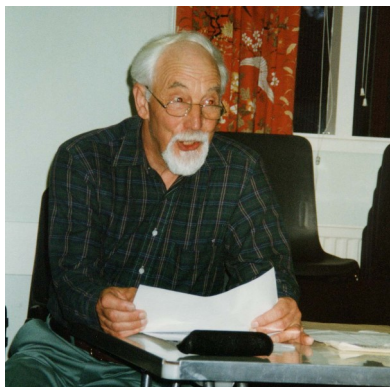
Return to the pan. Add the chicken and cream.

Reheat and add seasoning to taste.



**We wish all our customers a  
Happy Christmas**

**Please note that we will be closed  
Dec 20th, 27th and Jan 6th**



## **JACK HETHERINGTON**

**1ST AUGUST 1927—8TH NOVEMBER  
2021**

### **JACK'S DREAM**

Once Jack Hetherington of Darras Hall had a very funny dream  
He dreamed his life was done and he'd passed over Jordan's stream  
He walked along a narrow path alone and by his-self  
Then just in front he noticed Bill Hutch and Eddie Robb as well.

He saw a city on ahead with an angel at the gate  
Who said: "St Peter won't be long, if you would care to wait"  
When Peter came the angel said: "There's three here waiting you coming  
back"  
There's Bill Hutch, Eddie Robb and Hetherington forename Jack.

So Bill was the first one in. St Peter said "Now son  
In life did you ever tell any fibs?", and Bill said "just one"  
St Peter said – "that's very good but as penance for that sin  
You must run round the city once before I let you in".

Then it was Eddie's turn to take his place before the bar  
And he confessed to two big fibs before his case got far  
St Peter said "that's not too bad, but fibbing is a vice  
As punishment you'll have to run round this city twice".

So Eddie went running off like one of John Peel's hounds  
He hoped that he'd have plenty of puff – he'd have to do two rounds  
St Peter said – "where's Jack Hetherington gone, send him in if you like"  
The angel said "He'll not be long - he's gone home for his bike!".



## DAD'S LIFE

It all started back in Wylam, canny Wylam by the Tyne  
The village featured quite a lot in Freda's life and mine  
I remember waiting patiently to surprise a wartime evacuee  
Coming from school across the bridge – was she the one for me?

Both brought up in the village where we spent our early years  
Memories of wartime village characters and countryside ways  
Playing football for the local team, Freda missed the only goal I ever scored  
This was all before television came, yet we were never bored.

National Service broke the spell  
But there is much more of this love story to tell  
Then back to college for a while before fate intervened once more  
Plucked up courage to propose, didn't know what was in store.

So courting days behind us we set the fateful date  
Just missed April Fools day – but now had a deadline at any rate  
Married at St Nicholas's Mary and Jen bridesmaids, Frank best man  
Then honeymoon in Keswick – the day seemed all over before it had began.

Settled down to married life, took a while to get the knack  
Never had an argument – I just never answered back  
Set up house on Edgehill and haven't moved from there since  
The house expanded with the family – it's a pity it could not then shrink.

Life's supposed to start at 40, that's what people say  
What we discovered really was that we only did things a different way  
Freda kept on teaching and I gave architecture my all  
But soon all took second place when the stork began to call.

Dianne arrived in 58, a little blonde bombshell  
I must admit I wasn't much help and nappies sure were hell  
I had to learn, however, for as soon as she was two  
Chris arrived on schedule and it all started anew.

They soon grew up and progressed through nursery and schools  
With all the usual growing pains and no apparent parenting rules  
On to the teenage years where they always knew what was best  
We just tried to keep them happy and prepare them to leave the nest.

Family holidays, the highlight with caravans and boats the theme  
First Beadnell then Knott's Hill, all passed as a dream  
Then on to holidays abroad with a little culture mixed with sun  
With Lillian and Andy contributing to the adventure and the fun.

Dianne left for Liverpool to be a teacher like her ma  
Chris went to Barclays for postings near and far  
It wasn't long , however, before talks of engagements began  
But I admit they did it correctly – asked permission from the old man.

Now the house was emptied Freda returned to teach for a short spell  
Only stayed for seventeen years – she enjoyed it just as well  
Ex pupils with grandchildren greet Freda in the street  
Me, I'm just Mrs Hetherington's husband to everyone we meet.

Grandchildren came along – Joanne, Louise and Ross  
As grandparents we were sometimes called upon but no longer the boss  
Things are all so different now, it's quite difficult to give advice  
Louise's reply when I tried – "Oh grandad get a life".

Retirement came to us along with plans to spend a few quid  
Holidays around the world in company of Margaret and Syd  
Jack still had jobs to do a few hobbies to run  
Freda's WI and Luncheon Club – forget the house and garden work to be done.

And now it is time to say goodbye – as they look down from above  
We'd like to thank them for their friendship and their love  
So when you get the chance raise your glass to them in a toast  
To have had them in our lives we are luckier than most.

**Jack Hetherington**

## THE INJUSTICE ADVENT CALENDAR



Forget chocolate. Forget beauty samples. Forget beard oil, tiny bottles of beverages or small portions of cheese.....This is the advent calendar that really matters.

For Christmas 2021 Traidcraft Exchange is partnering with a hand-picked selection of world-changing organisations to provide you with 24 simple ways to make the world a better place. Every day until Christmas they will email you a link which gives you an opportunity to

stand up for justice in a simple way.

Amongst other things, the 2020 calendar asked us to stand up for homeworkers' rights across the world, raise issues within UK social care, advocate reducing the use of single-use plastics, and campaigning for better support for unaccompanied young asylum seekers/trafficked young people.

The actions you will be asked to consider all only take about five minutes to do, often a quick email in a standard format, or sometimes just reflecting on how you can do one thing differently to support a concern.....and the best thing is.....it will always be FREE!

It's not too late to sign up at

<https://traidcraftexchange.org/injustice-advent-calendar>

Bev



### ONLINE WORSHIP

The Newcastle West Methodist Circuit online service this week is a 'Sunday Short' led by **Rachel Wood** with the theme being the **First Sunday in Advent**.

Bible Reading - **Luke 21 : 25-36**

## **CHRISTMAS SERVICES**

### **Ponteland Methodist Church**

**Sunday December 19th** 6.30pm - Carol Service

Christmas Eve services are shared with our friends at St Mary's with services at 3pm, 5pm and 7pm. Our minister Rev Jona Sewell will be bringing the Christmas message.

**Christmas Day** 10am - Family Celebration

N.B. No services on Boxing Day

### **Milbourne Methodist Church**

**Sunday December 19th** 6.30pm - Carol Service

**Christmas Eve** 11.15pm - Communion Service

**New Year's Eve** 11.30pm - Watchnight Service

### **St Matthew's RC Church**

**Christmas Day Mass** - 10am

### **The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Ponteland**

**Christmas Eve**

11.30pm - Midnight Mass with Carols

## **CHRISTMAS CARDS**

We are making use of the pigeon holes again available for folk to exchange Christmas Cards. However, we ask that people remember that they are strongly encouraged to wear masks when moving around the building.

You may prefer to consider pinning a card on the display board in the foyer (which will be available from next Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec) where people from the whole Church can see them and that we ask for financial donations, in lieu of cards, to go to support the work of **Action for Children** which has suffered financially over the last 18 months or so. Please prayerfully consider this gesture at our season of goodwill.

Blessings

**Jona and the Stewards**

## GARDENING FOR DECEMBER

May I begin this last article for the year by wishing all my readers the Compliments of the Season. It has been a difficult year maintaining safety from the dreaded Covid 19 which has meant much more time at home and much less socialising than I have ever been used to. I wish everyone well for 2022, again the emphasis on “staying safe”.

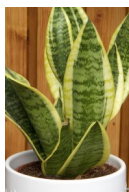


It has been quite a wonderful year in the garden even though the long spells of dry weather led to more work with the hosepipe. We had good crops in the vegetable garden and all the flowers have produced a wonderful show. We move into winter (writing on 24<sup>th</sup> November) with a forecast of severe weather for the very end of November. The warmth and dry conditions did encourage the grass to grow as well as the leaves to fall. Margaret cut the grass on 20<sup>th</sup> November with the dual purpose of picking up the leaves all over it. Mr Trugreen came yesterday and applied the winter dressing with added ferrous sulphate for moss control. We are very pleased with the grass this year and will continue to have it treated in 2022. Although even gardeners talk about closing down the garden for the winter I find there is always something to attend to. We are encouraged to ensure roses are deadheaded and are cut back by about a third to prevent too much “rocking” pressure on the roots in strong winds with pruning taking place in late March/early April next year. If you haven’t done it already frost-susceptible plants should be taken indoors or at least in planters into shelter by the walls of your house. Walls absorb the heating of the sun by day and radiate it out at night. All our begonia tubers and gladioli corms have been lifted and are now safely stored in the frost-free garage. Many plants are in the greenhouse.

Often plants, shrubs etc. grown in planters have filled the receptacles with roots during the growing season and the temptation is to move them into something larger in late autumn. Don’t do it. The time to pot on most garden plants is in the spring when new growth has commenced. Again do not be tempted to plant a smaller plant/shrub into a very large planter. Only increase the diameter by about 10 cm (4 in), the same using square planters.

Similar guidelines are applicable to indoor plants. Many of you

will find when selecting something new has filled the pot with roots – in many cases this has encouraged them to flower. In the winter months our homes are heated and the atmosphere becomes dry which is not good for plants. We might be tempted to apply a fine moist spray. Don't. Wherever possible position the plants on saucers and water from the bottom removing any excess water after 20–30 minutes – that is sufficient time for capillary absorption by the roots. With succulents a moister atmosphere around the plants can be created by placing them on much larger saucers part-filled with pebbles. Water the pebbles and the warmth will create a moister atmosphere around the plants as the water evaporates. We have very few window sills but on the east-facing garden room sill we have orchids which receive a little water irregularly but there are always some of them in flower.



Sansevieria (snake plant, mother-in-law's tongue) seems to have become a very popular indoor plant fairly recently. We have two (given by a friend). They are happy in most light conditions but particularly useful in dark rooms or areas of indirect or low light. They only need to be watered once a month allowing the compost/

soil to dry out between waterings. They should never be allowed to sit in any water. They are very frost susceptible as they originated in the Congo. I lost the first cuttings I had by leaving a night too long when there was no greenhouse heating on!

We received a Christmas cactus plant in a fully enclosed cardboard box in early December 2020 with no information on the outside only name and address. Being good, we did not open the box until Christmas Day only to discover it had almost dried out. With care and attention and twice potting on it now has dual-coloured pale pink and bright red flowers, looking very good on the kitchen window sill.

As you look around the garden on New Year's Day (after the wheelbarrow race) look for the successes in 2021 and then plan for the opportunities for change in 2022. Seed catalogues are now available for you to browse and order. Treat with care any plants you buy from garden centres particularly where they are in when you selected them.

Good gardening in 2022.

## **FAMILY NEWS**

**Andrew Pay** has been restricting contact over the past few weeks as he is due to have a hip replacement on December 8th at North Tyneside Hospital. Please pray for a speedy recovery.

**Ron Coggins**, Joan Teasdale's long standing friend, has died suddenly. He regularly attended Mens Forum and enjoyed the company of the other members. A few years ago he attended Mini Meanders. He will be greatly missed by Joan Teasdale and his family and friends.

## **DOOR STEWARDS**

In preparation of the next rota, I am looking for volunteers to take on duties as door stewards which involves a friendly welcome at the door prior to start of morning and evening services. Volunteers work in pairs in the morning and singly in the evening. Contact details would be helpful to enable volunteers to keep in contact with one another should they need to arrange a swap.

**Colin Hunter**

## **CAROLS**

Grange Lea Carol Service at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 22nd Dec  
To be led by Ann Cooper. Visitors are welcome.

**Chris Cogan**

## **CHRISTMAS APPEAL FOR THE HUB DROP IN FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES**

Our service has been significantly challenged during the lockdowns. During the hardest times contact was maintained remotely with our most needy clients. A limited drop in is now operating, following current guidelines.

We are unable to deal with clothing donations, but are very grateful for donations of household items, toiletries, hats, scarves and gloves. Cash donations would also be much appreciated. I will ensure that they are delivered.

Life has been particularly hard for our clients during lockdown. With grateful thanks in advance.

**Chris Cogan**



## **VILLAGE NEWS**

### **New Tech-Help Centre**

The “Morpeth Herald” has reported that a new “Tech Hub” has opened at 25 Main Street, Ponteland. Help & training is provided for desktop and laptop computers, smart phones and tablets and smart TVs. They also provide a mobile service at the customer’s home. The company say that Ponteland has more residents within the 60-85 age range than the UK average, so Ponteland is an ideal place for a new hub.

### **Citizens Advice – Service to help people with debt issues**

A pilot project is now running at the Ponteland Community Hub (new leisure centre and library). Newcastle Building Society has given a grant to assist.

### **Lloyds Bank**

A petition has been launched urging Lloyds to reconsider its plans to shut the Ponteland branch. Our MP Guy Opperman is also urging Lloyds to think again. The petition can be found at <https://chnq.it/6rVqsVjm> .

**Jennifer Hardy**

## **WOMEN’S MEETING**

Thursday meeting Winter Schedule in Church at 2.00pm

8th Dec The Clothes Bar, Lemington - Alison Bates

13th Jan Our Minister - Rev Jona Sewell

27th Jan Annual lunch at the Golf Club. Details from  
Marian Falcus.

10th Feb Life in Beirut - Glenis Richardson

24th Feb Beetle Drive

Do come along if you can!

**Chris Cogan**

## **BIBLE STUDY**

Open Door Bible Study in Church at 2.00pm

13th Dec Mary Mother of Jesus - Rosemary Gray

10th Jan Study on a disciple - Rev Jona Sewell

24th Jan Study on a woman from the bible

You would be welcome to join us.

**Chris Cogan**

## Preachers December

5th 10.00am Sewell  
6.30pm Wriglesworth  
12th 10.00am Forrester  
6.30pm Woolley  
19th 10.00am Gray  
6.30pm Sewell (CS)  
25th 10.00am Sewell  
26th 10.00am *No Service*  
6.30pm *No Service*

## Preachers January

2nd 10.00am Wood  
6.30pm *No Service*  
9th 10.00am Sewell (S Cov)  
6.30pm Orrock  
16th 10.00am P Brooks  
6.30pm Sewell  
23rd 10.00am Sewell  
6.30pm Barrick  
30th 10.00am R Brooks  
6.30pm Sewell

## 1st Ponteland Boys' Brigade Carol Service

*'Jesus, the light of the World'*

Ponteland Methodist Church

Tuesday 7th December

6.30 p.m.

All are welcome to join us for our  
annual Christmas Celebration



## From The Editors

*Don't forget that copy for the February edition of Cornerstone should be with the editor by **Friday 28th January 2022**. 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.*