

# Ponteland Methodist Church Cornerstone



**September 2023**

## **MINISTER'S LETTER**

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;  
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.  
Let us come before him with thanksgiving  
and extol him with music and song."

Psalms 95: 1-2

I've been reflecting a little on joy and thankfulness over the last few months.

In July our family enjoyed a holiday to Florida. We visited theme parks and the Kennedy Space Centre, shopped, ate out, relaxed by the pool, recharged the batteries a little, and spent precious time together as a family. I am aware of a joy and thankfulness deep within for this time together and experienced great delight in making memories filled with enjoyment, love, laughter and fun.

In August I helped out at the annual holiday club in Stamfordham where I co-led the group for about twelve 10-14-year-olds. It was a time for games, learning, fun and friendship.

Looking back on it I am so thankful for those days and for the team I worked with. It brought me joy to see children becoming excited about bible stories and learning about Jesus.

Many of you will also be aware that Helle and I recently celebrated our Silver Wedding Anniversary. I am thankful for our family, for 25 years together, and for the ongoing ways our relationship deepens and that we see God's faithfulness still at work in our lives; these things fill me with joy! We had a special meal out where we were thankful for the skills of the chefs and the ingredients they turned into very tasty food; it's important to appreciate the little things.

Even though I injured the ligaments in my ankle not long after we returned from holiday I am also thankful for the well wishes, the offers of lifts and support, and the prayers that have been offered for me. I am so grateful for the Church family and the kindness we have felt over the summer.

I will shortly be heading to the annual Greenbelt Festival which takes place over the August bank holiday weekend. I look forward with excited anticipation to gathering in this sacred space where I always feel at home surrounded by like-

spirited people who gather to renew friendships, listen, learn, laugh and share ideas, news and life with each other. It's a time that gives me life and for which I am very thankful.

I am also thankful for Bouncy Church, for the way we're making new friends, for all of the people who offer their time to make it possible, for the food, crafts, worship. I hope you find joy in seeing the children and their parents worship God together.

Joy and thankfulness are closely linked. The more appreciative and thankful we are for all that we have and experience, the more natural joy we will discover within ourselves. We are truly blessed and thankfulness and joy open the doors to discover this more. Joy will also be the theme for Bouncy Church over the coming months.

What are you thankful for? What has brought you joy recently?  
God Bless,



### THEMED PREACHING

Over the course of September and October there will be some themed preaching where we will explore together the themes of our new Vision, Mission and Values document which was published in the last edition of Cornerstone.

The themed preaching services will be shared between Steve Small and Jona. The same person will lead both the morning and evening services, delivering the same sermon at both; this is deliberate so that as many people as possible hear about what we're trying to do as a church, and what our direction of travel for the coming year or two will be.

The Sundays and themes will be:

September 10<sup>th</sup> – *Introduction: Blessed Are....* – led by Jona & Steve (Jona pm)

September 17<sup>th</sup> – *I will Worship* – led by Steve

September 24<sup>th</sup> – *Inspired by Scripture* – led by Jona

(Oct 1<sup>st</sup> is Bouncy Church, Oct 8<sup>th</sup> is Harvest Festival)

October 15<sup>th</sup> – *Everyone Welcome* – led by Jona

October 22<sup>nd</sup> – *Building for the Future* – led by Steve

October 29<sup>th</sup> – *All You Need is Love* – led by Jona

A study handout will be produced and made available for anyone who wants it. The handouts will be suitable for individual or group use.

Jona



# *Traidcraft*

**Fighting poverty through trade**

## **TRAIDCRAFT RE-BORN?**

The closure of Traidcraft plc was a significant blow to the Fairtrade movement. For 40 years, the word “Traidcraft” was almost synonymous with the Fairtrade movement itself and it could be argued that the Fairtrade mark, which celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024, would not have come into being without the influence of Traidcraft.

Transform Trade, the charity which campaigns for trade justice, has secured the right to use the Traidcraft name, the logos and the web address. With those few pieces, they are aiming to restore something of the positive, world-changing force that was “Traidcraft”. Whilst they won't be launching a new Traidcraft shop, they are seeking to restore three things under the Traidcraft brand:

- A route to the UK market for the world's most ethical, pioneering and impactful producer groups;

- The Traidcraft mark to pioneer new fair trade products and promote fairness in supply chains which can't yet access the Fairtrade mark;

- A small range of the best-loved Traidcraft products - including the classic Traidcraft tea blends.

As more information becomes available, I'll let you know how we can continue to support the Traidcraft journey.

Thank you,

**Bev**

## **GRANDMA'S MOBILITY SCOOTER**

Grandma was moving quite slow  
And creaked wherever she'd go.  
Grandad came up with a plan,  
A scooter to move her around!

This is Grandma's mobility scooter,  
It's got satnav so we'll never lose her,  
It's pretty fast when going downhill,  
But don't worry - she's making a will.

Grandma was nervous at first,  
But her legs couldn't get any worse.  
She went for a trip to the shops,  
And entered a new renaissance!

Grandma's mobility scooter,  
She'll get there, so please don't toot her,  
She is really doing quite well;  
Quick as an arthritic gazelle!

Grandma was soon up to speed,  
The scooter fulfilled her need,  
She glided along in fine style,  
But getting there still took awhile.

Grandma's mobility scooter,  
Its sleek red chassis does suit her.  
It all folds away compactly,  
And fits in the boot exactly!

Now Grandma is zipping around,  
It's Grandad who might need a hand,  
It's like he's entered a race  
He'll need one himself to keep pace!

This is Grandad's mobility scooter,  
It's got an onboard computer.  
It's fitted with wine rack and camera,  
And a motor that's brimming with stamina!

**Martin Attard**

## TWO WONDERFUL AWAY-DAYS

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August we were invited to join Ponteland WI to visit Howick Hall. The hall was the home of the Earl Grey family from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, being updated and virtually rebuilt in 1782. Owing to very poor water quality the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl Grey invited a Chinese mandarin to blend a tea suitable to the local spring water. Hence Earl Grey tea.

One of the outstanding and memorable points of interest was the exhibition of 82 exquisite kneelers on display in the beautiful Church on the estate. The 82 kneelers were on display, each designed, painted and hand-stitched by local people. They depicted local scenes, birds, flowers, etc, all just amazing in their use of such a wide range of embroidery stitch.

After returning from the exhibition we went into the refreshment room which originally had been the old ballroom. Lunch was then served which was excellent. Home-made quiche, new potatoes and an imaginative salad – all locally sourced.

Thankfully it was a beautiful sunny day so those who wished to walk split into two groups. The shorter group toured the gardens nearer the hall and the longer enjoyed a fascinating and informative walk through the Arboretum. Both groups had an excellent guide and at this point I would like to express my grateful thanks to everyone at the hall who dealt with my “booking” - they were just so delightfully helpful and kind and it all went towards making our day exceptionally enjoyable.

Our second awayday was enjoyed on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August and it was our “Strollers” outing. This time our destination was Haux-



ley Nature Reserve and unbelievably – in this unsettled summer – we again had a lovely dry day with spells of sunshine. Our group consisted of 12 persons and of course we started with coffee. The new visitor centre is just wonderful – it was completed six years ago and offers a wide range of soups, sandwiches and

scones/cakes etc (the scones were superb!).

After lunch we all set off at different paces on different paths and the hedgerows were absolutely fascinating with a wide



range of common and not so common wild flowers. One or two puzzled us all and in the evening out came the reference books. All along the route were several hides -even a Ponteland Hide, so we had an opportunity to see bird visitors to the reserve. Herons were quite high profile and of course various species of

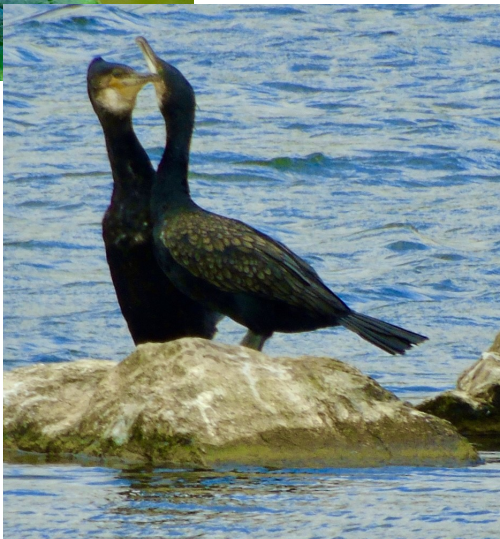
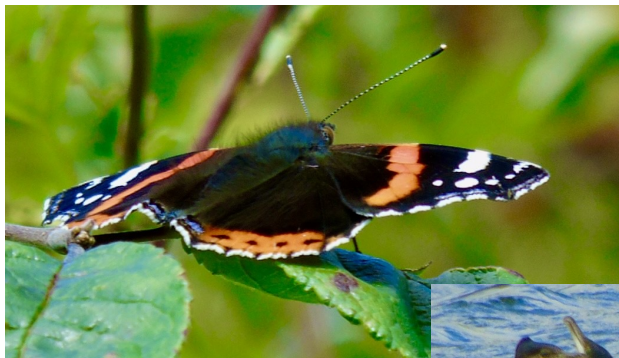


ducks. Also cormorants were basking in a sunny islet, looking very stately.

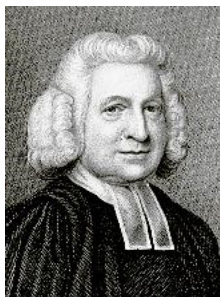
A party of walkers split up hoping to walk down to the shore but it was blocked off so instead we found places to sit and of course we enjoyed some lovely conversa-

tions. Then it was time for the return walk to the centre and soon we were on our journey home after a wonderful day in the salty breezy air.

**Jean Tweedie**



## THE EPIPHANY OF CHARLES WESLEY



For many years we have remembered each May what Methodism tends to describe as the Conversion of John Wesley. We sang the hymn his brother wrote to commemorate the pair's sudden perception of faith, and perhaps read a note in the hymn-book that says that John's younger brother, Charles, had had just such a religious experience the day before John's Aldersgate experience of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1738. How did he change from a strictly conventional 18<sup>th</sup> Century Anglican parson to an emotional passionate poet of salvation? All those poems of personal experience?

Highly conformist, both brothers were appalled at the idea of instantaneous conversions (despite all the New-Testament evidence!). Reason was an essential in the brothers' perception of Christian life. "Easy does it" was their view, lead up with fasting, prayer and good works. 'Enthusiasm' was a dirty word. "The Moravians they met taught a religion of un-reason" (a biographer writes), "they threw themselves on God in a leap of faith. With Christ religion meant falling in love. The world and sin had no more that they could do against one who had found the anchorage of the wounds of Christ."

Back in Britain from their failed mission in America, John Wesley had taken refuge in his Oxford College, a lonely Fellow there. But both were in London in May 1738, Charles sick in the house of a Mr Bray, a poor mechanic. The house was a centre for group of praying Christians, their concern was for the conversion of Charles Wesley. Mr Bray read the story of the paralyzed man let down through a roof and healed when Jesus saw the faith of the sick man's friends. Charles should trust the faith of his friends and Christ would heal. Suddenly he heard what he later described as "a strange voice, pitched in a queer key which might have come from below or above". He wondered if it was from Heaven! But a Mrs Turner, nervously explained that she had been frightened to speak but convinced that she must, so her voice distorted by fear, she had quoted words of scripture, indeed a prophetic message: *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and believe and thou shall be healed of all thine infirmities"*.



Charles sprang from his sick-bed, a changed man. I quote Elsie Harrison: "His conversion gave him just enough uplift to float him on the poetic wave and just enough abandon to forget himself. Here was something elemental that rushed up from the depths and got itself said in words of ecstasy. He never waited for the emotion to be recollected in tranquility, but pounded it out hot and strong from his heart and struck the opening chord for the Revival of Religion in England with that rapturous question of his:

"Where shall my wondering soul begin?" In one moment the world was well lost in the rapture of the discovery of Christ.

"It was unreasonable, but it worked. It worked marvellously above all one could ask or think. Let a common harlot once believe that she was safe where'er she walked. Let the condemned prisoner know that gospel and he could face Tyburn's rope with tears of joy, for he knew he dropped but into the arms of Love. Ejaculatory prayer every hour of the day and fasts all the year round could not achieve what the love of Christ wrought in a moment of time. Here was the gospel for which the outcasts of men were dying. Here was colour, emotion, life and victory.

To souls bound fast in the dungeon of Giant Despair, with the shackles of John Calvin upon them, such a Gospel of liberation broke all the prison bars. Flames of Hell, eternal damnation, the nightmare of the reprobate, all were conquered in that unconquerable Love of God. At the heart of old Calvinistic England the warmth of spring thawed away fear. At the centre of life and mystery God smiled. England turned from craven fear to that lighter burden of glorious love. Death was swallowed up in victory. Charles's hymns taught all fearful souls to meet God singing "*O could I catch one smile from Thee and drop into Eternity*". The far-off terrible Jove of the thunderbolt and fire became '*Jesus, Lover of my soul*'.

"The hymns of Charles Wesley were sung all over England.....". That song swept the reason of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century in ruin before it and in its place brought the laughter and the tears of the Romanticism. .. The peculiar quality of Charles Wesley's verse and the chorus of saved sinners who sang it in rapture thawed out the very heart of England. .... A thousand hearts were hungering for love and here they found what they longed for in full measure, pressed down and running over. It was a joy

which broke the heart and sent tears coursing down the cheeks in a strange mingling of emotions. The Love of God – sin of man – but victory through the Blood of the Lamb – must one laugh or cry? The world looked on and wondered. It saw tears washing the faces of the begrimed miners in the King's Wood, Bristol, and it noted the white channels of those tears and marvelled. Before, such men had been the terror of sedate citizens and had marched into Bristol murdering and rioting and looting shops for food. Now like so many lambs they followed the sweet singer Charles to Holy Communion in Temple Church. Now those wild men were crooning songs of love, gentle as a little child. They wept as they sang and looked into the face of Christ on Calvary's Tree:

*O let me kiss Thy bleeding feet,  
And bathe and wash them with my tears,  
The story of Thy love repeat  
In every drooping sinner's ears,  
That all may hear the quickening sound,  
Since I, e'en I, have mercy found".*

I am sorry that we have slipped from the wonderful tradition of frequently using the Wesleys' hymns and modern works in the same vein and sometimes take, from the too-convenient internet, song from the old rigid Calvinist strain. That is a serious loss.

**John M Gill**

### **MEN'S FORUM**

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September at 7:30pm the Men's Forum kicks off its 2023/24 programme in the traditional way with a Pie and Peas supper.

There will be a sweet course included - plus a short after dinner talk by Jona Sewell. All this for £5 per person!

Please reserve your place at the table by contacting **Geoff Lisle** (01661 822532) or **Peter Michell** (01661 871885). The Men's Forum meets monthly, and the meetings planned for this year look particularly interesting. Programme cards are available from Alan Groves. New members are always very welcome.

## BOUNCY CHURCH A YEAR ON!



It was with enthusiasm but a little uncertainty that we embarked on our first Bouncy Church in September last year. Five families came along which encouraged us to continue - and how delighted we are that we did that!

A year later we are averaging 14 families who come regularly. Par-

ents enjoy breakfast and good conversation with us, children enjoy play on the bouncy castle and craft making (based on the theme of the day's worship) and they all come into the worship service. At the end of the morning each family takes home a leaflet as a reminder of the subject of the service and its meaning for our lives today.

A bouncy castle particularly attracts young children but wanting to give families with teenagers a wider opportunity to enjoy Church, we have now introduced Pizza Friday. Pizza Friday is held monthly when families come to create their own pizza, (which is then cooked for them on pizza ovens), enjoy eating and talking together and hear a 5-10 minute Bible message. There are also organised games.

Bouncy Church has meant some changes for us all. It has been a big commitment for the team of helpers to provide breakfast, engagement with families and an additional Sunday morning service for many families who have never been to church before.

As a team we have all been immensely grateful for the kindness and co-operation of the wider Church. Without your support, which you have shown in so many ways, Bouncy Church would not have been possible. It is a great encouragement that you share in our worship service and come for breakfast. Please continue to do so and if you have never been, please come along! Join us on Pizza Fridays too. Your support is invaluable. We have felt very blessed by the presence of so many young families in church. Please remember them in your prayers that they may know a personal relationship with our God and Saviour and be the continuance of our future witness in Ponteland.

**Isobel Hindle**

**Methodist Women in Britain  
District Away Day**

**Trinity Methodist Church \***

**AMBLE**

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>  
September 2023**

**10.00 am Welcome and coffee**

**10.30 am Debs Coggrave – Bolivia visit**

**12.30 to 1.30pm Own packed lunch and fellowship**

**1.30 to 3.00 pm Bible Study**

**Workshops: Circle Dancing, Walk, Crafts**

**3.00 to 3.30 pm Closing Worship**

**Farewells with tea and cake**

**\* Percy Street, Amble, NE65 0AG**

**Ramped access and accessible  
toilet at church**

**Free street parking nearby**

**ALL WELCOME**

# 1st Ponteland Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association

## ANCHORS

5-8 years

## Juniors

8-11

## Company

11-14

## Seniors

15-18

- *Who?* Girls & Boys aged 5-18 years
- *Where?* Ponteland Methodist Church
- *When?* Tuesday evenings (during term times)
  - Anchors — 6-7 pm
  - Juniors — 7.15-8.30 pm
  - Company — 7.15-8.30 pm
  - Seniors — 7.15-8.30 pm

The Adventure Begins Here!

We start up again on Tuesday 12th  
September.

We have spaces available in all age groups.  
To start your adventure please contact **Les  
Dodd** at [1ponteland@boys-brigade.org.uk](mailto:1ponteland@boys-brigade.org.uk)

## **JOINT CHURCHES TOGETHER SONGS OF PRAISE**

On **Sunday September 24th, 4pm at St Mary's Church** -

Help needed! We aim to have 6 hymns chosen by members of our congregations with the person choosing giving a short explanation of their particular liking or reason for the hymn chosen. Paul the vicar will host in his usual friendly way and Jona will give a short address. Obviously we depend upon people who are willing to speak to the gathering suggesting hymns and why they are significant to them so please think about this and send your intention to participate and suggested hymn to Ruth (St Mary's Girl Friday; email [office@pontpcc.co.uk](mailto:office@pontpcc.co.uk) or drop a note into the office at the Church Centre, Thornhill Rd). Please volunteer by 17th September and remember we aim for this to be meaningful and also enjoyable!

**John Doherty**

## **OPEN DOOR BIBLE STUDY**

We plan on continuing our study of **Revelation** in **September**. We meet at **2pm**, doubling with an opportunity to share refreshments. Dates are :- **Monday 11th** when we will use **Revelation 7**. Our study is themed '**Living faithfully through that Holocaust**' and **Monday 25th**, using **Revelation 8 & 9**, is entitled '**Cheer up - and next to come**'.

**Chris Cogan**

## **CHURCHES TOGETHER IN PONTELAND**

### **Monthly Prayers 2023**

**Always at 12.00**

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September Ponteland Methodist Church

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October St Matthew's

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November St Mary's

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December Ponteland Methodist Church

Meetings consist of a brief introduction and prayers from the different churches. Usually no more than 30 minutes.

**Contact** John Doherty 01661 821013



## **GRANGE LEA AUTUMN FAYRE**

Please hold **Saturday 23rd September (1.30 - 4pm)** free in your diaries for our Autumn Fayre when we hope to have a fun-filled day with our residents, raise money for our residents' social fund and support the Great North Air Ambulance. There will be a raffle, tombola, cake stall, plant stall, book stall (depending on donations) as well as a few other stalls/activities etc. Admission will be **£2** - this will include a drink on arrival. As ever, if anyone has any prizes (and/or books) they could donate to our raffle/tombola these would be very gratefully received.

**Ann Cooper**



## **WOMEN TOGETHER AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2.00pm AT CHURCH**

**14 Sep– Dedication Service & Bring & Buy**

**28 Sep – Talk - Peter & Val Michell**

**12 Oct – Talk - Brenda Rutter**

**26 Oct – Mission Aviation Fellowship – Christopher Million  
- Open Meeting**

**9 Nov – Michael Gatherer – Land Army – 07817 110 987**

**23 Nov – Film afternoon**

**7 Dec – Advent Service – in Church - Rev Jona Sewell**

**21 Dec – Informal Gathering - Stobert Room**

**Chris Cogan**

## **NEWS OF SHADE AND NORTHERN KENYA**

Dear friends,

Firstly, I must let you know that we are all alive and well!!! I'm not sure how long it is since I put an article in Cornerstone, but it has been a while! Wesley is now back in the UK and soon to start university. How time flies!

The pandemic disrupted a lot of SHADE's work with group meetings not permitted for a long time. Some local community health workers managed to continue their work in support of Loonjorin health centre. Post pandemic it is encouraging that Samburu County Government are now undertaking some of the roles that SHADE used to need to fill. There is now improved access to health care, referrals to a much better-equipped sub-county hospital and county government-led vaccination programmes. SHADE's new post-pandemic norm is therefore more scaled back, while still meeting needs as they present. One present need is restocking with drought-resistant livestock. The recent prolonged drought coupled with increasing food prices has had a big impact on food security in Samburu. Many families have no livestock or lost livestock during the drought and struggle to gain enough income for food. The seasonal rains of April and May replenished grazing to some extent and more rain is forecast from September. This is a good time for restocking and SHADE is soon to buy 20 goats to provide 10 families with two female goats each. The chief and elders of Loonjorin have selected 10 families that are the most in need. As was done formerly, the first-born kid will be given to another family and they in turn will do the same, so spreading the benefit. Goats provide milk and are drought-hardy. In order to adapt to climate change and more prolonged droughts a shift to keeping more goats and camels and less cows will be necessary, though the Samburu will likely still want to keep some cows for years to come as it is so engrained in their culture.

We are still having to wait for the go-ahead to build Steve Gray's Meeting House. Loonjorin community were not certain if they would have to relocate following the previous Government changing the forest boundary around Mt. Nyiro (it is a natural cedar forest and water catchment area the Government wants to protect and the boundary where people can live was moved

below Loonjorin). The new Government may enforce the new forest boundary meaning Loonjorin community will have to move. Loonjorin community will need to decide where and when to relocate. Once Loonjorin community confirms to SHADE (Kenya) the location where the building is to be constructed the funds raised for the meeting house, which are currently with SHADE UK, will be forwarded to Kenya to enable construction to start. Please remember Loonjorin community and the communities around Mt Nyiro in your prayers. Thank you.

**Alison Lesingiran**

### **EASY ICE CREAM**

Pot of 270ml Double Cream, or Elmlea equivalent – chilled

Tin condensed milk

Tablespoon of any spirit (essential for a soft set)

Fresh or dried fruit, or other flavourings – add to taste.

Beat the cream and condensed milk thoroughly together.

Add the spirit, and mix thoroughly.

Freeze.

It is delicious!

Tools with a Mission have a local contact, who collects any unwanted tools. These are sent, after refurbishment, to Africa after being suitably packaged into work kits ie for joinery, building work, gardening etc.

The charity also collects haberdashery fabric off-cuts, and craft materials, that can't be sent to Africa. These are sent to other charities, for use in schools, playgroups and prisons. For further info contact **Chris Cogan**.



**Methodist Women  
in Britain**

for women, for justice, for Christ

## **METHODIST MWIB**

**This Webinar is produced by  
Methodist Women in Britain. It  
can be used by anyone within  
the Methodist Church.**

### **Neurodiversity and inclusive**

### **practices for autistic people (Thursday 21 September, 7.30 to 8.30pm)**

This talk will be delivered by Dr Sebastian (Seb) Shaw. Seb identifies as multiply neurodivergent - autistic, ADHD, dyslexic, and hyper mobile (hEDS). He is passionate about improving experiences for neurodivergent people in relation to healthcare. He has provided the blurb below to share with participants in advance of the talk.

The 'neurodiversity paradigm' invites us to think more critically about things that we previously accepted as fact. Specifically, it promotes thinking of neurodivergence (eg autism) as a set of differences, which can contextually become strengths or challenges depending on a variety of other (often external) factors. This offers a challenge to more traditional medical views, which considered such differences to be disorders with degrees of deficit/impairment that sat along a linear spectrum. Increasing uptake of this 'neurodiversity paradigm' has led to neurodivergent people being more meaningfully included in research and educational design. This has allowed recent research to begin to refute some old stereotypes, such as:

autistic people not feeling empathy or:

autistic people having poor communication skills.

The talk will conclude with a brief overview of some considerations around inclusive practices for autistic people, drawing on the "autistic SPACE" framework,

(<https://www.magonlinelibrary.com/doi/full/10.12968/hmed.2023.0006>).

It is essential to register for the talk. The link is:

[https://zoom.us/join/register/  
tJEIcEutqDwqGtPWKSn32E6uvMOT9es\\_rJr5](https://zoom.us/join/register/tJEIcEutqDwqGtPWKSn32E6uvMOT9es_rJr5)

This event is open to everybody across the Connexion.

**Kathleen Farquhar**



A very useful summer cake recipe. I have used apricots but it works well with raspberries, blueberries, plums, or any summer fruit.

**Judith**

## **Apricot Fantasy Cake**

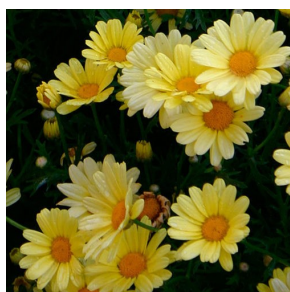
175g butter  
150g sugar  
2 eggs  
150g SR flour  
100g ground almonds  
1tsp almond essence  
3tbsp milk  
300g fresh apricots, chop each apricot into eighths.



Preheat the oven to 180°C/160 fan.  
Grease and base line a 9in cake tin.  
Cream together the butter and sugar.  
Add the eggs, flour, almonds, milk and essence. Combine.  
Fold in half the apricot pieces.  
Pour the mixture into the tin.  
Scatter the rest of the apricots over the top of the mixture.  
Sprinkle the top with demerara sugar.  
Bake for 1-1½ hours.

## GARDENING FOR SEPTEMBER, 2023

Everyone talks about “the weather”. It is often a greeting when you meet a neighbour or friend, and you take shelter when it is raining. During our “summer” we had a month of dry weather, with not a drop of rain in that May and June time. Many will say we have made up for it since when there has been no need for extended hose pipe bans while in some areas there have been no bans at all. In the dry period it was very difficult to establish “crops including flowers” in the ground while those in planters needed watering every day. The Met. Office has said that the record-breaking temperatures last summer will be the new normal. The unprecedented 40C heatwave and the average temperature of 10C were a “sign of things to come”. The warmest year in England since records began in 1659 and the hottest for the UK as a whole since 1884. January to August was the driest in England and Wales since the notorious summer of 1976 when we were living near Aberystwyth and went down to Lands End with the caravan in the summer holidays. It is a little different since June this year with the Jet Stream hovering south of us holding the heat further south and allowing much more low pressure and rain to dominate the period from late June until now.



Well how has it been in the garden for you? With much help we have had flowers from November and Argyranthemums and begonias will last until the frost comes ( a little earlier and more severe last autumn). We started with Paperwhite daffodils in the porch in November. With two planting times these lasted us until the Tete-a-Tete started flowering in March. After choosing very carefully from J

Parkers catalogue we ended up having new flowering daffodils/ narcissi each month ending with Old Pheasant's Eye in late May. You too, can have daffodils flowering right through either in the ground or in planters. RHS lists six varieties out of which you might pick N. pseudonarcissus and “bridal gown” as earlies with N. Thalia (has pairs of flowers) and Old Pheasant's Eye for later. Garden Centres and Nurseries all have displays of loose and packs of bulbs. They are not cheap so select with care but aim to plant in September. In the ground, on clay soils a little grit immediately below the bulb will aid drainage and prevent roots rotting.



If you don't want to dig bulb planters are useful tools for taking out a core or two of soil which you can break down and cover the bulbs. Bulbs do not need fertilizer at planting except a little phosphate and potash in planters. They all need feeding, particularly in the ground after flowering and dead-heading if they are to flower the following year. I tend to class most spring bulbs as annuals in planters as it is very difficult to maintain the moisture levels after flowering. I lift hyacinths and dry them using the best for planting again.

We have six troughs (2 ft. + long) on the wall of the back patio that have alternated between begonias and winter pansies which I have previously been raising from purchased plugs. Last year and this year home-saved begonia corms have been late in starting to grow so they are at their best now. Last autumn very few of the pansies got planted out so I am not raising ones (normally delivered in September).



The bulb order is in. I have stopped growing tulips in planters as they are soil-disease-prone and as all the planting mediums here are recycled I never know which might have had diseased tulips. Anyone wanting to grow a layered planter and starting with suitable medium not used previously for tulips could use a

20 inch or + diameter planted (and as deep) with tulips planted on top of say 6 inches of medium, covered with another 4 – 5 inches, then an early, not too tall daffodil such as Tete-a-Tete, then more medium and a top layer of single colour or mixed crocus – this should give flowers from March to May.

In the vegetable garden we have quite a good year with outside help. We have lifted (writing 23<sup>rd</sup> August) a very good yield of main crop potatoes and are enjoying French beans, runner beans, courgettes and beetroot.

The 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Flower and Craft Show will be held in Ponteland Memorial Hall on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September with doors open to the public at 1.00pm. Exhibits are invited in Flowers, Vegetables, Fruit, Children's section, Cookery, Handicrafts, Wine and Spirits and Photography. Exhibitors can stage their exhibits on Friday night and Saturday morning. Admission and entries are free but donations are welcomed.

Good exhibiting at the Show.

## **VILLAGE NEWS**

### **Solar Farm at Newcastle Airport**

This Solar Farm has been officially opened. The scheme includes tree planting to screen the view.

### **Weekly Banking Service—Barclays**

Last September Barclays Bank started banking facilities in the Memorial Hall on Thursdays. This service has now moved into the Leisure Centre. It is open on Thursdays from 9.30am to 12.30pm then 1pm to 4pm.

### **Houses at Jameson Manor Development**

This housing development on the former Police site is nearing completion.

### **Belsay Hall and Gardens**

A major two-year conservation project has been completed. The hall roof has been replaced - castle stonework repaired—80,000 new plants planted. A children's play area has been restored and the Coach House building has been restored and is a new café.

### **Noise Nuisance**

Those of us living within the village will be aware that on recent Sundays one of the public houses has been providing outdoor music. The volume is so loud that it can be heard throughout the village. Also, last Sunday they did not keep to the permitted times. If anyone wishes to complain they should contact Public Protection Service at Northumberland CC tel 03456006400 or 07790986685.

### **Broadway Café Planning Application**

A planning application has been made to change the frontage of the old "Café Lowry".

### **URC Church**

There are rumours that this may be being purchased.

**Jennifer Hardy**



## FAMILY NEWS

I just want to say a big thank you to all of you who passed on birthday wishes and birthday cards to myself on the occasion of a big birthday. I had a lovely day, spent in Raby Castle with Marianne. The photo was taken on the morning of my birthday in the hotel garden of where we were staying. Once again thank you.

**Elizabeth**

We would like to thank everyone for the cards and kind wishes we received for our Silver Wedding Anniversary. It is very much appreciated. God bless.

**Jona and Helle**



Welcome to the world Harriet Alice Dodd. She arrived at 4.01am on Thursday 17th August 2023 weighing 6lb 8oz.

**Johnny Dodd**

Good wishes to **Andrew Pay** and **Rosemary Gray** as they celebrate special birthdays.

Many congratulations to **Wesley Lesingiran** on achieving three A\* at A level and securing a place at Cambridge University.

Thinking of those who have had recent exam results, and wishing them all well as they progress further towards their working lives.

<b>Preachers September</b>	<b>RESTART DATES in SEPTEMBER</b>
3rd 9.00am Sewell (BC) 6.30pm Woolley	<b>OD Bible Study</b> Mon 11th
10th 10.00am Sewell/Small 6.30pm Sewell	<b>BB/GA</b> Tues 12th
17th 10.00am Small 6.30pm Small	<b>Men's Forum</b> Thurs 28th
24th 10.00am Sewell (S) 6.30pm Sewell (S)	<b>Women Together</b> Thurs 14th
	<b>Toddlers</b> Thurs 7th

# Pizza Friday

**15th September**

**5-7.30pm**



## From The Editors

*Don't forget that copy for the October edition of Cornerstone should be with the editor by **Friday 22nd September 2023**. 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.*