The Magazine for the Parish of Cheviot Churches

CHEVIOT

Autumn 2026

Prayer Corner

As the leaves turn from green to a deep red, we all have an opportunity for reflection. Autumn reminds us that life comes in cycles and not everything will always be perfect- but even if something bad happens, there are still blessings around every corner.
Wherever you find yourself during the autumn season, whether it is a place of hope, or in the midst of uncertainty with the changes around you, prayer is a great way to steady yourself. When we pray, we connect to God and receive his peace, and wisdom.

Autumn Prayer
O God of Creation, you have blessed us with the changing of the seasons.
As we embrace these autumn months,
May the earlier setting of the sun
Remind us to take time to rest.
May the crunch of the leaves beneath our feet
Remind us of the brevity of this earthly life.
May the steam of our breath in the cool air
Remind us that it is you who give us
your breath of life.
May the scurrying of the squirrels and the migration of the birds
Remind us that you call us to follow your will.
We praise you for your goodness forever and ever.
Amen

A pig in a poke?

Who is this new body who has appeared on the scene - your Interim Moderator?

My grandmother would look suspiciously at some unknown thing and say, "It'll be a pig in a poke", so we'll start with her. Born and brought up in Morebattle she was a huge part of my life. We lived in Teapot Street, and she lived next door on the Main Street, and I could speak to her through my bedroom wall! We spent endless hours together ‘going for a walk' or taking tea with her friends. She taught me all about the Border lands, from the name of every leaf and flower to all the old poetry and ballads.

I was born in Kelso Cottage Hospital and lived mostly in Morebattle, with a brief spell in Hawick. The few years in Hawick captivated me and I have a deep love for that place. My heart still soars on a visit there!

School was at Morebattle Primary and Yetholm Primary and then up to Kelso High School. The family moved to Cranshaws, and my school days were finished at the Berwickshire High School in Duns.

From the age of 14, I felt called to be a minister. The wonderful Rev Joe Brown was minister in Morebattle, Yetholm, Hownam and Linton and was not only an inspiration but a constant help and support throughout my Christian walk.

I studied for my BD in Christ's College in Aberdeen University and did my post graduate degree in Trinity College, Glasgow. These were marvelous years and I was blessed with some first-rate lecturers, leaders in their field: Howard Marshall, New Testament; JB Torrance, Systematic Theology; Henry Sefton, Church History and the wonderful Alan Main, Practical Theology. Six glorious years.

My 18-month Probationary Period was with the Very Rev John Miller, in Castlemilk. If there is anything good in my way of doing ministry, I owe it to this man. He was extraordinary. A giant among men. A man of God.

For the 27 years of my ministry from Ordination up to the present day, I have worked in cities, towns and villages and everywhere have met people working hard to be salt and light in their communities. I have been blessed to walk alongside folks through the happy and the sad places of their lives, the ordinary and the extraordinary places and that has been an enormous privilege.

Along the way, I have married and been surprised by five wonderful children! Husband Damon, children Ellie, Hamish, Toby, Oscar and Yana.

I am minister at Kelso North and Country Churches where I have been for the past 10 years. Home is at the Manse, 20 Forestfield in Kelso.

As your Interim Moderator, I will work with local congregations and Lothian and Borders Presbytery to help keep worship and pastoral care going and will work with the two parishes to help you prepare the call to your new minister. Exciting times.

Retirement Words for Rev. Colin Johnston at his last service in Yetholm Church on Sunday 30th August 2026

Good morning, everyone,

Today we come together with thanks and gratitude to celebrate the ministry of Rev. Colin Johnston as he retires after seven wonderful years serving the Cheviot Churches, together with our link churches of Kelso Old and Sprouston.

Colin, when you came to us, you brought your faith, enthusiasm and sense of purpose. Over the years you have become much more than our minister—you have been our pastor, our teacher, our guide and our friend. You have shared in our happiest occasions, celebrating baptisms, weddings and anniversaries, and you have stood beside us in times of sorrow, offering comfort, strength and hope when we needed it most.

None of us will ever forget the extraordinary challenges of the Covid pandemic. At a time when our church buildings were closed and we were unable to meet together in person; you found new ways to keep us connected. Through your prayers, online services, phone calls, pastoral visits where possible, and your constant encouragement, you reminded us that the Church is not just a building—it is a community of faith. Your calm leadership, compassion and unwavering trust in God helped many of us through one of the most difficult periods in our lives.

As restrictions eased, you helped us rebuild our fellowship, encouraging us to come together once more with hope and renewed purpose. Throughout your ministry you have inspired us through thoughtful preaching, gentle wisdom and your genuine care for every member of our congregations.

Your ministry has reached far beyond Sunday worship. You have been present in our villages and communities, supporting local events, schools and organisations, and strengthening the links between our churches. You have reminded us that God's love is lived out not only within church walls but through service to others every day.

As you now begin your retirement, we hope it will be filled with opportunities to spend time with your family and friends, enjoy a well-earned rest, and pursue the interests that busy ministry has perhaps left little time for. Although you may be retiring from full-time ministry, we know that your faith and your caring nature will continue to bless all those whose lives you touch.

Colin, thank you for your faithful service, your leadership, your kindness and your friendship over these past seven years. You leave behind a legacy of compassion, resilience and faith that will remain with the Cheviot Churches, Kelso Old and Sprouston for many years to come.

On behalf of us all, we wish you every happiness in your retirement. May God bless you with good health, peace and joy, and may He continue to guide you in this new chapter of your life.

Thank you, Colin, for everything. May God bless you always.

Epistle from Ayr

Warm greetings from Ayr! My move here went exceptionally well, though for the first few days I was living out of boxes. I have, however, put the flat into some kind of order and have acquainted myself with the Recycling Centre (you have to book a slot here, unlike in Kelso!). My flat is in a quiet residential street, overlooking the Old Racecourse. It is a few minutes' walk from the seafront and easily walkable into town. The weekend after I arrived was the Air Show, with the Red Arrows and lots of other aircraft from different countries, while last weekend was Open Doors with various buildings open to the public. There has been a lot to keep me busy! I have however to adjust to a different way of doing things (5 bins instead of 2) and to a different climate (far wetter).

St Columba's Church is close by, and I will probably worship there, but I will go round the various churches over these first few weeks. I will also move to Southwestern Presbytery which encompasses everything from Newcastleton to Stranraer to Largs and Cumbrae. I have already been asked if I would take services, but I will wait until the new year.

My final services were very emotional, though at the same time I thoroughly enjoyed them. From the joint Cheviot communion at Morebattle to our united service at Kelso Old marking the 40th anniversary of my ordination to the final service at Yetholm on the 30th of August and the final-final communion at Linton in the evening, they were all so meaningful. I appreciated the united choir with their anthem and their descants and loved the sense of togetherness as people came from their different congregations. It also allowed me to indulge myself in choosing some favourite hymns.

I was also incredibly touched by the various gifts and cards given to me and also sent to my new address. Many thanks. I absolutely love the slate plaque presented to me by the congregation which has now pride of place in the living room of my new flat. I was also overwhelmed by the very generous cheque, which I know came from both congregation and community. I have used it to purchase some furniture and a television for the flat – and there is still a lot over.

But most of all, I value the friendship and support given to me during my time with you. You are part of me, and I will certainly be back to visit. Meanwhile I wish you all God's richest blessings and wish the congregation well as you look to fill the vacancy.

Peace and Blessings,
Colin

Lebanon Update – and dates for your diary

At last, the winding path to our planned partnership with Tripoli Presbyterian Church in Lebanon seems to be straightening out. Rev Rola Sleiman, the Minister, and Jack Kahkedjian, her organist, are applying for visas so that they can arrive in the Borders on 4 January 2027.

The visas are the last hurdle. Rola has been here five times before, but she carries a Syrian passport (inherited from her parents) and so the Gnomes of London suspect her of being an undesirable alien. A few years ago, as a result, she arrived three days late for the General Assembly, and the organisers installed an empty chair with her name on it. Anyway, if all goes well, she will be preaching in Yetholm on **Sunday, January 10,** and Jack in Earlston**.**

The Church of Scotland's *Faithshare* scheme will be paying for the airfares, and the travellers will generously be provided with bed and breakfast by Mark Wands in Earlston, the longstanding partner of Tripoli Church. There will be minor incidental costs in addition, for which we'd like to start preparing in November.

Originally, the partnership with Earlston that started in 2016 was to be based purely on mutual support and prayer; but when Lebanon went virtually bankrupt in February 2022, even routine medication became unaffordable to those whose income was in Lebanese pounds, such as pensioners. As a result, a group of Earlston parishioners, and one or two from Tweeddale, started contributing funds to Tripoli Church each month to buy essential medication. By August 2026 giving had totalled £51,000, of which some was now being used to feed refugees from the south at communal Christian meals, including Muslims, at weekends – national funds can afford care for refugees only on weekdays. The typical standing order in Earlston is for £10-£25 per month

To mark the beginning of our partnership, and to celebrate the visit by Rola and Jack, Cheviot Churches would like to join in this effort. Starting from December, the first few donations will contribute to the expenses of our guests, such as meals during travel around the Borders; and thereafter will join the deep humanitarian needs of the Tripoli church. Mark Wands and Tom Burnham will be providing a detailed presentation of our needs and plans for the future on the afternoon of **Sunday, November 22** in Yetholm Church, to which the Cheviot, Kelso Old and Sprouston congregations will be invited.

Only one new Living Stone needs to be put in place: namely the recruitment of a few teenagers from Kelso High School, who are also residents of the Cheviot Churches parish, to form a long-term bond with their peers in Tripoli. We hope to give a positive update on November 22. Between now and then, let us pray with all our strength for the success of our planned partnership with the people of Tripoli and their Christian church.

Tom Burnham

Cheviot Churches Guild Syllabus 2026-2027
Meetings held in Morebattle Institute at 2pm.

2026

Sep 13th **Guild Rededication Service**
10am Morebattle Church

Oct 1st **Reverend Una Stewart**
Guild strategy – Let us build a house; Theme – 'Beyond the Walls'

Nov 5th **Members' meeting**

Dec 3rd **Christmas Lunch**

Dec 6th **Christmas Carols**
6.30pm Morebattle Institute

2027

Jan 7th **Reverend Susan Brown**
Her Year as Moderator of the Church of Scotland

Feb 4th **Pauline Williams – The Lavender Touch**
Support for those living with cancer in the Scottish Borders

Mar 4th **Mrs Heather McInally**
Travels with the President – love, laughs and luggage!

Mar 5th **World Day of Prayer** - Yetholm Church

Mar 27th **Coffee Morning**
10.30am Morebattle Institute

Apr 1st **AGM**

Yetholm Yewtree Allotments Association Update

September and we allotmenteers are harvesting the results of our labours. Sometimes I wonder why I expend so much energy tilling my plot, sowing seeds, weeding, planting more seeds, weeding then watering which makes the weeds grow back even stronger – but then, as I begin to start picking the first fruits there is nowt to beat the (dare I say it) slightly smug satisfaction of walking back home through the village with an armful of fresh vegetables or a bunch of freshly cut flowers to stock the larder or grace the table by the window.

But not everything goes as to how you planned it during those cold dark winter days whilst you were working up your seed order and how you were to organise the next season's cropping. What did I get right and more importantly, what did I get wrong and how can I deter those pesky root fly larvae from enjoying my carrots before I have the chance to do so.

This year the plot holders, as gardeners everywhere, have had to contend with, we are told, the driest and hottest summer on record. We are fortunate here on our Yetholm site that we are able to harvest some 22,000 litres of rainwater off the shed roofs. Some of the storage tanks did run dry but there was just enough to see us through. We are also lucky with the structure of our soil in that most years there is sufficient moisture held below the dried-out surface layer to keep the well-established plants going. I have had a useful crop of potatoes – many tubers but they were a bit on the small side – and no shortage of black and redcurrants.

Plot holders come and go, and this year has been no different. Some leave of their own volition and regrettably a very few are gently advised that allotment gardening might not be their scene. Fortunately, there always seem to be people around who wish to fill the gaps. Currently all the plots are taken but we do maintain a waiting list.

At the back of the site, by Yew Tree Lane, there is a listed ancient yew tree, the oldest inhabitant of the village, estimated to be some 500 years old. Some years ago, the tree was in a sorry state, rubbish had been piled up against its trunk and the area around was a dump. This was all cleared away and the tree put on new growth. However, we have been aware that some of the upper branches have died, and the Association has been advised that surgery is required to remove these and some other branches in order to ensure the tree is safe, kept healthy and good for another 500 years. We are now looking for funding to enable the necessary work to proceed. Tree surgery is not cheap!

Peter Dickens

The Craft Group resumed again on the 7th of September, and we would love to welcome anyone who would like a relaxing afternoon doing any craft they enjoy.

Toast Club

This will resume once again in Yetholm School after the October break. We supply toast to all the Primary School before the school starts twice weekly. We are always looking for willing volunteers to help with this task, and it is a valuable community outreach project especially when the children say, “you make the best toast in the world”. Please contact Susan Stewart or Mary Butler if you would be interested in helping out.

Kelso Quaker Group Invitation

At a recent meeting of Kelso Churches Together there was a discussion about the Kelso Quaker Group. They have kindly offered this invitation to anyone who could be interested in finding out more about this group.
Kelso Quaker Meeting House will be open in the afternoon of October 18th from 1pm.
We welcome anyone to call in, to talk to some of us, and find out a bit about what we do and what we believe.
Then at 2pm, visitors would be welcome to join us in a short, 15 minute 'Drop into Silence'
a peaceful break in our usually busy lives.
Time after that for any questions that may arise.

Eleanor Burns

What will you choose?

We're starting a new feature in this edition of 'The Cheviot': someone will be asked about their favourite hymn and will then pass the baton on for someone else to share in the following edition. This time Margaret Rustad writes about 'Jesus Shall Reign', by Isaac Watts.

'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to. shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

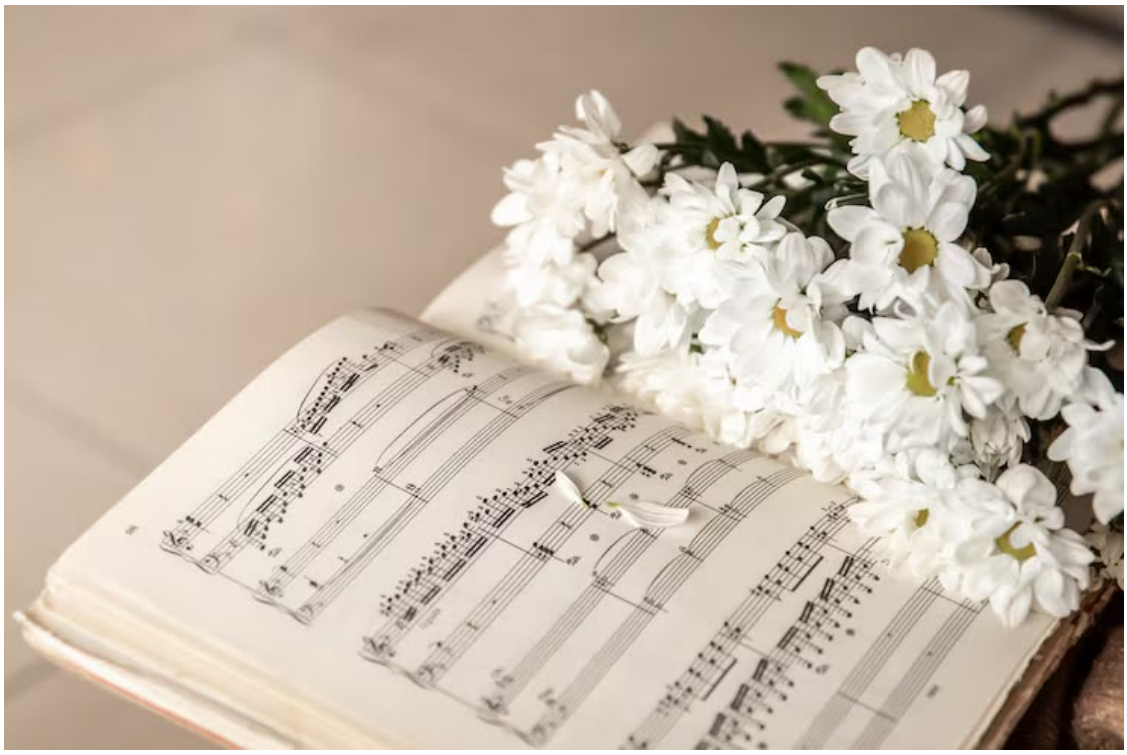
People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name.

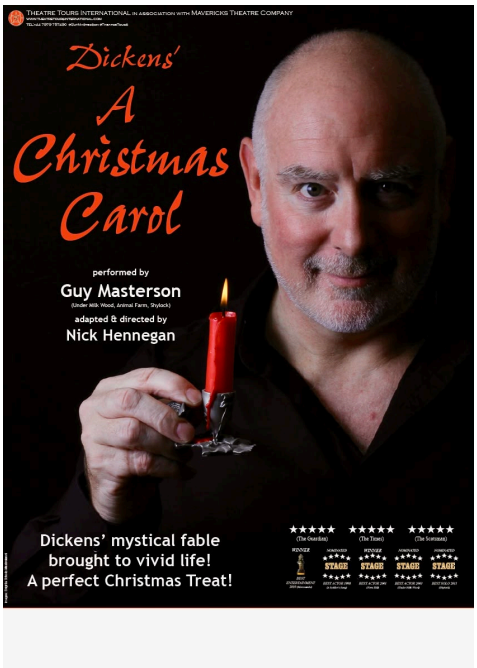
Blessings abound where'er he reigns;
The. prisoner leaps to lose his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honours to our King,
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen'.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748) was one of our foremost hymn-writers, in addition to being a scholar and preacher. He came from a long line of non-conformists and thus could not attend university, but from an early age he impressed everyone with his intelligence and intellect. His career seemed set for great things, but in 1712 he suffered a serious illness which left him weak and unable to live a 'normal' life.
In that same year he was invited for the weekend to the Abney family in Hertfordshire. He stayed with them for the next 36 years! His huge output of hymns flourished in this generous home, and we now sing 'O God, our help in ages past', 'Joy to the world" and 'When I survey the Wondrous Cross' at important times in the Church's year.
I love this hymn because it gives Jesus the central, highest place in the universe! We have many hymns and songs where we praise Jesus as our friend and brother, but we shouldn't forget the other aspect of Christ the King. (After all, C.S. Lewis depicted him as a lion, not a pussycat, in the Narnia stories.) In the Epistle to the. Christians in Colossae, Paul writes:

'Christ is before all things, and in him all things hold together.'. The sun, the moon, all creation depends on him, and we do well to remember this. In four hundred years language changes, and so it always amuses me to picture every creature bringing 'peculiar' (i.e. 'unique' or 'special') honours - just as, in the King James translation of the Bible, we're told that we are a peculiar people (!) - but I love the fact that we can still sing these words written by an eighteenth century man in weakness and dependence on other people's charity, that we can use them for prayer and praise, and come into the Lord's presence to bring our honour and worship.
Next time Pippa Emerson will bring you thoughts about her favourite hymn. I wonder what she'll choose?

Margaret Rustad

Theatre Tours International
in association with Maverick Theatre Company presents
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
Performed by Guy Masterson
Adapted & Directed by Nick Hennegan
From the original performance text by Charles Dickens
Featuring original Music by Robb Williams
DICKENS' MYSTICAL CHRISTMAS FABLE BROUGHT TO LIFE!
THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREAT NOW IN ITS 9th SEASON!
Olivier Award winner, Guy Masterson, veteran of many smash hit solo works such as Under Milk Wood, Animal Farm and Shylock, presents Dickens' classic festive fable for its 9th sell-out season! Famed for bringing multiple characters to vivid life, Masterson gives us Scrooge, Marley, the Fezziwigs, the Cratchits, Tiny Tim et al in a riveting, visceral performance that will dazzle, enchant, and linger long in the memory. Guaranteed to get you into the Christmas Spirit - in many more ways than one!
RETURNING TO THE WAUCHOPE HALL TOWN YETHOLM ON THURSDAY 19th NOVEMBER AT 7.30pm. TICKETS £12
Contact Susan Stewart at j.stewart134@btinternet.com to reserve seats.



Well, the last month has been busy in our shop with new and old customers popping in to top up on essentials and dip into some of our new lines.
Visitors and walkers have been very noticeable in the shop and have enjoyed their lunch outside the shop on the two picnic benches in glorious sunshine.
Our rota of volunteers continues to increase and even although the school is now back our young volunteers are continuing to work with us after school.
As mentioned in the last update there will be a box in the shop from the beginning of September to donate goods to the Yetholm Show raffle prize. Please support this venture and we all hope that the weather stays good for the Show this year!
We also have a good supply of baking items for those of you who like to take part in the show and if we don't have what you need please ask and we will order in for you.
The Bistro upstairs continues to do very well and has been a source of new customers to the shop who often have a wander round our shop after they have eaten. The Bistro has also kindly offered to give a free lunch to anyone who volunteers in the shop on a monthly basis which is an offer not to be missed as we all benefit from this.
We are sorry to say that one of our regular volunteers is leaving his post as "paper voucher" organiser and we thank him for his years of help in this post. We have someone else to over this role from the end of September so this part of the business will keep ticking over in a seamless way.
Should we mention the word beginning with C that really isn't that far away?! We are looking to stock some items for you to purchase in the coming months and again we are happy to take orders or requests for anything you would like to see in our shop in the coming months. Watch this space for hopefully some new lines in the coming months.
Thank you all once again for your continued support in so many ways since the beginning of 2026.

With all good wishes - Susan, Paul, Corrinne, Janice and Helen

Messy Church

Have you ever heard of a MESSY CHURCH? Well, we have a one in Yetholm! "Messy Church "is a new relaxed, creative approach to worship for all ages, especially tailored for families, and for individuals who do not already belong to a traditional church.
It aims to combine interactive worship and community experience.

In Yetholm Kirk, we have already had two Messy Church gatherings, on a Saturday morning in August and September, very ably led by Alison and her team, and we are planning to meet monthly.
We have looked at "Friendship" and then at "God's promises," via rainbows and Noahs Ark.

So far, we have welcomed mainly Pre- and Primary School children with their families and have enjoyed getting quite messy with playdoh, glitter and glue. There have been, amongst other things, colouring, origami, table and floor games and quiet book corners, some singing together and a prayer —oh! and some delicious refreshments, (perhaps along with a friendly chat.)

If you would like to like to find out what it's all about, then you are warmly invited to come along, with children or friends, to our next gathering on
SATURDAY 24th OCTOBER 2026, from 10am - 12 noon

Dates for Your Diary

October

Saturday 3rd – Yetholm Shepherds Show on The Haugh Town Yetholm from 8am.
Wednesday 7th – Quiz Night at 8pm in Plough Hotel. Proceeds to
Thursday 8th – People's Emergency Film Screening at 7pm in Wauchope Hall.
Saturday 10th - Kalewater Community Council Defibrillator Coffee Morning in Morebattle Institute at 10.30am.
Saturday 10th – Matinee Screening of "The Christophers" (15) at 2pm in Wauchope Hall. Entry £6 at door.
Wednesday 14th – Morebattle SWI - Sarah Plummer– Alternative Flower Arrangement in Morebattle Institute at 7.15pm. Competitions Pin Cushion, Ladies Buttonhole.
Friday 16th – Book Event at Yetholm Church at 7pm. Entry by donation.
Tuesday 20th Kalewater Community Council Meeting in the Institute at 7pm
Wednesday 21st – Quiz Night in Plough Hotel at 8pm. Proceeds to
Tuesday 27th – Yetholm and District Community Council at 7pm in Youth Hall.

November

Wednesday 4th – Quiz Night at 8pm in Plough Hotel. Proceeds to Yetholm Christmas Tree Fund.
Thursday 5th – National Theatre Screening at 7pm in Wauchope Hall. "Golden Boy" Entry £12 at door.
Saturday 7th - Craft Fair in Morebattle Village Hall 10am to 2.30pm – Teas, Craft Stalls, Raffle.
Saturday 7th – Matinee Screening at 2pm in Wauchope Hall Film TBC
Wednesday 11th – Morebattle SWI - Neil Thomson - RSABI & AGM in Morebattle Institute at 7.15pm. Competitions Woolen Hat (homemade or shop bought) & 3 Pieces of Fudge.
Saturday 14th – Morebattle Primary School Parent Council Coffee Morning in Morebattle Village Hall at 10.30am
Tuesday 17th – Kalewater Community Council at 7pm in Institute.
Wednesday 18th – Quiz Night at 8pm in Plough Hotel. Proceeds to Seniors Christmas Supper.
Thursday 19th – Live Performance at 7.30pm in Wauchope Hall of Christmas Carol with Guy Masterton. Tickets £12.
Friday 20th – Bingo Night in Wauchope Hall at 7pm. Proceeds to Kids Christmas Party.

Tuesday 24th – Yetholm and District Community Council at 7pm in Youth Hall.

December

Wednesday 2nd – Quiz Night in Plough Hotel at 8pm. Proceeds to Kids Christmas Party.
Saturday 5th – Young Lives v Cancer Coffee Morning in Morebattle Institute at 10.30am.
Saturday 5th – Matinee Screening at 2pm in Wauchope Hall.
Film 'Flow" (U). Entry £6 at door
Sunday 6th - Carols Round the Tree – Morebattle Institute at 6.30pm.
Wednesday 9th – Morebattle SWI – Christmas Meal
Wednesday 16th – Quiz Night at 8pm in Plough Hotel. Proceeds to Myeloma UK.

Church Diary

Thursday 1st October – Cheviot Churches Guild in the Institute at 2.00pm – Reverend Una Stewart – Guild Strategy - "Let us Build a House" Theme – Beyond the Walls
Sunday 11th October – Cheviot Churches Harvest Service in Morebattle Church followed with Lunch in the Institute.
Thursday 5th November – Cheviot Churches Guild in the Institute at 2.00pm – Members' Meeting
Thursday 3rd December – Christmas Lunch Guild

Regular Activities in Morebattle

Morebattle HIIT Exercise Class every Sunday night in Morebattle Village Hall at 6.30pm
Morebattle Badminton Group every Monday night in Morebattle Village Hall at 7pm.
Morebattle Tea Club every Tuesday 2pm to 3pm in Morebattle Institute.
Morebattle Chair Exercise Class every Wednesday 10.30 –11.30am in Morebattle Village Hall.

Regular Activities in Yetholm

Eddies' Gentle Exercise Class every Monday in Youth Hall 11 – 12noon. (closed January 12th).
Indoor Bowls every Monday (Winter months only Oct – Easter) in Wauchope Hall 2 – 5pm. New members always welcome.
Craft Group meet every Monday in Yetholm Church from 2 – 4pm.
Coffee in Yetholm Church every Tuesday from 10.30 – 12noon. All Welcome.

Yetholm Community Lunch every Tuesday 11.45 – 1.30
Badminton every Tuesday in Wauchope Hall 1.30 – 3pm.
Eddies' Fitness every Tuesday in Wauchope Hall 6.30 – 7.30pm.
Yetholm Village Choir in Youth Hall every Wednesday from 10.30 – 12noon. New members welcome.
Scrabble every Wednesday in Youth Hall 2 – 4pm.
Scottish Country Dancing every Thursday in Youth Hall 2 – 4pm.
Penny's Art Class every Friday in Youth Hall 10 – 12noon.

The editorial team would like to thank all of you who have contributed articles, photographs and information for this edition of The Cheviot.

Deadline
Please submit articles (including photographs) for the next edition of The Cheviot to a member of the editorial team by 21st November.
j.stewart134@btinternet.com, johnmabon431@btinternet.com

Register

Wedding:
Baptism: Talia Rae Cameron
Deaths: Barbara Maltby, Robin Butler, Dorothy McNulty, Susan Young, Stan Sudlow

Don't forget to put your clocks back an hour on Sunday 25th October at 2am!

Morebattle Community Shop

It's been all change for our Community Shop here in Morebattle. We bid a very fond farewell to Roddy and Pauline and very warm welcome to our new manager Gwen Jensen.

Gwen has moved down to the borders with her family, as her husband is farming in the Borders. She is used to rural community life and had been volunteering in the shop prior to becoming the new manager. Gwen has thrown herself into continuing the ethos of the shop and its community presence. We welcome her and family. She is busy getting to grips with all there is to know about running a Community Shop and has had the steadying hands of Roddy and Pauline to guide her over the past month. She is now flying solo, but with the help and guidance of our fabulous band of volunteers.

Unfortunately, at the present time we are unable to proceed with our application for funding to purchase the Butcher's shop. We are working with all involved to remedy this and we will keep you updated as we go forward. For the present we will continue as we were. It is Gwen's office space and a general storage for the shop; this allows us to create better use of space within the main shop and allows to make use of bulk buying of some non-perishable items. So, for the moment…. Watch This Space!

The shop itself remains busy with locals and the last few groups of walkers. The latter have been availing themselves of a welcome rest with bean to cup coffee, cakes and the healthy snacks too! We have a fully stocked shop for all your day to day needs as well as things to treat yourself with, as the nights begin to draw in. We also stock kindling, logs and firelighters to make those nights warm and cosy.

Following the great momentum and enthusiasm we experienced during the fund-raising campaign, the summer months have been a bit of an anticlimax, waiting to complete the formal sale process with the Church of Scotland General Trustees. While details for purchase of Linton Kirk building appear to be all confirmed, we're still trying to finalise the purchase of a small area of the glebe field, where we plan to establish a carpark area for visitors to Linton Kirk.

The trustees of Linton Kirk Heritage Appeal felt this was important, given Church of Scotland's intention to sell the barn hall which is likely to further restrict the already limited parking area for visitors.

The purchase cost of this ground has been agreed and we're trying now to finalise the land boundary line and a suitable access arrangement that ensures ongoing access to the glebe field.

30th August was a notable date for Linton Kirk as this was Rev. Colin Johnston's last day as Minister for Cheviot Churches. While the formal farewell was made at Yetholm in the morning, his final service with us was a simple communion at Linton Kirk. On the same day, I travelled west to attend the Sommerville clan gathering near Carnwath, where I was able to thank some of the Sommerville family members from various countries who had donated to the Linton fundraising campaign.

A Sommerville laird was credited with slaying the legendary Linton Worm and thereafter building the first kirk building on the site of Linton Kirk,

sometime around 1127AD. He then apparently travelled west and built another church in the parish of Carnwath, Lanarkshire where the family became well established.
Our journey so far, to secure the future of Linton Kirk has been remarkable and involves such a wide range of personal connections to this historic kirk building. We continue to look forward to completing the purchase which will allow us to develop further plans for this special place.

Simon Oldham
Treasurer, LKHA

Here are some interesting facts about Autumn

- **Leaves do not actually turn colours:** Yellow and orange pigments are hidden inside leaves all year. They only become visible when trees stop making green chlorophyll as sunlight fades.
- **Squirrels get smarter:** A squirrel's brain and memory grow larger in autumn so it can remember where it buried thousands of nuts.
- **It used to be called "Harvest":** Before the 16th century, people called the season "harvest" because of the bright harvest moon that helped farmers work late. The word "fall" came later as a short version of "the fall of the leaves"
- **Heart attacks drop after the time change:** Fatal heart attacks decrease by about 20% after clocks go back. Researchers believe the extra hour of sleep lowers stress.
- **Apples float:** Apples float in water because 25% of their volume is made up of air.
- **Greek mythology explains the season:** According to myth, autumn began when Persephone was taken by Hades to the underworld. Her grief caused all the crops on Earth to die.
- **Long journeys begin:** Birds migrate during autumn. The Arctic Tern flies an incredible 11,000 miles each way.
- **Bobbing for apples started as a romance game:** This traditional game began in ancient Britain as a courtship ritual where the first person to bite an apple would be the next to marry.
- **Fall babies may live longer:** Some studies suggest that people born in the autumn months have a higher chance of reaching 100 years old.

Yetholm Bistro, above the Community Shop, High Street, Town Yetholm

A Year of Fine Food & Community Spirit

With its anniversary approaching, it seemed a good time to write a happy, little Bistro update. Born out of the Yetholm Community Lunch Project (with huge thanks to that team for everything they did to support us), in July, the Bistro took wing, agreed a rent with the Community Shop and has been thriving ever since as a true "Pay as you Feel" restaurant. Although the Bistro no longer relies on volunteers, its ethos is still firmly community-minded with diners only asked to pay what is comfortable for them and a free monthly lunch available to anyone who volunteers in the shop. As well as the direct benefit to the Community Shop from the rent and the purchase of ingredients, there is also clear evidence of benefit from the diners' shop purchases, notably drinks.

As a pair of romantic Francophiles, our desire was to bring this under-utilised space, with its gorgeous views, to life. Recreating the unhurried charm of a true French Bistro with quirky décor and a super-relaxed ambience. A place that is welcoming to everyone, where diners sit un-Britishly close to others, strike up conversations with them and even share their wine. A place serving honest, affordable food while never compromising on quality. Diners travelling from all over the Borders, Northumberland (even Edinburgh!) have not held back with praise.

'Never been anywhere like it before, in a good way. Real feel-good atmosphere. Amazing food'

'French style cuisine was amazing and made with love'

'Absolutely amazing place, outstanding food'

'Delicious French cuisine served in this tiny bistro with views to die for'

'Best meal in the Borders'

'Best Bistro view ever!'

'Absolutely superb. Highly recommend this gem in the borders'

The Menu changes regularly with a focus on seasonal, local produce. Everything is made from scratch, even our bread. Opening times vary and are published on our Facebook page @YetholmBistro and on the door. The Bistro also lends itself perfectly to private parties (up to 18 guests) although these will need to be booked well in advance.

Booking through Facebook page / Jane 07969 880583 / janecmorgan@hotmail.com.

Finally, massive thanks to Carole Allen, waitress-extraordinaire, without whom our exceptionally busy evenings would not be possible. Thank you to the lovely staff and volunteers in the Community Shop and to the new Shop Committee for all their support.

A une nouvelle année!

Jane & Rob

A Busy Start to the New Term at Morebattle Primary

The new school year is well underway at Morebattle Primary, and we certainly haven't wasted any time getting stuck into another busy and exciting term!

Our Pupil Leaders

There is lots happening across the school, including the appointment of our new Pupil Leadership Team. Our P6/7 pupils have taken on a variety of important roles and responsibilities, giving them the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and make a real difference to school life.

Our Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) have also been chosen. They will be working alongside PC Lawrence to help raise awareness of road and bike safety throughout the school. They will be involved in assemblies, competitions and other activities to help keep our pupils safe.

Our older pupils will also be taking on a range of other responsibilities, including junior janitors, lunchtime supervisors, librarians, digital leaders and media correspondents.

We have also appointed our new Head Boy and Head Girl, as well as our House Captains and Prefects. We are incredibly proud of all the pupils who have stepped forward to take on these roles and are excited to see them lead by example throughout the year.

P7 Take on Robinwood!

Our P7 pupils have already enjoyed a fantastic adventure, heading off to Robinwood in Cumbria for their residential trip. There were plenty of opportunities to challenge themselves, face their fears and work together as a team. The zip wire, trapeze, giant swing and piranha pool were just some of the highlights — and there were certainly some stories to bring home!

The children had lots to say about their experiences:

"I really enjoyed caving because I worked with my p7 friends to get through the caves safely."

"I liked having to face my fears on the trapeze"

As well as having lots of fun, the pupils developed some really important skills during their time at Robinwood. They learned how to give instructions to blindfolded friends and worked on their teamwork, communication, problem-solving and listening skills. There was also a strong focus on harness safety and showing respect for others.

What are we learning this term?

Back at school, all of our classes are busy settling into their new topics and making the most of the term ahead.

P1/2 are getting to know their new routines, learning their sounds and developing their understanding of classroom rules.

P3/4 are finding out all about food and farming as part of their topic, exploring where our food comes from and how it is produced.

P5-7 are stepping back in time to explore Victorian life. They will be finding out what life was like during the Victorian era and comparing it with life in the modern world today.

With new responsibilities, exciting topics and plenty of adventures already underway, it looks like we are in for another fantastic year at Morebattle Primary. We look forward to sharing more of our news, learning and achievements with the community throughout the year!

People's Emergency Briefing Film
Location: Wauchope Hall, Town Yetholm
Date: Thursday 8th October 2026
Time: 7pm

Have you been surprised or worried about the extreme weather- and weather-related catastrophes that we have witnessed this year?

There is a film called the 'People's Emergency Briefing' that helps us understand the facts and plan for when things start to really affect us here in the Borders.

The film features footage from the National Emergency Briefing (November 2025), which brought together leading UK experts in climate science, food security, health, economics, national security and nature as

well as reaction videos from cultural figures like Jennifer Saunders, Adam Buxton and Chris Packham.

We are screening this 50-minute film at the Wauchope Hall, a place traditionally known for bringing people together for parties, celebrations and sporting activities, because we believe that this is another community event. With a discussion afterwards, asking what this means for our community, how we can prepare, our resilience and long-term planning it is designed to bring Yetholm, Morebattle and surrounding hamlets together. Together we can hear the facts, ask questions and think about how we can respond as a community.

The film presents a clear, measured overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting everyday life in Britain and what the evidence says about risks and responses.

The National Emergency Briefing initiative is explicitly non-partisan and is supported by a wide range of organisations including National Trust, Church of England, Exeter University, the Royal Meteorological Society, WWF, National Education Union, and many more.

We would greatly value your attendance. Bring a friend, bring your own refreshments, and let's make an evening of it.

We are asking people who can attend to register here to be able to keep to the capacity of the hall. Tickets are free:
https://buytickets.at/verityjames/2403979

October Book Event in Yetholm Church

Shaun Bythell is the owner of the imaginatively named "The Bookshop" in Wigtown. The definite article is not unearned: it is the largest secondhand bookshop in the country, and a very paradise for bibliophiles. It is also a magnet for eccentrics, oddballs, troublemakers, the parsimonious, the bemusing and the downright rude. This is Bythell's third volume of diaries, recounting the difficulties of earning a crust and keeping a temper against the odds. It is also his most touching and personal volume to date. That does not mean we are not still in the company of someone who took a shotgun to a Kindle, who threatened to burn Bibles unless someone bought them, is in an ongoing war with Amazon, and yet somehow manages to be the grumpy, genial, ingenious national treasure. This new volume covers the period up until the lockdown due to Covid. There is his trademark style of exasperation, frustration, fulmination and exhaustion, balanced by the small joys and little epiphanies of a life in books. Although it has drawn comparisons – not always welcome – to the sitcom "Black Books", there is a seriousness behind the levity. Will books survive AI?

Although Larkin wrote "what will survive of us is love", is it really the case that more often it is a box of moldering paperbacks that nobody wants?

Shaun will be in conversation with Stuart Kelly, who appears as a minor recurring character in the book and not always in the worst light. Shaun has promised to reveal more excruciatingly embarrassing details during the course of the evening.

Entry is by voluntary donation, wine is available for a donation, books will be on sale. 16th October, at 7pm, Yetholm Church. All welcome. At the time of writing, we were unable to ascertain if Shaun is bringing his latest purchase: a mobile pulpit.

It’s been a year since the Deli opened and we are grateful to the people of Yetholm and surrounds for being such great customers.
We’ve met so many lovely people and we hope that our customers old and new continue to enjoy our shop.
Autumn is coming in quickly, the nights are drawing in and there is a definite nip in the air. At the deli keep a look out for our new Autumn/Winter hot food choices and keeping our old favourites, bacon sandwiches, curries, and pizzas which can all be served hot. Just the thing for chilly days.

Our request for knitted twiddlemuffs has been a great success and provided around 100, we lost count!
The hospital has a good stock now, but they are an ongoing requirement, and we plan to offer them to other services where people will benefit.
If you find yourself with wool and spare time, why not knit another and we can find it a good home!
Enjoy Autumn

Cheviot Churches Recipe Book – Christmas is coming!

Do you need a present for someone you know? There are still copies of the Cheviot Churches Recipe Book available in Yetholm and Morebattle Community Shops at the price of £10 or contact Susan Stewart to purchase your copy.

Cheviot Churches Elders and Districts

Leslie Thomson	West of Morebattle, Eckford and Crailing.
Keith Cleland	Main Street, Heughhead and Renwick Gardens Morebattle.
George Lees	Mainsfield Avenue, Morebattle Mains and Whitton.
Ann Girvan	Kale Valley and Hownam.
Catherine Mabon	Linton
Trish Gentry	Bowmont Valley.
Graeme Watson	Woodbank Road, Braeside Road, Cheviot Road.
Pippa Emerson	Grafton Road to Mission, Grafton Bank, Main St from Old Manse to Cheviot Place, The Crescent, Duncanhaugh and Hayhope
John Stobart	Grafton Corner, Yewtree Lane, Road and Bank to Romany House
Susan Stewart	Deanfield Place, Court, Road and Bank. Back Lane and Dairy Wood.
Stuart Kelly /Rae Redpath	School to butcher and Dow Brae, Morebattle Road from top to Cheviot Place.
Carol Butler	Kirk Yetholm Village and Halterburn.
Arthur Bates	The Yett, Shotton, Yetholm Mains and Harelaw.
Ann Harvey	Hoselaw, Cherrytrees, Lochside, Lochside farms and cottages, Old Graden, Graden, Hoselaw.
Simon Oldham	Mainhouse, Bankhead and Linton Hill.
David Lang	Teapot Street and Bank. Thimble Lane.
Jimmy Fleming	Kelso
Debbie Brown	Postal

Church Services – Yetholm, Linton and Morebattle
Please see notices for opening times for private prayer and reflection.
Yetholm every Sunday at 10.00 a.m.
Morebattle every Sunday at 10.00am. except
1st Sunday when we meet at **Linton**.
Hoselaw is always open for private devotion and hosts occasional services.
The Tuesday Weekly Prayer Service is now regular following the Coffee Morning at **YETHOLM** Kirk. Please give any prayer requests to Rev. Colin or Kathleen Bates. (**07957 768311)** Everyone will be made very welcome.

Cheviot Churches: Church of Scotland (Charity No SCOO3O23)

Minister:
From 1st September 2026, on the retirement of Colin Johnston, Cheviot Churches is without a minster. Our interim moderator is Anna Rodwell, the minister of Kelso North and Country Churches.
For baptism/wedding/funeral issues she can be contacted by telephoning 07508810237 or by emailing - anna.rodwell@gmail.com
For more general queries please contact Susan Stewart Session Clerk

Session Clerk:
Susan Stewart
22 The Yett Kirk Yetholm, Kelso TD5 8PL
Tel: 01573420231 Email: j.stewart134@btinternet.com

Treasurer:
Simon Oldham
Mainhouse Farm Cottages, KelsoTD5 8AA
Tel: 01573440770 Email: simonoldham@freeuk.com

Safeguarding Co-Ordinator:
Vacant – appointment pending

Roll Keeper:
Pippa Emerson 01573420279

Committee Convenors:
Mission and Outreach: Melanie Eve 07807148496
Children and Youth Ministry Team: Graeme Watson 01573 420602
Ways and Means with Stewardship: Ann Harvey 07789885395
Worship Committee: Stuart Kelly 01573 420221