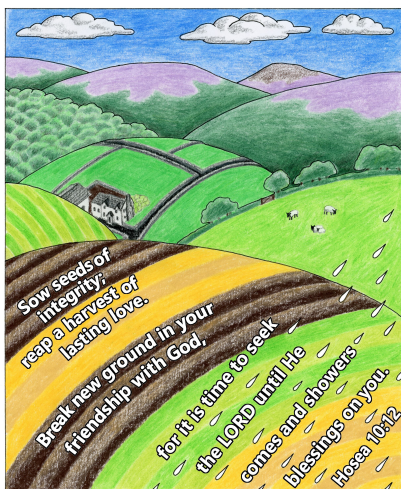
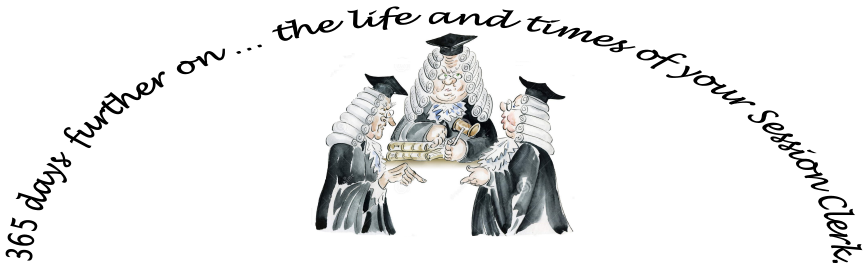


# The Kirk Quair

October - November 2021



St Andrew's  
In the Grange  
Church of Scotland



Here I am writing to you one year on from when, at a Kirk Session Meeting, I took the *Oath de Fidei administratione*, the oath taken in front of fellow Elders to carry out the duties as your Session Clerk. It was very comforting to share that moment with Ethel Robb and John Videlo when they took the same oath on becoming Deputy Session Clerks. So too that I had the support of a number of previous Session Clerks.

To take up the role as your Session Clerk was not a decision I came to easily. I gave it much thought, spent a lot of time in conversation with David, our former minister, and spent much time in quiet places, quietly in prayer.

Having spent my life in the Church of Scotland, I believed I understood how the church worked. I certainly understood the liturgical calendar; Advent moves to Christmas and Christmas to Epiphany that moves to Lent and on to Easter and so on until, once again, we arrive at Advent, the start of the Christian Year. But what of all the other bits and pieces?

Of course, there were going to be many new things to learn. Managing Kirk Session meetings, preparation of rotas that allow the work of the church to run smoothly each week and those little things that just pop up when least expected but, nevertheless, require immediate attention.

Nothing could have prepared me for what was ahead! Not for one moment could I have known that, within a few weeks of taking up the role, I would be faced with a church going into Vacancy. However, here we are months on from when David left us with Morning Worship provided every Sunday; every one so different and interesting. I must at this point thank Rev. Alistair Cumming, the Interim Moderator, the Rev. Sandy Harcus and the Rev. John McMahon for all of the services that they have led over the summer and, of course, we must celebrate

the work of our Worship Team. The team are doing a fantastic job with services filled with a strong Christian message and always with touches of humour. Thank you.

We said farewell to David and Grace on Easter Sunday as they returned to Scotland where David took up his role as Clerk to the Presbytery of Fife. Since that moment of his leaving, I have read and re-read the Vacancy Procedures of the Church of Scotland from beginning to end. I think I can almost recite parts of it from memory! The writing of the Parish Profile took a considerable amount of time with drafting and re-drafting until the final document was achieved. I am so grateful for the assistance given by Elders and by Graham Beveridge on this. Of course, we are now underway with the search for a new minister to come forward and continue with us on our journey of mission and prayer.

Each day is different in the Session Clerk's life. I often look back in my diary and think 'Did that really happen?' Of course, in the case of COVID it was 'Has that really happened again?' Yes, indeed it did and we were once more locked down. Again, we answered the call, and, from the experiences learned in the first lockdown, we got underway with our recorded services with a new Director behind the camera. Thank you Bill Harcus. I so enjoyed writing to my District members each Sunday morning to share just a little of what was happening in church, in life and in the community. It was always good to note that our services were watched by so many people and that many of the viewings were from beyond these shores.

So what were the other happenings? What a fantastic job we did in raising the money that has allowed the Tumaini Fund to continue its work and build not one but two houses for two families in Tanzania. Through this simple act of giving, we have given hope. Thank you to the Charities Team.

We celebrated Morning Worship at the Manse on a glorious Sunday morning in June. The sun shone, the birds sang and we joined them as we lifted our voices to God in song, prayers and Word in that beautiful space. Thank you to Ethel and team for the delicious lunch that we shared after the service. I hope that we can repeat this event in our 2022 calendar.

Continued 

I have been proud to represent St. Andrew's in the Grange at various events. Here I highlight the service at GROW, as it launched its rebuild project in May and the Church Leaders Breakfast meeting in July at Les Cotils. Whilst we may be in Vacancy that should never mean our voice is lost from the ecumenical conversations.

Hilary, Ethel and I undertook Funeral Training led by Alistair Cumming. This has allowed us to work with families at their saddest of times and to lead funeral services in the church.

In the space here, it is never possible to reflect on everything that has happened. I have selected a few. In selecting these few moments it reminds me of the privilege it is to serve as your Session Clerk.

Thank you to Sandy for our Saturday conversations and thank you for your many kind words. Those chats and words have helped me harness the strength to keep us moving forward. Finally, my thanks to Hilary for her guidance during this first year and to Ethel and John for their support.

So that is one year on. What will 730 days look like? Who knows, but together we will find out.

God Bless, Neil

## *StAG News*

The months of August and September are usually quiet with many members of the congregation off island visiting family and friends or on holiday. This year has been no exception with the easing of travel restrictions but church life goes on and we were very fortunate to have Rev Alistair Cumming, our Interim Moderator, to lead worship on the last Sunday in July and the first two in August. We then welcomed Rev John McMahon, Head of Spiritual and Pastoral Care at the West London NHS Trust. for the

next three Sundays. Alistair should have been with us again on 19th September but, sadly, he had to cancel his visit at the last minute when his mother was admitted to hospital. Fortunately, he had prepared the service so Sandy and Neil were able to step into the breach. We were very sorry indeed to learn that Alistair's mother has since died and would like to take this opportunity to pass on our sincere condolences to him and his family.

On September 26th, the Worship Team led our Harvest celebration after which we indulged in a Harvest Buffet Lunch in the hall.

More Stag news opposite



*“Let us build a house where love can dwell”* Hymn 198  
*We did. . . .Not just one but two!*

We were delighted to welcome Dr Susan Wilson, founder and Chairman of the Tumaini Fund at our morning service on August 15th and to be able to present her with the proceeds of our Lent Appeal, a cheque for £2,600, which should be enough to build two houses for widows and orphans in Kagera. A wonderful achievement and thank you to everyone who contributed.



The service, led by our Interim Moderator, Alistair, opened with Neil singing “Come all you people” which was followed, very appropriately, by “Let us build a house where God can dwell.”

This very special occasion ended with a South African Hymn, “Amen, Siakudumisa,” which translates as “Amen, we praise your Name.” Originally composed by Stephen Cuthbert Molefe in Xhosa, one of several languages spoken in the country, it is often included in Western Hymnals, CH4 being no exception! (Hymn 824) Unfortunately, as we do not have many accomplished marimba players in the congregation, we were accompanied by the organ!

### *Vacancy matters . . . .*

Not a great deal to report at this stage. “Permission to call” was granted just in time for inclusion in the last magazine and, as Neil has mentioned, revision of the Parish Profile is complete. After the service on 15th August, the congregation met to elect a

Nominating Committee and, with this completed successfully, the recruitment process has begun. This will not be an unrestricted call but a reviewable charge. After seven years, Presbytery will review the five purposes of the church: worship, service, discipleship, fellowship and evangelism

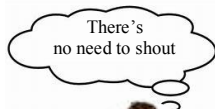


## *Worship with Rev John McMahon on 22nd and 29th August and 5th September*

On Palm Sunday in 2018, we rose, quite literally, to Alistair's invitation to "March in the Light of God" wafting our palm leaves as we marched and sang but whatever were we in for when John started to talk about that well known and much loved dance, the Hokey Cokey? No, thankfully, he wasn't expecting us "to shake it all about" but he was using the last verse to make a serious analogy with Christianity in which we have to "put our whole self in." A real challenge for us to ponder.

The next Sunday, he quoted a number of famous last words and I was reminded of those on the headstone of the legendary member of the Goons, Spike Milligan. "Duirf me leat go raibh me breoite" which, as our Gaelic speakers will know, means "I told you I was ill."

We are grateful to John for coming to Guernsey to minister to us again and hope that he enjoyed his time on the island.



### *Sound system .... update*



Little or no chance now of quietly nodding off during the sermon because the new sound system has not only been delivered but it has been installed and is up and running. A big improvement on the old one which will be greatly appreciated by us oldies!

When you spot George sitting on the back row with his *ipad*, he's not sending emails or whiling away the time playing Solitaire but actually controlling the sound with a digital graphic equaliser. Clever stuff!

### *A brief note from the Friends and Fellowship Team.*

Plans are being considered for an Afternoon Tea and, possibly, a Beetle Drive some time before our Christmas Lunch on 12th December and a soup and sweet lunch in the New Year. Guernsey Welfare had a successful Open Evening at their new premises but no lunches are likely until the Family Sunday Lunch February. Watch this space!



## Harvest, 26th September



The scene for our harvest celebration this year was set with a “Hedge veg” stall at the back of the sanctuary, lovely floral arrangements on the windowsills and a stunning floral arrangement at the front. The service was led by Neil and, after we had sung, very appropriately, “God, whose farm is all creation,” we welcomed Angus Bodman from Grow to tell us about their plans for modernisation and expansion which we will be supporting in due course. Later in the service, Laura delighted us when she sang a solo of Rutter’s arrangement of All things bright and beautiful.



After the service, we moved into the hall to be confronted with more lovely flowers, the usual array of goodies and an opportunity to chat over lunch. Thank you to everyone who arranged and took part in the service and to the Friends and Fellowship Team for an excellent lunch.

### *From the Editor*

Not a great deal of space left for your editor this time because such a lot has been going on in the StAG world recently and it seems that there is quite a lot to come in the run up to the beginning of Advent.

Reference has been made above to the harvest decorations but I wonder how many of you spotted the lovely little harvest mouse hiding in the centrepiece at the front.



It is very encouraging to be able to report that a number of clergy have responded positively to our

invitation to preach at St Andrews in the Grange. Rev. Linda le Vasseur will be with us as this edition of the magazine is published on Sunday 10th October and dates are being arranged with Rev. Howard Stringer, Rev Matthew Barratt and Professor Rev Dr Paul Middleton.



As we continue to feel our way through the twists and turns of vacancy, perhaps we should bear in mind some words of H Mayfield, “Progress is a tide. If we stand still, we will surely be drowned”

*Ed*

# BEYOND OUR SHORES



**Do you enjoy a good cup of coffee? If so, read on!**



Headline grabbing news from “Beyond our Shores” is rarely good news because good news doesn’t sell newspapers, nor does it create the dramatic pictures that fill our screens! It is not difficult to find reports of corruption, persecution, insurrection, etc, to fill this space but sourcing positive stories is not quite so easy!

A fortnight ago, while reminiscing with our youngest grandson, whom some of you may have met after the service (the shorter of the two young gentlemen!), your editor was reminded of a school trip to Uganda a few years ago, a story not dissimilar to that of the children from a church in Edinburgh who, on their return from a visit to a home-cum-school in Andhra Pradesh, prevailed upon their leaders to keep up the good work. The result was the creation of the charity, Scottish Love in Action, which has done, and still does, amazing work.

But what has all this to do with a good cup of coffee, you may well ask! Simple, really. In 2015, a small group of pupils from Hull Collegiate School (recently renamed Tranby Independent School) travelled to Uganda to help at Great Lakes High School and Kirima Parents Primary School in the South West Region of the country and, when they saw preschool children wielding machetes and working barefoot on farmland, they were inspired to make a difference. Back home, the pupils decided to set up an enterprise to help local farmers in Kanungu region by importing their high quality coffee and donating the proceeds of the sales to fund the education and maintenance of children in the two schools.

A very steep learning curve indeed for a small group of youngsters but “safi”, Swahili for fresh and pure, was launched in September 2017 and, with guidance, sponsorship and help from local businesses, the importation, distribution and sale of Grade A Arabica coffee began and has since doubled from one to two ton shipments. Each shipment may take up to six months from ordering to receipt but, on arrival in the UK, the coffee is ground, bagged and stored for free before being

delivered to the school for sale directly to shops, offices, individuals and businesses and online through the website. This project has been so successful that Highgate School in London and Felsted School in Essex, both with strong links to Uganda, came on board last year and, now, pupils from all three schools are involved in every aspect of the enterprise from logo and packaging design, to managing the accounts and day to day running of the company.

With no salaries or shareholders to pay, profits are dedicated to the education of children and the stated aim is to fill a 20-tonne container with coffee beans within 5 years. This will generate approximately £150K profit which will go a long way when it costs just £180 to fund a child at school for a full year including food, uniform, healthcare and accommodation.

If you would like to know more about this remarkable initiative or, perhaps, even treat yourself to some high class coffee, there is an excellent website at **[www.saficoffee.co.uk](http://www.saficoffee.co.uk)**. You can also contact the marketing manager directly by email: [carrie@saficoffee.co.uk](mailto:carrie@saficoffee.co.uk)

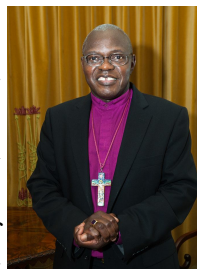
## ... AND CLOSER TO HOME

*Pioneer ministries* In August this year, the Church of Scotland called its first ever dedicated minister for the veterinary community. The Rev Allan Wright, a practising vet, will be reaching out to other practices within 30 minutes drive of Newcastle and hopes to respond to the profession's need for "a supportive ear, pastoral support, a wholistic approach to the welfare of staff and a real anchor in someone." When asked why the Presbytery of England had created this role, the clerk, Rev Alistair Cumming, said that the Presbytery felt that there was a need for a ministry to get alongside that community, to offer an ear to listen and to provide spiritual support if they wanted it."

Another pioneer ministry which began in Hampshire in 2010, is that of Anna Chaplains, an ecumenical initiative of The Bible Reading Fellowship ([www.annachaplaincy.org.uk](http://www.annachaplaincy.org.uk)) to help churches support the spiritual needs of older people whether in residential care, in congregations, in their own homes or in the community. Anna Chaplains are named after the widow, Anna, who appears in Luke's Gospel as a role model of faithful older people.

## **New Chair for Christian Aid**

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Dr John Sentamu, the former Archbishop of York, will be the next Chair of the board of international development agency Christian Aid.



Dr Sentamu – who has been outspoken on issues of poverty and justice in the UK and globally for many years - served as the Archbishop of York from 2005 until 2020. He was created by Her Majesty the Queen, Baron of Lindisfarne in the County of Northumberland and Masooli in the Republic of Uganda. He is a member of the UK Parliament, in the House of Lords.

Born in Kampala, Uganda, Dr Sentamu will be the first person of African descent to take up the position of Chair in Christian Aid’s 75-year history.

Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and current Chair, will stand down at Christian Aid’s Annual General Meeting (AGM) in November, having served two full terms of office.

Announcing the appointment, Christian Aid’s CEO Amanda Khozi Mukwashi said: “This is wonderful news for Christian Aid. Dr Sentamu brings with him a passion and energy for global justice, a deep love of the Church and a profound theological understanding that will be able to speak into the crises of climate change, Covid, conflict and debt that are affecting the world’s poorest communities. We look forward to welcoming him to the Christian Aid family.”

## **Christian Aid’s emergency appeal for Haiti**

Following the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in August, Christian Aid has launched an emergency appeal to help people that have been affected.

The nation - which is still recovering from the 2010 earthquake that killed 300,000 people and Hurricane Matthew in 2016, and more recently dealing with Covid and the aftermath of the assassination of its president – has now been struck another blow.

Figures of those killed or impacted are still uncertain. Houses have been destroyed, roads are cut off due to landslides, power lines and

communications have been damaged. People have lost their homes, belongings and means to make a living.

People will need emergency shelter, food, drinking water, access to healthcare and protection assistance, but in the long-term they will need housing, livelihood and psychological support.

Marc Pascal Desmornes, Regional Programme Manager for Christian Aid in Haiti said: “We see families moving to wherever they can to stay safe with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Swathes of Haitians are facing growing hunger and healthcare services are already overwhelmed by Covid-19.”

### *Smile lines ....*

#### **With Halloween in mind**

My mother is a cleaning fanatic. One Saturday she told me and my brother to get down to the living room and straighten it up. We had held a party there the previous evening, and she was none too happy about the mess.



As she watched us work, it was clear that Mum was completely dissatisfied with our cleaning efforts and let us know it. Finally, my brother, exasperated with having to do it all over again, reached for a broom and asked Mum, "Can I use this, or were you planning to go somewhere?"

#### **What you need**

A Sunday School teacher had just concluded her lesson and wanted to make sure she had made her point. She said, “Can anyone tell me what you must do before you can obtain forgiveness of sin?”

There was a short pause and then, from the back of the room, a small boy spoke up. "Sin?"

#### **Church notices that didn't quite come out right ..**

Jumble sale: The ladies of our church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.

## **Update on Afghanistan from Release International**

As the Taliban tighten their grip on Afghanistan, Release International has warned that attacks on Christians are likely to rise across the region.

One church leader in Afghanistan said Christians were living in great fear. Some who worked for the government now face reprisals and any identified as Christians could be killed. Christians risk betrayal, even from their own family members.

A Christian contact of one Release International partner describes the situation as 'dire.' Says 'Micah': "Our brothers and sisters in Christ are telling us how afraid they are. In the areas that the Taliban now control, girls are not allowed to go to school and women are not allowed to leave their homes without a male companion."

The church in Afghanistan already faced sharp persecution, even before the Taliban advance. That church is invisible and must operate underground in this land where Muslims who change their faith are breaking the law and considered to have betrayed their communities.

To be exposed as a Christian is to risk being charged with apostasy, which is punishable by death or imprisonment. There have also been honour killings of Christians by their families.

One of the communities worst affected by the Taliban is the Shia Hazara minority, which has been especially responsive to the Christian message.

In May 2021, the Taliban bombed the Sayed Ul-Shuhada High School in Kabul, killing at least 85, mainly schoolgirls. The previous year the Taliban staged a shooting at a maternity clinic, killing women, children, and babies.

It was the Pakistan Taliban who shot 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai for going to school and telling the world about it in a blog.

Thousands of Afghans, including Christians, are now seeking refuge in neighbouring Pakistan. But the Taliban are growing in influence there, too. Before the Afghan president fled, he accused Pakistan of permitting thousands of jihadi fighters to cross its border to support the Taliban.



Through its international network of missions, Release International is active in some 25 countries around the world, supporting pastors, Christian prisoners and their families.

### *With Halloween in mind .... Sunday 31st October*

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or ‘Summer’s End’. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1<sup>st</sup> November - All Saints’ Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called ‘All Hallows’ Day’. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called ‘All Hallows’ Eve’, The Holy Evening, later shortened to ‘Halloween’.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad luck, and everybody believed that witches ride about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night.

Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows’ Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.

# Church Register

## Baptism:

1st August 2021 Finn Benjamin Sinclair

## Deaths:

22nd June 2021 Maurice Jean Armand Thoroval  
13th September 2021 Marian Elizabeth Cameron Bowditch  
13th September 2021 David Sutherland Brand



**Can you sing?  
Yes!**

Then why not join Festiva, a choir whose purpose is to sing praise to Almighty God. We meet on Monday evenings to practise (term time only) and if you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact : Jo Paine, Conductor & Musical Director on 721215 or email [painejose@gmail.com](mailto:painejose@gmail.com)



## Tea & Coffee Rota



Tea & Coffee fellowship after the service may not seem a very important part of church life but, in fact, it serves a very useful role. Not only does it give us time to talk to each other but it also provides an opportunity to offer a special welcome to visitors.

Unfortunately, the drinks do not make themselves and we need more volunteers to sign up to help. It only needs to be occasional but, as we all know, many hands make light work!



## Flower Rota October - December



October	November	December
10 Niall	7 Edith	5 Carolyn
17 Andrea	14 Remembrance	12 Christmas
24 Sue	21 Neil	19 Christmas
31 Edith	28 Karen	26 Christmas

## Monthly Coordinator:

Andrea

Edith

Carolyn



# Church Calendar



## October

Sunday	10	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	17	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	24	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	31	10.30	Morning Worship
		18.30	Evening Service

## November

Sunday	7	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday	14	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	21	10.30	Morning Worship
	28	10.30	Morning Worship
		18.30	Evening Service

## December

Sunday	5	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
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We hope that, subject to availability, Rev Alistair Cumming will be with us to lead worship on 24th October and again on 7th and 21st November. Rev Sandy Harcus will lead worship on December 5th and other services will be taken by the Worship Group but see editorial p7.



### Meet & Greet

### Sunday Readers



#### October

- 10 Christine and Avril
- 17 Hilary and Audrey
- 24 Paul and Edith
- 31 Iain and Jo

- Ethel
- Elizabeth Mc
- Edith
- Alison

#### November

- 7 Andrea and Robert
- 14 Ethel and Patricia
- 21 Sally and Stuart
- 28 Charmaine and George

- John
- Peter
- Gay
- Sarah

#### December

- 5 Morna and Peter

- Amanda

# Church of Scotland

## St Andrews in the Grange, Guernsey

### Interim Moderator

Rev Alistair Cumming

Website: [cofsguernsey.org.gg](http://cofsguernsey.org.gg)

Email: [acumming@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:acumming@churchofscotland.org.uk)

Sunday service is held at 10.30 am each week with a creche available for the very young. Details of activities for older children are given in the Church Calendar.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month except at Eastertime when it is on Easter Sunday.

Car parking is available, by courtesy of the States of Guernsey at the Lukis House car park, 80 yards down the Grange and also at Healthspan (windscreen stickers must be displayed at the latter). Both car parks are on the same side of the road as the Church .

Session Clerk	Mr Neil Houston Neil.Houston2812@gmail.com	Tel 07810 000727
Treasurer	Mr Steven Jones	Tel 720547
Freewill Offering	Mr David Lewis-Jones	Tel 726561
Safeguarding Officer	Mr George Taylor	Tel 07781 100132
Church Organist	Jurat Dr Alan Boyle	Tel 246153
Creche Organiser	Mrs Amanda Jones amandajones.gsy@gmail.com	Tel 720547
Flower List Organiser	Mrs Carolyn Oxburgh	Tel 07781 132699
Church Magazine	Dr Bill Harcus billharcus@cwgsy.net	Tel 263688