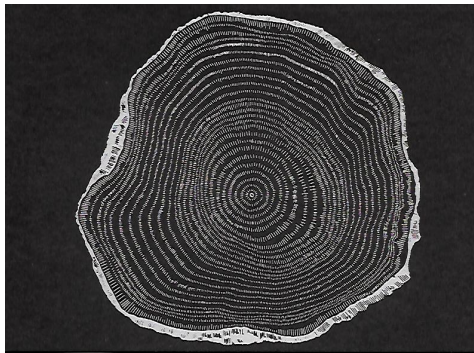


The Kirk Quair

February-March 2020



The seeds sown by God grow silently

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St Andrew's
In the Grange
Church of Scotland

From the Minister's Desk



Sitting at my desk in the Manse, I am looking at a picture on a card. It came after New Year from our dear Swiss friends who we first met twenty years ago when we were serving at the Defence Academy and the Halter family arrived with their three children for Jean-Marc to study for a Master's in Defence Administration. The children, Andre, Nicholas and Lara, were at the same school as our sons, Andrew and Tom, and we got to know the family well. They were regular attendees at St Thomas's, the Garrison Church, and, subsequently, we have made repeated visits to Switzerland and they to the UK. The boys Andre and Andrew are still very much in touch with one another all those years later.

It is funny how people come into our lives and how, occasionally, we remember names and faces of people we have not seen for years. Perhaps, people we grew up with or people we went to school with. People we knew from university or from our place of work. People who lived next door or who played on the same team. People we met at Church or on holiday that we are still sending cards to all those years later. Why? Perhaps, there are some people whose surname we cannot remember but we will never forget their friendship or kindness to us. Some remember names and faces easily while others struggle to remember either.

The picture on our New Year card (see front cover) is a pattern inspired by the chestnut trees from a place called Malcantone, Ticino, the southernmost Canton in Switzerland next to the Italian border. With dense chestnut groves and lush expanses of countryside, it is not hard to imagine the beauty of one of Switzerland's most breath-taking natural landscapes. It wasn't the landscape which caught my imagination but rather the silver pattern of a chestnut tree in cross-section. The concentric circles draw your eye into the centre, the beginning of where it all began. The circles represent years of growth, some wider than others

and some more extended than others or more compressed than others, perhaps, because of the prevailing wind, snow or weather. It is hard to tell if this particular pattern is of a tree that was grown in a sheltered spot or, perhaps, it was in a harsh and exposed spot. It is tempting to allow your eye to follow the rings of the tree around and around. But do you go clockwise or anti clockwise? The outer shell is darker and heavier like a protective coat of bark.

What does this picture say to you about New Year? A time when people choose to look forward but more often to look back. To recall past times; people who are no longer around; places we will never visit again. We remember, too, the long hot summers and the cold winters in our lives; the good times and the bad; the happy times and the sad. They are like the rings on the tree where sometimes it was hard to grow, at others it was hard to stop growing. Someone recently told me that they were discussing their family tree with their grandchildren and, on a visit back to Scotland, they went to a cemetery where some ancient relatives were buried. Next to the car park was a giant tree which one of the grandchildren asked: "Granma is that our family tree?" I am often drawn to the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes where, in chapter three, we read: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."

Our Swiss Family friends sent us warm greetings for New Year and hoped we would meet up in 2020. The message inside their New Year card is printed in twelve different language and in English reads: "As the tree grows stronger with each passing season, may you too grow in inner peace this coming year."

With all good wishes and every blessing

David

Pause for thought

With Lent in mind

Whatever else is or is not true, this one thing is certain – man is not what he was meant to be. - *G K Chesterton*

To get to heaven, turn right and keep going straight. - *Anon*

With St Valentine's Day and Love in mind

Even if marriages are made in heaven, man has to be responsible for the maintenance. - *Anon*



StAG News

Advent Study Group

Our Minister ran three study sessions during the Advent Season. Using material from AlterNativity - Just God, Simply Christmas; the group of 12 had a wide ranging discussion on the true meaning of Christmas. A similar Lent Study Group will run before Easter. More details on page 5 and to follow.

Thank You

In addition to the tree gifts for Guernsey Welfare (p8) and our Christmas raffle at the Congregational Lunch (p9), the Christmas retiring collections raised £680.65 for the Priaulx Premature Baby Foundation and, at a time when charitable giving is thought to be declining, it's a very big thank you to everyone who contributed so generously to these worthy causes.



Stop press

Please note that there will be a daffodil afternoon tea on Saturday 29 February in the Church hall from 2.30 until 4 pm. More details later but please make a note in your diary.



Covenant Service

The Church held a Covenant Service and Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the New Year. As part of the service, the congregation joined in by saying

A Covenant with God

I am no longer my own but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;

put me to doing, put me to suffering;

let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,

exalted for you,

or brought low for you;

let me be full,

let me be empty,

let me have all things,

let me have nothing:

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things

to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it.

And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

AMEN



Lent Study Course 2020

Year of the Word – 2020

A number of churches in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) are keeping 2020 as ‘the Year of the Word’ so this course, with its focus on scripture, will be an ideal resource for Lent 2020.

Opening the Scriptures

Setting our Hearts on Fire
Churches Together in Britain and
Ireland Lent Study Course 2020

The starting-point of the course is the story of Jesus’ journey to Emmaus. It is also to be the end point as the course concludes by returning to it in the week before Easter. In preparation for the course (or as part of Week One) it might be helpful if people read through this biblical passage (Luke 24.13-35) which has been the literal inspiration for this year’s CTBI Lent course.

The Study Group will meet at 7 pm on the following Mondays during Lent:

2 March; 9 March; 16 March;
23 March; 30 March; 6 April.

All are welcome

Guernsey Welfare Lunch

The next lunch will be at Les Co-tils on 23rd February at 12.30 for 1pm. £25/head for 3 courses and tea or coffee. Please see Ethel or ring her on 264559

Christian Aid Week &

World Aid Walk

Last year a small but enthusiastic team from our church helped distribute the red envelopes for donations in Christian Aid Week, and some of us also did lollipop duty for a two hour spell during the World Aid Walk which raises considerable amounts of money for associated charities.

In 2020, the dates will be:

World Aid Walk Friday: 8 May

Christian Aid Week: 10 - 16 May

Christian Aid works in about 50 countries, along with Christian and non Christian organisations. With the emphasis on setting up small schemes such as fishing and market gardening, then moving on once these schemes are self sustaining.

If you would like to help us with the envelopes or with lollipop duty, or need more information, please contact me, your Christian Aid representative, in church, or email [<>>](mailto:paul@riley.org.gg)

BEYOND OUR SHORES



Happy New Year ... or is it? As the old year drew to a close and a new one began, the view from our shores was, and is, anything but reassuring with wild fires raging in Australia,

volcanic eruptions in New Zealand and the Philippines, earthquakes in Albania, the Philippines and now Turkey and serious flooding just across the water in Lincolnshire and the North Midlands which, although devastating for those involved, is relative minor when compared with the floods wreaking widespread devastation in Pakistan and India about which we hear very little. Add to these natural disasters, the political conflicts, global religious persecution and mass migration and one might despair but it is at times like this that we hear of the sterling efforts of charity volunteers and communities rallying round to help each other.

After the two earthquakes that rocked Albania in November, the fourth poorest country in Europe, killing at least 47 people and injuring 750, the Albanian Evangelical Alliance has been coordinating churches across the country to provide hot meals, tents, blankets, transport and other care for the traumatised earthquake victims. Thousands are sleeping in tents and cars or just in the open air and the Barnabas Fund is working with the Albanian Evangelical Alliance to help people. More about this at: <https://barnabasfund.org/en>.

In Mindanao Island in the Philippines, three powerful earthquakes last October turned 21,000 homes to rubble and severely damaged another 7,000. ShelterBox, a charity that we, at St Andrews, have supported has been working closely with Rotary and local government to provide life changing aid for those most in need. Families have been given shelter kits, corrugated iron sheets, tarpaulins and rope to enable them to start building new shelters and so regain their privacy.

Large parts of Pakistan, India and South East Asia were affected by flooding throughout 2019 with fatalities, injuries and damage to properties. Global Living, a US based non profit global crowdfunding community, estimates that 25 million people have been affected with 1.8 million displaced. These figures are “mind blowing” but ShelterBox

suggests that right now more than 88 million people have been made homeless by natural disaster or conflict. Professor Chris Dickman of Sydney University estimates that so far, more than 800 million animals have died in the 136 Bush Fires in New South Wales currently covering an area larger than Belgium and Haiti combined.

Although a small number were killed on New Zealand's White Island when it erupted in early December, relatively few people were affected. It was a very different story, however, in early January when the Taal volcano in the Philippines erupted and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes. Mercifully, in this case, there were no fatalities.

Is there anything we can do against such odds? No easy answers other than to support the individuals and organisations working to alleviate the suffering and remember them and those they are helping in our prayers.

... AND CLOSER TO HOME

Former asylum seeker ordained as Kirk minister

Raheel Arif, a former asylum seeker who escaped the clutches of Islamic extremists has recently been ordained as a Church of Scotland minister and inducted into Denny Old Parish Church linked with Haggis Parish Church.



Mr Arif and his family first fled to Scotland from Pakistan in 2011 when their lives were threatened and there was a plot to have him arrested for blasphemy. Fortunately, it failed. When they returned to Peshawar, it quickly became clear that his persecutors would never leave them in peace and they decided to return to Scotland. He said "We were living a good life in Peshawar but extremists kept threatening us. It was a terrifying, horrible situation and I was very scared. At first the threats were only directed at me and I thought things would calm down in time but when people came to my house and threatened my family, I knew that we had to leave. I had heard the stories of how non-Muslims were killed by extremists – butchered with their bodies put in sacks and thrown in fields."

"I have been on an amazing journey and my ordination is affirmation for that call and God's plan for my life," he said.

THE DONKEY'S CHRISTMAS

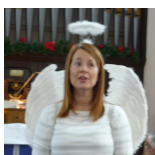
This year may well be the Year of the Rat in China but 2019 was definitely the year of the Donkey at St Andrew's in the Grange with "The Donkey's Christmas" being chosen as the title for our CoSY Christmas Service on 15th December.



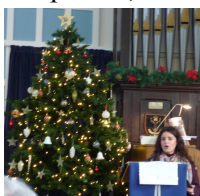
The service was well attended and, after lighting the third Advent candle and turning on the Christmas tree lights, we placed our gifts for Guernsey Welfare under the tree. In addition to the "treats" of biscuits and sweets, £753 was raised for fuel vouchers.



We sang a carol, said prayers and, then, it was time for our Thespians to "take to the stage" for this year's Nativity play.



The "grown ups" cast included some dodgy shepherds, a rather fierce looking Roman soldier, a grumpy inn keeper and his wife who turned away a pregnant lady and, of course, a delightful angel. The young people rose to the occasion too, as one would expect, and we had more shepherds, three wise men, another donkey and a very shiny star!



After we had been invited to "Come and join the celebration", the theme of our service was taken up by Laura who sang a solo and what could have been more appropriate than "The Donkey Carried Mary."

One last photo opportunity for Ed when the cast retired backstage to their “dressing room” and here is the result.



Time to relax and off to the Jerbourg Hotel for the Congregational Christmas Lunch. (not on the back of a donkey nor even shank’s pony, I hasten to add!) Once again, Father Christmas managed to find a little time in his very hectic schedule to drop in and distribute one or two presents and there was also a raffle in aid of the Salvation Army Christmas Lunch. Sixty four members of the congregation including a number of children joined the celebration and were very generous when it came to the raffle which, with a small top up, from the Charities Fund, enabled us to send £500 to the Salvation Army.



Both services on Christmas Eve were very well attended and the Watch Night with Bethlehem at 9.00 pm which replaced the Midnight Service seemed to be a very welcome innovation.

It has been said before but no apology for saying it again. A tremendous amount of time and effort goes into the preparations for these very special events. The church has to be decorated. The script has to be written for the nativity play and then rehearsed, costumes have to be made and music selected and practised. The lunch doesn’t just happen either but has to be organised, donations for the raffle collected and, of course, Father Christmas’ visit has to be arranged to fit in with his busy schedule! It’s a very big thank you to everyone who has helped. Without your contributions, however large or small, it just wouldn’t happen.

With Christmas behind us and Lent fast approaching, it's that time of year when we are looking both backwards and forwards. On page 12, there is a reflection on what has been, what is to come and the importance of living for the moment.

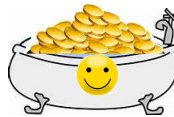


Then, as usual we have details and pictures of our Christmas activities and, on the facing page, a piece about Mary Slessor, an amazing lady to whom a passing reference was made in a recent service. We have some sobering thoughts about the world beyond our shores but also an encouraging story about a persecuted Christian who is forging a new life and career as a minister in the Church of Scotland.

Unfortunately, there's not enough space to feature St Valentine's Day, Shrove Tuesday, World Day of Prayer or the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity whose theme for 2020 was "They Showed Us Unusual Kindness." but there is space for our Big Lent Appeal



Our Big Lent Appeal



Ed

You may have seen recent advertisements on TV appealing for funds to provide clean water for children who are forced to drink and bathe in dirty water. It is a frightening statistic that around 1 in 10 people worldwide do not have access to safe, clean water and about one third of the world's population do not have access to decent toilets; something we take for granted. During Lent, your Charities Committee are appealing to the congregation to help us raise money for the improvement of water and toilet facilities for those without them.

There is an old, well-known Scots idiom that "mony a mickle maks a muckle". We suggest, therefore, that we surprise ourselves by collecting as much small change (20p, 50p or £1 coins) as we can in the six weeks of Lent or alternatively we might like to give up a regular coffee-shop coffee and contribute the cost of it to this worthy cause.

An amazing amount was raised at St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh when bottles of water were handed out and the recipients were asked to replace the water with coins. Whatever container you choose, be it piggy bank, bottle or bath, all we ask is that you fill it up! More information in due course but, in the meantime, please start collecting.

MARY SLESSOR: A REMARKABLE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY

Mary Slessor was born into a wretchedly poor family in December 1848 and moved into the fetid slums of Dundee when she was 11. After the deaths of her father and two brothers, her mother struggled to keep Mary and her two sisters alive. By the age of 14, Mary was working a 12-hour day as a jute maker.

But life was not all drudgery. Her mother, a devout Christian, read the family Bible to her daughters, and also the *Missionary Record*, a United Presbyterian Church publication. The stories captivated Mary and when she heard that David Livingstone, the great missionary explorer, had died, she decided to follow in his footsteps and to devote her life to taking the gospel to Africa.

In 1876, she was sent to Calabar, Nigeria, an area where no European had ever yet set foot. With her red hair and blue eyes, Mary grabbed attention wherever she went but, despite recurring illness and constant danger, she settled happily among the tribes, learning their traditions and quickly becoming fluent in their language, Efik. She won the confidence of their tribal leaders, taught their children and was determined to put an end to some of their barbaric practices, such as the killing of twins (whom they thought were evil). She put an end to many witchcraft practices and adopted every twin child she found abandoned.

She was tough – making long trips through the jungles and canoeing up remote rivers. When her shoes gave out, she went barefoot. Her great passion was to take the Gospel to ‘the regions beyond’ and she thrived in places and among people who would have terrified most women in her day.

It has been written of her: “Practically single handed, she tamed and transformed three pagan communities in succession” and, when in 1901 Southern Nigeria became a British Protectorate, Mary was appointed the first ever female Magistrate in the British Empire.

She was known for saying: "It is not Mary Slessor, but God and our united prayers that have brought the blessings to Calabar. Christ shall have all the honour and glory for the multitudes saved." When she died of fever in January 1915 the native Christian girls and women wept bitterly: “Our mother is dead. Everybody's mother has left us.”

Looking both ways at once

January gets its name from the Roman god Janus, the god of beginnings and transitions, of gates and doorways. Traditionally Janus had two faces, one looking to the past and one to the future. It reminds us that, as we start a new year, we can look back to the past with gratitude and to the future with expectation.



First, we can look back on the past year and give thanks for all the blessings that we have experienced. Thankfulness is really a choice. None of us will have had a perfect year and many of us will have had some dark days indeed but, if we look carefully enough, we will see that there were also many wonderful days and golden moments. Let's choose to focus on those and to acknowledge the work of God in our lives. *For what are you grateful as you look back to 2019?*

Second, we can put our faith in God for all that is to come. None of us know the future. We will have our hopes and our dreams, and have made our plans for the year ahead, but no-one can guarantee what will come to pass. There will be surprises for sure, both good (we never expected that!) and bad (I didn't see that coming!). How wonderful then to have a God who knows the future and in whose hands we are safe, no matter what comes to pass. Let's choose to place our trust in Him as 2020 unfolds. *What are you most looking forward to as you peer ahead of you this year?*

Enjoy each day as it comes

Is your diary for 2020 already filling up? That is fine, but also bear in mind what has been called 'the sacrament of the present moment.'

That is what the 17th century French Jesuit and spiritual writer, Pere Jean-Pierre de Caussade, called it. He wrote: "The present moment holds infinite riches, but you will only enjoy them to the extent of your faith and love. The will of God is manifest in each moment, an immense ocean which the heart only fathoms in so far as it overflows with faith, trust and love."

So this year, try and live your life a day at a time. You can't change the past, yesterday is history; and you can't live in the future, tomorrow is mystery. The present is really all you have.

When Jesus spoke about God, He always spoke about Him being where we are, in the here and now. He is our Father, our vine, our Shepherd, and His Spirit wants to walk with us each day.

And now for something on the lighter side

Shout

Vergers' advice to visiting preacher: "You'll 'ave to shout very loud in this 'ere church, Vicar. The agnostics are somefink terrible!"

Church notices that didn't quite get it right...!

Mrs Thomas, of this church, wishes to thank all those members who so kindly assisted in the death of her husband.

Children are normally collected during the Offertory Hymn.

Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked.

Take me out

An elderly single woman died last month. She requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she explained: "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, so I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead."

Love in a bag

I asked my nephew if he bought his wife anything for Valentine's Day, and he said he had bought her a belt and a bag. When I commented that I am sure she would appreciate them, he agreed: "Yes, and hopefully the vacuum cleaner will work better now."

Best to impress

An older man, not in the best physical condition, went along to his local gym. Carefully dressed in his new exercise clothes, he approached a trainer in the gym. "I want to impress a beautiful young girl as soon as possible. Which machine should I use?"

The trainer took one look at him and smiled: "I would highly recommend the ATM machine outside!"

And finally

Miscellaneous observations on daily life

A person who is nice to you, but rude to the waiter, is not a nice person. (This is very important. It never fails.)



Church Calendar



February

Sunday	9	10.30	Morning Worship, Sunday School
Sunday	16	10.30	Morning Worship, Half Term
Sunday	23	10.30	Morning Worship led by the Worship Team, Half Term. NO Evening Service

March

Sunday	1	10.30	Morning Worship with Communion Sunday School
Monday	2	19.00	Lent Study Course in Upper Room
Sunday	8	10.30	Morning Worship, Sunday School
		11.30	Stated Annual Meeting
Monday	9	19.00	Lent Course in Upper Room
Sunday	15	10.30	Morning Worship, Sunday School
Monday	16	19.00	Lent Study Course in Upper Room
Sunday	22	10.30	Morning Worship (Mothers Day) Sunday School
Monday	23	19.00	Lent Study Course in Upper Room
Tuesday	24	19.30	Kirk Session meets in the Upper Room
Sunday	29	10.30	Morning Worship, Sunday School
		18.30	Evening Service
Monday	30	19.00	Lent Study Course in Upper Room

April

Sunday	5	10.30	Palm Sunday, All Age Worship
Monday	6	19.00	Lent Study Course in Upper Room
Thursday	9	19.00	Maundy Thursday Communion
Friday	10	19.00	Good Friday Evening Service
Sunday	12	10.30	Easter Day Morning with Communion
Sunday	19	10.30	Morning Worship led by the Worship Team
Sunday	26	10.30	Morning Worship, Sunday School
		18.30	Evening Service

NB No Sunday School April 3-21, School Holidays

Church Register

Funeral	16th December 2019	Sheena Mansell
Funeral	13th January 2020	Gordon Fraser Gartell



As Big Ben was restored temporarily to “bong” out the old year and ring in the new, we too were ringing the changes at St Andrews in the Grange.

On the first day of 2020, our long serving flower convenor, Patricia, stood down and handed the Oasis to Carolyn who very graciously accepted it!

It’s a very big thank you to both ladies. To Patricia for her faithful service and the many beautiful arrangements we have enjoyed over the years and to Carolyn who has a hard act to follow but in whom we have every confidence.



Door Duty

- 9 Rachel and Beth
- 16 Charmaine and George
- 23 Edith and Paul

- 1 Avril and Christine V
- 8 Sally and Stuart
- 15 Amanda and Steven
- 22 Ethel and Patricia
- 29 Jo and Iain

- 5 Christina and David
- 12 Morna and Peter

Flower Rota February-April



February

- 9 Deena
- 16 Carolyn
- 23 Elizabeth J

March

- 1 Dulcie
- 8 Avril
- 15 Alison
- 22 Patricia
- 29 Heather

April

- 5 Sue
- 12 Easter
- 19 Norma
- 26 Beth

Monthly Coordinator:

February Edith

March Morna

April Sue

Sunday Readers



February

- Neil
- Elizabeth Mc
- Peter

March

- Ethel
- Sarah
- Sally
- Amanda
- Charmaine

April

- Grace C
- Easter Day

Church of Scotland

St Andrews in the Grange, Guernsey

The Minister

Rev Dr David Coulter

The Manse

Le Villocq, Castel GY5 7SB

Tel 257345

Website: cofsguernsey.org.gg

Email: dcoulter@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	Dr Hilary Boyle theboyles@cwgsy.net	Tel 246153
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