

The Kirk Quair

August-September 2022



Mark 4 v 1- 20

St Andrew's
In the Grange
Church of Scotland

From the Interim Moderator



Friends,

This is my last note as your Interim Moderator. I took up the role in April 2021 and, at that time, I had expected the vacancy process to run smoothly and be quite an easy journey to finding and calling a new minister. Little did I know in April 2021 what was to occur at the General Assembly of that year and the reduction in ministry posts across the Church of Scotland. The implications for Guernsey and the wider Presbytery of England were, and remain, very challenging. Nonetheless, with much prayer and a few letters to Edinburgh, we gained permission to call a minister to St Andrew's in the Grange.

I am delighted that you have now called Rev Justin Taylor to be your minister and I look forward to his induction later in August.

Every new minister presents opportunities to a congregation. Justin's arrival is just that opportunity. It is not a time to look back but a time to look forward to the possibilities that God will present to you. I know that Guernsey St Andrew's in the Grange has much potential, those who have gone before have planted the seeds, Justin will also plant many seeds but he alone cannot germinate those seeds. It is your role as a Congregation of faith to tend the seeds and watch them grow and flourish. There is an abundant harvest in the future.

I ask that you support Justin in his Ministry, give him time to settle into not only a new Congregation but also a new way of island life. Let Justin and his family have time and space to find their way. I am sure that, with your prayerful support and God's Grace, Justin's Ministry will be long and fruitful.

Finally, may I thank everyone for your support over the last 20 months, I would like to single out your Session Clerk, Neil Houston,

for a special word of thanks. It has once again been a home from home. Guernsey is always a very special place for me and I always look forward to every visit.

My prayer for you all is a fruitful and peaceful future with your new minister.

Your friend,

Alistair Cumming

From the Editor

In recent months, Alistair has used the analogy of horse racing in his “Messages from the Interim Moderator” and it seems appropriate that, the race over, the winning steed should now have a well deserved rest! Not that there will be much rest for the jockey with so many other demands upon his time. At least, he will have one less thing to worry about and won’t have me “nagging” at him for yet another message!



His reference to planting seeds brings to mind The Parable of the Sower (Mark 4, v 1-20) in which we are reminded that seeds need to fall on good ground if they are to grow and flourish. The question is: will we be the good soil where the seeds will produce a crop and multiply or be resistant to change like the path, the rocky place or the thorns described by Jesus? Let us hope that we fulfil Alistair’s confidence in our potential to reap an abundant harvest in the future.

If we need inspiration, then we need look no further than the report about a small charity that has sent an eye watering amount of aid to support the people of Ukraine since the Russian invasion in February (p10 & 11). It just shows that, “where there’s a will, there’s a way.”

As you will see, the last two months have been very busy with work on the manse (p5), preparation of special services and celebrations to mark our anniversaries and the Queen’s Jubilee (p 9&10). These events take a great deal of planning and hard work and we are grateful to all those who willingly give their time and talents to ensure that everything is as it should be. It’s not just the big events but the small things too like welcoming visitors on Sunday morning, arranging flowers, making tea and coffee and washing up afterwards!

Ed

StAG News

Vacancy matters

As our vacancy draws to a close, preparations are progressing apace for Rev Justin Taylor's induction to the Charge of St Andrew's in the Grange on Friday 26th August at 7 pm and we are delighted to report that His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor, The Bailiff and representatives from other denominations on the island have accepted our invitation to the ceremony.

There will be a Drinks and Canapés Reception in the Hall immediately after the service.

The induction of our new minister means, of course, that our Interim Moderator, Alistair Cumming, who has served us so faithfully since David's departure last year, will be standing down and we would like to put on record our gratitude to him for all he has done on our behalf. He hasn't quite finished with us yet though! He will be returning to the island to lead worship on Sunday 7th August, the day on which this edition is published and, then again, in his role as Presbytery Clerk for the Induction service at the end of the month.

NB Diary date

Sunday 16th October

Congregational Lunch

A celebration of 50 years affiliation to the Church of Scotland and 125 years since the opening of our building.

We will be gathering in the Harry Bound Room at Les Cotils after our morning service on 16th October at 12.30 for lunch and hope that there will be a really good turn out. Everyone welcome. Please put the date in your diary and do invite your friends and family to join us for this celebration. The more, the merrier.

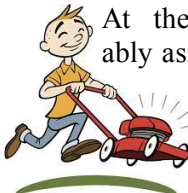
Further details will be available in due course.

Friends and Fellowship Team

It has been, and still is, an exceptionally busy time for the Friends and Fellowship team but it is encouraging, and a relief, to know that the existing team has recently been strengthened by the co-option of three new members, Beth, Bunty and Andrea. Thank you for volunteering to help.

From the property convenor

Preparation of the manse for our new minister and his family is well in hand and they will be moving in before we know it. Yet another challenge for our fabric team who maintain all the church property on our behalf.



At the manse, Hunter, ably assisted by Paul and Iain, cuts the grass and looks after the summer house and sheds as well as trimming the hedges, shrubs and trees.

Leila is in charge of housekeeping and, apart from keeping a weather eye on the cleaners, she also turns her hand to the odd bit of weeding.




George looks after our electrics, of course, but he is happy to turn his hand to most of the odd jobs about the place. Currently, he has been working at the manse taking out a fireplace and making good the gap created.



George and Steve are now well in to the re-decoration of the whole house!

Yes really!

Me? I try to make sure that the “bits” that need to dovetail,



dovetail. I am in the background looking for and getting competitive quotes where I can ... not easy when good labour is scarce and material costs rise week on week.

An added complication has been the disposal of unwanted furniture and fittings.

Going, going, gone!

Fortunately, there was an excellent response when Neil invited offers for items that were surplus to requirements: some went to members of the congregation, some to GO, the charity based at the Bridge, and some for recycling which meant that the manse was cleared in time for the decorators to move in as planned.



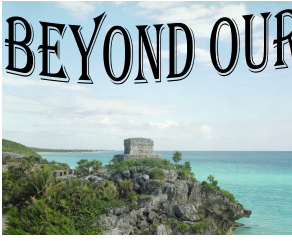
Neil has also organised the removal and replacement of old carpets and so all that remains is for the garage to be cleared!

But with luck, and a following wind, we'll have the finished article looking spick and span for the arrival of the Taylors.

Another great effort by everyone involved. Thank you, one and all.

Stuart

BEYOND OUR SHORES



This column usually looks beyond our shores to lands over the horizon where our fellow humans have little or no water to drink or food to eat, are persecuted for their beliefs, find themselves in the midst of sectarian strife or, even, warfare. Nothing has changed and, in the last few weeks alone, we have read about 50,000 residents in Sydney being advised to leave their homes because of floods while, in Bangladesh, around two million people have been affected by flooding and one and a half million families have had no power since mid May. Iraq had an outbreak of cholera last month and earthquakes in Afghanistan are reported to have caused widespread death and injury as well as serious damage to, or destruction of, several thousand homes.

This time, though, we are going to break from tradition, take a deck chair to the beach at Vazon, or any of our sandy beaches, and look upwards, not outwards.



It has been said that there are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on all the beaches in the world. More recently, as the estimated number of stars has increased, then even the grains of sand in all the world's deserts have been added to the comparison!

The Sun, vast though it is, is a fairly ordinary star, 93 million miles away. It is not easy to grasp that sort of a distance, but here's a measuring stick: if you were to fly in a fast passenger jet at 600 miles per hour, then it would take you about 17 hours to fly from London to Sydney, about 17 days to reach the Moon, and about 17 years to reach the Sun! As for how long it would take to fly on to the next nearest star to us - Proxima Centauri - it would take about 4.2 light years, as the distance is more than 24 trillion miles! And that is just to the next nearest star after the Sun.

How many stars are there in the Universe? Astronomers recently estimated about 70,000 million, million, million.

As you relax in your deckchair in the sun, you might care to pick up a couple of grains of sand. Let the first grain represent our Sun,

the second grain the next nearest star to us. Then look at the whole beach and after that consider all the beaches on Earth, with every grain of sand representing a star then it gives some meaning to the phrase “God the Father *Almighty*, Maker of heaven and earth.”

... AND CLOSER TO HOME



Take the book of Samuel, add a bit of Luke Skywalker father/son conflict from Star Wars, stir in a dash of Pirates of the Caribbean, and you sort of have the story of St Helier, Patron Saint of our sister island.

In the 6th century, a pagan Belgian couple were desperate for a child but the wife was barren. A local Christian, Cunibert, advised them to pray to the Christian God promising that any child born would be ‘given back’ to God. The wife gave birth to a son, Helier.

As Helier matured, he was precociously intelligent, performed miracles and differed from other children. His father, found this unsettling, grew jealous of Cunibert’s influence over his son and plotted Cunibert’s murder. In horror at such treachery, Helier fled, to Marculf’s monastery in Normandy where he settled, seeking a life of contemplation, but Marculf received pleas for help from the residents of the island of Gersut, or Agna (now Jersey) who had also had bitter experience of violent men, Vikings, Saxons and Vandals, killing their loved ones without warning, and now sought comfort from the Christians: would someone bring them the Gospel? They had no one to shepherd them.

Two monks, Helier and Romard were sent to Jersey, a small community of fishermen on the sand dunes where the modern town of St Helier now stands. Helier settled on a tidal islet, now known as the Hermitage Rock while Romard, acted as the ‘go between’ between Helier in his hermitage and the fishing village.

One day, while looking out to sea and praying, Helier saw the sails of attacking pirates approaching stealthily and alerted the fishermen and families who scattered into marshes, beyond the reach of the blood-thirsty, lustful pirates. This happened time and again and became so well known in island history that, even today, small dark clouds on the horizon are known as *les vailes dé St. Hélyi* (the sails of St Helier). One day, the pirates finally caught up with Helier on his tidal islet and beheaded him. He is remembered each year in Jersey on 16th July.

June Celebrations at St Andrews in the Grange

June was predicted to be a busy time and so it was!

Platinum Jubilee

First of all, we gathered in the hall for afternoon tea on Saturday 4th June to celebrate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and to sample lots of tasty goodies and a "pudding" based on Jemma Melvin's recipe for the special lemon Swiss roll and Amaretti trifle that won the nationwide competition to create an Official Jubilee Dessert.



Coincidentally, one hundred and five years ago, on June 4th, 1917, King George V established the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire to reward contributions to the arts and sciences, work with charitable organisations and also public service. What a pleasure it



was, therefore, to have the opportunity to congratulate and raise a glass to Peter who, just three days earlier, on 1st June this year, had been appointed as an Officer of the Order in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Honours List in recognition of his services to Guernsey.

Anniversary Celebrations



As reported in the last magazine, the celebrations continued the next day when we welcomed Rev Dr George Whyte, formerly Principal Clerk to the General Assembly, to lead our morning worship. After the service, we gathered in the hall once more, this time to cut a special cake marking the fiftieth anniversary.



sary of the affiliation of St Andrew’s in the Grange to the Church of Scotland and the 125th anniversary of the construction of our building. More events are being planned, see page 4.

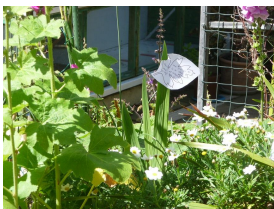
En plein air

The next Sunday, Trinity Sunday, we forsook the Grange and gathered in Gay and Pete’s delightful garden for our morning worship. Fortunately, we were blessed with beautiful weather and the sun shone on us for our service which was led by Neil and Sandy.



Included in the readings was a poem, written and read by Charmaine reminding us of “God’s beauty all around us” (p 13) Many of the hymns we sang, also reminded us about Creation and the beauty of nature and there was a special moment as we came to the second line of “Morning has broken” when we were accompanied not only by Alan playing the organ but also by a blackbird trilling away in the bushes behind us. Blackbird was indeed speaking!

During the service, we were invited to take a piece of white paper fashioned in the shape of a leaf, to write a prayer on it and, then, to attach it to a plant in the garden.



And so, into July when, on Sunday 17th, we had our “Big Sing.” In his introduction, Neil told us it didn’t matter if we couldn’t sing in tune but just to sing as if no one was listening! Sound advice!



Praise the Lord in merry song,
Praise Him, praise Him all day long.
But what of me? I cannot sing –



I have no melody to bring.
But in the Bible, joy of joys,
The Lord says: “Make a joyful noise!”

“Lest we forget....”



As we all know, major events grab the headlines but their dominance is usually short lived as something else moves into the spotlight. Isn't this what is happening now as the war in Ukraine is sidelined by political wrangling in the UK and, more recently, the heat wave. The war has, most certainly, not gone away though.

You may remember that, this time last year, we followed the incredibly protracted and difficult journey of a container sent from Hull to Zambia by a Yorkshire charity called Jacob's Well Appeal and, as this edition was being compiled, their latest newsletter dropped into my inbox. I was blown away by what I read about the response of this small charity and its supporters to the crisis in Ukraine. (www.jacobswellappeal.org)

First, to put things into context, they quote some shocking statistics:

“The Russians have destroyed over 347 hospitals and clinics
78 Ambulances have been shot and destroyed
8 million Ukrainians have fled the country
Over 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers have been killed and 30,000 wounded.
35,000 Russian soldiers have been killed and many more wounded.
The hospitals near the conflict zones are full of blast, burns and crushing injuries. Over 500 people are wounded every day.
Many doctors and nurses have fled the country leaving a small number of staff working long hours in buildings that are often deliberately targeted by the Russian Military.”

Having set the scene, the newsletter describes the charity's response to the crisis. “As soon as the refugees started to pour out of the country, Jacob's Well sprung into action and started appealing for food, clothing and other emergency supplies to help the desperate people. For the first few weeks of our Ukraine appeal, things were coming in faster than we were able to process it. It seemed like the whole country wanted to give to Ukraine! Schools in the area helped us by organising collections of food. Car loads of clothes and bedding started arriving, the volume of which we had never seen before in Jacob's Well Appeal's history. We appealed to all our medical partners and beyond asking for as many

items as they could send us. They responded by sending us hundreds of pallets of high quality dressings. Fortunately, donations of money started to come in as well, so we were able to pay for the transport for all the items that were being given.

Our first truck of aid went into Moldova to help the Ukrainian refugees there. Then, we started trying to send our aid trucks into Ukraine itself. European lorries refused to take the load beyond the border with Romania, so our large trucks had to be unloaded at the border onto smaller Ukrainian trucks. Later on, we were able to hire Ukrainian trucks that were starting to come to the UK exporting their agricultural produce that would normally have come to the UK in shipping containers.”

This charity’s link with Ukraine goes back a long way because its founders, Drs Peter and Beryl Beynon, were accompanying an aid container to Poland when they learned of the nuclear explosion in Chernobyl, just 500 miles away. Later, they met the research biochemist who was pioneering treatment for those afflicted with leukaemia after exposure to radiation and, with him, they established a branch of Jacob’s Well in Ukraine which had become more or less dormant because Ukraine, like many other Eastern European countries, was more affluent and no longer needed so much aid. Everything changed overnight though and, now, aid is being sent to the front line, other charities, government agencies and to more than 100 hospitals and clinics. The figures are staggering. Since the outbreak of war they have sent 19 lorry loads and 8 Luton vans of aid valued at £5.3 million not including the most recent shipment of £132,800 of dressings. As Craig Revel Horwood, of “Strictly” fame, would say A .. ma ..zing!!

And finally“Three ladies from the same church left a town that the Russians were attacking in the early morning on foot. Walking for days, they kept singing worship songs quietly, trying to avoid the roads and the Russian army road blocks, After days of walking, they finally reached the Ukrainian border and walked towards the guard post with their hands in the air. The Ukrainian soldiers greeted them and told them they were safe and could take off their white arm bands. The soldiers said, “We watched you from afar and realised you were civilians. But where is the fourth man who was walking with you? The tall man that we saw walking beside you 3 girls?” The ladies believe that God had sent an angel to escort them throughout their difficult journey!”

God's Beauty's all around us: a poem by Charmaine

God's beauty's all around us every hour of the day
Let us not pass by it, or put our senses on delay.
From the fresh dew of the morning, to the shining moon at night,
The stars that shine our pathway, to show us clear and bright.
Even when the day is dull, there is still beauty to be seen .
A white swan swimming on a lake, swimming slowly and serene.
The sound of crops when swaying, a rustling in the breeze.
The smell of a fresh orange when you've given it a squeeze.
The hens that lay our eggs for us, boiled poached or fried.
Let's not forget whilst eating, their hard work which cannot be denied.
The flour mills that grind our wheat to make our daily bread.
The cow that chews upon the cud, then home for milking she is lead.
The bees when they are buzzing making honey in their hive.
These are all God's creatures which help keep us alive.
The grapes all ripe and juicy which grow upon the vine.
A glass or two for me and you, I know you won't decline.
God's beauty's all around us every hour of the day
So do try to remember this when you kneel and pray.



Edinburgh Festival - 5th – 28th August

Will you be heading North in the next few weeks? If so you might like to take in an event at the Edinburgh International Festival which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year.



It was in 1947 that the first Edinburgh Festival was held and was the idea of the then General Manager of Glyndebourne Opera, Henry Harvey Wood, as well as the Head of the British Council in Scotland and leaders from the City of Edinburgh. Their aim was to establish “a world class cultural event” that would bring together audiences and artistes from around the world. Over the past 75 years, it has done just that, featuring performers from the worlds of dance, opera, music and theatre.

If you would like to see this year's programme, please go to: <https://www.eif.co.uk>

Working from Rest

Canon Paul Hardingham considers the link between rest and work:

*August sees many of us taking holidays to get some well-earned rest from working. But what is the biblical relationship between rest and work? The Bible shows us that **we are to work from rest, not rest from work**. How is this working out in our current experience?*

When God created human beings on the 6th day, the next full day was a day of rest before the work began: *'Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work of creating that He had done.'* (Genesis 2:3). Sunday is a day of rest at the beginning of the week.

Jesus lived out this rhythm of rest and work in His own ministry: *'Very early in the morning, Jesus got up and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed'* He then told His disciples: *'Let us go somewhere else so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come.'* (Mark 1:35-38).

Here is a rhythm for our own lives: *'I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit'* (John 15:5). Our work/fruitfulness arises out of the time we abide/rest in Jesus. He will then show us what aspects of our lives need pruning: *'while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.'* (2).

Let's use this month to reflect on how this pattern is working in our lives:

Are we spending enough time 'abiding' in Jesus?

Are we putting our energies into the right balance of rest and work?

Are there unproductive areas of our lives and churches that need pruning?

Remember God created us as *human beings* not just *human doings*!!

Pause for thought

A sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. - *Washington Irving*



Church Calendar



August

Sunday	14	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	21	10.30	Morning Worship
Friday	26	19.00	Induction Service followed by a Reception in the Church Hall
Sunday	28	10.30	"Preaching In" Service with the Rev Ken Froude

September

Sunday	4	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday	11	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	18	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	25	10.30	Harvest Festival

October

Sunday	2	10.30	Morning Worship
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On the lighter side....



As part of the admission procedure in the hospital where I work, I ask the patients if they are allergic to anything. If they are, I print it on an allergy band placed on the patient's wrist. Once when I asked an elderly woman if she had any allergies, she said she couldn't eat bananas. Imagine my surprise when several hours later a very irate son came out to the nurses' station demanding, "Who's responsible for labelling my mother 'bananas'?"

With baptisms in mind-

A couple took their five-year-old daughter to church. During the service, the minister conducted the baptism of a tiny infant. The little girl watched in wonder as he held the baby, said solemn words, poured water over its head, and then carefully wiped it dry. Finally, she turned to her father. "Daddy, why is he brainwashing that baby?"



In a church, at the font, her small brother was being christened. Little girl whispers: "Behind his ears, too, Reverend Smyth!"



Meet & Greet

August

- 14 Andrea & Robert
- 21 Jo & Iain
- 28 Charmaine & George

September

- 4 Morna & Peter
- 11 Avril & Christine
- 18 Edith & Paul
- 25 Sally & Stuart

October

- 2 Beth & Emily

Flower Rota



August

- 14 Leila
- 21 Sally
- 28 Carolyn

September

- 4 Betty
- 11 Neil
- 18 Charmaine
- 25 Harvest

October

- 2 Andrea

Monthly Coordinator:

August Liz

September Avril

October Andrea

Sunday Readers

August

- 7 Sally
- 14 Neil
- 21 Elizabeth Mc
- 28 Fiona

September

- 4 Peter
- 11 John
- 18 Ethel
- 25 Gay

October

- 2 Hilary



Anniversary Calendar

The Charities Team would like to have digital photographs of Guernsey at various seasons of the year for inclusion in a 2023 “Anniversary Calendar” and also your favourite recipes for a cookery book. Photos should be sent to Neil.Houston2812@gmail.com and recipes to Sally.



Church Register

Baptism

24th July 2022 Angus Andrew Sunderland

Church of Scotland

St Andrew's in the Grange, Guernsey

Interim Moderator

Rev Alistair Cumming

Website: cofsguernsey.org.gg

Email: 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.

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	Tel 07810
	Neil.Houston2812@gmail.com	000727
Treasurer	Mr Steven Jones	Tel 720547
Freewill Offering	Mr David Lewis-Jones	Tel 726561
Safeguarding Officer	Ms Ethel Robb	Tel 264559
Church Organist	Jurat Dr Alan Boyle	Tel 246153
Creche Organiser	Mrs Amanda Jones	Tel 720547
	amandajones.gsy@gmail.com	
Flower List Organiser	Mrs Carolyn Oxburgh	Tel 07781
		132699
Church Magazine	Dr Bill Harcus	Tel 263688
	billharcus@cwgsy.net	