

# The Kirk Quair

Christmas and New Year  
2023



“Immanuel, God is with us.”

Isaiah 7:14

St Andrew's  
In the Grange  
Church of Scotland

# Musings from the Manse



Christmas always seems to come around far too quickly. The distance between Hogmanay and Christmas seems to be shorter and shorter every year. I don't feel like the summer should be over, yet, here I am writing a Christmas Letter.

Many of you won't know we had a leak at the manse. What started as a problem with the floor and wall in Francis' room ended months later with my office being stripped out — the culprit: a leaking radiator pipe behind my bookcase. The leak was found by chance the day before we were set to go on holiday when I noticed some mould on the bottom of my bookcase.

When I found the leak, my office looked like a bomb had gone off. Nothing was where I thought it was, and I was so lost. I realised my collection of lovely books hindered getting to the telephone and the printer. Try answering the phone politely after falling over, stubbing your toe, or hitting your head. I couldn't find the needed books, so I was frustrated and struggled to find peace while working.

We often see the Christmas story as one of tranquility and peace. Where everything is just in its place, and Jesus is the perfect child with "no crying he makes". The stable is clean and the animals are delightful and not smelly. The shepherds smelt more like Bubble Bath than the fields they were sitting in and the wise men looked refreshed from their weeks-long journey.

This couldn't have been further from the truth. These two young people, Mary and Joseph, had their world turned upside down. They feared for their lives and were utterly exhausted. Mary or Jesus could have died in labour, and Jesus might have had trouble feeding or sleeping. The last thing I would want in that situation is visitors, especially people I didn't know.

But that is the truth of Christmas and our lives. Jesus does not come to the immaculate places but into the areas that are in chaos, in turmoil and where peace does not reign. This is where Christ is born, not with answers or loud miracles but as a baby.

So, if you can spare ten minutes this Advent and Christmas, stop and ask yourself what my life's messy places are. What are the areas that I can't control? What are the places that I don't want anyone to see? Then, look closely and see where Jesus is being born in those places. The good news is that Christ comes into our lives as they are, not as we think they should be.

So, as you celebrate Christmas, I pray that you would find Jesus, not only born in the disarray of the nativity but also in the messy places of your life. Bringing new life into the chaos and disorder.

Blessings to you and to those you love.

*Justin*

P.S. Thankfully, my office is now fixed, books are in the new book-case, a new desk has been installed, and I feel more at home — a big thank you to Stuart and George for getting everything sorted.



*Congregational Survey ... have your say.*

As described on the next page, our minister, with the help of the Mission Team, has been following up on Future Focus, thinking about the way forward for our congregation, trying out different approaches to worship and considering ways in which we might raise our profile.

He says, “A couple of months ago, we spoke about doing a worship audit to allow people to have a say in how they wanted worship to be conducted. Below is a link which will take you to a survey. Please ask Justin for a paper copy if you can't fill it out online. We would love to hear from you as your voice will shape our church's worship.”

The link is: <https://blocksurvey.io/worship-audit-at-st-andrews-in-the-grange-L52WQA5SSTSXeZXdsYsY1Q?v=o>

# *StAG News*

## *Deputy Session Clerk*

Carolyn was appointed as Deputy Session Clerk at the Session meeting on November 7th and takes over from Ethel and John whose tenures of office have recently ended. We wish her well in her new challenge and thank Ethel and John for their hard work on our behalf.

## *Mission Team*

Following on from Future Focus, it was decided to form a team to take forward the ideas and suggestions made at the meetings. At Kirk Session, it was agreed for Alison (co-ordinator), Carolyn and Paul to form a sub committee to discuss and try to implement some of the suggestions from Future Focus as well as coming up with new ideas on how to increase our community service, advertise who we are, our aims, and to include the congregation in new initiatives.

Mission Team are now actively working on many of these initiatives and hope to bring you information on the progress very soon.

## *Carol Singing*



Mission Team need you! Would anyone like to join us to sing carols at one of the late night shopping evenings in town?

We shall be in Market Square from 5.30 to 6.00 pm on Thursday 21st December. A practice will be held after the service on Sunday 17th December. If you think you would like to come, please let Alison, Carolyn or Paul know so we have an idea of numbers. All welcome, the more the merrier!



## *Church magazine*

A copy of our magazine can be viewed on the church website and a digital version is also sent directly to one or two members. If you would prefer to receive a digital rather than a paper copy. Please have a word with the Editor or your Elder.

## *Holy Communion*

Please note that if you are unable to attend a Communion Service in church, the Minister is happy to bring it to you at home and to offer pastoral care. Please do get in touch with him.



## *Special Services and Christmas Lunch*

Details of this year's Christmas Services can be found on the back cover and, for those who were unable to attend last year's Nativity service and may be wondering, "what is a Scratch Nativity?" the format differs in that there are no auditions, no casting, no rehearsals. Come along dressed as your favourite character from the story and enjoy taking part! If you don't have a suitable costume, no need to worry, some will be available in church on a first come, first served basis. No need to memorise a script either! There will be plenty of room for our gifts under the Christmas tree for Guernsey Welfare as usual.

After the service, we will be heading off down The Grange for our Congregational Lunch at Les Cotils.

If you intend to join us, please sign up and complete the form in the Narthex with your menu choice but don't delay, the list will be closing very soon!



Sun  
Dec  
10

## *Heat Hub 2024*



We have been approached by the media to ask if we are planning a Heat Hub again this winter. Sessions have agreed that we should offer two evenings a week when the temperature falls below five degrees centigrade. Tea and coffee will be available and there could possibly be a movie night or board games.



## *Tumaini Sewing: A Message from Leila*



Enjoy a social morning helping a good cause by stitching on buttons, wrapping threads round cards, making up sewing kits, cutting out fabric or sewing it up. Nothing too complicated!

Come along and join us at Shiloh Church any time between 10 am and 12 noon on the following Wednesdays.

January 10th	February 14th
March 13th	April 10th
May 8th	June 12th
July 10th	September 11th



## The Heart of Christmas

We're at that time of year again! But is Christmas just about the shopping, tree or presents? At its heart, Christmas is all about a God who has showed up on earth. The Creator of the universe, whose hands flung stars into space, cared enough to come to earth as a tiny baby. 'The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.' (John 1:14)

Every year we sing carols and retell the same story of the donkey, inn-keeper, stable, angels, shepherds, star, wise men, gifts and Mary and Joseph with baby! Why do we do all this? It's to remind us that God deals with the mess of our world by sending His Son to die in our place. This makes it possible for us to have a relationship with Himself:

*When the time came, He "did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:6-8)*

Reflecting on Jesus in the manger is a great place to start understanding the heart of the Christmas message. However, it's so much more than simply a cute baby lying in the bed of straw:


*If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator;*

*If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist;*

*If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist;*

*If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer;*

*But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Saviour.*



With digital magazines in mind A techy smile!

A grandfather was talking to his granddaughter. "When I was a child, all we got for Christmas was an apple and an orange." The little girl whooped in joy. "Brilliant, I'd love a new computer and a mobile!"

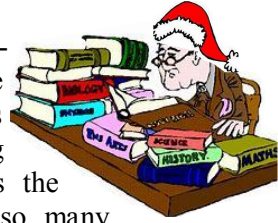
## *From the Editor*

Little did I ever imagine that I would be composing a Christmas editorial for this magazine at 2 o'clock in the morning in the ICU at the PEH but that is exactly what I am doing! I have to admit though that the conditions in which I find myself are much more comfortable and caring than those in which Mary found herself in Bethlehem 2000 years ago when Jesus was born.

Justin has set the tone in his "musing" by reminding us that the Nativity did not happen in a cosy warm stable in the presence of cuddly animals, as is so often portrayed, but in a much less hospitable environment, a point which is taken up in the reflection on the opposite page. Please note, however, we are not aiming to replicate these conditions in our Scratch Nativity! Well, certainly not the smelly bit!

This is not a time for "Bah humbug," though, because, despite all the doom and gloom, there are so many positives. The problem is they're not headline grabbing news. Young men and women, far from home, separated from their families, fighting valiantly to defend their freedom and their countries and, of

course, innumerable charities reaching out across the globe in so many different ways, often, at great personal risk to their representatives on the ground.



Our support for a number of local, national and international charities continues and there is a summary of our charitable giving so far this year on page 12.

Last Sunday was St Andrew's Day and also King's Day, the last day of the church year which we celebrated with a service at which the Moderator of General Assembly, the Rt Rev Sally Foster Fulton. (p11) preached. Now, as we move forward into the season of Advent, how do I even begin to give a chirpy, upbeat Christmas message with so much conflict, persecution and natural disaster all around us. Things are, perhaps, not as bad as they might seem and, if you are looking for reassurance, I would recommend reading a book called "Factfulness" by Hans Rosling which has been circulating in our family and presents a much more positive perspective on things. Happy Christmas everyone!

*Ed*

# BEYOND OUR SHORES



We're not venturing far beyond our shores this time, merely jumping on the plane to Gatwick and then taking the train to Westminster to admire a much

loved British icon which features prominently at this time of year, namely, Big Ben.



Do you stay up until midnight on New Year's Eve? If so, this year will be special - it is 100 years ago, on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1923, that the BBC first broadcast the chimes of Big Ben to welcome in the New Year.

For it was not until 31<sup>st</sup> December 1923 that the chimes of Big Ben were ever heard outside Parliament and Westminster. But then, the BBC got permission to broadcast them to the nation and history was made.

That first year, the BBC engineers were not allowed into Parliament, and so had to access Big Ben from the roof of the Palace of Westminster. This meant that their microphone picked up not just the chimes, but a lot of traffic noise as well. A tradition had started and, by 1924, the Big Ben bonges were being broadcast every day.

By then, the BBC had installed low sensitivity microphones very close to the bells so that they missed the sound of the clock mechanism.

The nation quickly came to love the sound of Big Ben and, during the Second World War, the chimes were broadcast across occupied Europe - encouraging millions in their struggle against the Nazis.

The Big Ben daily time signal on the BBC is still cherished today and Big Ben rings live for important events such as Remembrance Day and New Year, when the BBC sends the sound right around the world.  
<https://www.bbc.com/historyofthebbc>.

While on the subject of clocks, it is told of the great preacher C H Spurgeon that, after preaching at length one Sunday, he said, "I don't mind people looking at their watches but I do dislike to see them holding them to their ears to see if they are still going."



## ... AND CLOSER TO HOME

### Disabled access to the church and hall.



Earlier this year, we reported that our property convenor has been exploring the possibility of carrying out affordable alterations to the building to improve access for the disabled. Working with Julian Hurley of Lovell Ozanne, a local architectural practice, a set of drawings and proposals have been produced for consideration.

It is proposed that a ramp will be installed from the sanctuary to the hall landing with a disabled friendly lift from there to the hall floor below.

The entrance to the lobby and hall will also be modified to provide wheelchair access by removing the door and frame at the bottom of the stairs to widen the space. If you would like more detail or to see the drawings, please have a word with Stuart.



### *What's in a name?*

A smile line in a previous edition told of a minister who went for an extra bucket of water when the parents of a baby he was about to baptise reeled off a long string of names! Last month, in real life, the El Pais newspaper in Spain told of a couple, Fernando Fitz-James Stuart, the 17th Duke of Huescarr, and his wife, Sofia Palazuelo, who were ordered by a judge to rename their daughter because her proposed name, Sofia Fernanda, Dolores Cayetana Teresa Angela de la Cruz Micaela del Santisimo Sacramento del Perpetuo Socorro de la Santissima Trinidad de Todos Los Santos, was too long to be registered legally !



Sometimes people are given a name to match their beginnings. When a young woman in Kenya gave birth in the back of a missionary's car on her way to hospital, she decided to call her little boy Motaka. (Her attempt at motor car!) Centuries ago, a little boy was born in a cattle manger but his mother called him neither "Stable" nor "Crib" because the Name Jesus had already been assigned from Heaven to match His unique coming world-role as Saviour (Matthew 1:21)



*A day to remember ....  
Sunday 12th November*



Our Service of Remembrance this year began with four wreaths being placed on the table. The first wreath was for those who have died in battle, the second, for the women and children who have suffered or died in war, the third, for those fighting against us (our enemy) and the fourth wreath was for all the people in Ukraine who are fighting to defend their country.



Col John McRae, to write his famous poem “In Flanders Fields.” This inspired an American academic, Moina Michael, to adopt the poppy as an official symbol across the USA. In 1921, Anna Guerin, a French woman in the UK, had the same vision and planned to sell poppies in London. The Royal British Legion, also formed that year, adopted the poppy as its emblem and sold nine million poppies as a reminder of the fallen.

There were poppies, too, to remind us of the thousands of the bright red blooms that sprang up in the desolated mud of Flanders in the Spring of 1915 and, later, inspired a Canadian doctor, Lt

“In war, whichever side may call itself the victor, there are no winners but all are losers.” **Neville Chamberlain**



*Festival of Remembrance  
The Royal Albert Hall*



Janette and I attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on 11 November which was just as moving as it appears on television. There was brilliantly choreographed marching by all branches of the services, the Ukrainians were involved and one brave family marched without their dad who was killed in Iraq. Alfie Boe and Katie Melua sang solos, the Chelsea Pensioners received great applause as usual and there were three rousing cheers for the King and Queen. If you would like one of the poppy petals which dropped down from the ceiling at the end, just let me know.

Paul

*.... and another day to remember*  
*Sunday 26th November*



### **The Moderator comes to Guernsey.**

On 26 November, the Right Reverend Sally Foster-Fulton preached in our church and took part in serving communion.

The Moderator is a hard-hitting preacher who has made it her mission to represent the lowest in society. She is a fierce advocate for human rights, poverty issues and climate change.

For her text she chose St Matthew ch 25 31-46 “Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” Her hymns included Sydney Carter’s “When I needed a neighbour were you there?”

She told us that in Scotland one child in five presently lives below the poverty line.

The Bailiff and also the local Christian Aid Committee took Communion with us and following the service a sandwich lunch was served in the hall.

Our session Clark, Sally, presented the Moderator with Guernsey-themed gifts including a child’s alphabet book for her grand-daughter and, later, during the afternoon, the Moderator and her husband had tea at Government House.

She has brought inspiration to our congregation, underlined our position in Guernsey and left us happy memories of a committed, impressive Moderator.



## PAYMENTS MADE TO CHARITIES IN 2023

Our treasurer reports that, so far this year, just over £6000 has been donated to charity from special collections and church funds as follows:

Shelter Box	£3833.00
MAF	£ 627.00
Guernsey Welfare	£ 120.00
The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	£ 250.00
Maison de Queterville	£ 110.00
Humanitarian Aid Guernsey (Ukraine)	£ 117.50
Princess Elizabeth Hospital Chapel	£ 102.15
The Leprosy Mission	£ 447.50
Christian Aid	£ 427.27

### **How the Church can receive more than you give in your Offerings**

It might sound too good to be true, but it is true. You **can** increase the value to the Church of your giving without increasing what you put in the plate or the envelope.

If you are a Guernsey tax payer and give more than £500 a year (ie £10 per week) through the plate or the envelopes, the States will pay the Church an amount equal to a quarter of the amount you give. All you have to do is complete a simple form and give that form to the Treasurer, Steven Jones. At this time we want to collect the forms in respect of money given during last year - 2022. We will collect forms in respect of the current year - 2023 - during next year.

The forms are available at the back of the Church, but please speak to Steven Jones to get a form, if that is simpler or if you want any further details. The payment from the States represents the tax you would have paid on that part of your gross income which you used to make the contribution to the Church.

### **How you make your Offerings. Loose money in the plate or weekly envelopes**

You can give to the Church by simply putting money in the plate. As an alternative, you can use the envelope system which helps you to put aside your giving week by week. The envelopes can help as a reminder to maintain your giving for those weeks that you are away.

## Charities Update

### Christian Aid

Our collection for Christian Aid in May raised £427.27 and Paul has been as busy as ever organising bucket collections. Even in these very difficult times, he has managed to raise more this year than last. A great achievement. Well done, Paul.

He has also been very actively encouraging their supporters to join us at the service being led by the Moderator, the Head of Christian Aid in Scotland.

He tells us that, “In November, I was staying at Waterloo in London, just a few hundred yards away from the Head Office of Christian Aid, so I paid them a visit.



The large building was donated by a generous donor and it is shared by several church charities. I met a number of lovely young people beavering away. Several staff work from home, understandably, so there are advanced plans to sell the building and move to a much smaller office on the outskirts of London. I will inspect that one too!”

### MAF



Unfortunately, our best laid plans for the Lent Appeal went “agley” but were later resuscitated and our efforts on MAF’s behalf are greatly appreciated. We have received this update on their work in PNG.



When nurse Reena Delesae who works at the EC PNG hospital in Balimo was finally able to acquire a new Bible through MAF’s Bible Box, she was filled with a new purpose. A lack of medical supplies and qualified staff are a part of everyday life in the rural areas of PNG. This is why MAF serves these isolated communities.

“When we order medicine, it comes with MAF,” said Reena. “They bring patients too from the outstations.” The Bible Box also comes on these MAF flights and it is where Reena acquired her newfound hope. Being a nurse in PNG is hard work but, through the Bible, Reena has developed a new perspective. “I know that my Lord is living. My God is living. We are called and there is a purpose,” said Reena. Thank you for making life transforming flights like these possible.



# Church Calendar

For December Services,  
please see back cover



## January

Sunday	7	10.30	Morning Worship (No Holy Communion)
Sunday	14	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
Sunday	21	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	28	10.30	Morning Worship

## February

Sunday	4	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
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### Meet & Greet

#### December

10 Morna and Peter  
17 Sally and Stuart  
24 Hilary and David  
31 Elizabeth

#### January

7 Charmaine and George  
14 Beth and Emily  
21 Andrea and Robert  
28 Edith and Paul

#### February

4 Carolyn and Alison

### Sunday Readers

#### December

10 Gay  
17 TBA  
24 Leila  
31 Peter

#### January

7 Amanda  
14 Stuart  
21 John  
28 George

#### February

4 Sally



### Flower Coordinator

Andrea



**Church of Scotland**  
**St Andrews in the Grange, Guernsey**  
**The Minister**  
**Rev Justin Taylor**

Tel 257345

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

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

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.

Session Clerk	Ms Sally Wilkinson	Tel 263991
Deputy Session Clerk	Mrs Carolyn Oxburgh	Tel 252267
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
	<a href="mailto:amandajones.gsy@gmail.com">amandajones.gsy@gmail.com</a>	

## Church Register

### Deaths

**19th September 2023 Irene Maud Wilkinson (Renee)**

**16th September 2023 Dina McMahon (nee Martel)**

**Funeral Service held at Les Cotils Christian Centre on 4th October 2023**

**A Memorial Service was held at St Andrew's in the Grange for Guernsey friends and relatives of Susan Randa (formerly Webber, nee Cockram) on 29th September 2023.**

# CHRISTMAS SERVICES

AT  
ST ANDREW'S IN THE GRANGE

<http://cofsguernsey.org.gg>

## DECEMBER

- 3rd 10:30 Traditional Worship
- 9th 10:30 Bereavement Service
- 10th 10:30 Scratch Nativity and Tree Gifts
- 17th 10:30 Lessons and Carols
- 24th 10:30 Traditional Worship
- 24th 16:30 Pyjama Service
- 24th 21:00 Watchnight with Bethlehem
- 25th Online reflection (Church website)

