

The Kirk Quair

December 2022—January 2023



A D V E N T



For unto us a child is born
Isaiah 9:6

St Andrew's
In the Grange
Church of Scotland



Presidents and Prime Ministers are often rated on their first hundred days in office. Questions abound: what swooping changes have they brought in, what policy have they enacted and where have we seen the difference in our lives? It is seldom that a leader marks their report card. Instead, it is left to pundits and the general public to assess one's term. Recently, we have seen people struggle to make it to a hundred days in office because they proposed changes people were not ready for. They might have given themselves an A+, while others gave them an F.

When Bill asked me to write a reflection about my first 100 days in office, I did so with trepidation because how we start often dictates how we run the race. Come out of the blocks too quickly and you won't have enough puff to make it through the race; come out too slowly, and you are playing catchup. Our start is vital to the shape of our future ministry together.

On a personal note, part of my first hundred days has been getting to grips with what it means to live in Guernsey. This is not my first time being an immigrant to an island but this is by far smaller than the UK. The amount of admin is daunting, getting our children settled (amidst them being ill and running headfirst into the church hall door) and learning the day-to-day routine of being an islander has taken time. I am not in Scotland any more and it takes energy and time to get to know the ins and outs of this tiny island. No part of my life has not had to adapt, learn, and decipher to make this transition sustainable. I have even had to learn how to drive again (I have already replaced one wing mirror). Ma heid is puggled but we, as a family, are getting there.

Regarding the congregation. I have been lucky to have spent time visiting people in the congregation and the people I have met so far have

shown me the beauty of St Andrew's in the Grange. I have learnt why you love this place so dearly. I can say that people are passionate about this wee Kirk and want to see it thrive.

After listening to many stories in the last few weeks, I have thought about the opportunity before us. My deliberations have been grounded in prayer, observations and searching about what God calls us to do in the future. What places do we need to work on, where have we missed the boat and how do we make this congregation sustainable for the next 125 years? Like the rest of the Church of Scotland, we need to ask critical questions about our future and how we will continue to be a strong presence on the island. There is a lot to be optimistic about but it needs some honesty and planning to make this church reach its full potential.

This year's Christmas celebrations will be new for our family and me. We have sent a letter to Santa updating our postal address and asking for leniency for the minister in this house. We are looking forward to sharing our celebration with our new family of St Andrew's in the Grange, and we look forward to all the ways we welcome the birth of new life amongst us once more.

Thank you to all of you who have made us feel so welcome and I look forward to spending hundreds more days with you.

Merry Christmas

Justin and the family at the manse.



AND WITH THE MANSE FAMILY IN MIND!

Out of the mouths of babes etc



Little George was visiting his aunt. He found the cat in a sunny window purring cheerfully. "Oh Auntie, come quick," cried George. "The cat has gone to sleep and left his engine running."



A little boy was taken Christmas shopping by his mother. He watched the escalator going down for several minutes and, then, asked with concern: "What happens when the ground floor gets full of steps?"

StAG News

Session Clerk

The imminent departure of Neil, our Session Clerk, was reported in the last magazine and it is a great pleasure to be able to confirm that Sally has accepted the role. At a Session Meeting on Wednesday 23rd November, she took the Oath de fidei administrationem which, for non Latin scholars, means “I promise to carry out faithfully the duties of”Session Clerk. Thank you, Sally, for agreeing to take on this demanding office. We wish you every success.

A word from the Treasurer



How to increase the value of your giving without increasing how much you give.

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 taxpayer and give more than £500 a year (i. e. £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 com-

plete 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 2021. We will collect forms in respect of 2022 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.

Giving: 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.

We are about to distribute the envelopes for 2023. If you would like to join those using the envelope system, please speak to David Lewis-Jones who will be pleased to provide you with envelopes or to provide any further information about the system



Anniversary Lunch

Our Friends and Fellowship Team have done it again and, despite a number of the congregation being off island, there was a good turnout of just under 40 for the Anniversary Celebration Lunch at Les Cotils on the 16th October. The occasion has been summed up as follows: "Friendship and Fellowship were much in evidence, good food in plentiful supply, attentive staff and beautiful surroundings though the misty day dulled the usual wonderful view."

Christmas Lunch

We will be returning to Les Cotils after the morning service on Sunday 11th December for our Congregational Christmas Lunch. The cost will be: £27.50 for 3 Courses and £22.50 for 2 courses, Children up to 12, £15. Tea and coffee are included.

Please let Ethel have your order, menu choice and cash or cheque in favour of "Church of Scotland" by 4th December at the very latest. There will be music, lots for children to do and, also, a raffle in aid of the Salvation Army Christmas Day Lunch, so please bring any prizes on the day.



Sheila Brown

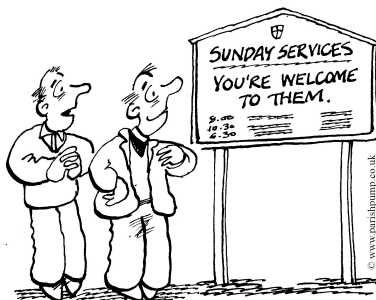


There are fond memories of the times the Rev Lawson Brown and his wife, Sheila, spent with us at St Andrew's in the Grange and we were very sorry to learn of Sheila's death last month.

She will be remembered with affection as a lovely lady who was gentle, caring and the sort of person to whom one might turn with complete confidence in difficult times. She was very much a part of the Fellowship here at St Andrew's and, even after leaving Guernsey, kept in touch with friends right up to the time of her death.

From the property convenor

The notice board has been updated with the Minister's details and reinstalled at the front door of the church .



*...love the new notice board, Vicar...
...just not quite so sure about the wording...*

BEYOND OUR SHORES



with Tom Videlo in Georgia

From September 2021 until July 2022, and again since the beginning of November, I have been in Georgia, nestled against the Caucasus Mountains bordering Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia.

The fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s saw the rejuvenation of the Georgian Orthodox Church after its suppression by the Soviets but, also, armed conflict in the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The home of Abkhazians and Ossetians respectively, although ethnic Georgians always made up the majority, the two regions sought independence but resorted to ethnic cleansing of Georgians with the assistance of the Russian military. Various conflicts ensued, including the Abkhaz War in 1992 and 1993, and the war between Georgia and Russia over South Ossetia in 2008. The situation at present is peaceful but sometimes tense, with 20% of Georgia's territory occupied by Russian forces.

The Georgian Orthodox Church is one of the world's oldest churches, with the Christianisation of the Kingdoms of Colchis and Iberia (no relation to the peninsula in western Europe) happening from the 4th century AD with the conversion of King Mirian III. Nowadays, the Church is by far the most influential institution in Georgia and enjoys widespread support amongst the 85% of Georgians who are members.

Nikozi Cathedral, which I visited several times as part of my photographic project on the occupied territories, lies just a few hundred yards from the 'border' with South Ossetia. Nikozi was heavily bombed during Georgia's 2008 war with Russia but is now home to a thriving art school and climbing club. Bishop Isaiah of Nikozi & Tskhinvali founded the art school due to his previous career as an animator. It hosts an international animated film festival along with daily after-school classes in subjects such as ceramics, embroidery and music.

Following my unannounced attendance at Nikozi Cathedral on successive Sunday mornings looking for permission to photograph inside the

Cathedral and the art school, Bishop Isaiah was kind enough to invite me to lunch. Although his English is good, to translate some things, he sought the help of two young Belarusians who had joined us. After a delicious meal of bean stew and cheese bread, along with generous helpings of wine and the Georgian spirit *chacha*, I was allowed to photograph the following Sunday's service at the Cathedral along with the art school whenever I wished.

25 December will be a normal day for me this year. Orthodox Christmas takes place on 7 January due to the difference in the Gregorian and Julian calendars. In Georgia, a midnight liturgy brings vast numbers of people to church to see in Christmas Day, followed by street processions in the morning called *Alilo*. The Georgian version of a Christmas tree - *Chichilaki* - is made by peeling the branches of the hazelnut tree producing dozens of white fronds that are said to resemble St Basil's beard.



Another interesting Georgian tradition at the turn of the year comes on 2 January, *Bedoba*, which translates as 'day of fate'. People try to do happy and positive things on *Bedoba* because the rest of the year will reflect how they spend it.

... AND CLOSER TO HOME



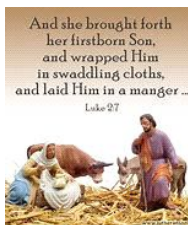
B S L

Recent debate in our States has drawn attention once again to the problems of people with a disability and on Sunday 25th September, a Baptist minister, the Revd Sue Whalley, delivered the first ever known sermon in British Sign Language (BSL) at St Paul's Cathedral.

The invitation grew out of a meeting in London between Deaf Church Leaders and Church of England Clergy. Building on the momentum of the BSL Act last April when British Sign Language was accepted as an official language in England, Scotland and Wales, it was suggested that a Deaf person preach at St Paul's .

Although BSL interpreted services have been held in the Cathedral for many years, this was the first time that a sermon was given entirely in sign language with a spoken word interpretation. A maximum of 30 Deaf people were expected to attend alongside the hearing visitors to the cathedral. But instead, 60-70 Deaf people turned up, "highlighting the importance and significance of the event." Good news indeed, for the 125 thousand adults in the UK who use BSL to communicate.

The message of Advent? – history is going somewhere!



And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger' (Luke 2:7)

'They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.' (Matthew 24:30)



What a contrast between the humble birth of Jesus in Bethlehem – and His eventual return! No one knows when that day will be, but it will be earth-shaking. In the meantime, Advent reminds us of the last of six great saving actions of God in Jesus Christ.

The Birth of Jesus at Bethlehem was to inaugurate our salvation. The Death of Jesus at Calvary established it – forever. The Resurrection of Jesus at Easter confirmed it. The Ascension of Jesus to heaven celebrated it. The Gift of the Spirit at Pentecost drove it worldwide. And sixthly will come the Return of Jesus at the world's end – to consummate and complete it.

The message of Advent reminds us that history is not circular or locked into an unending stalemate. Neither can we ever accept a notion of successive reincarnations, for the Bible is clear that *man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment* (Hebrews 9:27).

The Bible has had many pre-runs of that final 'Day of the Lord.' Noah's flood, the overthrow of wicked Babylon; these and other upheavals were but pointers to the final 'Day of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Corinthians 1:8), when all wrongs will be stopped, and the Lord shall reign with justice.

For the Bible is clear that world history is leading to a *Conclusion*, to the new heaven and the new earth. That will be inaugurated when 'He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.' Christ's return will usher in the final triumph, bringing about the dismantling of the whole apparatus of Evil that has so harassed us across the centuries.

The Cross and Resurrection secured the victory over evil. Christ's return will make it final! Believers echo Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 - 'And so we will be with the Lord for ever.' If we have a *strong view of the future, we can be sure it will energise us in the present!*

In the meantime, Advent is coming round once again. It's time to celebrate the first of God's six mighty acts that secured our salvation – and look forward to the future.



From the Editor

Much has been happening since our last magazine was distributed at the beginning of October.

Justin has continued to find his feet as he explains in his reflection on "The first hundred days" (P2&3) which, incidentally, will be the very day on which this edition is published.

Neil, our Session Clerk, has left the island and we are extremely grateful to Sally for stepping in to take his place (p4).

As ever, our Friends and Fellowship team have been hard at work organising an excellent celebratory anniversary lunch. No let up for them, though, as arrangements for the Christmas lunch are now well in hand (p5).

We are pleased to have received a report from Tom who, after his solo exhibition in town, has returned to Georgia to further his career in photo journalism

(p8&9) and we reflect on Advent which is upon us once more.



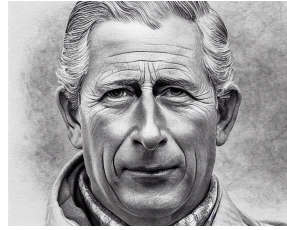
The Crown Dependences, can take heart from the words of our new King (p10) that he will endeavour to serve us "with loyalty, respect and love" and also that he will uphold the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. (p11)

We take a look at some of those confronted by warfare and natural disasters who will not be wishing each other "Happy Christmas" this year and, also, the challenge faced by just one charity whose income has dropped and costs soared during the pandemic and Ukrainian conflict. (p12&13)

Now, as we pray for peace, all that remains is for me to wish you a very happy Christmas and successful 2023. *Ed*

King Charles III

'And wherever you may live in the United Kingdom, or in the realms and territories across the world, and whatever may be your background or beliefs, I shall endeavour to serve you with loyalty, respect and love, as I have throughout my life.'



These are King Charles III's words from his TV broadcast following the death of Queen Elizabeth. They reflect the Queen's own commitment to serve the nation for 70 years. They also express the continuity of monarchy: *'The Queen is dead. Long live the King!'*

However, continuity doesn't mean that things remain the same. King Charles III will face different challenges to the Queen, but the same God works His purposes through each of them. At his death, King David spoke these words to his son Solomon: *'Be strong and observe what the Lord your God requires: walk in obedience to him...Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go.'* (1 Kings 2:2,3) These are words for our new King and ourselves, as we seek God's will in a time of uncertainty.

King Charles III has demonstrated his ability to get alongside people to *'see the value of each person as God sees them.'* (Archbishop of Canterbury). He is also in touch with the important issues of the day. He has provided young people with opportunities to change their lives. He understands the life of the poorest in our society, and he is passionate about the state of our planet. Let's pray for our king, as he faces new challenges and opportunities: *'I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.'* (1 Timothy 2:1,2).

The Monarch and the Church

By me kings reign and rulers issue decrees that are just (Proverbs 8:15) We have a unique system in this country that links the King to the Church.

The new King has made an oath to uphold the Presbyterian Church in Scotland and is the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. The sovereign holds the title 'Defender of the Faith' originally given to Henry VIII by the Pope for defending the Roman Catholic faith. It was later claimed as a title for defending the Protestant religion.

These are legal roles and titles which bind the Crown, Parliament and Anglican churches together. The King appoints Archbishops, Bishops and Deans of the Church of England, who then swear an oath of allegiance to the monarch.

Some people might ask if the Church or any part of it needs to be so closely linked to the State. Why should Parliament or the government, who may be people from other or no faith, have a say who runs the Church? Some say that the purpose of having an established Church is so that Parliament can protect the Church from itself. Some would argue there has been too much modernisation in the Church which has not led to more people in pews. Meanwhile, though the numbers of people having an allegiance to the Church of any kind is falling, still many people turn to the Church at times of personal and family troubles and celebrations.

God save the King. He has solemnly promised to uphold the Church and spoken of his personal faith. We do not know what the future of this country or the Church will be but we can influence it by prayer. We should pray for those in authority, whether we agree with them or not. It may not be a perfect system, but it is probably better than all the rest.

The new King's cypher is appearing on post boxes in the UK. Look at the way 'they' have entwined the letters C R and the Latin numeral III.



Now think about what you so often see in church buildings - letters entwined together, either from Latin or the Greek. A common set of initials often seen on altar linen and probably the most misunderstood is 'IHC'.

People often suggest it comes from the Latin 'Jesus Hominum Salvator' meaning, 'Jesus, Saviour of the World', or even the English 'In His Service'. But they don't. They are the first three letters of the Greek for JESUS - which in Greek was IHCOYC or, in Latin, IHS

Pause for reflection . . .

Traditionally for us, Christmas is a time for celebration, for “Glad Tidings” or, put more simply, “Good News.” Sadly, for so many this year, there will be little, if any, good news to celebrate.

Not for many Ukrainian families who have fled their homeland since last Christmas and left loved ones behind or those whose lives have been devastated, their homes and even cities destroyed by the ongoing conflict with Russia. Now as the “bleak midwinter” approaches and there is widespread disruption of energy supplies, please pray that they will find ways to keep warm until the return of Spring. Pray, too, for families in Russia whose loved ones have been conscripted to fight a war about which they are told so little and, from which, they may never return.

Not for many people in Pakistan where it is estimated that around 33,000,000, yes .. thirty three million, people have been affected by this year’s heavy monsoon rains with almost 8 million displaced and predictions that the flood waters may take up to six months to recede. Please pray for these people that they may find shelter, food and medicines to ensure their survival.

Not for the people of Indonesia who experienced a powerful earthquake in the island of Java on 21st November. More than 80 schools were badly damaged and over 22,000 homes destroyed. Please pray for the work of Save the Children and the many other relief organisations and volunteers who are battling torrential rain and landslides to bring help.

These are just three of the disasters that have been grabbing the recent headlines but, as we know, many charities, large and small, have been finding it difficult to maintain their income in the aftermath of the pandemic. A recent update from MAF, one of the many charities we support at St. Andrew’s in the Grange, sets out the problems they are facing. We are reminded constantly about inflation rates and rises in the cost of living but many of us probably don’t see beyond our personal bubbles and this update, which is reproduced with permission, is thought provoking. Referring to the rocketing cost of domestic fuel, the letter says:

“The situation is serious

Sadly, the fuel that ensures MAF aircraft bring God's love to men, women and children in the depths of their isolation is no exception. The drastically devalued pound means the cost of our life-saving flights to remote airstrips has soared



MAF has been working tirelessly throughout this year to ensure the fleet continues its unique Gospel mission. However, unprecedented price rises are now taking their toll”.

PRAY THAT HE PRAY THAT HIS PRAY THAT HE
WILL BLESS ALL LOVE WILL TRANS- WILL PROVIDE THE
THE PASSENGERS FORM THE LIVES EXTRA FUNDS THIS
WHO FLY WITH US OF ISOLATED MEN, CHRISTMAS TO BUY
TO REMOTE COMMU- WOMEN AND CHIL- THE AVIATION
NITIES WORLDWIDE DREN SERVED BY FUEL WE NEED
MAF



An answer to Prayer?



Recently, when speaking about prayer, the minister told us about his passion for cake (hardly the best thing for his waistline!) and the time when he gave it up for Lent. Passing his favourite bakery, he silently prayed, “Lord, you



don’t like us to suffer. Would it be all right if I stopped for a piece of cake. If I find a parking space, I will take it as a sign that I may have my piece of cake” and, lo, there was a parking spot and only the eighth time round the block!

This brings to mind another gentleman who was driving down the street, worried because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up toward heaven, he prayed in desperation: "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking place, I will go to church every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up whisky."

Miraculously, a moment later, a parking place appeared. He looked up again and said, "Never mind. I found one."



Church Calendar



December

- Sunday 11 10.30 Morning Worship and Tree Gifts
In aid of Guernsey Welfare followed
by Congregational Christmas Lunch
at Les Cotils with raffle in aid of the
Salvation Army Christmas Lunch**
- Sunday 18 10.30 Service of Lessons and Carols**
- Saturday 24 16.30 Pyjama Service
21.00 Watchnight at Bethlehem**
- Sunday 25 10.30 Family Service**

January

- Sunday 1 10.30 Morning Worship**
- Sunday 8 10.30 Morning Worship with Holy Communion**
- Sunday 15 10.30 Morning Worship**
- Sunday 22 10.30 Morning Worship
18.30 Evening Service**
- Sunday 29 10.30 Morning Worship**

February

- Sunday 5 10.30 Morning Worship with Holy Communion**



A new slant on baptism!

Proud “Grandma Liz” is pleased to share this rather fun photo she captured at her grandson’s baptism in October.

She tells us that it was a lovely occasion and a service her family are sure to remember for many years to come.





Meet & Greet

December

- 11 Morna & Peter
- 18 Amanda & Steven
- 25 Jo & Iain

January

- 1 Beth & Emily
- 8 Charmaine & George
- 15 Andrea & Robert
- 22 Sally & Stuart
- 29 Gay & Pete

February

- 5 Avril & Christine

Sunday Readers

December

- 11 Gay
- 18 **
- 25 **

January

- 1 **
- 8 Peter
- 15 Sally
- 22 Stuart
- 29 Andrea

February

- 5 Robert

** To be chosen from the list of volunteers



Flower Rota



December

- 11 Christmas
- 18 Christmas
- 25 Christmas

January

- 1 Christmas
- 8 Edith
- 15 Edith
- 22 Christine V
- 29 Isobel

February

- 5 Edith

Monthly Coordinator:

December Andrea

January Paul

February Carolyn



*while on the
subject of rotas*



Sometimes people think of church as being like a giant helicopter. They don't want to get too close in case they get sucked into the rotas.

Milton Jones

Church Register

Baptism: 30th October 2022 Rory Frederick Bell

Deaths: 16th October 2022 Irene Ruthven

Admission by Confession of Faith:
2nd October 2022 Gillian Mabbett

Church of Scotland

St Andrew's in the Grange, Guernsey

The Minister

Rev Justin Taylor

Tel 257345

Website: cofsguernsey.org.gg

Email: jtaylor@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	Ms Sally Wilkinson	Tel 263991
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 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