

# The Kirk Quair

December 2021- January 2022



**And the word became flesh, and dwelt among us  
John 1:14**

**St Andrew's  
In the Grange  
Church of Scotland**

# From the Interim Moderator



Friends,

As I write this letter, I am sitting at my desk overlooking Epsom Downs. Just above the tree line, I can see the grandstand of Epsom racecourse where the famous horse race, the Derby, is run. All around the town of Epsom are photographs of famous Derby winners, both horses and jockeys.

The race probably only lasts around two minutes as the horses gallop up the hill from the start and finish by galloping down a hill toward the finish some mile and a half later.

What you don't see in those few minutes is all the preparation work that goes into making the horse a winner. That might be the trainer, the groom, the physiotherapists and many others who all play a small part in turning the horse out on race day. As that preparation takes place, there are often many obstacles to overcome, some that the owner might feel at the time are insurmountable and they feel like walking away from the horse, taking their money out of the equation and looking to start again with another horse. Then, as the race begins, they see all the effort that everyone has put in come to fruition as the horse comes from behind to edge ever more closely to the winning post, passing all the other horses on that run in until, eventually in what seems like an age, the jockey's arms are raised in jubilation, the crowd erupts, big hugs all round, the race has been run, the race has been won and a place in history is assured.

The pathway in the vacancy process has been pretty much like that running of the Derby. All the preparation work was done after David left St Andrew's in the Grange. The profile was rewritten to be attractive, votes were taken and a nominating committee elected, so surely that meant we were inside the starting gate and ready to charge forward.

We then encountered the first obstacle in the process which, in effect, prevented the starting gate from opening and the race became more like the Grand National with all its hurdles than the Derby. Our friends in The Church Central Offices wanted further assurances from Presbytery that permission to Call for Guernsey would still be a priority when Minister numbers are reduced within the Presbytery. Despite many letters of reassurance and phone calls, the committee at “121” are required to carry out due diligence and challenge the Presbytery’s decision. It is right that they should do so, though frustrating for those of us closely involved in the process.

These challenges are continuing. However, like the horse race I described, I feel that the discernment of God’s will and our prayers, certainly will lead us all to better preparation and be certain that we are preparing the winning horse. We shall not give up, we will persevere and together we will get there.

We need to remember that our timeframes are often not God’s time frames and, while we are desperate to move things along, God has a plan for Guernsey and for the Presbytery and things will happen in His time and not that of ourselves or 121.

I would ask you to continue to hold the Nominating Committee and the Presbytery Planning Committee in your prayers and, I am certain that through the love and will of God, there will be rejoicing to come as we pass that winning post and Call a new minister to Guernsey St Andrews in the Grange.



As we enter the Advent season and await the arrival of our new born King once again, we see hope in the birth of the Christ Child. May we all know the Hope, Peace and Love that following Christ brings to us all, our families, our communities and our everyday life.

Merry Christmas

Alistair

# StAG News

## Safeguarding

George who has served as our Safeguarding Officer since taking over from Dick in Spring 2017 has decided to step down from the role and his responsibilities have been transferred to Ethel.

At the Kirk Session meeting on 21st November, the Interim Moderator thanked George for his service and told the meeting that the poster on the noticeboard would be updated with the required details.

## Bereavement Service



On Sunday 28th November, we gathered in the afternoon for a Service of Bereavement and Memories. During the service, we lit the first Advent candle, Neil sang two solos and read the Roll of Remembrance as Hilary lit 32 candles lining the Communion table, one for each person on the Roll.

*We will remember them.*



No armoured car to greet us on arrival at church for this year's Remembrance Service but a magnificent display of poppies in the Sanctuary reminiscent of the one created at the Tower of London in 2014 with 888,246 poppies, one for each life lost in the First World War. The service, led by the worship team, included a solo based on John MacRae's, "In Flanders Fields," and readings from Moina Michael's, "We Shall Keep The Faith," Major Malcolm Boyd's, "If I Should Never See The Moon Again," and a reflection on "Some Corner Of A Foreign Field," by David Mace.

A retiring collection raised £250 for The Royal British Legion



## *Charities Committee*

The Convenor of the Charities Committee tells us that some members of the congregation are collecting their change in jars in anticipation of next year's Lent Appeal which will, doubtless, be upon us before we know it! A gentle reminder that "Sally's Boxes" are still available in the Narthex. Please help yourselves if you want to free up your jars for the marmalade making season which seems to get earlier as the years go by!

Advent is another time of year when we support a number of charities and we will be collecting tree gifts of biscuits, chocolates and money for fuel vouchers for Guernsey Welfare at our Nativity Service on December 12th, and, then as usual, there will be a raffle in aid of the Salvation Army Christmas Lunch at our Christmas lunch.

It has been customary to donate the collections from our Christmas services to The Priaulx Premature Baby Foundation but, as the Foundation has been a major beneficiary of this year's Swimathon, it has been decided to support Home Start which offers friendship and practical advice to families with young children who need support.



## *Nativity Service and Christmas Lunch*

Instead of the usual Nativity Service last year, we had a Musical Christmas with a miscellany of reflections, readings, solos, and a duet. This year, we are reverting to a more traditional format for our Nativity but with a difference! What's the difference? Why not come along and find out! Rehearsals are well under way and it is looking very promising.

After the service, we will be heading off to Driftwood at Perelle for our Congregational lunch. If you haven't signed up there's still time ... just ... as names and menu choices have to be in by Sunday 5th December! The cost of the lunch is £24 for adults and there is a special children's menu priced at £5.95 for those under 12. Donations of prizes for the raffle will be welcome even if you are unable to join us for lunch!

## *Diary date*

Plans are in hand for a Soup and Sweet lunch after the service on Sunday 13th February. More details in the next issue.

## *From the Editor*

A few weeks ago, we were reminded that New Year in the Christian Church is not the first day in January but it is, in fact, the beginning of Advent that heralds the end of one year and the beginning of the next. Having just lit our first Advent candle as this issue goes to the printer, we have the opportunity, once more, to reflect on the year that has gone and look forward to the one that lies ahead.

At this time last year, we were just coming to terms with the sad news that David had accepted a call to St Andrew's in Fife and that St Andrew's in the Grange would be in "vacancy" again. Little did we know how complex it would become to fill a vacancy as a result of decisions taken at the General Assembly. We have an update from Alistair (p 2 ) and would like to thank him and his colleagues in the Presbytery for their untiring efforts on our behalf.

We were extremely fortunate, however, to be able to celebrate Christmas normally, probably the only Church of Scotland congregation in the British Isles that could. Then, not long afterwards, we were back into "lockdown" and your editor

found himself editing videos of services as well as producing a "digital" maga-



zine. The remarkably swift response by our Contingency Authority did mean that restrictions were short lived and it was back to business as usual.

We bade farewell to David and Grace on Easter Day. Since then, everyone has pulled together with a wide range of imaginative worship and social events for which we are indebted and immensely grateful to the Worship Team, Alistair, Sandy, visiting preachers and the Friends and Fellowship Team led by Ethel.

As you will see from the calendar (p14) we have a very busy Advent Season ahead of us and there should be something for everyone. Plans are also afoot to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the construction of our building by the Presbyterian Church and its subsequent transfer to the Church of Scotland 50 years ago.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*Ed*

## **Christmas and St Luke's Gospel**

It is to St Luke's wonderful gospel that many Christians turn as the year draws to a close and Christmas approaches, for it is to St Luke that we owe the fullest account of the nativity.

Luke alone tells us the story of Mary and the angel's visit to her, and has thus given the Church the wonderful Magnificat of Mary.

Luke alone tells us the story of Simeon's hymn of praise, thus giving us the wonderful Nunc Dimittis.

Luke alone tells us the story of how the angels appeared to the shepherds and how the shepherds then visited the infant Jesus.

So – imagine Christmas cards and nativity scenes every year without the shepherds arriving to visit baby Jesus. Imagine school nativity plays without our children dressed as shepherds or sheep.

So – thank you, Luke!

What makes it so amazing is that Luke was not a Jew! The man who wrote the fullest nativity story, and indeed more of the New Testament than any other single person, was a Gentile!



### **A new Bible for all your family**

In partnership with Youth for Christ and several other family-focussed organisations, the Bible Society has created an edition of the Bible specifically designed for families.

*The Good News Bible – Family Edition* has plenty of features to help each member of the family engage with the Bible at their own pace.

The Bible Society says: “We know that doing Bible reading as a group can be difficult, so we have designed this new Bible to be a resource that encourages families to respond creatively to the text, whilst supporting individual preferences for engaging.

Based on the five themes of THINK, CHAT, DO, CREATE and WATCH, the Bible contains “plenty of interactions” to suit every member of a family.

The aim is to allow families “to journey through the Bible together”, and in the process come closer to God, and to each other.

Find out more at: [biblesociety.org.uk/gnbfamily](http://biblesociety.org.uk/gnbfamily)



## BEYOND OUR SHORES

This time last year, we joined Father Christmas on his annual circumnavigation of the globe and what did we see as we looked down at the world “Beyond Our Shores?” Persecution, poverty, starvation and unimaginable natural disasters which, despite the Herculean efforts of charities and aid agencies, are still with us. In West and Central Africa, for example, 138,000 homes have been destroyed by flooding whereas Somalia and Madagascar on the Eastern side of Africa are in the grip of severe drought.

In their Christmas letter, Barnabas Fund describe an elderly lady in Madagascar who wondered why her younger relatives had not turned up for their regular monthly visit. As she had no way to contact them, she just had to wait for their next visit in a month’s time but to no avail. So she travelled by ox cart to their remote village, about 75 km away, only to discover that the whole family, the parents and three children, had all died from starvation just a few days earlier. It is estimated that 47% of children in Madagascar are suffering from malnutrition

Fortunately, as we look down from our sleigh, we will see some positive sights too. In Tanzania, we would spot two new houses built with the proceeds of our Lent Appeal. It is reassuring to know that two families will be celebrating Christmas in their new homes this year as Alison explains in her update.

She writes, “I am delighted to report that both the houses for which we raised money through our 2021 Lent Appeal are now finished and both families are safely installed. No more uncertainty over when a crumbling house would finally collapse or a shack made of twigs would leak in the rain. On behalf of Tumaini can I thank everyone for their generosity in providing two families with a safe and secure home and we wish them well for the future.”

On a much larger scale, some four and a half thousand families in Albania, Romania, Moldova and Montenegro will be given a totally unexpected Christmas gift thanks to Rotary Guernesians who have filled shoe boxes with goodies such as cuddly toys, balls, colouring pencils



and woolly hats for children and babies who would probably not have been receiving any presents this year. The boxes also include other items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, face clothes and soap which will undoubtedly be welcomed by their Mums and Dads but not quite so exciting for the youngsters!

The gap between Guernsey and many far off territories such as Sri Lanka, Haiti, Nepal, the Phillipines and, more recently, Calais and Greece, has been bridged by a local charity, Bridge2. Sadly after 16 years, its founder, Sarah Griffith, acknowledging that there is a time and a place for everything, has taken the difficult decision to close the charity at the end of the year.

## ... AND CLOSER TO HOME

Unfortunately, the recent surge in the number of Covid cases on the island has meant that some events have had to be postponed. One such event was the 2021 Community Awards ceremony which was due to be held on Tuesday 16th November and would have been attended by more than 200 people, some vulnerable and others representing charities that work with and provide essential services to people who are at risk.

A special article in the Guernsey Press on 10th November explained that The Community Awards celebrate local charities, organisations, groups, individuals and businesses who work to provide services to others in the Bailiwick and that the awards recognise best practice and commitment in the sector.

Two of this year's finalists are well known to us at St A's. Fiona Naftel, managing director of Les Cotils, chairwoman of Safer and vice chairwoman of Mind, has been nominated for the Outstanding Individual Achievement Award and Les Cotils itself has been nominated for the Charity of the Year Award.

We will have to wait a little longer to know who wins the awards but, whatever the outcome, it is a great honour to be chosen as a finalist.



## *A day, or two, in the life of the Moderator of the Presbytery of England*

When I agreed to be Moderator of Presbytery, I wasn't really sure of what I had signed up to do. Yes, of course, there were Presbytery meetings to moderate and services to lead but I certainly didn't think part of my duties included representing Lord Wallace, the Moderator of the General Assembly. However, much to my surprise, an email came through from his office asking me to do just that.

On Saturday October 9, Alan and I, therefore, attended a presentation in London given by CAP, Christians Against Poverty (capuk.org). They were celebrating 25 years of working with partner churches throughout the United Kingdom, and now in America, New Zealand and Canada, to bring hope to those living in debt and poverty. As they said, Poverty destroys lives; it breaks families apart and drives many to contemplate suicide.

Millions are living below the poverty line with crippling debt. CAP work to relieve the debt through practical help, alongside supportive church communities, lots of prayer **and by placing Jesus at the heart of all that they strive to do.** Tens of thousands of desperate people who found the strength to seek help are now free from debt but, more importantly, are now part of growing Christian communities and some of them are now involved within the organisation helping others.

I have to say both Alan and I were bowled over by the enthusiasm, welcome and dedication of all those involved in the CAP presentation. Their work is inspirational and making a real difference to people's lives. They know, also, that since the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 their work and services are more vital than ever.

At the conclusion of the meeting, we all walked to St Paul's for Evensong. The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury and the Patron of 'Christians Against Poverty', should have been leading the Service and, indeed, attending the meeting but he was in Nigeria. In his place, the Bishop of London gave the sermon.

Evensong at St Paul's can only be described as the icing on the cake.

The Cathedral was packed. We sat right under the dome with a fantastic view of the choir and those conducting the service. The singing was truly spine tingling. The choir was great but it was the congregation, in a packed St Paul's, singing their heart out in such a beautiful setting that is something I shall remember for a long time.

The following weekend, we were back in London for the Presbytery meeting at London: Crown Court. I led the service, which for me felt strange facing forty people, all wearing masks and socially distanced. Alan was the star of the show. He had been nervous beforehand knowing that he was to play on the newly refurbished organ that had cost £250,000 to repair. If he was nervous before we started, he was made doubly so because the Treasurer had said to him, "You won't break it will you?" No pressure then! We had both wondered what the singing would be like because of the masks but we shouldn't have worried. I think maybe the choice of hymns, definitely the playing and the sheer joy of singing together again in church was, for me, very special. The congregation must have thought so too because they stayed on at the end of the service to listen to Alan. He got a round of applause something that doesn't normally happen. Every time I looked across at him during the meeting that followed, he had a big grin on his face.

November is already busy with a Local Church Review, more meetings and dinner at Lambeth Palace with the Archbishop but I will leave that for the next issue of the magazine.

Hilary

*With organists and remembrance in mind ....*

Local newspapers advertising church services don't always get it quite right. Such as the local paper advertising a Remembrance Day service, which should have printed: *There will be a parade of uniformed organisations.*

Instead, they printed: *There will be a parade of uninformed organists.*

*And on another occasion .....*

We will remember those killed and injured in conflicts during our morning service.





# Christmas Wordsearch



Christmas is nearly here! Two thousand years ago, the Jews were longing for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament had promised that when He came, He would preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, comfort all who mourn and to bestow on His people a crown of beauty instead of ashes. Jesus did all those things. He was and is the Son of God, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father. Whoever believes in Him will have the best gift of all – His Spirit within them, which gives them eternal life.

- Messiah      Beauty
- Broken       Ashes
- Heart        Son
- Freedom     God
- Darkness    Jesus
  
- Favour       Seen
- Prisoners    Father
- Comfort     Whoever
- Mourn        longing
- Bestow       thousand
- Crown



## Smile lines ....

Answers on P 15

A recent letter to The Times newspaper headed "Go with the flow" told of a child's first visit to a bonfire party. When given a sparkler, he asked, "Do I have to put it up my nose, Mummy?"

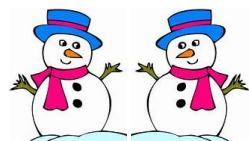


## Santa

Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

## Snowmen

Two snowmen were standing next to each other. One said to the other: "Can you smell carrots?"



## 25<sup>th</sup> December: We three kings of Orient are... what?

“A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey, in. The way’s deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, in *solstitio brumali*, the very dead of winter.” (TS Eliot)



It was 1622, and the Bishop of Winchester, Launcelot Andrews, was preaching a magnificent sermon to King James I. Reckoned one of the best preachers ever, Launcelot Andrews’ words were later taken up by T S Eliot and transformed into his wonderful poem ‘The Journey of the Magi’.

What a vivid picture – we can see it all! The camels’ breath steaming in the night air as the kings, in their gorgeous robes of silk and cloth-of-gold, and clutching their precious gifts, kneel to adore the baby in the manger.

Yet, the Bible does not give us as much detail as some people think. Tradition down the centuries has added a great deal more. For instance, we know from St Matthew that the magi were ‘wise’, or learned men of some sort, but we do not know if they were kings or not. The Bible tells us there were several; tradition has decided upon three, and even named them: Balthassar, Melchior, and Caspar (or Gaspar). But the Bible does tell us that the magi gave baby Jesus three highly symbolic gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Gold stands for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh for anointing – anticipating His death.

### Christmas presents

Mother decided that ten-year old Cathy should be given something ‘practical’ for Christmas. “Suppose we open a savings account for you?” she suggested. Cathy was delighted.



“It’s your account, darling,” mother said as they arrived at the bank, “so you fill out the application.”

Cathy was doing fine until she came to the space for ‘Name of your former bank.’ After a slight hesitation, she put down ‘Piggy’.



# Church Calendar



## December

Sunday	12	10.30	Christmas Nativity Service with Baptism
Sunday	19	10.30	Service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas-tide
Friday	24	16.30	The Sweet Story of Christmas
		21.00	Christmas Eve Service
Saturday	25	10.30	Christmas Morning Family Service
Sunday	26	10.30	Service of Readings and Carols for Christmas-tide

## January

Sunday	2	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	9	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion*
Sunday	16	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	23	10.30	Morning Worship
Sunday	30	10.30	Morning Worship
		18.30	Evening Service

## February

Sunday	6	10.30	Morning Worship with Holy Communion
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**\*NB** Please note that the Communion Service in January will be on the second Sunday and not the first Sunday as usual.

The services on December 12th and January 9th will be led by our Interim Moderator, Rev Alistair Cumming, and on February 6th by Prof Rev Dr Paul Middleton.

Prof Middleton serves with Hilary on the Presbytery Planning Team and will be taking over from her as Moderator of Presbytery in February. His “day job” is Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at the University of Chester but, in addition to this, he is an active member of the Society of Biblical Literature, Secretary of the European Association of Biblical Studies and Information Officer for the British New Testament Society. As if that isn’t enough, he makes regular contributions to radio, television and print media on a wide range of topics.



## Church Register

No new entries



## Meet & Greet

## Sunday Readers



### December

- 12 Amanda & Steven
- 19 Hilary & Audrey
- 26 Jo & Iain

- Sally
- Christmas
- Christmas

### January

- 2 Beth & Emily
- 9 Eleanor & Niall
- 16 Andrea & Robert
- 23 Sally & Stuart
- 30 Charmaine & George

- Fiona
- Stuart
- Neil
- Hunter
- Alan

### February

- 6 Gay & Pete

- Ethel



## Pause for thought...

God isn't looking for perfect people. He is looking to perfect people. – *John Hileman*

Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car. – *Billy Sunday*

## Flower Rota December - February



### December

- 12 Christmas
- 19 Christmas
- 26 Christmas

### January

- 2 Christmas
- 9 Patricia
- 16 Christine
- 23 Sally
- 30 Andrea

### February

- 6 Deena
- 13 Edith
- 20 Elizabeth
- 27 Isobel



## Wordsearch . Answers

O	R	S	H	O	U	U	G	U	I	S	T
U	E	T	R	O	G	N	N	W	O	R	C
J	I	H	J	T	N	S	E	N	A	B	N
O	E	N	G	H	I	S	W	E	M	E	A
D	K	S	R	O	G	L	H	K	E	A	I
O	A	T	U	U	N	E	O	O	S	U	R
C	P	R	I	S	O	N	E	R	S	T	E
E	R	O	K	A	L	M	V	B	I	Y	H
H	N	F	E	N	S	E	E	N	A	R	T
S	G	M	O	D	E	E	R	F	H	A	A
R	U	O	V	A	F	S	E	H	S	A	F
E	R	C	D	S	B	E	S	T	O	W	M

### Monthly Coordinator:

December Carolyn

January Paul

February Carolyn

# Church of Scotland

## St Andrews in the Grange, Guernsey

### **Interim Moderator**

Rev Alistair Cumming

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

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

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

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

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

Session Clerk	Mr Neil Houston	Tel 07810
	<a href="mailto:Neil.Houston2812@gmail.com">Neil.Houston2812@gmail.com</a>	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
	<a href="mailto:amandajones.gsy@gmail.com">amandajones.gsy@gmail.com</a>	
Flower List Organiser	Mrs Carolyn Oxburgh	Tel 07781
		132699
Church Magazine	Dr Bill Harcus	Tel 263688
	<a href="mailto:billharcus@cwgsy.net">billharcus@cwgsy.net</a>	