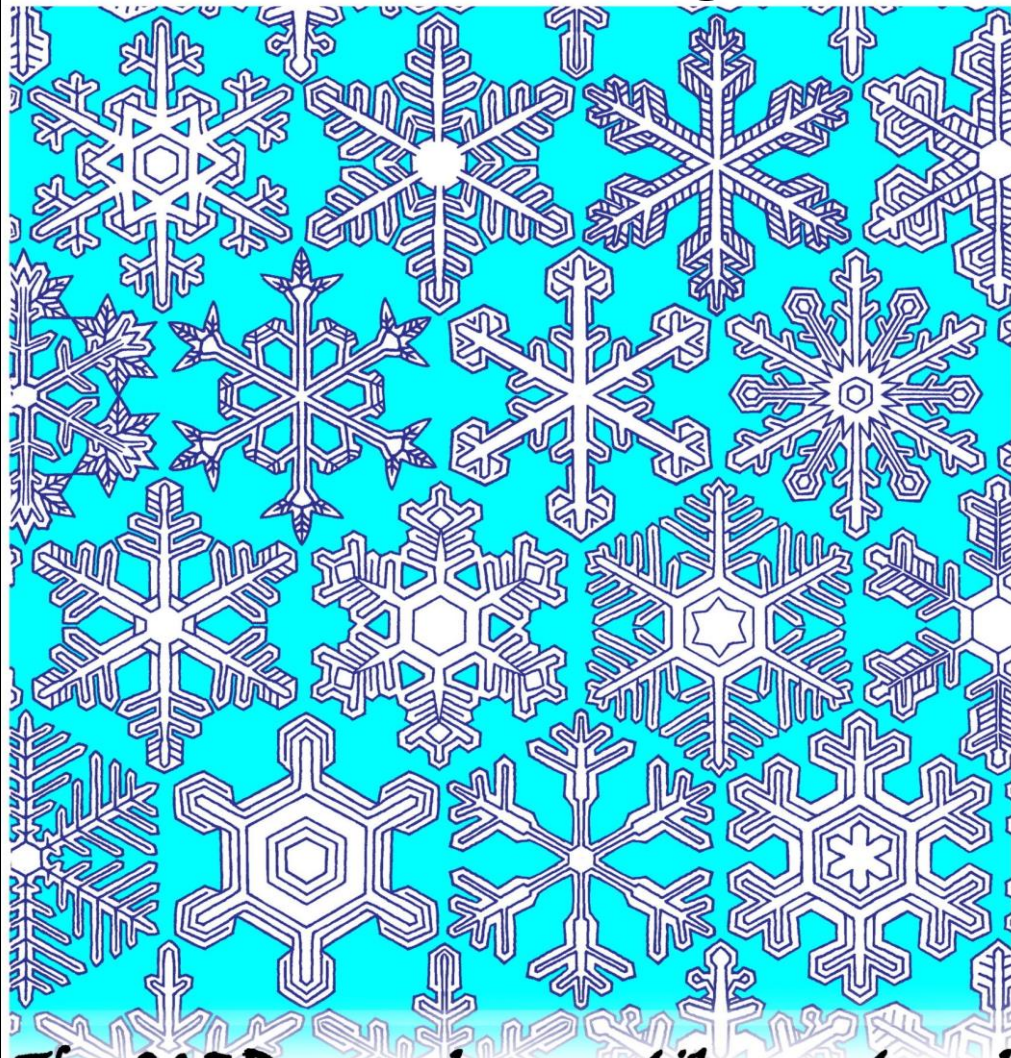




January
2022

Rushen Parish Magazine



*The LORD spreads snow like wool and
scatters frost like ashes. Ps 147:16*

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From the Editor

Dear Friends

On a Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock, come rain or shine, a group of parishioners meet in St Catherine's Church Hall. If the weather is good the group leave the hall and roam through Port Erin. The route they take varies from week to week. Approximately twenty people take part in the walk. There are some parishioners who, for a variety of reasons, do not join with those that roam, but still attend the hall for the refreshments provided, and for the fellowship during and after the event. The walk itself is organised to last for about an hour so the refreshments served usually begin at 11 o'clock. Should the weather be inclement the roamers still meet at the hall and tuck in to the refreshments then. We are indebted to Jim Dale for organising this very successful venture. Not only does it provide camaraderie during the walk and afterwards, but it also provides funds for the parish, as each participant is asked to make a contribution of £2 each week. We are also grateful to June Davies who contributes to the refreshments by providing scones and cakes. This also applies to the other members who provide goodies to eat. This is one of the many events that the PCC Social Committee arranges.

In May next year another Murder Mystery evening has been organised. This is an event where a group of actors will enact a situation where a murder, it could be more than one, takes place. The challenge to the teams who attend is to work out the murderer's identity, his/her motives and the clues that have led to their conclusion. To enable them to do this they are allowed to ask questions of the actors. Once these have been answered they are asked to enter their accusation, and details of the motives and clues, on a murder sheet which is provided. At the end there is a prize for the most clued up team. Of course it is better that you don't let other teams know of any of your suspicions and discoveries. At some point during the proceedings refreshments are served, these can be in the form of a hot pot supper or shepherd's pie to give you an example, there will also be a dessert. Once again parish funds benefit from your attendance. Tickets will be on sale during April.

Another event to look out for will be a quiz evening. At this we are hoping that you will come as a team of say six to eight people. Each team can make up a name such as 'Quizzers United' and together will answer questions on a number of subject areas. There will be a bonus round which will be available for teams to answer from the beginning until the break. During the break a fish and chip supper will be provided. The date has yet to be finalised but it will take place during the lighter evenings.

I have just outlined three of the events that will be taking pace either weekly, or at some time before the summer. The aim is to get as many of you as we can to enjoy church activities. Of course the annual concert season will be taking place during the summer months. Who knows what will be arranged during the autumn and winter months?

David

The Pathway to Net Zero Carbon



God has made us stewards of the Earth, but mankind is seriously damaging the environment by creating too much greenhouse gas, mainly CO₂. We add to these carbon emissions every time we switch on a light or heater or travel in a car. Recognising this, the Synod of the Church of England has set an ambitious target for net-zero emissions for 2030. They realised that this would be difficult and costly, but it is still the right thing to do.

As far as Rushen is concerned this means that all the energy used by our buildings needs to be clean by 2030. We simply must use only green electricity and stop burning oil in our central heating boilers. The first step was easy. Our PCC voted to switch to the Manx Utilities Green Tariff for all our electricity (which now mainly comes from UK windfarms).

Last year, Dr Henry Uniacke, the Diocesan Environmental Officer came to talk to the wardens and Joe and to visit and survey all our buildings to advise on the way forward. The bottom line is that for each church we need to replace the oil-fired boiler with some sort of electric heating, as well as reducing the energy consumption in any way possible (without making our churches cold and unwelcoming).

So, what are we doing now?

- Reducing demand – using LED light bulbs / controlling heating more closely / moving meetings to smaller rooms which are easier to heat / fitting draught excluders to doors / Having more joint services. By doing this now, we can reduce our carbon footprint and our costs now, before we even start talking or replacing boilers.
- Collect information – We are currently recording temperature and humidity in each of our buildings. This information will help us waste less in unnecessary heating over the winter months.
- Experiment with new types of electric heaters – Infrared heaters or under pew heaters and learn from our experience.
- When we plan any building work it should include new electric heating, that only heats the area (and the people) who need it, when they need it.
- Plan to replace the oldest, least efficient boilers first.
- Think creatively. Do we need to heat 4 churches to 18 degrees every Sunday? We might share buildings more in the winter. We could give out rugs and heated cushions to worshippers instead of expecting our churches to be as warm as our homes.
- Appoint Climate champion in each church. Someone on the spot to notice the lights left on, the cold draught, the warm church with nobody using it.

So don't be shy – Climate Champions don't have to be hardened Eco-warriors – just normal members of the congregation who believe that this is important. I would love to hear your ideas and see people getting excited about how we meet the Net Zero challenge

Peter Hayhurst (464949)



Ladies Working Party – St Mary's

Unfortunately, the number of Covid 19 cases, particularly in the south of the island, impacted on our December plans, causing the cancellation of many church events with which we would have been involved. We are however glad that Sunday Services continue to be held, and we were able to decorate the church on Dec 10th. Having just recovered himself, Peter had put up the tree

inside the church and decorated it, prior to our arrival. Huge thanks to all who helped us in any way, particularly to Sue B for the delicious mince pies and to Lesley for the mulled wine. We were all glad that both Peter and Gerry were able to join us, and we extend to them both our grateful thanks for all they do for us throughout the year.

With our love and very best wishes to everyone for good health and happiness in 2022.

Our next meeting will be on Jan 11th at 2.15pm in St Mary's Church Vestry.

Pat Thomson

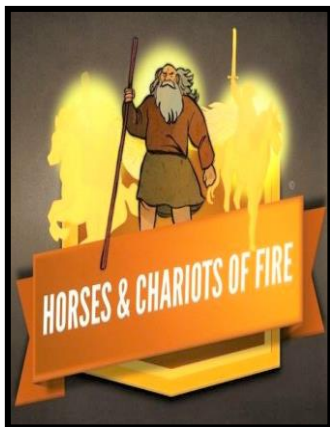
12th January: St Antony Pucci: poor, plain and tongue-tied

If you have nothing much going for you, Antony Pucci (1819-92) should be your patron saint. He came from nowhere – a peasant family in Tuscany. He went nowhere – he spent his life as a parish priest in the Tuscan city of Viareggio. He was unattractive to look at. He wasn't good with words – people found him awkward and shy.

So why do people still remember him today? Because Antony Pucci used the one gift he did have in the service of others. He was an excellent organiser, and he served his people brilliantly. His care for the sick in the epidemics of 1854 and 1866 was outstanding. He even set up the first seaside nursing homes for poorly children.

Antony Pucci used to say that organisation is the servant of charity, not its substitute. But he used his gift for organisation as a way of showing his charity, and for that he was loved.

So – if your family is nothing to shout about, if you wince when you look in the mirror in the morning, if you stand tongue-tied in most social situations, don't despair. Ask God to show you what gift He HAS given you, and use it in the service of others. And in giving to them, you will receive! It is when we lose our lives for His sake, in His service, that we truly find them.



There's more with us than with them!

*Editor: This series is about encouragement. Each month **Dr Herbert McGonigle** will take a Bible event and a historical anecdote to bring us a word of help and support in these difficult days. This is the first in the series, which will run for most of this year.*

We begin the New Year with a Bible event from 2 Kings and an anecdote from Birmingham: For a number of years, the king of Syria had tried to capture the prophet Elisha. (The story is found in 2 Kings 6:11-19). Elisha always knew what the Syrians were planning, and revealed their plans before they could be carried out. Finally, the Syrian armies surrounded Elisha in Dothan.

When Gehazi, Elisha's servant, woke up and saw the encircling Syrian armies, he was terrified. But Elisha prayed, 'Lord, open his eyes.' When Gehazi looked again, he could hardly believe what he saw. All round them were horses and chariots of fire. The armies of heaven were protecting them! And Elisha encouraged him. "Don't fear, there's more with us than with them!" Immediately the Syrians were struck with blindness and Elisha and Gehazi escaped.

Often, we need to ask the Lord to *open our eyes*. When our strength has failed and faith is weak, we're apt to think that God has forgotten us. But He hasn't! He is near and only our dimness of vision prevents us from seeing His great presence and power and provision. Fear not! Trust God! Believe His Word! There's more with us than with our enemy!

In the early 1950s a well-known department store in Birmingham, England, wanted to extend its premises. Close at hand was an ideal site but it belonged to the Quakers whose Meeting House had been there for well over 200 years. The department store wrote to the Quakers, offering to buy the site. They said, "We will give you a very good price for the land. In fact, we'll send you a blank cheque. Please fill in whatever sum of money you think appropriate, and we will honour it." Four weeks passed and there was no reply, then five weeks, then six weeks.

Finally, a letter arrived from the Quakers. It thanked the department store for their generous offer but declined to accept it. "Our Meeting House has been here for almost 250 years," they explained, "much longer than your store. We have no wish to sell our property. However, if you would agree to sell your site to us, we are very interested in buying it. We will give you a very good price for it. Just state your selling price and we will honour it." The letter was signed 'Cadburys.' The department store thought they were dealing with a small congregation of Quakers. Instead, they were dealing with the Cadburys' empire. Cadburys could have bought the department store twenty times over!

When our enemy the devil attacks us, by ourselves we are weak and feeble. But when Christ dwells in us by His Spirit, we are mighty! The devil is no longer attacking us; he is attacking the Captain of our salvation – and the devil cannot win! There's more with us than with him! As we go through 2022, be *encouraged*. With Christ we are more than conquerors!

(The Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle is a former Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology and Church History at Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, England.)



Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester

Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester from 1062 to 1095, occupies a unique place in British church history.

He was the last surviving pre-Conquest bishop, the first bishop to pay homage to William the Conqueror after the battle of Hastings, and one of the few Saxons to keep high office to the end of William's reign. On top of that, he seems to have been a truly good and holy man.

Wulfstan was born about 1008 at Long Itchington, Warwickshire. His uncle was Archbishop of York, and through his help, Wulfstan studied at the monasteries of Evesham and in Peterborough. Because of his Christian dedication, his superiors recommended him for the priesthood. Wulfstan was ordained in 1038 and joined a Benedictine monastery at Worcester.

Wulfstan was appointed prior of the monastery and from 1034 also served as the parish priest of Hawkesbury, Gloucestershire. He was made bishop of Worcester in 1062.

As a bishop, Wulfstan made some significant contributions to the English church. He had a passion for pastoral care and was the first English bishop to be known to have made a complete visitation of his diocese. He was a gifted administrator, increasing the effectiveness of his archdeacons.

He was highly influential in monastic reform, overseeing laws and canons to reform the role of the clergy.

He was a powerful preacher – with a great gift for explaining the teaching of Christianity. He encouraged a wider understanding of public penitence and taught against the many pagan customs throughout the land.

He had a strong social conscience, and soon became a bitter opponent of the slave trade. Together with Lanfranc, Wulfstan was mainly responsible for ending the slave trade in Bristol, and also for abolishing the slave trade between Worcester diocese and Ireland.

He had a passion for buildings, and founded Great Malvern Priory, as well as overseeing the large-scale rebuilding of Worcester Cathedral, Hereford Cathedral, and Tewkesbury Abbey.

Wulfstan died in January 1095, apparently during his daily ritual of washing the feet of 12 of his parishioners.



News from St Catherine's & Kirk Christ



We had all been looking forward to the Christmas season in our four churches with the Parish Carol Service at Kirk Christ, Commissioner's Carol Service at St Catherine's, the Christingle Service at St Catherine's, and Carols Candles and Cake at St Peter's, to name some of the activities that were planned. Unfortunately this dreadful virus forced us to cancel them as it was far better to be safe than sorry. Ordinary Christmas services will have taken place and we were so grateful to be able to continue with these. I am of course writing this report before the Christmas season so other events and perhaps services may have had to be cancelled, but hopefully not. I hope that you checked whether the service or event you hoped to attend was proceeding before venturing out during the cold weather.

I would like to take this opportunity in thanking everyone involved in the decorating of our two churches. Lots of good comments have come from people thankful for the effort taken in celebrating the Lord's birthday.

Finally I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe new year with our Lord's blessings.

Gerry Callister

God's fragrance – do people catch a whiff of it on you?

'...and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.' John 12:3

A story runs of how a lady was having tea outside a tea shop late one afternoon, when she became aware of a pleasant scent filling the air. She asked the waiter the source of the scent and was told that it came from the people passing by. He explained that they worked in a perfume factory down the street and were on their way home. When they left the factory, they always carried with them the fragrance that had permeated their clothes during their day's work.

As the perfume workers leave the factory full of the fragrance of where they have been, so we, as we leave our churches and chapels and wherever we spend time with God, are meant to carry the perfume of His presence with us. We are called to spread everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him (2 Corinthians 2:4). If we allow ourselves in worship to be permeated with Christ's love and the sweetness of His presence, then we will be able to take the Jesus in us out into the world.

Sudoku January 2022

			6				7	
		7			3	5		
3					7		4	
					2	6		
8	5						1	7
		9	3					
	9		5					3
		4	1			8		
	2				9			

Visitors

The minister came home after church one Sunday morning looking very satisfied.

"Many people in church?" asked his wife, bustling around the kitchen.

"Yes, and we had at least three strangers, though I didn't see them."

"Then how do you know?"

"Because there were three £10 notes in the collection plate."

December Sudoku Solution

3	5	1	8	2	7	6	9	4
9	6	8	1	4	5	3	2	7
2	4	7	9	6	3	8	5	1
4	9	6	3	5	8	7	1	2
5	7	2	4	1	6	9	8	3
1	8	3	2	7	9	5	4	6
7	2	9	5	3	1	4	6	8
6	1	5	7	8	4	2	3	9
8	3	4	6	9	2	1	7	5

December Crossword Solution

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

Resolution 2022

Faith Alive! For this we pray,
Acts of true kindness to display.
Sensitive to another's plight ~
May we accomplish what is right.
Help us believe, trust and obey.

Kept in the Holy Spirit's sway.

Faith Alive! for this we pray.

Let's cherish what is light and green ~

Our Mother-earth has set the scene.

Use her resourcefulness aright ~

Waste, greed, destruction put to flight.

Enough for all! be this our aim ~

Poverty's curse a losing game.

Faith Alive! for this we pray,

Generous actions to convey.

A loving, gentle attitude,

Where selfish thoughts do not intrude.

Communication will then be

Genuine Christianity.

*"Faith that doesn't show itself is no faith
at all – It is dead and useless."*

(James 2:17 The Living Bible)

Margaret Couper

The New Year

If we put our hand in God's hand
As we enter this New Year
Not knowing what the future holds
But that our Friend is near

We shall not fear what lies ahead
If He is by our side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If He will be our guide.

The Sinless One from heaven came
To dwell with us on earth,
He sought and bought us with His blood
And offered us new birth.

Now as we travel through this year
He knows the things He's planned,
So let us trust and know just this -
Our times are in His hands.

Megan Carter

The music you love best – and when you love it

If you enjoy listening to music, ever notice how the kind of music that you like changes throughout the day? According to research published in the journal Royal Society Open Science, our tastes over just one day will vary in preference to a perceived tempo, loudness, bounciness, and danceability.

In late morning, we tend to go for loudness and energy in our music. By afternoon, the tempo begins to increase, and the beat and danceability also increase.

The highest tempo is preferred in the evening, between 8pm and 11pm. After that, we tend to prefer softer, slower music. But by 4am, the picture is muddled, as "the handful of people awake at this hour are often up to very different activities."

According to a scientist at Aarhus University in Denmark, it all seems to point "to there being a circadian rhythm, even in our preference for music."

BBC Journalism and the Truth



Truth is under attack like never before, BBC director general Tim Davie told a special church service in London, attended by the Duchess of Cornwall.

Speaking at the annual commemorative service for journalists, held at St Bride's, Fleet Street – the journalists' church – Tim Davie declared: "In the disinformation age, truth is under assault like never before. Those who stand up for it most

strongly have never been more targeted. "He welcomed the recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize to journalists, Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov, "for their fight for freedom of expression" in the Philippines and Russia.

Mr Davie explained: "We know that the physical risks faced by journalists no longer come solely from the front line. Reporters all around the world face escalating dangers, increasing levels of harassment, and ever more subtle modes of intimidation."

He said that in March, the BBC's Beijing correspondent, John Sudworth, had been forced to leave China as "a result of pressure and threats from the authorities." Over the summer, the BBC's Moscow correspondent, Sarah Rainsford, had been expelled from Russia after more than 20 years of reporting. These moves, he said, "were almost unthinkable just a few years ago."

Tim Davie told the service that journalists share key beliefs: "that truth is the foundation of democracy, that power must be held to account, that those who abuse that power must be exposed, and those who are the victims of that abuse must be given a voice."

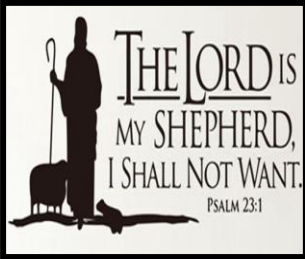
He added: "More than anything else, what truly brings us together as a family is the compassion and care we have for our colleagues in peril right around the world, and for their families."

Canon Alison Joyce, Rector of St Bride's said: "The world has never been in greater need of good journalism, and we have never had more occasion to be reminded of the human cost of good journalism than we have today.

"It is our privilege to honour the memories of all those journalists; photographers; film crew; and their support staff, and all who work freelance in the industry, who have lost their lives this past year and to remember in our prayers those who continue to work in situations of immense personal risk in the pursuit of truth.

Revd Peter Crumpler

The Reality of Faith in God



Editor: The Rev Dr Herbert McGonigle, a former Senior Lecturer in Historical Theology, looks to Psalm 23 as the New Year begins...

As we enter this New Year of 2022 even the most devoted Christians can't ignore the uncertainties we face. The whole world was caught up in the persistent spread of Coronavirus. It is shaking national economies and causing untold stress and

harm. Many people fear that their lives and families will never be the same again.

Almost daily the news has been gloomy and economic experts say the situation is the worst in living memory. How do we, as Christians, react to all this? What do we trust in? Has God something to say to us in these days?

An answer may be found in a well-loved passage from the Bible – Psalm 23: 'The Lord is my shepherd ...He restores my soul ...he leads me ...I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

But in the middle of this lovely psalm there are three reminders that Christians are NOT exempt from the realities of life. The psalmist speaks of 'the paths of righteousness', 'the valley of the shadow' and 'the presence of my enemies.'

The mention of 'the paths of righteousness' is a reminder that we are called to love the Lord and live our lives in *righteousness*. The wonderful promises in this psalm come with a condition; they are given to those who determine by God's grace to live righteously. And that must be our first resolution for 2022.

The 'valley of the shadow' may refer to death, but generally the reference here is wider. It means all those occasions when fear and sorrow and heartbreak and loss come to even the best Christians.

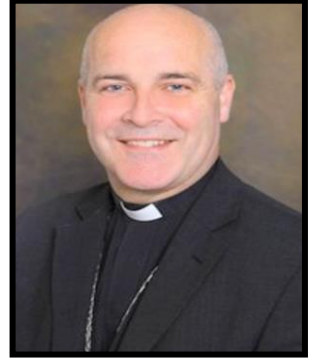
Then there are our 'enemies.' Originally that probably meant those wanting to kill the psalmist. For us it may be the seduction of old temptations, the fears that paralyse us and the memories of sins that still haunt us.

The psalmist is a realist! As Christians we live our lives in the real world! We are not floating on cloud nine; we are rooted in a fallen world and surrounded by temptations and sins and infirmities. Any day, pain, an incurable disease, even death itself, may come to us or to those we love. How do we face these realities?

Psalm 23 has the answer. If we, by God's grace, will walk in 'the paths of righteousness,' then all the promises are ours! The Lord will be our Shepherd. He will lead us by the still waters; He will restore our souls, prepare a table for us in the wilderness, protect and guide us with His rod and staff and, at the end, bring us into the house of the Lord forever. Let's make Psalm 23 our charter of faith for 2022!



**What the
Archbishops say
about the
Church of England**



The current state of the Church of England – and its future – was the subject of the joint presidential address to the recent General Synod, delivered by both the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, considered the historical context: “Numerically, the number of regular church goers has shrunk in absolute terms every year since around 1952, 70 years next year. As a percentage of the population of England, the Church of England was at its high point, when there were accurate records, in the 1851 census when we were about 20% of the population. We are today a little less than 2% of the population.”

But the picture is not entirely bleak. “The reality is that a huge amount of work is being done at every point of this extraordinary Church for England ... People talk too easily of decline but miss the energy that is spurring us on. “Internally, we will be looking at reforms and changes aimed at focussing resources where they are most needed, at enabling support for anywhere and everywhere that shows signs of the blessing of the Holy Spirit... “We have gone through the greatest peacetime challenge in 400 years and emerged forging ahead. Effectiveness is being transformed, training is being rethought to work well in the very different patterns of population that we see today, and even more different that we see in the future.

“The way in which dioceses work together and share resources is being challenged and will change slowly and gently and consensually. “Our failures in safeguarding, in racism, in the way we treat those with disabilities ... are being tackled... We are a church that can admit it is wrong, say sorry and try – at least try – to do better.” As for externally the church is not only still educating a million young people across the UK, but also planting churches in new places, and putting fresh resources into traditional parishes.

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell, continued the theme.

“Our vision and strategy is for growth. It is not about managing decline gracefully. We want the Church of England to grow. Let us declare the good news of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and do everything we can to align all our resources, to make that happen in our local churches, whatever that local church is.

All in the month of January



150 years ago, on 14th Jan 1872 Greyfriars Bobby, a Scottish Skye terrier dog died. He was famous for having guarded his master's grave in Edinburgh for 14 years.

100 years ago, on 5th Jan 1922 Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Irish-born British Antarctic explorer, died of a heart attack in South Georgia. He had led three British expeditions to the Antarctic. **Also on 16th Jan 1922**, Ralph Vaughan Williams' *A Pastoral Symphony* was performed for the first time, in London.

80 years ago, on 8th Jan 1942 Stephen Hawking, theoretical physicist and cosmologist was born. Author of *A Brief History of Time*, he suffered from motor neurone disease for more than 50 years and communicated from his wheelchair via a speech synthesizer. (Died 2018.) **Also on 17th Jan 1942** Muhammad Ali (previously Cassius Clay), American heavyweight boxing champion, was born. One of the most significant sports figures of the 20th century. Also on 29th Jan 1942 the BBC Radio Show *Desert Island Discs* was first broadcast. It is Britain's longest running radio show, and the world's longest running weekly factual radio programme.

75 years ago, on 1st Jan 1947 the UK's coal industry was nationalised when the Coal Industry Nationalisation Act 1946 came into effect. The industry was run by the National Coal Board. It was renamed the British Coal Corporation in 1987 and was subsequently privatised.

70 years ago, on 1st Jan 1952 the nuclear reactors at Windscale (now Sellafield) in Cumbria began producing enriched plutonium for use in Britain's first atomic bomb.

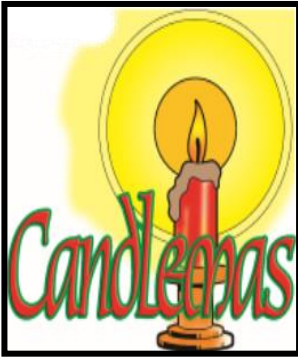
50 years ago, from 9th Jan to 28th Feb 1972 British miners staged a major strike over pay. This led to power shortages, and a state of emergency was declared on 9th Feb. The miners returned to work when the National Union of Mineworkers accepted an improved pay offer. **Also on 30th Jan 1972** Bloody Sunday occurred in Northern Ireland. British paratroopers opened fire on civil rights demonstrators in Londonderry, killing 13 people (plus another who died later) and injuring many others.

40 years ago, on 14th Jan 1982 Mark Thatcher, son of the British Prime Minister, was found safe and well after going missing in the Sahara Desert for six days while competing in the Paris-Dakar rally.

25 years ago, on 15th Jan 1997 Princess Diana walked through a minefield in Angola, visited victims, and called for an international ban on landmines.

20 years ago, on 31st Jan 2002, the Larsen B Ice Shelf in Antarctica began to collapse. The whole 3,265 sq. km structure disintegrated over the next 35 days.

Reflected Faith - Taking Down Christmas



Happy New Year!

January is, of course, the time to take down the decorations and put them away for next year. In many churches however, the Crib scene is left up until the beginning of February - the Feast of Candlemas. That celebrates the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

It's yet another moment of 'illumination,' and has a number of meanings.

The date 'set' for Candlemas is the 2nd February each year and it marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. So, from that date onwards the days begin to get longer and the nights shorter.

It's the day when we celebrate Mary and Joseph taking their baby, Jesus, to the Temple. The custom was set down in Leviticus chapter 12, where the parents presented the child to the Lord, and received a blessing from the priests. It was a picture of the sacrifice of the first-born son, giving him to the Lord.

Any ideas on a third meaning? (*Answer next month.*)

As you take down your decorations, think about where you will store them ready for use next Christmas – and also, how carefully you will put them away.

Will the string of lights be a tangled mess of knots when you take them out of their wrappings or will you be able to hang them straight on the tree? One of the biggest concerns is where to put the figure of baby Jesus. It's usually so small in a Crib Set that it is easily lost and then the Crib Set rather loses its meaning!

This month

Have a think about where you put Jesus after Christmas. Not the figure but the 'real' person. He's easily left in a virtual crib as a baby in our minds, just like the wooden or plastic figure in our attics or under the stairs. If we keep Him as that lovely sweet-smelling-cute baby we miss out on His teaching and miracles, we will fail to understand and engage with His massive love and compassion for each of us on the cross – and most importantly His resurrection. Death is not the end.

Not for Him.

Not for us.

And not for our loved ones.

Rev Dr Jo White

From the Registers

Funerals November 2021:

4 th November	Robert D Ryan	Kirk Christ	Service & Crem.
5 th November	Ronald B Cowden	Kirk Christ	Service & Burial
16 th November	Nicholas Bridge	RBG	Ashes
16 th November	Donald E Williams	RBG	Ashes
25 th November	Pauline S Corkill		Crematorium

(RBG Rushen Burial Ground)

Baptism November 2021:

7 th November	Callie Jade Fletcher	St Catherine's
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With Epiphany in mind...

I was telling my three boys the story of the Nativity and how the Wise Men brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh for the infant Jesus. Clearly giving it a lot of thought, my six-year-old observed, "Mum, a Wise Woman would have brought nappies."

Safeguarding

The Parish of Rushen is committed to the safeguarding, nurture and care of **everyone** within our church community. If you, or someone you know, are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk or has been harmed, or are concerned about the behaviour of someone towards children or vulnerable adults, please contact:

Rushen Parish Safeguarding Officer, Claire Jennings (Tel. 830850)

The **Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser** has now been appointed. For more details contact the diocese.

A copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy is available on the Diocesan website: http://www.sodorandman.im/safeguarding_inclusion



Rushen Mothers' Union



Storm Barra arrived on the day of the Diocesan Mothers' Union Advent Service, Dec 7th, and all but essential travel was recommended. It was a wild day, and we were relieved that those of our members who had previously planned to go, did not! At the service, thank you was said to out-going president Mrs Gail Eagles, and welcome to incoming president Revd Jeanette Hamer.

Having taken the decision to cancel our branch party on Dec 13th, (due to covid 19), we are looking forward to seeing everyone at our first meeting in 2022, on Jan 10th at 2pm in St Catherine's Hall. Mrs Elizabeth Sheen will be in the chair and will introduce a speaker from the charity Crossroads. As always, guests will be very welcome.

Forthcoming date: Lady Day Service on 25th March 2022 at 2.30pm in the Cathedral, when Bishop Peter will preside, and York Provincial President June Houghton will preach.

With grateful thanks to Gerry for all he does for us, and with love and very best wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy 2022.

Pat Thomson

Animals vanishing from literature as well as nature

How many works of literature still contain references to animals? A study of 16,000 works, written between 1705 and 1969, and including books such as Goethe's Faust and Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, has found that even in literature, animals are fading towards extinction.

Professors at Leipzig's Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research found that 1830 was the high point for biodiversity in literature. They believe that the steady decline since then is due to a "consequence of humans increasing alienation from nature."

Authors such as William Makepeace Thackeray and Robert Louis Stevenson were found to have the richest vocabulary when referring to nature. But after 1830, there was a marked decline in the description of animals, with usually only basic words like 'horse' or 'dog' to be found. After 1955, there is an especially sudden decline in references to nature, and especially any linguistic richness.

God in the Arts



*Editor: The **Revd Michael Burgess** continues his series on **God in the Arts** with a famous masterpiece of the **Nativity** by Botticelli.*

What hope, at the turning of the year?

This month's painting was painted in Italy at a time when there was similar speculation about the end of the world. A mesmerising priest called Savonarola had preached in Florence about portents of this end time, and the final battle that would take place. His own end was gruesome and horrific as the church authorities silenced his voice, but his influence lingered on among people. Nowhere more so than in Botticelli, who painted this 'Mystic Nativity' in 1500, two years after Savonarola's death.

At first glance, it looks a typical Epiphany scene, for the wise men are shown to the stable by an angel. But everything is basic and rudimentary. The wise men do not wear luxurious clothing, they have no servants, they bear no gifts. The stable is just a thatched roof propped against the mouth of the cave, with Joseph oddly hunched at one side. The babe kicks a leg into the air as Mary and the animals watch on, looking from the inside of the cave.

But then look above the scene. There is a long inscription from Botticelli: it announces that he painted this Nativity at the end of 1500, to provide a key to the violent and confused times in which he lived. At the bottom little demons scramble back to the underworld, and those who have been through the battle of life are comforted by angels, and there are more angels engaged in an ecstatic dance above the stable with olive branches and scrolls in their hands. At the heart of it all is the simple nativity scene.

Botticelli seems to be making a heartfelt statement about his faith in the light of all that he had experienced and seen around him: his distress at the suffering war had brought, and his sense of doom that war was a portent of worse things to come. But the painting also shows his calm resignation that as one century turned into another, and one year into another, there is a birth which can be the pivot of that turning. A birth which is a sign of a future, a sign of new life, a sign of love. We can come through, he says, if we realise where our hope and trust should be placed - not in the pursuit of power which leads to death and destruction, but in a birth that leads ultimately to a heaven of victory and dancing and celebration.

The painting is not about winter, it is about spring: a season of hope and new life. We can draw the curtains across this nativity scene and shut out the light and springtime. But then, says Botticelli, chaos and war and greed will flourish. Go to the stable with the wise men, open the curtains, invite the Christ-Child in, and all will be transformed.

Children's Page

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

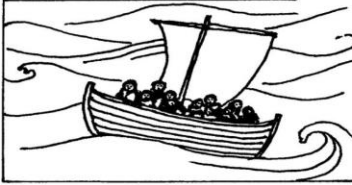
It can be read in the Bible in
Mt 14:13-22, Mk 6:45-52, Jn 5:16-21

After Jesus had fed the crowd, he sent his disciples off in their boat and the crowd away. He went up the mountain to pray.

Jesus spent the evening
with his father God.



A strong wind started to
toss the boat around.



They tried rowing
but could make no
headway.



Not long before morning they
saw someone walking past
them on the water.



They thought it was a
ghost and screamed!



Don't be afraid! It's me,
Jesus.



Lord, if it's really you,
tell me to come to you!



Peter started walking
towards Jesus...



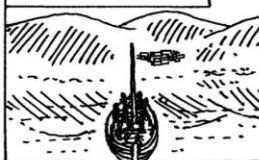
he saw how strong the wind
was and took fright. He
began to sink!



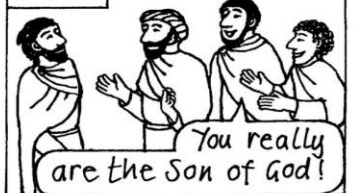
Jesus pulled Peter up.



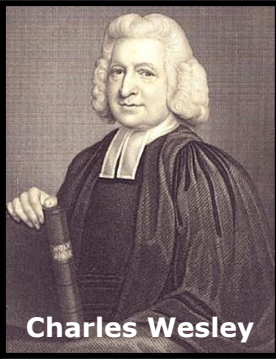
As Jesus and Peter
got into the boat the
wind died down.



The disciples worshipped
Jesus.



The Story Behind the Hymn



Charles Wesley

And Can It Be That I Should Gain

And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood!
Died he for me? who caused his pain!
For me? who him to death pursued?
*Amazing love! How can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?*
Repeat

'Tis mystery all: th' Immortal dies!
Who can explore his strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
*'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore;
let angel minds inquire no more.*
Repeat

He left his Father's throne above
(so free, so infinite his grace!),
emptied himself of all but love,
and bled for Adam's helpless race.
*'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
for O my God, it found out me!*
Repeat

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
*my chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.*
Repeat

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in him, is mine;
alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
*Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ my own.*
Repeat

"And Can It Be That I Should Gain" is perhaps one of the most joyfully poignant hymns penned by Charles Wesley. On Whitsunday 21st May 1738, three days before his brother John experienced his heart "strangely warmed," Charles was convalescing in the home of John Bray, a poor mechanic, when he heard a voice saying, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." The voice was most likely Mr. Bray's sister who felt commanded to say these words in a dream.

The text of the hymn is fairly straightforward. Wesley opens with an exclamation, "And can it be that I should gain an interest in my Saviour's blood!" These words are followed by a rhetorical question, "Died he for me — who caused his pain?" Both are typical of Charles's poetic style. The imagery he uses for each verse is poignant and, particularly in the case of verse four, is reminiscent of both Peter's and Paul's miraculous release from prison as told in Acts 12 and 16, respectively. The first verse expresses wonder and amazement at the redemptive act of God and his offering of free grace to all, even those "who caused his pain." This wonder is further emphasised by the repeated phrase "For me" in lines three and four.

The second verse continues this sense of awe with its opening line, "'Tis mystery all: th' Immortal dies!" Here, Charles captures the paradox of the Paschal Mystery (the redemptive death and resurrection of Christ), saying that even the chief of the angels cannot fathom the depth of this love divine. In verse three, Wesley speaks of the incarnation, echoing Philippians 2:6-8 in lines three and four, "Emptied himself of all but Love, and bled for Adam's helpless race." Verse four compares humanity's newfound freedom from sin to that of Peter's miraculous release from prison. Wesley borrows a line from a popular story of romantic fiction from his day, Eloisa to Abelard, by Alexander Pope, "Thine eye diffused a quickening ray," to symbolise God's love and power coming down to release the captives. In verse five, Wesley speaks of the present justification we now have in Christ and our future glorification in the life to come. The first line, "No condemnation now I dread," alludes to Romans 8:1, "Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

The hymn first appeared in John Wesley's 1739 hymnal, *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. Since its first publication, it has been included in most hymnals.

Rushen Parish Prayer Diary



Dear Father, as we stand together on the threshold of a new year, we ask that you watch over us in the year ahead; guide us when we falter; and re-direct us when we lose our way. But above all, pour down on the whole world Your Love and Peace, so that all may know that you are our Father, and Lord of all. Amen



January 2022

This is your invitation to pray day by day for:

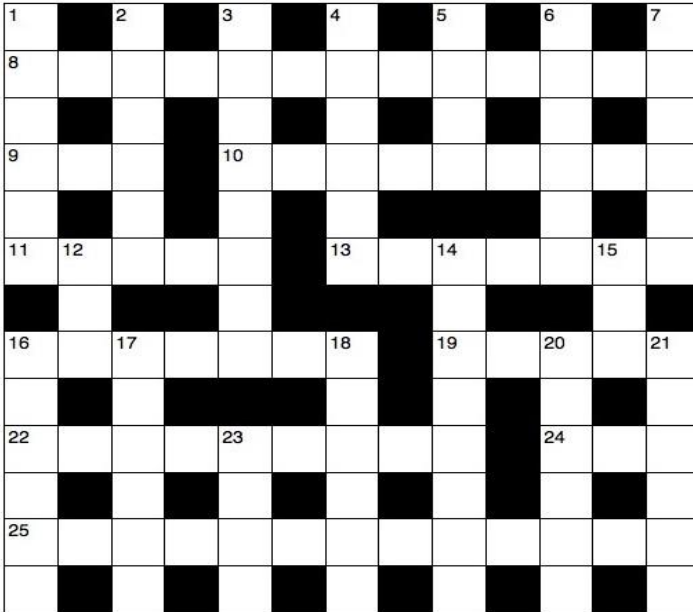
- 1st A happy and peaceful year ahead
- 2nd Preparations being made for the return to work and school
- 3rd All people who are expected to work outside in adverse weather conditions
- 4th People in residential care homes across the island
- 5th People awaiting treatment in our hospital
- 6th The new service pattern now in operation throughout the parish
- 7th Wildlife throughout the island as it seeks food and shelter during the winter
- 8th Travellers having to drive on sometime treacherous roads during the wintertime
- 9th The work of the Royal Lifeboat Institution
- 10th People who live in isolation with little contact with the outside world
- 11th Noble's Hospital and the doctors and nurses dedicated to making people well
- 12th The Ladies Working Party and its charitable work in the parish
- 13th Those who entertain whether on the stage or on television
- 14th People who are suffering financial hardship after the Christmas season
- 15th Everyone who has a birthday this month
- 16th The PCC meeting taking place at 7.00pm in St Catherine's Church Hall this evening
- 17th Those who enjoy watching and/or partaking in sporting activities
- 18th The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity which commences today
- 19th Music and the part it plays in everyone's life whether it is modern or classical
- 20th All the Home Groups which meet each week throughout the parish
- 21st The beauty of this wonderful island on which we live
- 22nd People mourning the loss of loved ones
- 23rd New mothers and fathers looking after their children
- 24th The Diocese of Sodor and Man and the work undertaken by all its employees
- 25th The Headteacher and staff of Rushen Primary School
- 26th Messy Church and its continued success in bringing Jesus into people's lives
- 27th The Headteacher and staff of Scoill-Phurt-le-Moirrey
- 28th Those parishioners who read the lessons or intercede at services in the parish
- 29th The work of aid organisations at home and overseas
- 30th The work of the Isle of Man government in maintaining services for us all to use
- 31st Our determination to serve God in as many ways possible

Services January/February 2022

2nd January <i>(Christmas 2)</i>	11am	Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW)
9th January <i>(Epiphany 1)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's All-Age Service St Catherine's Holy Communion CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)
16th January <i>(Epiphany 2)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW) St Mary's Holy Communion (CW) St Catherine's All-Age Service St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP)
23rd January <i>(Epiphany 3)</i>	11am	Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW)
30th January <i>(Epiphany 4)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW) St Mary's Morning Prayer (CW) St Catherine's Holy Communion (CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer
6th February <i>(Epiphany 5)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW) St Mary's Holy Communion (CW) St Catherine's Morning Prayer CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)
13th February <i>(Epiphany 6)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's All-Age Service St Catherine's Holy Communion CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)
20th February <i>(Epiphany 7)</i>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW) St Mary's Holy Communion (CW) St Catherine's All-Age Service St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP)
27th February <i>(The Transfiguration of Our Lord)</i>	11am	Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW)

Dates and times of services/activities subject to alteration/or cancelled
 (CW) Common Worship (BCP) Book of Common Prayer

Crossword January 2022



Across

- 8** How the Abyss (NIV) is described in the Authorised Version (Revelation 9:1) (10,3)
- 9** Frozen water (Ezekiel 1:22) (3)
- 10** The Ten Commandments (9)
- 11** In Roman Catholic theology, neither heaven nor hell (5)
- 13** Des cons (anag.) (7)
- 16** 'Though [your sins] are red as —, they shall be like wool' (Isaiah 1:18) (7)
- 19** Keen (Romans 1:15) (5)
- 22** Repugnant, loathsome (Jeremiah 24:9) (9)
- 24** Drink like an animal (Judges 7:5) (3)
- 25** First and last (Revelation 22:13) (5,3,5)

Down

- 1** Father of Ahi, a Gadite (1 Chronicles 5:15) (6)
- 2** Where David found the stone with which he killed Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (6)
- 3** 'Hour by hour fresh lips are making thy — doings heard on high' (8)
- 4** 'And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their — at night' (Luke 2:8) (6)
- 5** United Society for Christian Literature (1,1,1,1)

- 6** 'If he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would — — or a tax collector' (Matthew 18:17) (1,5)
- 7** Where Paul was taken when things became difficult for him in Berea (Acts 17:15) (6)
- 12** Istituto per le Opere di Religione (Vatican Bank) (1,1,1)
- 14** 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new —; the old has gone, the new has come!' (2 Corinthians 5:17) (8)
- 15** Used to colour ram skins red for use in the tabernacle (Exodus 25:5) (3)
- 16** Vat car (anag.) (6)
- 17** 'Be joyful — —, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer' (Romans 12:12) (6)
- 18** 'The parts that are unrepresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts — — special treatment' (1 Corinthians 12:23) (4,2)
- 20** Ancient rowing boat (Isaiah 33:21) (6)
- 21** Say again (2 Corinthians 11:16) (6)
- 23** What Jesus did in the synagogue in Nazareth after he stood up (Luke 4:16) (4)