

Lord Jesus Christ,
may we never cease
to wonder at your birth,
when heaven touched the earth
and you came
to be among us;
our Saviour and our God.



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Mrs Wendy Heaton
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Active Clergy

Rev Roger Harper
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From the Editor

Over the past year I have lost two things which mean a great deal to me. The first was a wooden cross which I carry in my trouser pocket every day, and the second my wedding ring. I'm sure you will understand the significance of both. Despite searching every nook and cranny throughout the house and the car for many weeks I was unable to find them. I was so upset about losing these two items that in my prayers I asked God if He could give me some indication as to where they were. In Philippians 4:6-7 it reads, *'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'* So taking this advice I decided to assume that as God knew my loss, He would, in His own time, answer my prayer.

Being unable to find things of importance can cause distress to those who lose them. Strangely, because I had left this matter with God, I became much calmer, and certainly not as stressed as I had been. The search stopped and I put the loss to the back of my mind. Of course some people lose things of value such as cars or jewellery. Such events are usually caused by unscrupulous individuals who do not care what affect it might have to the victims. Whilst cars could be classed as being essential to the lives of ordinary people, they can be replaced as soon as insurance matters are dealt with. Jewellery, on the other hand, has sentimental value to those who mislay it. The items do not necessarily have to be valuable, especially if given by someone dear to you.

In my case the ring meant a great deal to me. When Pauline and I married in 1968 we did not have a great deal of money so we decided that at our wedding I would be the one who gave her a ring, and that when funds were more available we would go ahead and buy a ring for me. This we did and since that day I have worn it as a wedding ring and been proud to wear it. It wasn't particularly expensive, but to me it was irreplaceable. The cross was bought at Canterbury Cathedral and had remained in my pocket until I lost it. It too carried sentimental value as it was a constant reminder that Jesus was with me wherever I went.

A few weeks ago, on a visit to Shoprite for my weekly provisions, I was at the checkout opening the bags to carry my purchases away when out of one of them my ring fell on to the conveyor belt. I quickly retrieved it and put it on my finger. I was overjoyed and left the shop feeling elated and so thankful that my prayer had been answered. I'm still waiting in hope that the cross will soon be found. May I take this opportunity in wishing you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Joyous New Year.

David



Reflections on the Christmas Story Part 1

In the magazine there is a mix of Bible readings and comments by **Tony Horsfall**, a former OMF missionary to the Far East and now retreat leader and author based in Yorkshire.

Matthew 1:18 Joseph's dilemma

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit...."

It is not clear at what point Mary told Joseph the news of her pregnancy, but when she did it came as a bombshell. What should he do, knowing the child was not his? Could her story be true? He was however a righteous man, and he sought God for direction rather than acting impulsively. God spoke to him through a dream, confirming that the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and this gave him the courage to stand by her, and take her as his wife. It was a brave decision, but he now knew that the child would be the One to save people from their sins.

It is easy when we have difficult decisions to make to be impetuous or hasty, but the best decisions are made slowly and with prayer. When you are making important choices ask God to guide you clearly, and to give you the courage to do what is right.

Matthew 1:22 Long-awaited Immanuel

All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' (which means 'God with us')... And Joseph gave Him the name Jesus.

The plan of salvation is intimately connected to the Old Testament, and was the fulfilment of prophecies made long ago. God was sending His Son into the world that we might be saved. God is with us – this astonishing, mind-blowing truth underpinned Joseph's straight-forward trust in Him. Today as you get on with your life, pray that the wonder of knowing that God is with you will never be far from your awareness.

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**The Vicar, Readers,
Churchwardens, PCC, and
everyone involved in the
management of the
Parish of Rushen
Wish you all a very
Happy Christmas**



Ladies Working Party – St Mary's



The unseasonably warm weather has changed today, and it is starting to feel more like November, the time at which we approach Advent, followed soon by Christmas. We have received thanks from Jean Wilkinson for our help with the Link to Hope Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2022: she gathered and stored 154 boxes in total this year before their uplift! We are delighted that Helen Guy is now able to join our meetings and appreciate her valuable insight and contribution to our

discussions. Megan too has attended a meeting at which we were pleased to learn from her about the origin of the sweets termed "Peace Babies", in connection with our making of Christingles.

We are all interested in hearing from the vicar about the reordering plans for St Mary's Church after the service on 20th Nov, and glad to have the opportunity to express our opinions on various aspects of this much anticipated work to improve facilities.

We look forward to preparing 80 Christingles for distribution at St Catherine's Church on 4th December, and to enjoying our St Mary's Church Christmas lunch on 6th December at the George Hotel, Castletown. Thank you, Sue, for all your hard work organising this. We plan to decorate St Mary's church on Saturday 10th December, and to provide refreshments after the Crib Service on 24th December at 4pm. (Our weekly meetings will cease after 10th Dec and recommence on 10th Jan 2023.)

After our readings and prayers for the sick, we are always pleased to hear of some people improving while being aware of the needs of others for whom good health has still to be attained. We pray that this Advent season brings peace, comfort and hope and we take this opportunity to wish everyone a very blessed and happy Christmas.

With love from us all in the Ladies Working Party

Pat Thomson

Seasonal Smiles

Children's version of the Christmas story

When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manger.

*When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta
Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.*

What do you call Santa's helpers? - Subordinate Clauses.

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? - Frostbite.



Reflections on the Christmas Story Part 2

Luke 2:1-7 Bethlehem

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world... so Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

This is perhaps the most familiar picture we have of the Christmas event—but remember what was happening. This was no ordinary child. In Jesus God became a human being and dwelt among us, perhaps the greatest miracle (and mystery) of all. As you visualise the scene again, let worship arise in your heart: *'From heaven you came, helpless Babe, entered our world your glory veiled.'* Emmanuel, God with us! The Servant King, worthy of all our adoration and love.

LORD God, in this season please help me to live in the wonder of your upside-down Kingdom where your love for us compels you to become helpless, vulnerable and dependent. May your Kingdom come in and through my life today.

Luke 2:8-12 The Shepherds arrive

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St Mary's Sunday School



Share God's Word

(John 8:12). He is always with us, shining His light to guide us and help us through any dark times.

At the beginning of November, we had a Sunday School session on the theme of Light. We played a game of trying to walk around the hall blind-folded (to simulate walking in darkness), and although the children managed extremely well (even with obstacles in the way!), we agreed that it was much easier to walk in the light than in the dark, or when somebody was guiding us on our way. We learnt that Jesus is the light of the world and that all who follow Him will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life

The children looked for and found several electric candles and torches around the hall, which brightened up the room quite a bit. We also lit a candle as a symbol of Jesus, the light of the world. We then thought about various ways in which we can be a light to others, how we can let our light shine as followers of Jesus (Matthew 5:14-16), eg by telling others about Jesus, by being kind and caring, by playing with other children who may have nobody to play with, or by praying for others. We thought about 'dark' places in the world which need the light of Christ, such as Ukraine, Iran, North Korea, and we placed electric candles on these countries on a world map and then prayed for them.

To help us remember to 'let our light shine' throughout the week, we made brightly coloured star wands with glowsticks and the words 'Let your light shine.' The children enjoyed waving their wands as we walked around the room singing 'Let your light shine' and 'This little light of mine.' In our next session, we want to put together a Christmas shoebox for a child in a Ukrainian orphanage as a practical way of bringing the light of Jesus to those in need.

We are now looking forward to the season of Advent leading up to the celebration of Christmas, with our Parish Christingle service in aid of the Children's Society on the 4th of December (4pm at St Catherine's), our all-age service on 11th December, our Sunday School Christmas party on 18th December, and our very special Crib Service on Christmas Eve (4pm at St Mary's). All are very welcome!

We wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas,
full of love, joy, hope and peace.

May the light of Christ shine in your hearts, this Christmas and always.

With love and blessings

Claudia



News from St Catherine's & Kirk Christ



During the past month at Kirk Christ we have held the Annual Civic Service of Remembrance. The church blends itself to this service with the poppies around the windowsills and the Poppy Fall hanging from the front of the font. A big thank you to all who worked so hard in planning for this service. During the service we remembered and prayed for all who lost their loved ones in war and conflict. Many wreaths were laid at the war memorial during the service.

At St Catherine's, also on Remembrance Sunday, the usual joint service of holy communion with the congregation of St Mary's, was held. At 11am silence was observed after hearing the last post. Reveille was played at the end of the silence. Another thank you to Rushen Silver Band which provided the buglers.

Soup Inn was held on 3rd November with 31 people enjoying food and fellowship together. We kept the hall open until 4pm so that we could provide a warm space should it be required by anyone. The Pre-Christmas Quiz was held on 18th November organised by David Bowman with help from the social committee. This event is proving to be very popular. My thanks to David for preparing the quiz, prizes, and being the question master.

We now look forward to celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus. Our Christmas preparations begin on Advent Sunday. St Catherine's will host the annual Christingle Service at 4pm on 11th December.

I would like to thank everyone for the help I have received from you during the past year. I wish you all a Very Happy Christmas as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Gerry Callister

The Holy Family

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?"

One child answered, "Mary."

The teacher then asked, "Who knows what Jesus' father's name was?"

Another child ventured: "Verge?"

Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?"

He replied hesitantly: "Well, you know they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

Sudoku December 2022

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

Christmas card

Richard, my husband, and I had a hectic Christmas holiday schedule involving work, care of parents, driving of teenagers, shopping, and all the required doings of the season. Running out of time, I asked a local printer to simply print our name on our Christmas cards, to save me signing each one. Soon we started getting cards from friends signed 'The Modest Morrisons', 'The Clever Clarks', and 'The Successful Smiths'. This baffled me until I looked again at our card. I had posted out a hundred cards neatly imprinted with 'Happy Holidays from the Rich Armstrongs'.

November Sudoku Solution

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

November Crossword Solution

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

Reflections on the Christmas Story Part 3



Luke 2:8-12 The Shepherds arrive

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

The first visitors are not VIPs but humble shepherds who have been summoned by an angelic visitor. For those who have eyes to see, there hidden in the manger beneath the blankets is the Son of God, the one sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. Very few of those crowded into Bethlehem that night were aware of what was happening. Only those with faith could recognise the arrival of the long-awaited Messiah. It is the same today.

Lord, I pray for eyes to see where the glory of Heaven touches earth. May I be alive today with the truth that the Saviour, rescuer, King Jesus has been born 'to us' and that there is joy in this for all people. May my life reflect that glory even in a small way in my interactions with people, so that in this Christmas season the good news of great joy will be known.

Luke 2:13-15 Angel hosts

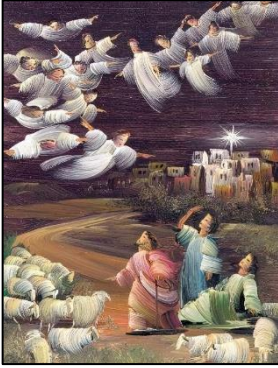
Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

The darkness of the Judean hillside was lit up by the appearance of a great angelic choir, messengers sent to herald the birth of the Saviour. Their song breaks the stillness of the night, first in praise of God for his act of mercy in sending the Son, and then in proclamation of the peace the child will bring to earth. The shepherds now decide to do the unthinkable - leave their flocks, and head off into town to see the new born King. Such is the drawing power of the Saviour.

Sometimes there are things we too must leave behind if we are to follow his call, but whatever sacrifice is needed, it will be worth it just to find him for ourselves.

Continued on Page 11





Reflections on the Christmas Story Part 4

Luke 2:13-15 **Angel hosts**

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.'

The darkness of the Judean hillside was lit up by the appearance of a great angelic choir, messengers sent to herald the birth of the Saviour. Their song breaks the stillness of the night, first in praise of God for his act of mercy in sending the Son, and then in proclamation of the peace the child will bring to earth. The shepherds now decide to do the unthinkable -leave their flocks, and head off into town to see the new born King. Such is the drawing power of the Saviour.

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Tony Horsfall

Mothers' Union partners campaign against domestic abuse

Mothers' Union has teamed up with Women's Aid in a campaign to help draw attention to end domestic abuse.

The campaign aims to highlight the fact that 1.6 million women in England experience domestic abuse every year. Three women are killed each fortnight by a current or ex-partner. And one in every seven children will have to live with domestic violence at some point in their childhood.

As Bev Jullien, CEO of Mothers' Union, says: "It's what happens behind closed doors which is so very worrying. Domestic abuse takes many forms. As well as the bruises and violence, which is absolutely shocking, it's restricting access to money, it's tracking your partner online, it's controlling who they speak to. It's very much about exercising power over those who are closest to you. Of course, the longer it continues, the more impact it has on any children in a relationship as well.

"God created man and woman as equal. He teaches us to love one another, and those core principles should lead us all to be in healthy relationships and help others to be so too."

More details at: <https://www.mothersunion.org/partnerships/womensaid>

Christmas Quiz



Editor: If you attended, or were unable to attend, the recent Parish of Rushen Quiz on 18th November, have a go at the one that follows. The answers will be in January's magazine.



How did No Vac Novak become No Match Novak?

35 years ago ITV wanted a detective story set within 50 miles of the Midlands to rival BBC's Agatha Christie stories. What did they choose?

Which rock star who died in January and would do anything for love, but not that?

What unexpected occurrence at the Winter Olympics caused problems in the icy setting?

He would have celebrated his 100th birthday in March and was one of a duo who wrote The hippopotamus song mud, mud, glorious mud

What was the career of the President of Ukraine before he entered politics?

At the Oscars Will Smith had an incident with the comedian, Chris Rock, What film did Smith go on to get an Oscar for?

What were the following "gates"? Why are they called "gates"? Partygate - Tractorgate - Beergate

In May a footballer's shirt was sold for the record breaking £7.1 million. Whose was it?

What were two places outside the UK that gained city status?

There was a television series this year called Infamy. Which film features the line, "Infamy, infamy, they've all got it in for me."?

A surprise guest of Her Majesty for tea over the Platinum Jubilee was Paddington Bear. Who voiced Paddington in the Ukrainian language version of the film?

The actor who played the Revd Timothy Farthing passed away this year. What comedy series did he appear in?

At the age of nearly 90, he published an autobiography looking back on his years in show business in 2018. Its title was *Bernard Who? 75 Years Of Doing Absolutely Everything* - and its advice was simple. "Do your best and be grateful for every single job". Who was he?

Which actress was ordered not to quit a science fiction series by Martin Luther King?

Where did Dan Snow reportedly urge tourists to visit instead of (or possibly as well as) Stonehenge?

Good Luck!

Advent's Challenge

Surrounding the joy of Advent,
Certain challenges remain:
How to use blessings wisely,
As the season stakes its claim.

Time proves very elusive,
As Christmas Day draw near.
Communicate with people,
Lend a sympathetic ear.
Ponder a text from scripture,
As the hours disappear.

Money may be a problem
As we decide and donate.
Community has its needs;
How suitably to relate?
The homeless, for example,
Have a miserable fate.

The privilege of talents
Gifted to us from above.
Let's share them with each other
In good fellowship and love;
Patiently and carefully,
Gentle, as is the dove.

Face then, the challenge before us;
Fear not the World's selfish foe.
But joyfully through Advent,
Let us purposely go!

Micah 6:8

.....what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

And to walk humbly with your God.

N.I.V.

Margaret Couper



The mysterious ways of mistletoe



Mistletoe has long been used as part of our Christmas decorations. It is not your usual kind of plant.

Instead, it is *hemiparasitic*, meaning that although its leaves enable it to feed itself through photosynthesis, its roots invade the host tree or shrub to extract water and other nutrients.

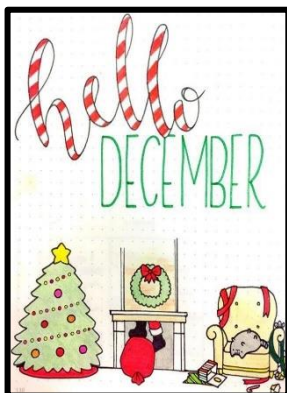
Mistletoe loves living in apple, lime, hawthorn, poplar or oak trees. You may spot it high up, as a large globe, on the bare trees in winter. There is one spectacular example in Windsor Great Park, clearly visible from the path on the opposite side of the Thames.

Mistletoe's berries are almost translucent, fleshy and sticky. They form in the forks of mistletoe's many branches. While they are toxic to humans, they are attractive to birds, who wipe the remaining seeds off their beaks onto the nearest branch, which of course helps the plant to spread.

For some reason, Romans thought mistletoe represented Peace, Love and Understanding. Perhaps that is how it got into our Christmas celebrations? The earliest documentary evidence for kissing under mistletoe dates from the 16th century, but we don't know who got kissed first.

Tim Lenton

All in the month of December



200 years ago, on 27th December 1822 Louis Pasteur, French biologist, microbiologist, and chemist was born. One of the fathers of germ theory, he was best known for the pasteurisation process, which is named in his honour.

100 years ago, on 8th December 1922 Lucian Freud, German-born British figurative artist and draughtsman was born. One of the leading portrait artists of the 20th century. **Also 100 years ago, on 14th December 1922** John Reith (later Lord Reith) was appointed as General Manager of the BBC.

Also 100 years ago, on 30th December 1922 the Soviet Union was founded. Officially known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), it was dissolved in 1991.

90 years ago, on 25th December 1932 the first Royal Christmas Message was broadcast on radio. King George V addressed the nation live from Sandringham.

80 years ago, on 1st December 1942 the British Government published the Beveridge Report, which formed the basis of the welfare state. **Also 80 years ago, on 17th December 1942** British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden told the House of Commons about the mass executions of Jews by the Nazis in occupied Europe. Ministers and Members of Parliament condemned the massacres and held a minute's silence as a mark of respect for the victims.

65 years ago, on 25th December 1957 Queen Elizabeth II's Christmas message was televised for the first time.

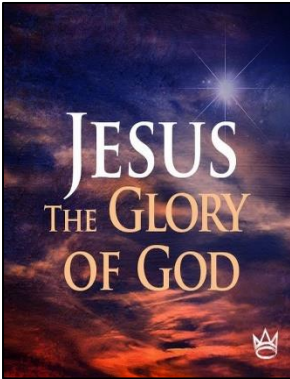
50 years ago, on 22nd December 1972 14 people were found alive in the Andes more than two months after their plane crashed. They had survived by eating dead passengers.

40 years ago, on 12th December 1982 30,000 women joined hands around the Greenham Common RAF base in Berkshire to protest against the siting of US Cruise missiles there.

25 years ago, on 11th December 1997 Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams met Prime Minister Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street – the first Irish Republican leader to do so since Michael Collins in 1921. **Also 25 years ago, on 11th December 1997** the Kyoto Protocol, aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and combating global warming, was adopted at a conference in Japan. More than 190 countries have signed the agreement, which came into effect in February 2005.

20 years ago, on 7th December 2002 Iraq submitted a weapons declaration to the United Nations in which it said it had no weapons of mass destruction. This was part of the prelude to the March 2003 Invasion of Iraq.

10 years ago, on 9th December 2012 Patrick Moore, British astronomer, television presenter and musician died. Best known for hosting the astronomy series The Sky at Night (1957-2013) the longest-running TV series with the same presenter.



Reflecting faith - To the Glory of God

Editor: The Rev Dr Jo White continues her series.

Everything about the church building is intended to tell us something about God.

But it doesn't end there. We put into the building things that are important to us and again reflect not just our specific denomination but our ways of worship.

Imagine visiting someone in their home whom you are just getting to know and have a look around at the decorations, photos, wall hangings, books, music etc. What are their hobbies? How do they enjoy spending their time? Who is important to them? Well our church interiors are like that.

In most church buildings each week there will be a display of flowers. Venues vary from being large and elaborate to simple and homely and so do such arrangements. Of course, much depends upon finance and the availability of flowers as well as the interest and skills of the arranger.

Flower arrangements 'should' be in keeping with the church season or the occasion that is being celebrated. During Advent (Latin meaning 'coming') while we anticipate the birth of Christ at the Feast of Christmas most places of worship show restraint in their arrangements and often decline to use any coloured flowers using only evergreen leaves.

Then nearer to Christmas itself everything changes and either flowers are added to the original evergreens or they start completely new. Colours change to red for love and Christ's death and passion, white and gold for importance, royalty and celebration: with green alongside for the hope of new birth and spring.

This month: Have a look at the flowers used in a church near you. What do they 'say'? Perhaps there will be poinsettias, lilies or even irises. Each has a different story to tell of the glory of God.

Rev Dr Jo White

Christmas Prayer

Dear Lord thank you for creating us and for loving us so much that you sent Jesus to become one of us and to be our way to you. This Christmas may we know the love, peace, comfort and joy that only You can give, no matter what our circumstances. And may we reflect Your light and love in this dark world to bring glory to You.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

From the Registers

Funerals October 2022:

7 th October	Jerry Deakin		Crematorium only
7 th October	Jerry Deakin	Memorial Service	Kirk Christ
19 th October	John Mairs	Service & Burial	Kirk Christ & RBG
20 th October	Edward Haley	Methodist Burial	RBG

Baptism October 2022

9 th October	Margot Rosa Rodger	St Peter's Church	3.15pm
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Church officials

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

"Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel demanded.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two big men standing by the door and glaring at you? They're hushers."

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, Voirrey Baugh (Tel. 833275)

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



"The vicar's still miffed that one of the parents got £250 from You've Been Framed for their video of last year's nativity play."

Rushen Mothers' Union



Having been invited by Patrick/Dalby/Foxdale Mothers' Union to join them for a Flower Demonstration by Jenny Corrin, on 20th October, four of our members attended and enjoyed a delightful afternoon of fun and fellowship, each winning a lovely floral arrangement in the raffle. We were delighted to have three of their members joining us for our afternoon talk by Professor Hugh Davidson on Rushen Heritage Trust on 14th November, and we hope to see more members of the other South & West branches to our speaker meetings in the future.

Mrs Lesley Scott chaired the meeting and after a warm welcome to members and guests, she led us in a short service of prayer, hymns chosen and played by Mrs Iris Mitchell, and a lovely reading given by Mrs Sue Bould. Birthday pens were distributed and two letters of thanks, from Mr Gerry Callister and from Mrs Margaret Couper were passed round.

Mrs Pat Thomson reported on the S&W JMP committee meeting on 8th November, and advised that Kirk Michael have invited us to join them on Tuesday 13th December for Christmas Communion with a simple lunch at 12 noon. (Please let Lesley or Pat know if you wish to attend)

Hugh treated us to a fascinating talk on Rushen Heritage Trust, covering so many aspects of its work in the community and beyond; its beginning, vision, values, objectives, results to date, funding and the acquisition of a building which now houses the Rushen Heritage and Visitor Centre. He brought to life with many anecdotes the exhibitions, events, publications, school outreach, research, built environment and outdoor activities which highlight the success of the Trust to date. Hugh had also very kindly brought along many items for us to examine. Mrs Pat Thomson gave the vote of thanks, after which Lesley, our new Branch Coordinator, presented Mrs Elsie Faragher with flowers, gifts and a card signed by all members to express our thanks and appreciation for all her hard work as outgoing Branch Leader. However, the refreshments were still served by Elsie, with Sue and Gerry helping in the kitchen!

Forthcoming Dates:

MU Advent Service in Braddan Church, 7pm, Tuesday 6th December, with an Envelope Collection for Housing Matters, an IOM charity which provides advice, guidance and support to local families and individuals in housing crisis. Please give to Lesley or Pat if you wish to donate to the MU charity for this year, but cannot attend, and please also advise if you wish to attend but need a lift. Please also note that used, but still working kettles may be brought to meetings for donation to Housing Matters throughout the forthcoming year.

Our branch **Christmas Party**, 2pm, Monday 12th December, in St Catherine's Hall, to which all members are invited to bring a small plate of food and a Christmas Reading. Guests are warmly welcomed.

Spring Council and AGM meeting 7pm, Monday 13th March 2023, St John's church Hall.

We would all like to say a very big thank you to Gerry for all his help throughout the year; to extend our love and very best wishes to those members not in the best of health, and especially to our indoor member Mrs Edythe Bridson; and wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Pat Thomson

God in the Arts



The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at the cartoon for 'The Mackintosh Madonna', which normally hangs in the British Museum.

Preparing the Way

This month's drawing is 'The Virgin and Child' by Raphael (1483-1520). Raphael was a talented artist from a very early age, but this drawing belongs to a time when he was in Rome from 1510-12. The finished painting is known as the Mackintosh Madonna, after its last owner.

This drawing, or cartoon, was the first stage in creating that work: it is in black chalk with heightening marks of white. When an artist made an initial drawing like this, he would then prick the cartoon with holes and then sprinkle charcoal powder over the drawing to reproduce the design on the canvas below. The pinholes on this drawing are still clearly visible. Sadly the final painting has been damaged through time, but here in the cartoon we see that first stage: a sensitive and balanced picture of mother and child: Mary warm and caring, Jesus laughing and alive.

During Advent we think of the preparations God made for the birth of the Saviour. We celebrate God's work of creation and how He chose a people for His own. Within that people He looked for a holy remnant and then finally a loving heart in the assent of Mary to be the mother of our Lord. These preparatory steps were as vital for our salvation as the artist moving from idea to sketch to the finished work.

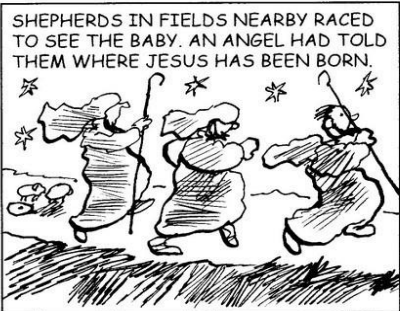
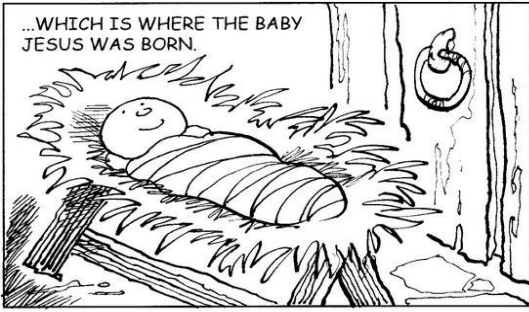
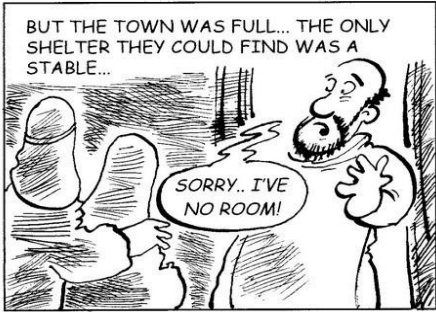
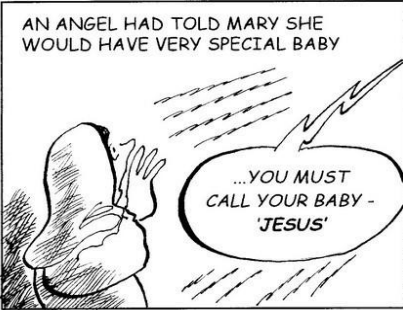
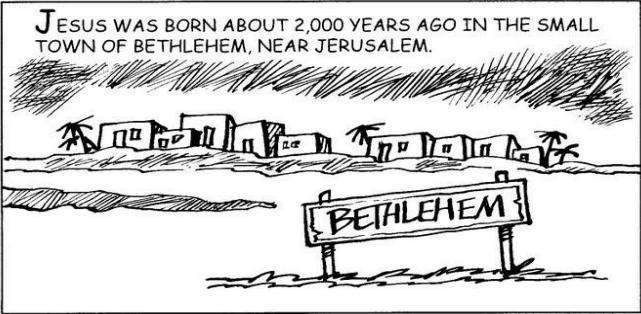
Each stage is important; each stage a revelation of life and love. Vasari wrote of Raphael that in his paintings 'the flesh palpitates, the breath comes and goes, every organ lives, and life pulsates everywhere.' Even this preliminary drawing displays that life and vitality. It is a life we celebrate at Christmas in the birth of a child who turns to us, as he does in this work, as a sign of joy and love.



Good home

After the Christening of his baby brother in church, young Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That minister said he wanted us to be brought up in a good Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."

Children's Page



The Story Behind the Hymn



Good King Wenceslas

Good King Wenceslas first looked out on the
Feast of Stephen

When the snow lay round about, deep and
crisp and even.

Brightly shone the moon that night, tho' the
frost was cruel

When the poor man came in sight, gathering
winter fuel...

Bring me flesh and bring me wine; bring me
pine logs hither;

Thou and I will see him dine when we bear
them thither.

Page and monarch forth they went, forth they
went together,

Through the rude winds' wild lament, and the
bitter weather...

In his master's steps he trod where the snow
lay dinted;

Heat was in the very sod which the saint had
printed.

Therefore Christian men, be sure wealth or
rank possessing,

Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourself
find blessing.

This carol was 900 years in the making... and started with a brutal murder in Bohemia.

For Wenceslas was a real person, the Duke of Bohemia, who lived in the early 10th century. He seems to have been a rare ruler, in that he was just and had compassion for the poor. His goodness made him enemies, and when he was only 22, he was assassinated on the steps of a church in Prague in 935.

But that was not the end of Wenceslas. Deeply mourned by the common people, he was soon considered a martyr and a saint. A cult of Wenceslas grew up in Bohemia, influencing the High Middle Ages idea of the *rex Justus* – or 'righteous king' - that is, a monarch whose power stems mainly from his great piety.

The story of Wenceslas came to England sometime before 1853, when Queen Victoria's envoy to Stockholm sent some rare books to a friend, John Mason Neale, Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead. Here Neale found the story of Wenceslas in an ancient poem by Czech poet Václav Alois Svoboda. Neale published his translation as a carol in 1853. He made the 'Duke' into a 'King', as a later Pope had conferred the regal title on Wenceslas.

The carol tells the poignant story of a young king and his page braving harsh winter weather in order to bring food, wine and fuel to a poor peasant on the Feast of St Stephen (26 December). The journey is terrible, and the page only gets through by following in the king's footprints, step by step, through deep snow. There are themes here of following Christ, through suffering, to do good to the poor.

If the story is ancient, so is the melody that Neale chose for his carol - it goes back to Finland in 1582.

Good King Wenceslas... today, a millennium after his brutal murder, he is still remembered in Prague, where a statue of him stands tall in the middle of Wenceslas Square. His goodness is not forgotten.

Rushen Parish Prayer Diary



During this season of Good Will let us pray that we can do our part to bring Peace to the world: God our Father, Creator of the world, please help us to love one another. Make nations friendly with other nations; Make all of us love one another like brothers and sisters. Help us to do our part to bring peace in the world and happiness to all people. Amen



December 2022

This is your invitation to pray day by day for:

- 1st Shopkeepers during the busy build up towards the Christmas period
- 2nd All Christians preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ
- 3rd The vicar, readers and retired clergy and all they do for the parish
- 4th Our fellow neighbours and the love and respect we have for them
- 5th Nativity plays being performed at our island's primary schools prior to Christmas
- 6th People in care homes preparing for Christmas and all that it means to them
- 7th The hope that Christmas will bring families, which have been apart, together again
- 8th Rushen Parochial Church Council and the work it does for the parish
- 9th Children with disabilities which require them to be cared for by others
- 10th The relatives of those who have died throughout the parish during 2022
- 11th The annual Christingle Service at St Catherine's Church at 4pm on this day
- 12th Sidespersons and the important role they play during church services
- 13th Those who have no homes and are wondering what Christmas will bring to them
- 14th The Carols, Candles and Cake event at St Peter's Church this evening at 7.30pm
- 15th The Port Erin Commissioners' Carol Service at St Catherine's Church at 7pm
- 16th All those who do such good work for charities across the island
- 17th Sportsmen and women providing enjoyment and competitiveness
- 18th The Parish Carol Service at Kirk Christ at 6.30pm this evening
- 19th Mothers' Union partners campaign against domestic abuse
- 20th Gerry Callister, his dedication to the parish, and all he does for everyone
- 21st All Christian children and their many expectations during this Christmastide
- 22nd Families who were kept apart because of Covid restrictions now able to meet again
- 23rd People in hospital hoping to be home during the Christmas season
- 24th The Crib Service taking place in St Mary's Church at 4pm this afternoon
- 25th Peace throughout the world
- 26th St Stephen, the first martyr, who is remembered today
- 27th Those who have suffered, in one way or another, during the Christmas period
- 28th People who have had to work throughout Christmas to maintain vital services
- 29th Teachers preparing for a new term at school
- 30th Preparations for the New Year and the hope it brings for everyone
- 31st New Year celebrations throughout the world and the hope for peace

Services December 2022

4 th December <i>(Advent 2)</i>	9.30am	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW)
	11am	St Mary's Holy Communion (CW)
	11am	St Catherine's Morning Prayer CW)
	3.15pm	St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)
11 th December <i>(Advent 3)</i>	9.30am	Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW)
	11am	St Mary's All-Age Service (CW)
	11am	St Catherine's Holy Communion CW)
	3.15pm	St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)
	4pm	St Catherine's Christingle Service
14 th December	7.30pm	St Peter's Carols, Candles and Cake
15 th December	7pm	St Catherine's Commissioner's Carol Service
18 th December <i>(Advent 4)</i>	9.30am	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW)
	11am	St Mary's Holy Communion (CW)
	11am	St Catherine's All-Age Service (CW)
	3.15pm	St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP)
	6.30pm	Kirk Christ Parish Carol Service
24 th December <i>(Christmas Eve)</i>	4pm	Crib Service. Venue to be announced
	7.30pm	St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP)
	11.30pm	St Catherine's Midnight Communion (CW)
25 th December <i>(Christmas Day)</i>	10am	Kirk Christ Joint Christmas Day Service (CW)

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

The Story of Mince Pies



Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

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Articles for the magazine should be submitted to the editor no later than 20th of each month. This arrangement is subject to change.

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Please contact Mr Harry Dawson: 478050/835770

or Mr G Callister: 474924/834627

Crossword December 2022

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Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)