

Rushen Parish Magazine

December 2024



**Wishing you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**

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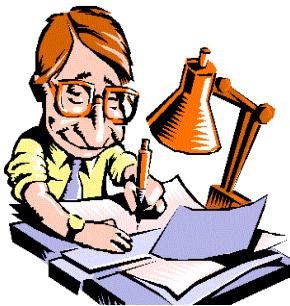
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From the Editor

It's quite difficult to write an editorial worthy of passing on a Christmas message to the people who read the magazine. When I used to take assembly at school I searched many stories with a Christmas theme that I could tell the children, and at the same time provide them with the reason why we celebrate the birth of such a small child, and the significance of it. There are countless stories, written by eminent people, which try to pass on the true meaning of Christmas. There are films, shown on television, which are regular features during the festive season, all designed to pass on the message of Christmas to both children and adults alike. Children, in many schools, enact stories of the Nativity to their relatives, dressed up in tea towels, dyed sheets, and a variety of costumes, with both sheep, cows, camels and other animals, portrayed in costumes that have been handed down year after year, all designed to help communicate the greatest story ever told.

This year it has been refreshing to come across a story which really does tell the meaning of Christmas, and how lucky we are as Christians to be reminded of such a simple and yet poignant story, and its significance. It was written by Canon Paul Hardingham who gives thanks to the God who comes among us...

The story is told of a farmer who didn't believe in Jesus. 'One snowy Christmas Eve, his wife was taking their children to a service at their local church. He refused to come saying: *'Why would God lower Himself to come to Earth as a man? That's ridiculous!'* So, they left him at home.

During the evening the winds grew stronger, and the snow turned to a blizzard. He heard a series of loud thumps on the window. In the field near his house he saw a flock of wild geese. They had been migrating south when they got caught in the snowstorm. They were lost and stranded on his farm, with no food or shelter.

The man wanted to help the geese and so he opened the doors of the barn, hoping they would go inside for shelter. But the geese didn't do anything, despite the man's efforts to move them. He made a breadcrumb trail leading to the barn and tried to shoo them toward the barn, but they only got more scared and scattered.

Nothing he did could get them to go into the barn: *'Why don't they follow me?'* Then he realised: *'If only I were a goose and become one of them, then I could save them.'* Finally, he understood the heart of the Christmas message. God has become one of us in Jesus. The eternal creator God has entered time and space as a baby, to show us who God is and how we can know Him'.

This Christmas let's celebrate again this amazing truth that we have a God who knows and can meet our needs in Jesus. *'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel, which means 'God with us'.* Matthew 1:23. I hope you all have a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

David

Teaching the Lord's Prayer across the North of England



The Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell plans to teach the Lord's Prayer across the North of England throughout 2025, a priority of his vision for Faith in the North. Archbishop Stephen is to visit dioceses in the Northern Province of the C of E where he will be sharing the relevance of the Lord's Prayer to our world today, encouraging people to pray and live by this, as part of their missionary discipleship.

Archbishop Stephen is encouraging prayer, storytelling and church planting inspired by the Northern Saints such as Hild, Cuthbert, Bede and Paulinus. The aim is to foster deeper connections with the Christian faith across the north and renew the Church's missionary purpose to share God's love with all.

Archbishop Stephen said "In less than 70 words, Jesus gives us a prayer to learn by heart and a prayer that gets inside our hearts, shaping the way we live. The Lord's Prayer surely is the best place to start. It is said in just about every church service, from the coronation of the King to the christening of a child. It's a challenging prayer and when we say this prayer together, we become part of God's movement of change, of bringing God's heaven to earth. It teaches us how to pray. But it also teaches us how to live".

Current Dates of the Lord's Prayer Tour 2025

Friday 7th March - York Minster

Monday 10th March - Chester Cathedral

Monday 17th March - Liverpool Cathedral

Friday 21st March - Wakefield Cathedral

Friday 28th March - Hull Minster

Tuesday 1st April - Manchester Cathedral

Tuesday 17th June - Carlisle Cathedral

Wednesday 25th June - Sheffield Cathedral

Sunday 6th July - Isle of Man/ Peel Cathedral

Thursday 18th September - Newcastle Cathedral

Friday 3rd October - Durham Cathedral

Friday 10th October - Blackburn Cathedral

To learn more about Faith in the North visit (www.faithinthenorth.org)

Faith in the North is a movement of prayer and strategic resourcing which aims to help recapture the missional energy and commitment to prayer of the Anglo Saxon saints leading towards 2027, with the celebration of the 1400th anniversary of the establishment of the Church of Saint Peter in York and baptism of King Edwin by Paulinus in 627

Ladies Working Party – St Mary's



As winter has truly arrived the Ladies Working Party is very grateful for the cosy and warm space at the back of St Mary's church, for its meetings on Tuesday afternoons, and also for the community Coffee and Chat sessions on Monday mornings. This will continue over Christmas as it is felt that it is providing a welcome provision to the community, especially as there are no other coffee outlets open on Mondays. On 23rd December at 10am the LWP will be holding a very special Christmas Coffee

and Chat, with mince pies and some festive fun. Everyone is welcome - just turn up and enjoy!

St Mary's Church will be being decorated for Christmas by the LWP on Tuesday 26th November at 10am. There will be mince pies and mulled wine on offer to get everyone into the Christmas mood! If you would like to join us you will be more than welcome.

At the back of St Mary's Church there is a large box containing children's Christmas jumpers. These have been kindly donated by church members. Anyone in need of a child's festive jumper is free to select one. The initiative began last year to assist the parents of children at St. Mary's School.

The annual Christingle service is being held at Kirk Christ this year, and the LWP will be assembling the Christingles together at Kirk Christ on Saturday 7th December at 10am. We would welcome assistance with this from St. Catherine's and Kirk Christ congregations, as we will have several of our members away on their holidays by then. Many hands make light work!

One of the charitable causes that LWP support is the Leprosy Mission. Its treatment centre/hospital in Anandaban, Nepal, has been virtually washed away by recent floods. It is tragic and the LWP is doing its best to raise awareness and funds towards the rebuilding of this vital resource.

It just remains for the LWP to wish our parish family a truly blessed Christmastide, full of wonder, peace and Joy.

Rev Ginny Viner

What would you like for Christmas?

A little girl visited Father Christmas in the local garden centre grotto. He welcomed her with a smile and asked what she would like for Christmas. She gasped, and stared at him in horror. "Didn't you get my email?!"



St Mary's Sunday School

Following the half term break, we had two meetings in November. On Remembrance Sunday, we all joined the congregation for the start of the service and the two-minute silence, before going into the hall to think about the themes of Remembrance and Peace. We discussed the meaning of the poppies and learnt that while they remind us of the sacrifice of the soldiers who lost their lives in wars, they are also a symbol of hope and new life. We looked at tiny poppy seeds from which the flowers grow and discovered that they can be quite tasty in bread or cakes, and even in yoghurts!

We then talked about what we had in common with each other and what made us different from each other, and we agreed that while we may look different or like different things, there will always be something we have in common with other people, which led us to thinking of the importance of living in peace with each other and making peace with each other, eg after an argument. We reflected on Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who gives every believer peace (if we ask for it), even in difficult situations, and who wants us to be peace-bringers and peace-keepers. The children also learnt about the Bethlehem Peace Light, which is lit each year from the 'eternal flame' in the Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem and is then distributed around Europe. A small group of Manx Scouts and Guides travel to England to bring the Peace Light to the Island each December, and we usually have one of the candles on the altar at Kirk Christ at Christmastime. We all enjoyed finding out about and tasting the Peace Babies (now known as Jelly Babies), first produced in 1918 to celebrate the end of World War I.

While we were making white paper peace poppies, we talked about what we can do to bring more light and peace into the world, starting in our own families, our schools, and our communities. Our ideas included being kind to each other, helping each other, forgiving each other and making up quickly after an argument, as well as thinking about other people's needs and praying for them. To put our thoughts into practice, we prayed for people in different parts of the world, and we also filled a large shoebox with lots of goodies and a hand-made Christmas card for a child in Ukraine. Members of the charity 'Manx Support for Ukraine' will be taking the shoeboxes to a school in an impoverished area in Boryslav, Western Ukraine.

Our last session in November was mainly spent making beautiful red and gold paper lanterns (and a few other decorations) for one of the Christmas trees at St. Mary's Church. We hope you like them! We are now looking forward to the season of Advent leading up to the joyful celebration of Christmas, with our Parish Christingle service in aid of the Children's Society on the 8th of December, our Sunday School Christmas party on 15th 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 Claudia

Reflecting Faith: Christmas Tree Decorations



Over the decades the decorations on my home Christmas tree have come and gone. From an eclectic colourful mix of baubles and home-made items when the children were young, to a radical change to 'contemporary' and 'sophisticated'. It didn't last long, as quite frankly they seemed a bit dull, lifeless and lacking real meaning. We quite rapidly added mementoes from holiday places to the mix to jazz it up a bit. In more recent years we've been receiving and proudly displaying creations from the next family generation - so we come back to the start.

How about your tree? And what about the tree decorations you have in your church? What is the story behind those? Are they identical or very different?

In 1957 at Ascension Lutheran Church, Danville, USA, Frances Kipps Spencer thought that the traditional, brightly coloured Christmas ornaments were not fitting for a worship setting, so she started thinking about a way to reflect the Christian faith through ornaments.

The first ornament was the name of Jesus and His title: Christ. The Greek *Chi* (X) *Rho* (P) is the monogram for the Greek word *Christos* (Christ). There followed over the years a whole collection symbolising the life of Jesus and His ministry. These ornaments even have their own name: 'Chrismos,' which comes from the words *Christ* and *monogram*.

Just as wall paintings and stained glass in churches tell the Christian story these Chrismos are a clever way to communicate the same key ideas of the Christian faith particularly to annual church visitors.

Chrismos are white and gold, representing purity and value. When used with an evergreen Christmas tree, symbolising eternal life, and white lights covering the tree, symbolising Jesus as the light of the world the whole gives a story just in its use of colour with no words required.

This month: Have a look at the tree decorations in a church near you. What does the overall effect say? and are there any 'Chrismos' on it?

Revd Dr Jo White

Nativity scene

"Here's a king!" announced the five-year-old as he unwrapped a figurine from the Christmas decorations box. "Here's a donkey!" he added a moment later. Then he removed the tissue from another figure, finding the infant Jesus moulded permanently into the little manger. The child exclaimed, "And here's Baby Jesus in his car seat!"



News from St Catherine's & Kirk Christ



Kirk Christ held the annual Civic Remembrance Service on 10th November. The congregation included members of the Port Erin and Port St Mary branches of the Royal British Legion, many service personnel, cubs, scouts, brownies and Rainbows. There were also representatives from our two primary schools.

The service was led by the Rev'd Joe Heaton and the Rev'd Chris Bellfield. As usual it was a moving occasion, especially when the wreathes were laid prior to the close.

The work of the re-ordering of St Catherine's Church is now at the latter stages and it won't be long before we look forward to its re-opening later in the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas as we look forward to our Christmas services when we remember the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

Gerry Callister

The Colours of Christmas

There are several colours that we traditionally associate with Christmas. They are green, red, and gold, and to a lesser extent, white and blue.

Green: Evergreen plants like holly, ivy and mistletoe were used for thousands of years to decorate buildings during the long dark winters. The Romans exchanged evergreen branches in January to wish each other good luck. The ancient Egyptians brought palm branches into their home during the mid-winter festivals. In Europe during the Middle Ages, the 'Paradise tree' which figured in plays about the loss of Eden, was normally a pine tree with red apples tied to it.

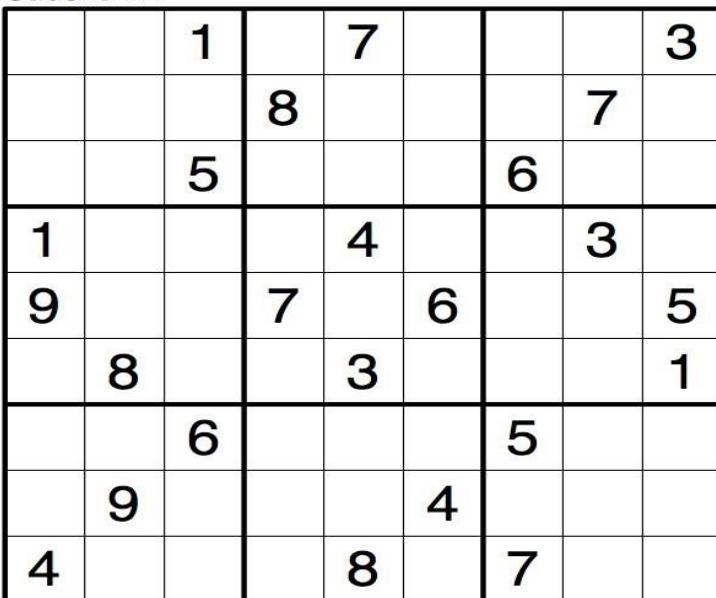
Red: This is the colour of holly berries, and it reminded people of Jesus's blood when He died on the cross. Red is also the colour of bishops' robes, which is how St Nicholas came to be portrayed wearing red. Red is also the colour of fire, which keep you warm during cold dark nights.

Gold: This is the colour of the Sun and light. It was the present of one of the Wise Men, and traditionally, was the colour of the star over Bethlehem.

White: This is the colour of purity and peace. It is the colour of the altar cloth at Christmas.

Blue: This is the colour of Mary's robe. It is also the colour of the sky and heaven.

Sudoku December 2024



Christmas carols

One night as Christmas approached, some friends decided to go carol singing. A man answered the door of one house, and gasped as they launched into the opening lines of the first carol. Within half a minute, he looked stricken. Soon tears were welling up in his eyes. The carollers sang and sang, and the man looked very moved by what he heard. One caroller ventured: "I understand - our singing reminds you of your happy childhood Christmases." The man looked at her with misery in his eyes. "No," he whispered back. "It's just that I am a musician!"

November Sudoku Solution

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

November Crossword Solution

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



The Challenges of Christmas

Christmas is a great time of year, but it's not without its challenges! After one family had put up 250,000 Christmas lights outside, they didn't dare boil a kettle for fear of blowing the system!

The challenge of over-indulging

We all remember the episode of the Vicar of Dibley, where she had to consume four Christmas dinners! Christmas is a time when we usually eat and drink far too much, the average person gaining six pounds in weight. But Christmas is not simply about gaining weight, but losing what weighs us down. *'Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.'* (1 Peter 5:7). Whatever your concerns or worries this Christmas, bring them to God.

The challenge of overspending

In the rush to buy Christmas cards, a woman bought a pack of 50 identical cards. Without reading the verse, she hastily signed and sent them off, but for one. A few days later she read the message: *'This card is just to say a little gift is on the way.'* Christmas is not about getting into debt, but God getting us out of debt. He spent exactly what was needed on the first Christmas night: *'You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.'* (Matthew 1:21).

The challenge is over too quickly

Christmas doesn't last very long, yet the effect of the first Christmas is long-lasting. *'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'* (John 3:16). Jesus has come to bring us life in all its fullness, both for now and all eternity.

How do we face the challenges of Christmas? *'Yet what I can, I give Him - give my heart.'*

Revd Paul Hardingham

Church rules

Six year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel sat together for the Christmas concert in church. Joel kept giggling and whispering until his big sister had had enough. "Be quiet in church!"

"Why?" Joel demanded. "Who is going to make me?"

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

What does your TV licence cover?



Imagine something unlikely! There is one television programme the whole family enjoy, but everyone watches it differently. So - you are resting upstairs and watching it on the portable set in the bedroom. Your partner is still at work and watching it on a laptop in the office. Your son is at university and watching it on his computer live. Your daughter who lives with you is on the train coming home from a short holiday loaded with dirty clothes and using her mobile phone to see the programme. Your neighbour does not have a television and listens to highlights on the radio. A happy typical family scene!

You are covered if you have a television licence as it includes the whole house. If you have let out a part of your house on a separate tenancy, the tenant needs a separate licence.

Your student son must have his own TV Licence if he watches or records programmes as they are being shown on TV or live on an online TV service, download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer. If he shares a house, then one licence is sufficient for the house.

Your partner needs a separate TV Licence for the office if he watches live on an office phone, tablet or computer. Staff or customers do not need a licence if they watch live TV at the business address using their own device, if it is not plugged into the mains, and there is a TV Licence at their home address.

Your daughter is covered by your home licence. The neighbour does not need a licence to listen to the radio.

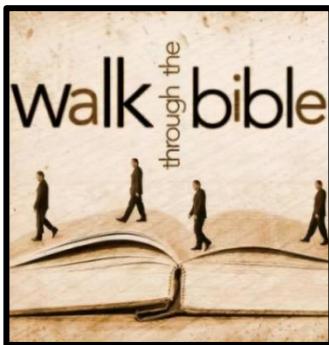
The law changed at the beginning of September. You must have a TV Licence to download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer – live, catch up or on demand. If you already have a TV Licence, you are already covered.

As always this is a guide and if in doubt get advice. The TV Licensing website has some very clear and helpful advice and a set of FAQs. <http://www.tylicensing.co.uk/>

David Pickup

Father Christmas

Of course, I had expected that by the age of seven it was inevitable that my son would begin to have serious thoughts about Father Christmas. Sure enough, one day near Christmas he suddenly said: "Mum, I know something about Father Christmas, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy." Taking a deep breath, I asked him what that might be. "Easy," he said, "They are all nocturnal."



What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Gospel of John

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham continues his series on the books of the Bible, which will run until the end of 2025.

'John's Gospel is like a pool in which a child may wade and an elephant can swim. It is for the beginner in the faith and for the mature Christian.' (Leon Morris).

The Apostle John is usually credited with the authorship of this Gospel, writing in Ephesus at the end of the First Century. His purpose is *'that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.'* (20:31). Throughout he stresses the deity of Christ and presents Jesus as the Son of God.

In the prologue (1:1-14) Jesus is presented as the pre-existent and incarnate Word of God revealed by the Father. It also highlights how He has come as light into the world, so that those who believe in Him will not remain in darkness.

The heart of John's narrative contains 7 *signs* or miracles, which demonstrate who Jesus is and demonstrating His transforming power over creation and people: turning water into wine (2:1-11); healing the royal official's son (4:46-54); healing the paralytic (5:1-18); feeding the 5000 (6:1-14); walking on the water (6:16-21); healing of the man born blind (9:1-41) and raising Lazarus (11:1-44).

After these signs, the story moves into the upper room discourses followed by the story of His death and resurrection. The whole Gospel is a revelation of the glory of God's only Son, who comes to reveal the Father and then returns in glory to the Father. It can be well summed up in the famous verse: *'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'* (John 3:16).

Quiz on John's Gospel

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Why was John the Baptist sent from God? To perform miracles and signs To bear witness of the light To explain the writings of the prophets | 2. What did John the Baptist say when he saw Jesus? Behold the Saviour of the world! You are the true Son of God Behold the Lamb of God! |
| 3. Where did Jesus see Nathanael? Under the fig tree Under the almond branch Within the house | 4. What happened at the marriage of Cana? Jesus healed a crippled man Jesus turned water into wine Jesus forgave the couple's sins |
| To whom did Jesus say, "Ye must be born again"? Nicodemus Simon of Cyrene Joseph of Arimathea | 6. What did Jesus say He could give the woman of Samaria? Bread of life Living water Eternal life |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>7. How long had the infirm man lain at the pool of Bethesda?</p> <p>1 year 25 years 38 years</p> | <p>8. Which of these is not declared as a witness of Jesus?</p> <p>Nature and creation John the Baptist The work God gave Jesus</p> |
| <p>9. What teaching of Jesus did the Jews not understand?</p> <p>The kingdom of God is nigh at hand I am the bread which came down from heaven He who is not for me, is against me</p> | <p>10. What did Jesus say to those who accused the adulteress?</p> <p>He that is without sin, let him first cast a stone Take her and stone her What has she to do with me?</p> |
| <p>11. Which two signs, or miracles, are also recorded in other gospel records?</p> <p>Feeding of the 5,000, raising of Lazarus Feeding of the 5,000, Jesus walks on water Raising of Lazarus, the catch of fishes</p> | <p>12. How did Jesus heal the blind man?</p> <p>He touched his eyes and scales fell off them He anointed his eyes with oil He anointed his eyes with clay and told him to wash</p> |
| <p>13. Which profession does Jesus compare Himself to spiritually?</p> <p>Shepherd Fisherman Carpenter</p> | <p>14. What are the names of Lazarus' sisters?</p> <p>Martha and Ruth Salome and Mary Mary and Martha</p> |
| <p>15. What did Jesus do to the disciples before the Last Supper?</p> <p>Exhorted them to believe Washed their feet Anointed their heads</p> | <p>16. What did Jesus say He would leave with the disciples?</p> <p>Humility Love Peace</p> |
| <p>17. What relation was Annas to Caiaphas?</p> <p>Father-in-law Son Nephew</p> | <p>18. Where was Peter standing when he denied Jesus for the second time?</p> <p>In the streets outside the high priest's yard Warming himself at the fire In the garden of Gethsemane</p> |
| <p>19. What colour robe did Pilate's soldiers put on Jesus?</p> <p>Blue Brown Purple</p> | <p>20. How many fish were caught in the miracle of the draught of fishes?</p> <p>120 144 153</p> |

Answers to November's Quiz

Gabriel (Luke 1:18-19) (1-10)
 Simeon (Luke 2:25-26)
 Widow's son (Luke 7:11-17)
 Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37)
 Three (Luke 11:5-6)
 Rich fool (Luke 12:13-21)
 Herod (Luke 13:31-32)
 Salt (Luke 14:34-35)
 On his shoulders (Luke 15:5)
 Ten (Luke 15:8)

His inheritance (Luke 15:11-13) (11-20)
 Wasting goods (Luke 16:1)
 Abraham's (Luke 16:19-22)
 Priests (Luke 17:11-14)
 Twice a week (Luke 18:9-14)
 Jericho (Luke 19:1-2)
 Sword (Luke 22:35-38)
 The thief on the cross (Luke 23:39-43)
 Two (Luke 24:13-35)
 Fish (Luke 24:36-43)

All in the month of December



500 years ago, on 24th Dec 1524 Vasco da Gama, Portuguese explorer, died of malaria. He was the first European to reach India by sea.

200 years ago, on 21st Dec 1824 James Parkinson, British surgeon and politician, died. He was the first person to describe Parkinson's disease, in 1817.

125 years ago, on 5th Dec 1899 Henry Tate, British sugar merchant and philanthropist, died. He established the Tate Gallery in London. **Also on 16th Dec 1899** Noel Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives*, and *Blithe Spirit*.

80 years ago, from 16th Dec 1944 to 16th Jan 1945 the Battle of the Bulge (Belgium) took place. German forces launched a surprise assault on the Allies in the Ardennes Forest – their last major counter-offensive operation of the war.

75 years ago, on 13th Dec 1949 Jerusalem became the capital of Israel, replacing Tel Aviv.

60 years ago, on 31st Dec 1964 Donald Campbell broke the world water speed record, and became the only person to break both the land speed record and the water speed record in the same year.

50 years ago, on 24th Dec 1974 British politician John Stonehouse was arrested in Australia (on suspicion of being Lord Lucan.) He had faked his death on 20th November by leaving a pile of clothing on a beach in Miami Florida.

40 years ago, on 3rd Dec 1984 the Bhopal disaster took place in India. A poisonous gas leak at a Union Carbide pesticide plant killed thousands of people and left at least 120,000 with long-term health problems. **Also 40 years ago, on 31st Dec 1984** the Bank of England stopped producing one pound notes. They remained legal tender until 1988.

30 years ago, on 9th Dec 1994 Sinn Fein held its first formal talks with the British government. This eventually led to the IRA ceasefire, the Good Friday Agreement, and the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998.

25 years ago, on 2nd Dec 1999 that the UK devolved political power in Northern Ireland to the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive Committee. **Also on 31st Dec 1999** the London Eye – the world's tallest Ferris wheel at the time, was officially opened on the banks of the River Thames. It opened to passengers in March 2000.

20 years ago, on 26th Dec 2004 the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (also called the Boxing Day Tsunami) took place. A massive undersea earthquake near Sumatra caused a devastating tsunami that swamped coastal areas in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and East Africa. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history, killing more than 230,000 people in 14 countries.



The “cheek and chic, pose and poise” of Noel Coward

Just 125 years ago, on 16th December 1899, Noël Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives* and *Blithe Spirit*. Coward was a supremely talented individual, starting as a child dancer who made his professional debut at the age of 11 and progressing to become a success in many areas of show business. He published more than 50 plays and hundreds of songs, most of them set in the kind of high society that he himself soon inhabited, despite his unpretentious upbringing in Teddington. His acting and directing career lasted six decades.

He received some education at the Chapel Royal Choir School, but he later described his spiritual attitude as “unregenerate” and became agnostic. He said: “I have a selfless absorption in the well-being and achievements of Noël Coward... I am jolly kind to everybody and still attentive and devoted to my dear old mother.”

He found it easy to make friends and possessed what *Time* magazine called “a sense of personal style, a combination of cheek and chic, pose and poise”.

His many successes, including those in cabaret from the 1950s, led to a knighthood in 1970. Much earlier, by 1930, he had become one of the world’s highest-earning writers, with an annual income of £50,000 – equivalent to more than £4 million today.

During the Second World War he worked for British Intelligence and ran the British propaganda office in Paris. It is reported that Churchill preferred his role in entertaining the troops.

Towards the end of the 1960s Coward developed arteriosclerosis and suffered from bouts of memory loss. He received many other awards, including an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Sussex University.

Tim Lenton

Christmas play

The Sunday School Christmas play was in full swing when the teacher prompted: “And what was it that guided the Wise Men from the East?” Right on cue, the pre-schoolers turned their large white letters to face the audience. However, the last four children in the lineup had somehow reversed their sequence, and so the answer was: C H R I S T M A S R A T S.

From the Registers

Funerals September 2024:

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 2 nd Sept. | 2.30pm | Rose Collister | Service (MT) | Burial (RBG) |
| 20 th Sept. | 11am | Ronald Couch | | Ashes (RBG) |

Funerals October 2024:

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 10 th October | 11am | Doris Fielding | Service (KC) | Burial (RBG) |
| 11 th October | 12.30pm | Peta Mills | Service (SM) | Crematorium |
| 19 th October | 11.30am | Ivan Kneale | | Ashes (RBG) |
| 14 th October | 10am | Marylyn Atkins | Service (KC) | Burial (RBG) |
| 18 th October | 11.30am | Raymond Buchan | | Ashes (RBG) |
| 31 st October | 11.30am | Susan Bowes | Service (KC) | Crematorium |
| 28 th October | 11am | Joyce Duggan | | Ashes (RBG) |

Wedding October 2024:

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------|--|
| 26 th October | 2.30pm | Matthew Williams & Christine Johnston (SP) |
|--------------------------|--------|--|

| | |
|-----|----------------------|
| MT | Mount Tabor |
| KC | Kirk Christ |
| SM | St Mary's Church |
| SP | St Peter's Church |
| RBG | Rushen Burial Ground |

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,
Rhiannon Manning (Tel. 832275)

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



Our meeting in November was held in St Catherine's Hall where 20 members and two guests listened to a most interesting talk by Rev David Shirtliff. He told us all about the retreat house Thie Dy Vea in Peel. He spoke very enthusiastically about their mixed programme of events covering everything from quiet individual peaceful breaks to longer residential retreats for groups. We were all so impressed that a visit to the house will be on our agenda for next year.

Other news from MU included information on the craft day that will be held on the 28th November when funds will be raised for the MU family charity AFIA (Away From It All).

The Advent Service will be held at St Peters Church in Onchan on 5th December. There will be an envelope collection for Victim Support. This will also be the last day for the collection of costume jewellery that will be sold at an MU coffee morning also in aid of Victim Support. If anyone can't go to the service but would like to give an envelope or costume jewellery, then please let me know before the 5th and I can take them for you.

The Rise Up Campaign requests that you hold a one minute silence at 1.03pm on Saturday 30th November. This is to mark that one in three women worldwide has been subject to abuse.

MU are asking for volunteers to help with any of the jobs such as typing, finance, prison service or any of its projects. If you are interested in helping, please talk to me or any of the MU trustees.

Our next meeting will be at St Mary's Church on Monday 9th December at 2pm. This will be our Christmas Celebration so please feel free to bring a small plate of finger food and a reading, a story, a poem or an activity to help us to have a fun celebratory Christmas Party. Everyone welcome, see you there.

Lesley Scott (832919)

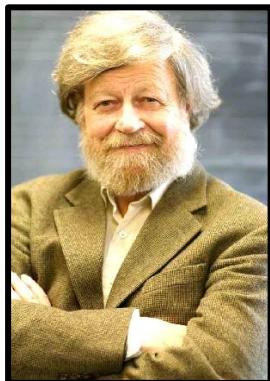
Nolite Timere (Do not be afraid) (By Nigel Beeton)

1. Do not be afraid
Of angels in the sky
Nor of the Babe in manger laid
Or of the death He'd die.

2. Do not be afraid
Of magi bearing gold
Their clothes of velvet and rich braid
As mysteries unfold.

3. Do not be afraid
Of Herod's fatal rage
Or soldiers on a killing raid
On those of tender age.

4. Fear not, instead rejoice!
For joy the angels bring!
Good news is in the angel's voice
Of Christ, our Saviour King!



'Glorious the song when God's the theme'

Morten Lauridsen, American composer

In the Middle Ages, at the end of the Christmas Midnight Mass, the clergy would often tell the animals' version of the Nativity story and imitate the sound of each animal. The cock would crow 'Christus natus est.' (Christ is born). The cows would moo 'Ubi?' (Where?). The sheep would bleat 'In Bethlehem.' And the donkey would cry 'Eamus' (Let us go there). It was a way of expressing something of the joy and fun of the Christmas celebration.

Commercialism with all its trappings has sadly made that fun and festivity the be all and end all of Christmas. We need to capture again the heart of the Incarnation, which is a mystery rooted in silence and wonder. The book of Wisdom reads 'For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, the all-powerful Word leapt from heaven, from the royal throne.'

Those words remind us that at Bethlehem there is that silence and wonder. The animals may rejoice to tell the Good News of the Incarnation at the Midnight Mass, but at the crib they gather with the Holy Family and the shepherds. We are given no words of Mary and Joseph and the shepherds around the crib. The mystery of what was happening seems to have intensified their silence. They did not know what the future held for this new-born child, but they did know that God was acting in a special way. They were like people standing in the faint light of the dawn, and their response was an expectant and wondering worship.

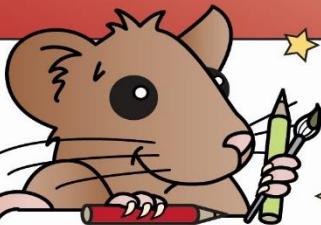
It is at the heart of this month's beautiful and moving setting of some words from the matins of Christmas morning, 'O magnum mysterium.' 'O great mystery and wondrous sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in the manger. Blessed Virgin, whose womb was found worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia.' The words were set by the American composer, Morten Lauridsen in 1994 and first performed a few days before Christmas in Los Angeles. Since then, the setting has been sung by choirs, both professional and amateur, around the world.

Morten Lauridsen has composed many works for the human voice, and all of them are sensitive and heartfelt responses to the words chosen. No more so than in 'O magnum mysterium.' After the opening chord, the altos introduce us to a motif that pervades the work: D to a rising 4th, and a falling 3rd that lights on A. It is like the movement of the heart, rising in praise and resting in hope at the mystery of the Incarnation. The joy is inner and deep and suffuses the music as it reaches a climax with Alleluia. The final words are that all this glory lies in a manger, where the animals gather.

The world will call us in this month to a frenzy of doing and buying amid a clamour of noise and muzak. 'O magnum mysterium' by Morten Lauridsen invites us to step into the stable again and join the animals, the Holy Family and the shepherds to find a joy and a wonder there that can nourish the soul. At the crib we can know 'the silence of eternity interpreted by Love' and with the choir we can respond Alleluia.

Revd Michael Burgess

Children's Page



Mouse Makes

"Jesus said,
I am the ___ Y
and the ___ U ___
and the ___ I ___.
No one comes to the Father
except through me."
John 14:6

"The child to be born
will be called
H ___ _ _ _ , the
_ _ _ _ _ of _ _ _ _ _"
Luke 1:35

"For unto you is born
this day a
S ___ _ _ _ _ _ who is
_ _ R ___ _ _
the ___ R ___"
Luke 2:11

THE GREATEST GIFT

"She will bear a son,
and shall call his name

for he will save his
people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21

"Jesus said,
I am the

and the life."
John 11:25

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

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

P R O P H E T I
R E D E E M E R
I E M I L I G
E M E S S I A H
S R M E G F T
T E A C H E R E

JESUS
THE
GREATEST
GIFT
OF ALL!

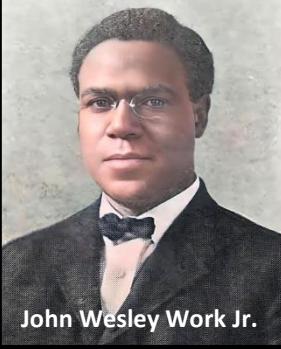
E V E R L A S T I N G
K I N G O F K I N G S
I N K I G W F D O U
S E S O N O F G O D D
S E W O C O U W O R D
C O U N S E L L O R U

EMMANUEL • MESSIAH
REDEEMER • KING OF KINGS
SON OF MAN • EVERLASTING • SHEPHERD • PRIEST • PROPHET • TEACHER
LIGHT • BREAD • VINE • DOOR • LAMB • COUNSELLOR • CHRISTMAS • GIFT

Find the words from the Bible verses too!

Dec24 © deborah noble @ parishpump.co.uk

The Story Behind the Carol



John Wesley Work Jr.

Go, tell it on the mountain

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a Holy light

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

The shepherds feared and trembled
When, lo! Above the Earth
Rang out the angel chorus
That hailed our Savior's birth

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

Down in a lowly manger
Our humble Christ was born
And brought us all salvation
That blessed Christmas morn

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born
That Jesus Christ is born

John Wesley Work Jr.

The Jubilee Singers started out in 1871 as a brave little band of young people led by George White and Ella Shepperd. Many of them were former slaves, and their mission was to raise money for their struggling university on a singing tour through cities of the North.

They began by performing only traditional hymns and classical arrangements to show their musical training and their performances received a moderate amount of attention, but the journey was anything but easy.

When their money ran out and they had to scrimp to get coats to protect themselves from the cold Northern winter, they kept going. When they were met with threats and hostility and were turned away from hotel after hotel in Ohio because of the colour of their skin, they kept going.

When reviews derided their music and editorial cartoons depicted them as minstrel singers, they still kept going.

At last, three days before Christmas, the tide turned. The choir had run out of funds when the most famous preacher of the day, Henry Ward Beecher, invited them to his church. They began to sing the songs of their hearts, the spirituals they'd learned from their parents during slavery days.

And the wealthy congregation responded with tears... and donations. Soon, they went from struggling to successful to, eventually, famous—world-famous, when their following tour of England had them appearing before nobility and even Queen Victoria herself.

Their concerts were the first time most Americans were introduced to spirituals, including "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," a seasonal crowd favourite, so that the good news could truly spread "Over the hills and everywhere."

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 2024

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 Nativity plays being performed at our island's primary schools prior to Christmas
- 4th Our fellow neighbours and the love and respect we have for them
- 5th Mothers' Union Advent Carol Service today at St Peter's Onchan at 7am
- 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 The annual Christingle Service at the Parish Church at 4pm on this day
- 9th Children with disabilities which require them to be cared for by others
- 10th Port St Mary Commissioner's Carol Service at 7.30pm on this day at Mary's Church
- 11th The vicar, readers and retired clergy and all they do for the parish
- 12th The relatives of those who have died throughout the parish during 2024
- 13th Sportsmen and women providing enjoyment and competitiveness
- 14th Those who have no homes and are wondering what Christmas will bring to them
- 15th Rushen Parochial Church Council and the work it does for the parish
- 16th All those who do such good work for charities across the island
- 17th All children and their many expectations during this Christmastide
- 18th The Carols, Candles and Cake event at St Peter's Church this evening at 7pm
- 19th The Port Erin Commissioners' Carol Service at St Catherine's Church at 7pm
- 20th Gerry Callister, his dedication to the parish, and all he does for everyone
- 21st Sidespersons and the important role they play during church services
- 22nd The Parish Carol Service at Kirk Christ at 6.30pm this evening
- 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/January 24/25

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1 st December <i>(Advent Sunday)</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) |
| 8 th December <i>(Advent 2)</i> | 9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm 4pm | Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's All-Age Service (CW) St Catherine's Holy Communion CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP) Kirk Christ Christingle Service |
| 15 th December <i>(Advent 3)</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 Holy Communion (BCP) |
| 22 nd December <i>(Advent 4)</i> | 11am 6.30pm | St Catherine's Joint Holy Communion (CW) Kirk Christ Parish Carol Service |
| 24 th December <i>(Christmas Eve)</i> | 4pm 7.30pm 11.30pm | St Mary's Crib Service. St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP) St Catherine's Midnight Communion (CW) |
| 25 th December <i>(Christmas Day)</i> | 10am | Kirk Christ Joint Christmas Day Service (CW) |
| 29 th December <i>(Christmas 1)</i> | 11am | Kirk Christ Joint Service (CW) |
| 5 th January <i>(Epiphany)</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) |
| 12 th January <i>(Baptism of Christ)</i> | 9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm | Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW) St Catherine's Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's All-Age Service St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP) |
| 19 th 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 Morning Prayer (CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP) |
| 26 th January <i>(Epiphany 3)</i> | 11am (CW) Common Worship | Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW) (BCP) Book of Common Prayer |

Contact Details for Rushen Parish cont'd....

St Mary's Sunday School Leader:

Mrs Claudia Koenig, Fois Fraon, Fistard, Port St Mary 832974/495630

St Mary's Ladies Working Party

Mrs Lesley Scott, 20 Rhenwyllan Close, Port St Mary 832919
(Mobile: 07808254356 email: lesley@pharmaconsulting.co.uk)

St Catherine's Hall Bookings:

Mr & Mrs G Callister, 60 Ballamaddrell, Port Erin 474924/834627

Web Site/E-mail:

www.rushenparish.org.uk rushenparishorg@gmail.com

Magazine Editor

Mr David Bowman, The Old Bakery, Qualtroughs Lane, 837117/260539
Ballafesson, Port Erin

e-mail: dbow43@manx.net

Articles for January's magazine should be submitted to the editor no later than 15th December.

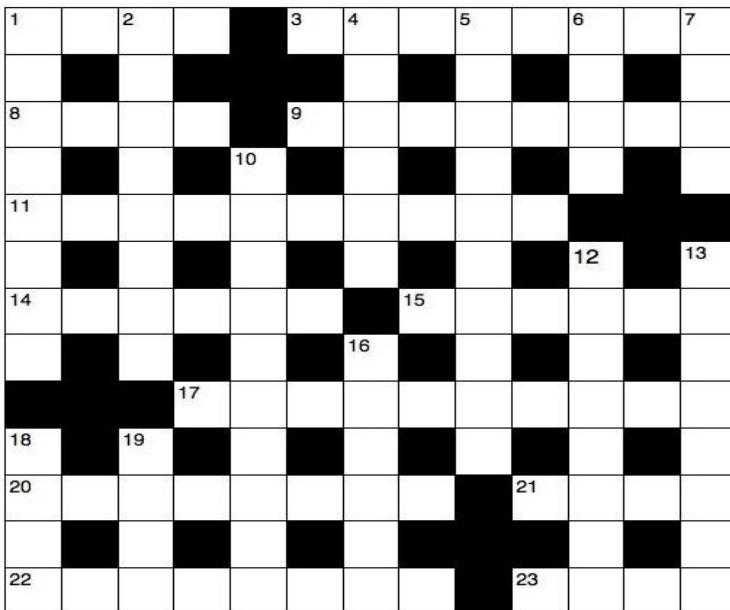
Parish Director of Music:

Mr M D Porter, 10 Fairway Drive, Rowany, Port Erin 832143

Churchyard Enquiries:

Please contact Mr Harry Dawson: 478050/835770
or Mr G Callister: 474924/834627

Crossword December 2024



Across

1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
21 Rite (anag.) (4)
22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

Down

1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)
2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)
5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)
19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)