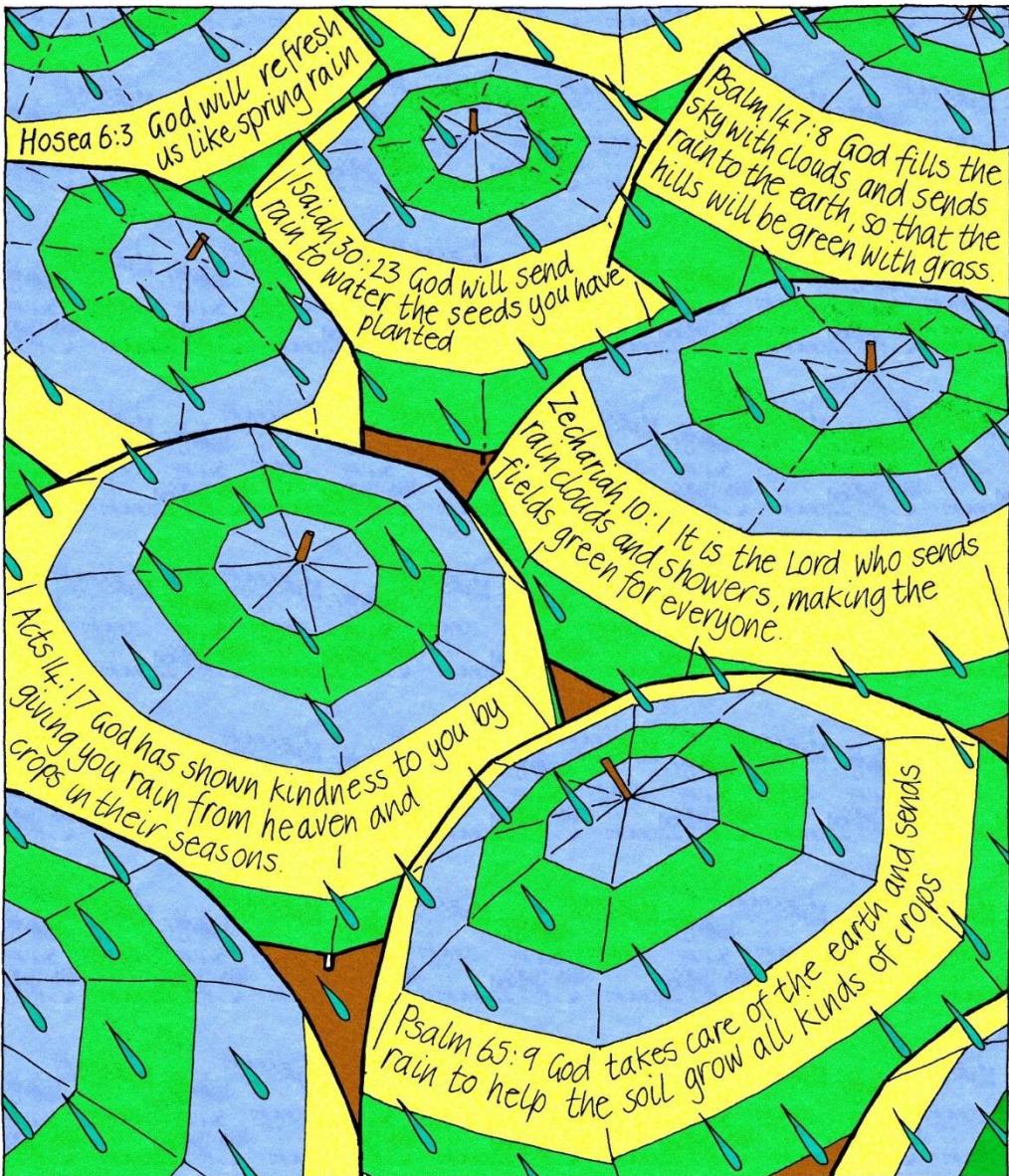




February 2025

# Rushen Parish Magazine



## Contact Details for Rushen Parish

**Vicar:**

Rev'd Joe Heaton (rev.joeheaton@gmail.com) 832275  
Rushen Vicarage, Barracks Road, Port St Mary

## Readers:

Mrs Margaret Galloway  
Mrs Wendy Heaton  
Mr Harry Dawson

## Active Clergy

Rev Roger Harper  
Rev John Gulland  
Rev Ginny Viner

## Family/Youth Worker

Natalie Heaton      [rushenparishyouth@gmail.com](mailto:rushenparishyouth@gmail.com)

## Church Wardens:

Mr Gerry Callister, 60 Ballamaddrell, Port Erin	474924/834627
Mr Harry Dawson, Thalloo Reagh, Cregneash	478050/835770
Mr Peter Hayhurst, Fois Fraon, Fistard	832974/464949

## PCC Secretary:

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

## PCC Treasurer:

Mr Stephen Curtis, Clybane Cottage, Phildraw Road, 823475  
Ballasalla

## Parish Safeguarding Officer for Children and Vulnerable People:

Rhiannon Manning    rushenparishorg@gmail.com    832275

## Parish Administrative Assistant

Rhiannon Manning    rushenparishorg@gmail.com    832275



## From the Editor

We are now at the time of the year when 'Love' seems to be the theme. On 14<sup>th</sup> February many unsuspecting men, women, girls and boys will receive a Valentine's Day card and the sender will either remain anonymous, or leave the person receiving the card looking for clues as to who has sent it. Children love it, especially when the receiver guesses who it is.

Pauline and I first met at a night school class in September 1962. As time went by we began to sit together and enjoy each other's company. It became so obvious that there was some sort of chemistry between us, but up to that point I had never had a girlfriend and was quite shy about the protocols one must go through to show that I quite liked this young lady who, like me was studying 'A' level Biology. I hated it whenever she didn't turn up, especially as I had no idea why, and was relieved the following week when she reappeared, and our silly pranks could resume again.

Christmas came and went, and snow in abundance followed. This became part of a big freeze which meant that schools and colleges had to remain closed on safety grounds. Even my beloved Manchester United were unable to play its weekly football matches, and seeing Pauline a virtual impossibility, as she lived eight miles away from where I resided. The only contact between us was that we each sent a Valentine's card on 14<sup>th</sup> February, neither of which disclosed the sender's name. Oh how I had wished that I had put on my name! Of course we guessed that we had sent a card to each other, but even then we weren't sure.

The big freeze thawed in early February and schools and colleges began to reopen and football resumed. At the first evening class I plucked up the courage to ask Pauline if she would like to accompany me to the first football match after the freeze. She too was an ardent Manchester United follower. It so happened that on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1963 Manchester United were due to play Blackpool at Old Trafford, and my invite was accepted. At 3.15pm United scored a goal, and in our excitement we both held hands. It was the start of a loving relationship which, although Pauline is no longer with me, still goes on. As far as I am concerned love is there for life and beyond. Incidentally Manchester United beat Blackpool 2.1!

Jesus was asked which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. ' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself. Perhaps we should all treat these two commandments as our New Year's Resolution so that 'Love' surpasses everything else in the world. Maybe wars will cease and peace prevail. Then, the humble Valentine Day's Card will be accepted as a true token of love, and one to be treasured for ever.

David

## Aspects of Romantic Love



### Aspects of Love

God obviously approves of romance, after all, putting Adam and Eve alone together in the Garden of Eden was His idea, and romance has been around ever since.

The history of the Israelites began with three great romances: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Rachel. The on-going history of Israel was deeply affected by later romances: Esther and King Xerxes, David's love affair with Bathsheba, and Solomon's marriage to hundreds of foreign wives. There is even an entire book in the Old Testament devoted to the love of a man and woman: the Song of Solomon!

When we reach the New Testament, we find real love between Joseph and Mary (even when Joseph thought Mary had been faithless, he did not want to harm her). St Paul, though himself a bachelor, nevertheless spent a lot of time urging Christians to love and be kind and faithful and considerate to their spouses. He even wrote 1 Corinthians 13, the great love chapter that is read at millions of weddings worldwide 2000 years later.

Down the centuries ever since, romantic love has been critical in shaping history (Antony and Cleopatra), in shaping cultural ideals (King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table). Some of our favourite stories are built on romance : Puccini's *Tosca*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*.

Romance remains as prominent now as it ever was, added to which we have films, television and drama all flying the romantic flag. Wherever we look, whatever we do, romance continues to permeate every aspect of life.

People make amazing sacrifices for love. They defy their family, forsake their culture, turn their back on wealth and position, to be with their loved one. People give their loved ones amazing gifts. Surely the most extravagant was the gift of the Shah Jahan, who built the Taj Mahal in India for his favourite wife, Mumtaz Mahal.

Romance is still alive and well in Britain, last year we sent about 25 million Valentines to our beloved ones.

And what of the future? Well, just as the Bible begins with a love story, so it ends with one. And *you are involved!* For actually the greatest Love Story of all time is that between God and His people.

Christ is described in Revelation as our heavenly Bridegroom, and the Church is His beloved Bride. He has given us the most expensive present of all, Himself. And, just as in all the best romances, the story will end with the bride and groom getting together at last, so at the End of Time, Christ will return for His Bride.



## Ladies Working Party – St Mary's

On 7<sup>th</sup> January, after a short festive break, the ladies resumed their Tuesday afternoon meetings in St Mary's Church where we enjoyed our usual warm friendship and fellowship.

At each meeting, we catch up with all the news, particularly of those who have been unwell, awaiting test results or operations, and we pray for God's healing.

In December, we had enjoyed our Christmas lunch in the Port Erin Station Hotel, decorating the church for Christmas and assisting with refreshments at the back of church after the always enjoyable Christmas Eve Crib Service.

The weekly Monday morning Coffee and Chat meetings continue to be well supported, and are now a well-established feature after one year of operation, providing a warm space, coffee, biscuits and friendly chat to members of the local community, for a small donation. Huge thanks to Lesley for organising the rota for this and also the rota for the church Flowers, and to all our willing helpers.

Donations have been made to the RNLI and we await the installation of our handrails to assist worshippers in managing the steps to the chancel, for communion. Our much-missed member, Peta, and her family, would be delighted to know that her mission to leave a little duck wherever she travelled has been picked up by the LWP, and Rev Ginny has recently sent us photos of some of the many places she has left one in Peta's memory.

We continue to support The Leprosy Mission, and in the Spring, we look forward to meeting our new Rep, Sam, who is taking over management of our area from Mike who has moved to Bath. (More info to follow.)

With love and very best wishes to all

**Pat Thomson**

### ***No news***

*A traveller was marooned in a small town because of a landslide caused by heavy rain. It fell in torrents for three days. Looking out of the window of the restaurant, he finally remarked to the waitress: "This is like the flood."*

*"The what?"*

*"The flood. Surely you have heard about the great flood and Noah and the Ark?"*

*"Sorry, sir," she replied. "I haven't seen a newspaper for four days."*



## St Mary's Sunday School

Following our Christmas break, and the joint service to celebrate the long-awaited re-opening of St Catherine's, our first gathering of the year back at St Mary's was for our all-age service mid-January. We welcomed the Rev. Margaret Burrow, who led a very thought-provoking interactive service on the Baptism of Christ. Thomas read the first lesson from Isaiah 43, in which God assures His people that they need not be afraid in difficult situations, because He loves them and will always be with them, leading them through the waters and even through the fire! Following the reading, the Sunday School joyfully led the congregation in singing

'Our God is a great big God,' as a way of expressing our gratitude to God for His love and His faithfulness.

After Laura had read the gospel passage from Luke chapter 3, Margaret started her talk by inviting us all to close our eyes and imagine the scene: a crowd by a river listening to an unkempt long-haired bearded man in unusual clothes made of camel hair, his loud voice telling them all to "REPENT!", turn from their old ways and be baptised! Another man coming along, asking to be baptised and getting fully immersed in the water... then Heaven opening and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove... and this voice from Heaven declaring that he is no other than God's own beloved Son! Wow!

Having got us to imagine the scene, Margaret then asked for a volunteer to draw the scene on to a Flipchart, and she found the perfect artists in Margot (aged 8) and Sheila (aged 90)! While we were all admiring their beautiful artistic creation, Margaret drew our attention to print-outs of some rather different representations of the scene, e.g. one by a Korean artist, depicting Jesus and John as Koreans, and one of the Jesus Mafa illustrations (created to help native black Africans to identify with and better understand the Bible) showing Jesus and John looking like people from Cameroon.

Margaret wanted to show us that we only have a limited view and understanding of God and Jesus, but that God is so much more, and that because Jesus lives inside each of us (through our faith in Him), it is only right that we imagine Him to look like us, but that He will obviously look different to different people around the world. These seemingly unusual illustrations were also useful in getting us to think about other parts of the world and about what was currently happening there, eg floods and fires, earthquakes and wars, and to pray for the people there.

Many thanks to all the children and young people who read a lesson and/or a prayer and who helped with leading the singing - as always, they all did very well indeed! Following the service, we all enjoyed a good catch-up over tea, juice and biscuits served by our wonderful ladies. Thank you! We are now looking forward to our regular Sunday School meetings twice a month, as well as our next all-age service in February.

**With love and blessings**  
**Claudia**

## Nunc dimittis

**Editor: Nigel Beeton writes:** "2<sup>nd</sup> February is Candlemas - when we commemorate the presentation of Christ in the Temple. Zechariah was the priest there, he had been told by God that he would meet the Messiah before his death, and his beautiful prayer in Luke 2:29-32 became known as 'Nunc Dimittis.'

A child within my arms now lays  
Asleep, He's in my care  
The Son of God, the Spirit says  
And now I speak this prayer:

*O Lord, now let me go in peace  
According to Your Word  
My earthly life may gladly cease,  
For I have seen You, Lord*

Salvation You have now prepared  
Before the face of men  
Salvation with the world is shared  
So all may live again

*O Lord, now let me go in peace  
According to Your Word  
My earthly life may gladly cease,  
For I have seen You, Lord*

A light upon the Gentiles, He  
And Israel's glory, too  
Now all Your saving love may see  
And all may come to You.

*O Lord, now let me go in peace  
According to Your Word  
My earthly life may gladly cease,  
For I have seen You, Lord.*

## What you have in common with a woodcarving

Woodcarving isn't as straightforward as it seems. You don't begin with a block of wood; you begin with a piece of paper. The first step is to draw a plan of what you want to carve, and only when you've got that right do you start to shape your piece of wood. The carver then works his block with his plan alongside it. He cuts those bits of wood away that he doesn't want, and shapes what's left until it ever more closely resembles that original plan. Only when the design on the wood and the paper plan are identical has the carver finished his job. He's then made exactly what he'd hoped for, while working all along from that original plan.

It's the same for our lives. God is the master carpenter. He has a unique plan for each one of us, which is a blueprint of what He hopes we will become. As we go through life, God shapes us, cutting away those bits of us that He doesn't want and which would spoil what He hopes we'll come to look like. He then gradually shapes what's left until we look ever more like that original blueprint. Only when the two are identical will God's work be over.

But there's one big difference between a human being and a block of wood. A block of wood sits impassively on the carver's bench while he works at it. The wood cannot help the process along and has no idea what's happening to it. God very much hopes that we'll help Him in the process of being moulded and shaped into His pattern. That's why we read the Bible and worship and pray: to find out just what His plan is for each one of us. Only when we have some idea of what He wants us to be can we help Him in the process.





## News from St Catherine's & Kirk Christ



At Kirk Christ the Christmas services were a joy once again. Because of the on-going refurbishment at St Catherine's Church, additional services were arranged at Kirk Christ for its congregation. These were the annual Christingle Service, Port Erin Commissioner's Carol Service and the Midnight Holy Communion Service on Christmas Eve. All three were well attended. It was also good to see members of the Kirk Christ congregation joining the services and singing favourite and familiar carols. I'm sure that everyone enjoyed worshipping at Kirk Christ during the festive season.

St Catherine's congregation continued to meet in St Catherine's Church Hall whilst the building work was being completed in the church. In addition the hall was used for other activities one of which was Rushen Silver Band's Coffee Morning. Lots of people attended and enjoyed the festive atmosphere and sang along with the carols played by the band itself. On 5<sup>th</sup> January the congregations of our four churches in the parish joined together for a re-opening service at St Catherine's Church. This was the first service held at the church since the end of July 2024. The church now has a new sound system, carpeting throughout, a new heating system and many more new features, far too many to list here. It is with gratitude to the late Arthur Cregeen, a former church warden, and faithful servant of the parish who's legacy to the parish enabled the refurbishment to be undertaken. The parish is so lucky to have worshippers who, like Arthur, have left funds to our four churches so that they can be maintained, and used for generations to come.

**Gerry Callister**

### **'You can count on me' by David Pickup**

*"Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."* (Matthew 18:19-21) I cannot count in church. I do not know why, but I cannot. I mean that, when I am at the front and leading a service, I try to add up how many people there are in the congregation. We are supposed to do this and enter the figures in the church register, but I find it difficult. I usually give up and hope a warden has counted them. Do you include the leader and the organist? Well, yes, to increase the figures!

I am not sure why counting in church is a problem, as people do not move around. Yes, it is sometimes difficult to see heads in pews, but it should be easy. I start on one side and go to the back and then up the other side but then I get lost and have to start again. Sometimes the congregation see me looking from one to another and nodding gently to myself. Numbers are important of course, but I am in two minds. Sometimes there are only a few and I think the pressure is off me, but it is disappointing, working hard to prepare a service and then not have many there. Often it seems that the congregation try a trick on me - and wait until the very last minute to rush in! Numbers are important, but the most important figures are two and three. The most important relationships are between partners or a child and their parents. There is the same idea in the Bible. The Church of England's Order for Evening Prayer puts it like this:

*"Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests".*

I always like to pause between saying out loud the words two and three, which is good because I can just about count up to three!

## Sudoku February 2025

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

### Father

*My family was at the dinner table when my five-year-old daughter startled us all by announcing to my three-year-old son: "Dad is not your real father."*

*My son retorted: "Yes, he is!"*

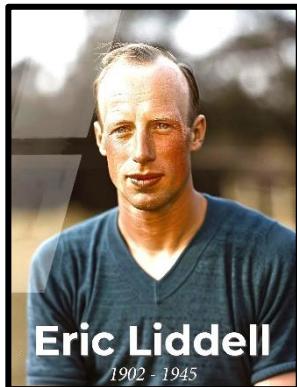
*"No, he's not," she insisted. "God is your heavenly father." Then pointing to my husband, she added: "That's only our homely father!"*

### January's Sudoku Solution

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

### January's Crossword Solution

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



## Eric Liddell – from Olympic star to Japanese internment prisoner

*Editor: Tim Lenton looks back on a much-loved Olympic runner.*

Eighty years ago, on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1945, Scottish athlete Eric Liddell died. An Olympic gold medallist in 1924 at Paris, he had withdrawn from the 100m heat because it was held on a Sunday, and had entered the 400m instead. The story is featured in the film *Chariots of Fire*.

Liddell died in a Japanese internment camp in China, aged 43. He wrote to his wife on the day he died saying he was suffering from a nervous breakdown brought on by overwork, but he was also malnourished and had an undiagnosed brain tumour. Five months after his death, the camp was liberated.

Liddell was born in China to Scottish missionary parents and attended boarding school at Eltham College in South London, where he is remembered as an outstanding all-round athlete “entirely without vanity”. He later went to the University of Edinburgh, which awarded him a posthumous degree last year in recognition of his contribution to sport and humanity.

Originally intending to run in the 200m at Paris, Liddell discovered en route that the heats for the event would take place on a Sunday. So, he switched to the 400m – and won in an Olympic record time of 47.6 seconds.

“God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure,” he said.

He returned to China the following year and stayed there until his death, apart from two furloughs to Scotland, during one of which in 1932 he was ordained a minister of the Congregational Union of Scotland. He then continued his selfless missionary work, largely as a teacher, in China, where he married Florence Mackenzie, a China-born Canadian. Their daughter Heather died in 2023.

When Scotsman Allan Wells won the 100m gold medal in Moscow in 1980, he dedicated his victory to Eric Liddell.

### Visit

*The new vicar was doing the rounds to meet his parishioners. At one house where he knocked, a woman inside called out: “Is that you, Angel?”*

*The vicar hesitated and then called back: “No, but I’m from the same department.”*



## **Prayers of the Bible: Praying in your Discouragements**

*Editor: It can be hard to pray sometimes, and most of us need all the help we can get! This is the second part of a new series which will run to the end of the year:*

*'Moses said to the Lord, "...I am not able to carry all this people alone, the burden is too heavy for me..."' Numbers 11:10-15.*

discouragement. The opening verses of the chapter relate how divine punishment fell on the people of Israel because they complained about almost everything. Moses prayed and the punishment stopped but not the people's complaints. They wanted meat to eat. For years they had been sustained by manna from heaven, but now they longed for the fish, cucumbers and melons they had eaten in Egypt (vv.5,6). They forgot how the Lord had delivered them from Pharaoh's bondage. Now they preferred Egyptian food, and the slavery that went with it, to the goodness of the Lord and His provision for them.

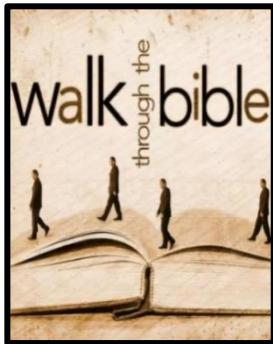
Moses was beside himself with despair. Would these ungrateful people never stop complaining? Then the Lord's anger threatened the people again (v.10). Moses was caught in the middle. On one side of him the people complained, and on the other side God's wrath was about to fall. Moses couldn't go on. His frustration broke out in petulant questions to the Lord. 'Why are you dealing so severely with me?' 'Why do you lay this burden on me?' 'Did I conceive these people?' 'Why am I a nursing mother to them?' 'Am I responsible for getting them to Egypt?' 'How can I provide meat for so many?' 'Lord, this burden is too great for me.' 'I'd rather die now than go on like this' (see vv.11-15).

Moses was depressed, irritable and resentful. He poured it all out before the Lord. It was a prayer born of frustration and anger. He was angry with his ungrateful congregation, and he was angry with God. Why did the Lord leave it all to him? After all, it was God's plan to bring the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan. Moses had only gone along with it because God commanded him. But now it was all too much. Worn out with listening to the people's whining and not sure of what God would do next, Moses had had enough. He blamed the Lord for giving him a burden he couldn't carry, and he wanted to die.

But God answered Moses graciously! He understood the frustration, the petulance, the lack of faith and the rebellious spirit that blamed God for it all. He provided Moses with seventy elders who eased the burden of leadership (vv.16, 17). He sent an east wind that brought quails into the camp and provided meat for them (vv.31, 32). In grace and mercy God 'overlooked' the faults of Moses and sent him help and refreshment.

In our deepest disappointments, God understands. In our frustrations, God is merciful. When we lash out at circumstances and even at God Himself, He does not answer in kind. In our deepest discouragement, His love and grace and understanding are with us still.

**Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle**



## What's the Big Idea? An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament: Job

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

'Why does God allow suffering?' This is a frequently asked question of Christians, because we believe in a God who is both good and powerful and it is explored in the book of Job. This book is part of the wisdom literature, along with Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

Job was both wealthy and righteous, yet he experienced catastrophic suffering, losing all his wealth, children and health. This is portrayed as a result of Satan's challenge to God, testing whether Job's devotion to God was dependent on his circumstances or not. The main body of the book (3:1-42:6) consists of dialogues between Job, his friends (Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar) and God. Job and his friends assume that God is almighty and just, and that no human being is wholly innocent. In the three cycles of speeches they wrestle with the reasons for Job's suffering, remembering his morally upright character.

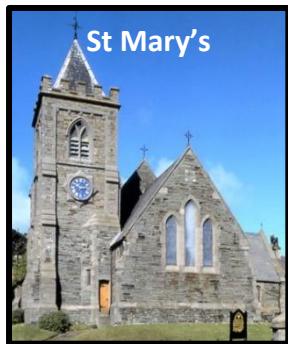
Finally, all are silenced by God, as He speaks Himself (chapters 38-42). He points out that Job knows very little about the universe when he reflects on God's power. Job confesses his lack of understanding and weakness, but then goes on to confess his confidence and trust in God. This puts suffering in a right perspective. Job is not condemned, and the book ends with the restoration of his family and possessions.

The importance of this book is that it realistically addresses the painful questions of life, without offering simplistic answers. It focuses on *how* we should respond to suffering, rather than on *why* God allows suffering: '*Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised.*' (1:21)

### ***Car-ride***

*A teenager who had just received her provisional licence offered to drive her parents to church. After a hair-raising ride, they finally reached their destination. The mother got out of the car and said in a quiet but fervent voice: "Thank you!"*

*"Anytime," her daughter replied. As the woman slammed the car door she said, "I wasn't talking to you. I was talking to God."*



## Reflecting Faith: Church Buildings

*Editor: The Revd Dr Jo White considers the visual impact of church buildings.*

We have been thinking about different aspects of church buildings. But what about 'the whole thing'? - the impression you have when you first see a church building?

Most of us have visited many church buildings, either to worship or as a tourist: to enjoy the splendour, the colours, the style and the architecture, with or without necessarily a time of prayer or worship.

There are some amazingly staggering designs around the world – one only has to think of the complex and intricate stone carving of Gaudi's catholic basilica in Barcelona, Spain (due to be completed next year!) and then compare that to the sleekness of the Lutheran (Church of Iceland) parish church in Reykjavík, Iceland.

How about the grandeur of St Peter's in Rome, full of baroque gold and rich colours? Or what about St Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow – now a museum but topped with amazingly coloured onion domes?

Just looking at the outside of a building tells you a lot about what it is likely to be like inside, the purpose of the building and the style of worship to expect there.

It's not just about the condition of the fabric, or the tidiness of the grounds but rather the architecture itself.

When we see a contemporary modern building, we will expect the worship to match it: whether that is Protestant, Catholic or any other denomination.

### *This month*

If you were designing a brand-new church building today, what would you put into it and therefore what would the exterior look like? What would you want on the outside, to express your faith? Would you include any specific Christian symbols, or be more all-encompassing?

### **Prayer for February 2025**

*Dear Lord, February can be a trying month, but there are special associations too and we thank you for the hope they bring. In February we remember how Jesus was taken, as a baby, to the Temple. Simeon took Him in his arms and by the power of the Holy Spirit, recognised Him as the Saviour you had sent as a light, to bring revelation to the whole world. And how this world needs your light and revelation in this new year, 2025. Lord, as we notice more light in the lengthening days of this month, as we see the promise of the Spring in the bobbing heads of the beautiful snowdrops, help us most of all to recognise Jesus as our Light and to trust in Him as our Lord and Saviour. Thank you, Lord, for the gift of each new day. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

## All in the month of February



**125 years ago, on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 1900** the Labour Party was founded in the UK.

**90 years ago, on 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1935** US President Franklin D Roosevelt banned aircraft from flying over the White House – because the noise kept him awake at night. The ban remains in place today, but mainly now for security reasons.

**80 years ago, during Feb 1945** Anne Frank died. The young Dutch Jewish diarist and Holocaust victim died in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp at the age of 15, probably from typhus.

**Also 80 years ago, on 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 1945** the bombing of Dresden took place. The Allies carried out four massive bombing raids, completely destroying the inner city, and killing about 25,000 people.

**75 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1950** the world's first payment by credit card took place. The founders of Diners Club (now Diners Club International) used it to pay their restaurant bill at Majero's Cabin Grill in New York City.

**70 years ago, from 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 1955 to March**, Britain's Big Freeze took place. Deep snow and freezing temperatures caused havoc, with many places cut off. The RAF dropped food and medical supplies to affected areas, while thousands of sheep died from exposure.

**65 years ago, on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 1960** the Hollywood Walk of Fame was established in Hollywood. It consists of more than 2,700 stars embedded in the pavement, that bear the names of notable figures from the entertainment industry.

**50 years ago, on 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 1975** Margaret Thatcher became the first female leader of the Conservative Party. She became Britain's first female Prime Minister in 1979.

**40 years ago, on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 1985** the Islamic militant group and political party Hezbollah was founded in Lebanon.

**30 years ago, on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1995** James Herriot, veterinary surgeon and best-selling author, died. Best known for his autobiographical book *All Creature's Great and Small*, which was adapted into a popular TV series.

**20 years ago, on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2005** Charles, Prince of Wales, and Camilla Parker Bowles announced their engagement. They were married on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2005. **Also 20 years ago, on 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2005** YouTube, the online video-sharing service, was founded. It was purchased by Google in 2006.

**15 years ago, on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010** Wikileaks published the first classified documents led by US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning. In total, she sent Wikileaks nearly 750,000 sensitive documents. She was arrested and served seven years in prison.

**10 years ago, on 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2015** Leonard Nimoy, actor and film director, died. Best known for his role as Spock in the *Star Trek* films and TV series.



## Eco Church Awards for Kirk Christ and St Mary's

Eco Church is a programme run by the A Rocha environmental charity. It is a learning community of churches of all shapes and sizes and provides a framework to support churches to take practical action on caring for God's earth. The Eco Church survey, with its suite of supporting resources, is designed to help us 'go green' in all areas of our church life. We have completed surveys for all four churches in Rushen and Kirk Christ and St Mary's have

earned Bronze awards. The survey looks at five major areas of church life:

- **Worship and Teaching:** *Do we sometimes have preaching about caring for God's earth, include the environment in our prayers?*
- **Buildings:** *Are we making steps to minimise our carbon footprint, save energy, everything from using paper cups to fitting double glazing, to twinning our toilets, to recycling service sheets?*
- **Land:** *Do we create spaces for nature, encourage community use, bird feeders, compost heaps, wild flowers, no-mow May etc?*
- **Community Engagement:** *Do we bring in environmental speakers, participate in global campaigns (e.g. Christian Aid), use fairtrade coffee, install bike racks, organise walks (Roamers) engage (either as individuals or as a church) in environmental projects?*
- **Lifestyle:** *Do we encourage church members to live greener lives, promote walking and cycling, fairtrade goods, local suppliers, ethical investment of church funds?*

We obviously do better in some areas than others. For example, more work would be required to get St Peter's or St Catherine's to a bronze standard for land use, but by making us look at these different areas of church life, it shows us that going green is more than just saving energy, important as that is. Care for God's Earth means looking at everything we do and thinking about how we can do it better to benefit our community, our environment and our planet. These changes may be big and expensive (buying solar panels or an electric car). They may be small, and inexpensive, almost trivial (buying LED light bulbs, planting wild flowers). They may have a big impact on our lives (giving up meat) or small (giving up disposable cardboard cups). The important thing is to think about what we do and keep travelling in the right direction.

So where do we go from here? As our bronze awards suggest, there are also silver and gold which could be achieved and these get increasingly more challenging. We would have to get more involved in environmental campaigns, and organise environmental events within our community. We would need explicit parish policies on environmental issues. More practically we need to pension off all of our oil boilers, better insulate our buildings and think of imaginative ways to use our land better. It is all good stuff, but it can sound a bit daunting, but please don't panic. For me, it is about the little changes that show 'We Care'. This week I put up a bird box in St Mary's garden. It's a small thing, but it made me happier than anything else I had done this month. Another small step towards a greener church.

**Peter Hayhurst**

## ***From the Registers***

### ***Funerals December 2024:***

6 <sup>th</sup> December	Robert Corrin	12pm	Service Kirk Christ followed by Cremation
10 <sup>th</sup> December	Helen Maddrell	2pm	Service Kirk Christ followed by Cremation
11 <sup>th</sup> December	Karen Senior	1.55pm	Service and Cremation at the Crematorium

### ***Wedding December 2024:***

7 <sup>th</sup> December	Shaun Gritton & Francesca French	1pm	Kirk Christ
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### ***Lion***

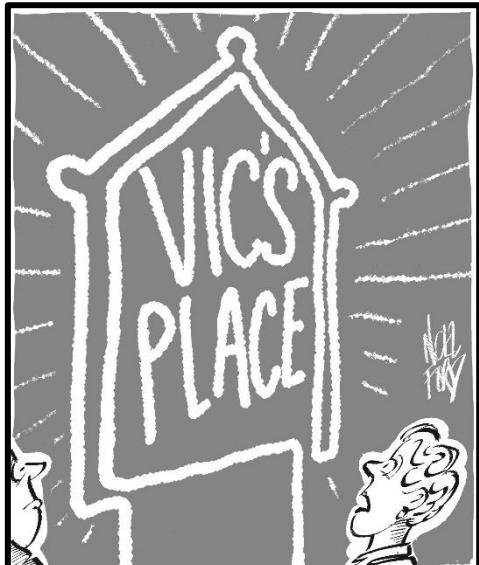
*A Sunday school teacher was telling her youngsters about Daniel and the Lion's Den. To illustrate the lesson, she drew a picture of Daniel standing, brave and confident, with a group of lions around him. Suddenly, one little girl started to cry. The teacher said, "Don't cry. The lions are not going to eat Daniel."*

*Snuffling back the tears the girl replied: "That's not what I'm crying about. That little lion, over in the corner, isn't going to get anything to eat."*

### ***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, Email  
psorushen@sodorandman.im. 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](http://www.sodorandman.im/safeguarding_inclusion)



*"It may well attract more young folk to join the congregation but I still prefer the old church notice board"*

## Rushen Mothers' Union



We held our first meeting of the year in St Catherine's Hall and thanks must go to Gerry for making it warm for us. Pat Thomson led the meeting and introduced our speaker, Lead Admiral Nurse Jeanette Hogg.

She gave us a really informative talk on the role of Admiral Nurses on the island. They are totally funded by the charity Forget Me Not and are supported by Dementia UK and hosted

by Hospice Isle of Man. There are only three Admiral Nurses, and they support about 140 dementia sufferers and their families. They have time to listen and the knowledge to solve problems. They make sure that carers have the skills and support that they need to cope and the time to relax. This is achieved by running groups such as the bowling group, a creative arts group and one for Tai Chi is starting soon.

We also learned that the nurses were named by the family of Joseph Levy, who founded Dementia UK in his honour. He was affectionately known as Admiral Joe because of his love of sailing.

If anyone would like to know more about the Admiral Nurses information can be found through Hospice or Dementia UK.

Can I remind those of you who have not yet paid their subs that they are due and Jude Sille will be happy to receive them.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 10th February at 2pm in St Mary's Church. Jane Gunn will take the lead. We are all looking forward to hearing David Bowman talking about 'A Stitch in Time'.

### Dates for your diaries:

10 <sup>th</sup> Feb to 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Moon Project at the Cathedral. Volunteers needed.
25 <sup>th</sup> February	Trustees meeting
10 <sup>th</sup> March	Spring Council Meeting and AGM. Tea/coffee 6.30, meeting 7pm St John's Church Hall
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Festival Service 2pm at Kirk Michael Church

**Lesley Scott**



## God in the Arts



*Editor: The Revd Michael Burgess considers the sacred in Art.*

### 'My First Sermon' by John Everett Millais

There is a story of two men talking about their new vicar. One says to the other, "This new one's not a patch on the old vicar. With the old one preaching I was asleep in five minutes. With the new one it takes all of ten." Some churches in times past employed 'sluggard-walkers' who had long rods and walked down the aisles, ready to wake up the faithful if they had nodded off during the sermon.

Sluggard-walkers are not needed for this month's painting, *My First Sermon* by John Everett Millais. It hangs in the Guildhall Art Gallery in London, which houses the art collection of our capital city. The Gallery is built on the site of an amphitheatre and was only completed in 1999, having replaced a building that was destroyed in the blitz of 1941. It has over 4000 works, many of them from the Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite period. Among them is this painting by Millais which depicts Effie, his 5-year-old daughter sitting in Kingston Church. She is dressed properly and sensibly for the occasion with feathered hat, muff and a cloak of vivid red. Her mother's prayer book and gloves are by her side. Effie is listening with great concentration.

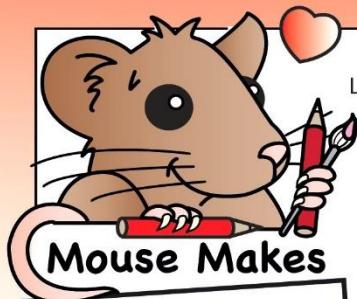
When the painting was exhibited in 1863, it was a great success. In the following year Millais produced *My Second Sermon* – a very different occasion, for Effie has now fallen asleep with her hat by her side. Millais was often criticised for his sentimental portraits of children as in *Cherry Ripe* and *Bubbles*. But in 1864 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Charles Longley, praised this second painting for reminding us of 'the evil of lengthy sermons and drowsy discourses.'

As we look at Effie alert one Sunday, asleep the next, we can smile. But we might also ask how we respond to the Word that comes to us through the medium of words in the weekly sermon. The preacher has the daunting task of using this everyday coinage of words to draw us into that mysterious, life-giving realm of the Word, Jesus. The words spoken must make a straight path for the Lord to reach each human heart.

The two paintings of Millais depict the reality and fragility of this endeavour. Sometimes our attention is engaged; at others, drowsiness closes our eyes and even our hearts to the good news of salvation. On occasions the sermon sows seeds, which can bear fruit. At other times, all kinds of factors mitigate against the sermon's success. Let us pray that as listener or as preacher, we may be aware of the dynamic power of the Word, which, as Karl Rahner wrote, calls us 'out of the little house of our homely, close-hugged truths into the strangeness of the mystery of God that is our real home.'



## Children's Page



### Mouse Makes

"Love is

love is \_\_\_\_\_  
It does not, \_\_\_\_\_  
it does not \_\_\_\_\_  
it is not \_\_\_\_\_  
it does not \_\_\_\_\_

others, it is not self-  
it is not easily \_\_\_\_\_  
it keeps no record of \_\_\_\_\_

Love delights in  
it always \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The steadfast **love** of the Lord never \_\_\_\_\_;  
His \_\_\_\_\_ never come to an end;  
they are new every \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Lamentations 3:20-23*

I pray... you will understand...  
the greatness of Christ's **love**,

how \_\_\_\_\_  
and how \_\_\_\_\_  
and how \_\_\_\_\_  
that **love** is.  
*Ephesians 3:18-19*

God is **love**.  
whoever \_\_\_\_\_  
in **love** \_\_\_\_\_  
in God, and God \_\_\_\_\_ in them.  
*1 John 4:16*

Give \_\_\_\_\_  
to the Lord, for He is \_\_\_\_\_,  
his steadfast **love** endures  
\_\_\_\_\_  
*Psalm 136:1*

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

### HOW DOES GOD **LOVE** ME?

**God sent me a saviour:**  
He sent His one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him.  
*1 John 4:9*

**God gave me His spirit:**  
He has given you the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His **love**.  
*Romans 5:5*

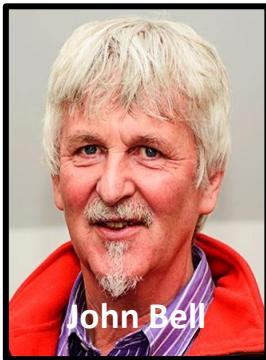
**God called me His child:**  
See what great **love** the Father has for us that He would call us His children.  
*1 John 1:3*

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Jesus told us to:  
**LOVE** the Lord your God with all your **heart**, all your **soul** and with all your **mind**.  
*Matthew 22:37*

**LOVE** your neighbour the same as you **love** yourself.  
*Matthew 22:39*

GOD • **LOVE**  
PATIENT • KIND  
GRACIOUS • PEACE  
JUST • TRUTHFUL  
TRUSTING • LOYAL  
HOPEFUL  
PERSEVERES  
ENDURES  
HUMBLE  
SELFLESS  
PROTECTS • DEFENDS

## The Story Behind the Hymn



### *Carol of the Epiphany 'God in a baby's hand'*

I sought him dressed in finest clothes,  
where money talks and status grows;  
but power and wealth he never chose:  
it seemed he lived in poverty.

I sought him in the safest place,  
remote from crime or cheap disgrace;  
but safety never knew his face:  
it seemed he lived in jeopardy.

I sought him where the spotlights glare,  
where crowds collect and critics stare;  
but no one knew his presence there:  
it seemed he lived in obscurity.

Then, in the streets, we heard the word  
which seemed, for all the world, absurd:  
that those who could no gifts afford  
were entertaining Christ the Lord.

And so, distinct from all we'd planned,  
among the poorest of the land,  
we did what few might understand:  
we touched God in a baby's hand.

Epiphany is a time when we recall those events in the life of Christ that demonstrated he was the Son of God. It is also a time of light—the light that guided the Magi to the Christ Child and of Christ himself as the “Light of the World” (John 8:12; 9:5). John Bell (b. 1949) has turned the story of the Magi on end in his “Carol of the Epiphany.” Just as traditionally three Magi travel to see the Christ Child, his hymn incorporates three voices. Reminiscent in structure of “We Three Kings of Orient Are” this hymn has three characters seeking Christ.

In verse one, the singer looks for Christ in the opulent places of society, but find that Christ “lived in poverty.” In the second verse, another voice seeks Christ in safe and secure places, but finds that “he lived in jeopardy.” A third voice asks about Christ in popular places where “spotlights glare” and famous people may be found, but discovers that “he lived in obscurity.”

All three voices sing together in the fourth verse. Rather than finding Christ among the rich, the safe and the famous, they find him among the poor who “could no gifts afford.”

In this unusual hymn, the congregation listens to the three voices for verses, reflecting on the unusual perspective of the singers who are a part of this narrative. Not until the fifth verse is the congregation invited to sing; they become a part of the story. Despite our plans to find the Christ Child among the rich, safe and famous, we found him “among the poorest of the land.”

In what may be one of the most profound metaphors for the Incarnation, Mr. Bell closes the hymn with a most memorable and moving phrase: “We touched God in a baby's hand.”

## Rushen Parish Prayer Diary

*Thank you, that you accept us as we are; that you love us as we are. So, may we love those around us. By your Spirit may we hold hands. May we rejoice with the rejoicing, weep with the weeping. And may we offer our all to you, together. Then we may be ourselves. Then we may be one. Amen*



**February 2025**

***This is your invitation to pray day by day for:***

- 1<sup>st</sup> Everyone who gives of their time, money and energy to charitable organisations
- 2<sup>nd</sup> The Presentation of Christ in the Temple - Candlemas
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Pets which bring such comfort to the elderly and the lonely
- 4<sup>th</sup> The Social Committee of the PCC which organises enjoyable fundraising activities
- 5<sup>th</sup> The bereaved and the sense of loss that they feel when loved one's die
- 6<sup>th</sup> All those who read the lessons at the services in the parish
- 7<sup>th</sup> Stephen Curtis and the work he does maintaining the finances of the parish
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grandparents who help their children through challenging times
- 9<sup>th</sup> Families attending morning services today and the fellowship they develop
- 10<sup>th</sup> All those involved with the refurbishment of St Catherine's Church
- 11<sup>th</sup> Those who give of their time to visit sick and lonely people in the parish
- 12<sup>th</sup> Those preparing for marriage later this year and for the people around them
- 13<sup>th</sup> All those who intercede during the services in the parish
- 14<sup>th</sup> St. Valentine, the patron saint of romantic love, remembered today
- 15<sup>th</sup> Those people in hospital awaiting treatment for life threatening diseases
- 16<sup>th</sup> The head teachers of our local schools and the successes they bring to all children
- 17<sup>th</sup> Homegroups in the parish and the fellowship received from them
- 18<sup>th</sup> Natalie Heaton and the work she does with children and the youth of the parish
- 19<sup>th</sup> Sidespersons who carry out their duties in our parish week by week
- 20<sup>th</sup> Farmers as they prepare for springtime and the year ahead
- 21<sup>st</sup> The Bishop of Sodor and Man at the beginning of her ministry
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Children who have been baptised in the parish during the past year
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Today's Joint Service at Kirk Christ with every church in the parish represented
- 24<sup>th</sup> Children who attend youth organisations such as brownies, cubs, scouts and guides
- 25<sup>th</sup> The Rev'd Joe Heaton, Vicar of the Parish of Rushen, and his ministry.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Children who attend nursery, primary and secondary schools across the island
- 27<sup>th</sup> PCC committees and the work they do in keeping the parish active
- 28<sup>th</sup> Those who administer communion to the housebound.

## Services February/March 2025

2 <sup>nd</sup> February <b>(Presentation of Christ)</b>	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)
9 <sup>th</sup> February <b>(Epiphany 5)</b>	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)
16 <sup>th</sup> February <b>(Epiphany 6)</b>	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)
23 <sup>rd</sup> February <b>(Epiphany 7)</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW)</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> March <b>(Transfiguration)</b>	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)
9 <sup>th</sup> March <b>(Lent 1)</b>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Holy Communion (CW) St Mary's Morning Prayer (CW) St Catherine's Holy Communion (CW) St Peter's Holy Communion (BCP)
16 <sup>th</sup> March <b>(Lent 2)</b>	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)
23 <sup>rd</sup> March <b>(Lent 3)</b>	<b>11am</b>	<b>Kirk Christ Joint Holy Communion (CW)</b>
30 <sup>th</sup> March <b>(Mothering Sunday)</b>	9.30am 11am 11am 3.15pm	Kirk Christ Morning Prayer (CW) St Mary's All-Age Service St Catherine's Holy Communion (CW) St Peter's Evening Prayer (BCP)

(CW) Common Worship

(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](mailto:lesley@pharmaconsulting.co.uk))

### St Catherine's Hall Bookings:

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

### Web Site/E-mail:

[www.rushenparish.org.uk](http://www.rushenparish.org.uk) [rushenparishorg@gmail.com](mailto:rushenparishorg@gmail.com)

### Magazine Editor

Mr David Bowman, The Old Bakery, Qualtroughs Lane, 837117/260539  
Ballafesson, Port Erin  
e-mail: [dbow43@manx.net](mailto:dbow43@manx.net)

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

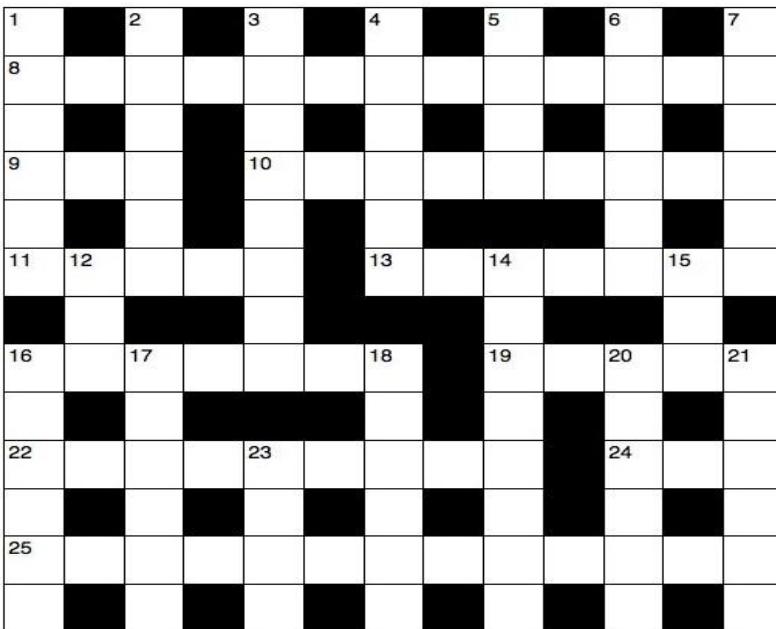
### Parish Director of Music:

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 February 2025



### Across

8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)  
9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap'  
(Leviticus 4:12) (3)  
10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of  
Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)  
11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)  
13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)  
16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)  
19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of  
God's mercy, to — your bodies as living  
sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)  
22 David's plea to God concerning those  
referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them  
escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)  
24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1)  
25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God  
more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

### Down

1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)  
2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in  
battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)  
3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim  
religion (8)

4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but —  
him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1)  
(6)  
5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)  
6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)  
7 God's instructions to the Israelites  
concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to —  
your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)  
12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)  
14 'All day long they twist my words; they are  
always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)  
15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back  
to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)  
16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)  
17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't  
rescued from the cistern where he was  
imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)  
18 What the prophets do to a wall, with  
whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)  
20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)  
21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters  
continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)  
23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and  
authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)