

# The Grapevine

*The Magazine of Saint Magnus Cathedral Congregation*

## St Magnus Cathedral Services

### ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

SUN 29 <sup>th</sup> NOV	11.15am	<b>Advent Sunday</b>
SUN 6 <sup>th</sup> DEC	11.15am	<b>The Second Sunday in Advent</b> Lighting of The Grimstad Christmas Tree
SUN 13 <sup>th</sup> DEC	11.15am	<b>The Third Sunday in Advent</b>
TUES 15 <sup>th</sup> DEC	7.30 pm	KGS Carol Service
SUN 20 <sup>th</sup> DEC	11.15am	<b>The Fourth Sunday in Advent</b> The Sunday Club Nativity Presentation
	6.30pm	<b>Festival of Lessons and Carols</b> The Cathedral Choir
TUES 22 <sup>nd</sup> DEC	10.00am	Papdale Primary School Christmas Service
THURS 24 <sup>th</sup> DEC Christmas Eve		with Kirkwall East Church
	10.30pm	Cathedral Music Group
	11.00pm	Community Carol singing
	11.30pm	<b>Watchnight Service</b>
FRI 25 <sup>th</sup> DEC Christmas Day	11.15am	<b>Joint Family Communion Service</b> with Kirkwall East Church in the King St Halls
SUN 27 <sup>th</sup> DEC	11.15am	<b>The First Sunday of Christmas</b>
	2.30pm	Reflective service with Kirkwall East Church in the Upper Room of the King St Halls

**Services are held in St Magnus Cathedral every Sunday at 11.15am**

The year's Christmas Offerings from the joint Watchnight and Christmas Day Family services will go to the Fishermen's Mission Orkney and Christian Aid.

## **Christmas**

***“And is it true? And is it true,  
This most tremendous tale of all,  
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,  
A Baby in an ox's stall?  
The Maker of the stars and sea  
Become a Child on earth for me?”***

*John Betjeman*

There have been advertisements for Christmas gifts since October, or even before. Over the last few weeks we have seen the usual commercial build-up, aimed at inducing us to spend more money on gifts, food, drink etc. For some people this will be an annual celebration, with an opportunity to meet with family and friends and have a party. For many there will be no thought whatever of Jesus Christ, whose name we remember in Christmas.

Some will protest that a very thin veneer of Christianity has been overlaid on an ancient pagan festival, and that Jesus Christ has no relevance. Others will enjoy hearing again the old familiar stories of the Christ Child, born of a virgin in a manger in Bethlehem; of three wise men following a special star which miraculously stopped over a certain stable; of shepherds, and choirs of angels. They will sing again those favourite carols that we learned as children. They will remember a succession of Christmases past, and, as we creep into the New Year, will look back, and forward. For millions of people worldwide, this is the magic of Christmas.

Others again will suggest that the Bible stories are not so much magic, as myth; that they are the attempts of the early church to describe the indescribable. They will go on to explain that the Christmas Story is meant to be taken metaphorically, and that doing so yields an even greater richness of meaning. Jesus was conceived by the Spirit: what happened in him was of God. The special star symbolises the Light of the World, sent to all nations, including those Gentile Wise Men. The Good

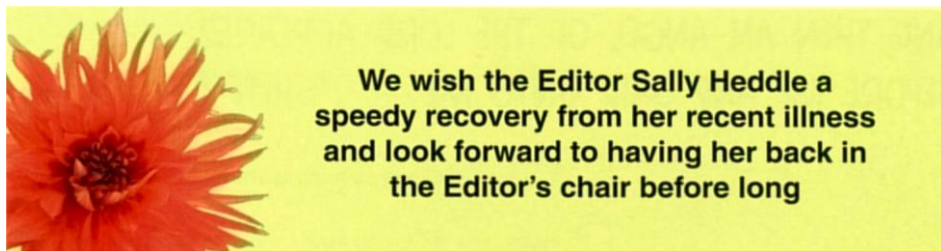
News comes to the shepherds, representing all the poor and marginalised, and the angels' song affirms that Jesus, and not Caesar, or anybody else, is Lord and Saviour. All this, and more. And – what is most important – the stories mean all of these things, irrespective of whether or not the familiar details are literally true.

Whether or not we take the stories at face value does not matter. What does matter is that, at this time of year, we remember the entry of Jesus into the world. The Word became flesh and lived among us. As we look forward, we look forward not only to the New Year, but to Easter.

Without Christmas, without Jesus, there could be no Easter. In our Christmas celebrations we remember not only the infant in the manger but the crucified and risen Christ.

May God bless you this Christmas and in the Year ahead.

Martin Prentice





12-23-1997

I WAS SO EXCITED ABOUT THE BABY JESUS  
THAT I STARTED CLUCKING LIKE A FIEND ...  
AND THEN AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED  
BEFORE ME AND SAID UNTO ME ... "SHUT UP"



Church of Scotland ~ Presbytery of Orkney

# MALAWI PARTNERSHIP

This Christmas give a gift that means something and does something

You can support the work of our partner congregations in Malawi by buying a "gift voucher" for someone. Choose how much you want to donate, fill in the form and we will send you a lovely Christmas card / certificate acknowledging the donation so you can forward it to a friend. Alternatively, we can post it directly to them saying that the donation has been made by you on their behalf. All forms must be received by Wednesday 9th December and will be posted on Thursday 10th December (15 days prior to Christmas) unless you request it earlier. If you wish to send it outwith the UK please ask for the card to be delivered to yourself.

Current partnership projects include: roofing school classrooms, sinking wells, feeding programme for HIV orphans, bicycles for women workers, health education projects, sewing machines self-reliance programme, pig rearing, youth work, building projects etc.

## PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM:

Your name : .....Your address:.....

.....

.....Postcode: .....

Your phone number (in case we need to contact you) : .....

Won't be shared with anyone.

Amount you wish to donate (in whole pounds): £ .....

Cheques should be made out to "Presbytery of Orkney"

Name of person you wish the card to be sent to : .....

Just write "self" if you want it sent to you at the above address

Address you wish the card to be sent to : .....

.....

.....Postcode: .....

Please tick as appropriate:

I wish the card to be sent as soon as possible

or

I wish the card to be sent on Thursday 10th December

I have enclosed a cheque made out to "Presbytery of Orkney" for the amount above

send to The Manse, Hildavale, Westray KW17 2DW.

Further details from 01857-677357 or westraykirk@btinternet.com

Remember - deadline for forms is strictly 9th December

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Presbytery of Orkney is a charity registered in Scotland SC014026



Presbytery of Orkney is a charity registered in Scotland SC014026

**Bringing the insights of four women to the season of birth and renewed hope**

*The Midwife's Story by Nancy Reeves*

*Woodcuts by Margaret Kyle*

Later,  
when the tale was told by others,  
I was not mentioned –  
like many women and men in essential jobs,  
taken for granted.  
But the Eternal One knows.  
For our God gave me a gift to ease birth.



He was like so many others;  
you could tell it was his first.  
Anxious to get back to her.  
Love shining in his eyes.  
That wasn't the only thing shining that night.  
You didn't need a light;  
the whole sky was aglow with one star.

I knew they were packing them in.  
But to make a woman, ripe to bursting,  
sleep in a stable!  
Oh, well.  
At least no one would grumble at  
the noise and the smell.  
Birth so resembles death sometimes.







It was obvious she'd been prepared well –  
far from mother, grandmother, cousin,  
yet taught by them and remembering the teaching.  
She knew that pain is part of every birth,  
Living with the hope and the joy.  
He was a help too,  
the strength and gentleness in his touch and look.  
The love between them rivalled that star.

---

Then, the sweating and the pushing.  
Hard work, harvesting the seed  
planted months before and nurtured in darkness.  
It's a willing sacrifice we make,  
offering our bodies to be broken open  
– water bursting forth, sweat and pain –  
to birth a miracle.



They knew he was a boy child before I told them.  
The final push was easy.  
Sliding out of his warm nest,  
he came  
to be with us.  
Little lambkin,  
blood on his head.  
Large eyes drinking in the world.  
A person could fall into those eyes.

---

I held glory for a second,  
then gave him to her – to them.  
I was forgotten for a time, as is right.  
Their baby-filled eyes  
had no room for anything else.  
They had a few minutes, the three  
united in communion,  
before the magnetism of birth drew the others.  
This time, men as well as women.





I'm not good with crowds and I felt full, satisfied –  
my gift always ready,  
prepared to make the way smoother.  
I know I was inspired that night.  
I left them to others and went home.  
Grateful for my part  
in bringing God to birth.

---

### IDEAS AND COMMENTS BOX

As you will be aware from reading the last publication of '*Grapevine*', the Kirk Session has been considering how communication within the Church can be improved and decided on the installation of two Ideas and Comments Boxes – one in the Cathedral and one in the St Magnus Centre.

We are pleased to be able to report that the first box has now been placed at the west end of The Cathedral, by the church communication board.

**This box is available to any member of the congregation or visitor to the church who wishes to offer constructive comments (including compliments!), to suggest new ideas or to raise issues of concern. The box is locked and only opened by members of a panel appointed by the Kirk Session. Anyone using the box can be sure that the point of view expressed will be treated confidentially, discussed appropriately and a personal response given where contact details are provided.**



## ***A Shopper's Psalm"***

I'm weary, Lord.  
Bone tired.  
In spite of the fact that my shopping's half done  
I need to crash.  
The crush  
of the crowd has gotten to me.  
So, too, the deafening sounds  
of a pre-Christmas city  
throbbing with incarnate greed.  
I need to be reminded  
that this season's more  
than plastic Santas,  
perpetual sales,  
and Muzak.  
I need back  
on the track  
of reflection.  
I've derailed, Lord.  
My emotional fuel is leaking.  
I'm about to explode.  
And then I see it.  
A miniature creche  
in a gift shop window.  
A guardian father;  
a grateful young mom;  
a baby asleep on the hay.  
A trio maintaining their harmony  
despite the dis-chord all around them.  
And with my nose pressed against the frosted pane  
my inner pain subsides.  
At once I am rested,  
renewed, and revived.  
And I linger  
and ponder  
God's peace.

By Greg Asimakoupoulous

# THE GUILD

The Guild is enjoying a varied programme this winter and has taken on board the theme “Called to Act Justly”; ***What does the Lord require of you?***

This year the National Guild have chosen 6 new projects and we are, as usual, committing to 3 for the coming 3 years; a decision will be taken by members at the November meeting (too late to include in this issue but we will let you know).

Towards the end of November members will again, together with members of the congregation, participate in the Church of Scotland Guild 16 days of prayer – a call to pray for 16 days at the 16<sup>th</sup> hour for action on behalf of those suffering from the effects of violence against women.

The programme for 2010 is as follows: meetings in St Magnus Centre at 7.30 pm

<b>12 January 2010 –</b>	<b>“This is my life” with Mr Mark Causer.</b>
<b>6 February</b>	<b>Coffee Morning.</b>
<b>9 February</b>	<b>Theme Night with Mrs Sybil Brown and Mrs Cristine Ferguson.</b>
<b>9 March</b>	<b>“Everyone Present” for “Taste and Try” – Members’ Evening.</b>
<b>April</b> (date to be confirmed)	<b>Our evening out</b>

***We welcome new faces, whether you come as a casual visitor because the evening’s programme is of interest, or you wish to join us and support the Guild and its aims.***

# CHRISTMAS IN THE CHOIR

Christmas starts early in the choir stalls. The period from August to January is a busy one, with events like Remembrance Sunday, Tree-lighting, Carol Service and Christmas Eve Watchnight all requiring their own special music. This takes a good deal of planning ahead, and so we start work on our Christmas carols even before the cards and calendars appear in Spence's!

This year's service of Nine Lessons and Carols will take place on Sunday 20th December at 6.30pm and will follow the familiar format. At the end there will be hot mince pies and a chance to chat with choir members. The programme of carols will include pieces by Britten, Richard Rodney Bennett and William Mathias along with more traditional carols like the Sussex Carol and Vaughan Williams setting of "This is the Truth Sent from Above". And most importantly there will be a good selection of familiar congregational carols with which to raise the roof.

Last year I was privileged to share in the direction of the service with our choir-master, Robert Wilson. Robert has to be working in France this Christmas, so our organist Heather and I will be in joint charge. We are all looking forward to sharing the fruits of our labours with you on the 20th, so put the date in your diary, bring a friend and join us in enjoying the Christmas spirit together - not to mention the mince pies!

Iain Campbell





12-20-2005

ARE YOU SERIOUSLY GIVING US ALL WOOLIES  
FOR CHRISTMAS?!?

## A TYPICAL NORWEGIAN CHRISTMAS DINNER

### "PINNEKJØTT" - SALTED LAMB RIBS

Pinnekjøtt is rib of lamb, which has been either salted and dried or salted, smoked and dried. Pinnekjøtt has a good deal of bone fat, so it is best to allow about 500 g per person if it is served on its own; if it is served together with sausages, allow 350 g per person.

- Separate the salted ribs from each other with a sharp knife and leave them in cold water overnight
- Go out in the woods and find enough fresh branches from a birch tree (finger thick) to cover the bottom of your pot. Remove the bark.

- Put the branches in your pot and fill it with enough water to cover the branches
- Place the ribs over the branches and cook until the meat loosens from the bone (apprx. 2 hours)
- Be careful so the pot doesn't cook dry - refill water as necessary
- Before serving, give the ribs a few minutes under the grill of your oven.
- "Pinnekjøtt" is normally served with mashed kohlrabi (turnip) or rutabaga, boiled potatoes and mustard. Don't forget the aquavit and cold Christmas beer.

### **MASHED RUTABAGA**

Approx. 1 kg rutabaga, water, pepper, salt, cooking juices from the "pinnekjøtt"

Peel and slice the rutabaga and cook it until tender in lightly salted water. Drain off the excess water. Pour 1/4 cup of cooking juice from the "pinnekjøtt", add salt and pepper and mash the rutabaga. You can use milk instead of cooking juices, then you should add a tablespoon of butter, too.

### **RICE CREAM** (creamy rice pudding/porridge) (serves 4)

- 3/4 cup whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups rice porridge

Serve with red fruit sauce on top. Rice Cream is often served with an almond hidden in it. The person who finds the almond gets a prize - usually a marzipan pig or a delicious Norwegian chocolate.

# PARISH REGISTER

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following who have joined the Cathedral congregation

Heather Rendall          Hawthorn Villa East Road Kirkwall

Derek Bristow          'Stucar' Tankerness

Mark Causer          1 Manse Lane Kirkwall.

## BAPTISMS

Finlay Lyall Flett Rendall          27 September

Archie Alexander Gunn          22 November

## WEDDINGS

Carolyn Davies and Andrew McMullan          5 September

Sheila Ritch and Raymond Shearer          12 September

Susan Easton and Andrew Stewart          18 September

Tara Copland and Joseph Silgoner          19 September

Lucy Holt and Roland Prentice          12 October

Kirsten Stephen and Nicky Bichan          16 October

## ***Christ, within Us Hidden:***

### ***A Hymn for the Advent Season by Curtis Tufts***

Christ, within us hidden.  
Christ, in all and each.  
Christ, who comes unbidden.  
Christ, within our reach.

Christ, born in our stable,  
Christ, our daily bread.  
Christ, host at our table.  
Christ, the hungry fed.

Christ, in friendship's sharing  
Christ, in stranger's face,  
Christ, reborn in caring.  
Christ, in love's embrace.

Christ, in bodies broken,  
Love new crucified.  
Christ, the Word new spoken,  
Death by love defied.

Christ, in love recovered.  
Christ, in hope revealed.  
Christ in faith discovered.  
Christ in tombs unsealed.





Photo: Leslie Burgher