



**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF
ST ANDREW, KYRENIA
in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf**

MARCH 2024

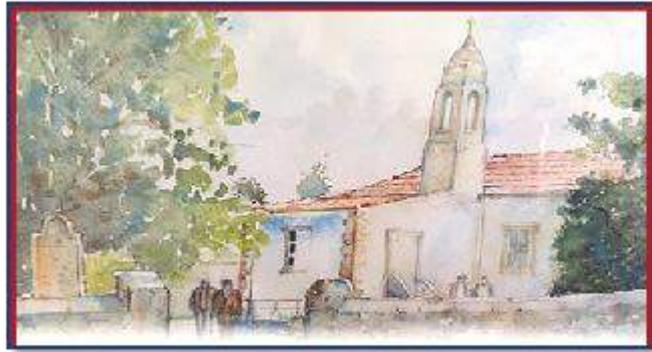


*Matthew 26:17-30 - The Last Supper
a painting by Trinidad and Tobago artist Rebecca Foster*

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SERVICE TIMES FOR MARCH

**A service of Holy Communion
will be held
each Sunday morning at 10:30am**

SERVICE TIMES FOR HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday 28th March - 12 noon

Good Friday 29th March - At the Cross 12 - 3pm

Easter Sunday 31st March - Sunrise service at the Hermitage - 6am

Easter Sunday 31st March - Easter Sung Eucharist - 10.30am

All are welcome

WELCOME



Добропошги Karibu
Bem vindo Ünözöjök Benvenuto
ようこそ Bienvenue καλώς ήρθατε
Welcome Willkommen Hoş geldiniz
خوش آمدی 환영 Vällkommen добро пожаловать
Velkominn Mëlgangeng pargelding מברכים הבאים Witamy
Welkom Bienvenido Dobrodošli Tervetuloa
أهلا بك Vitejte Aloha 欢迎 स्वागत

Thoughts From The Hermitage

MARCH 2024



Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf - Synod February 2024

Linda Balfe

It was an honour to be asked represent St Andrew's at the Diocesan Synod held in February in Larnaca - and an inspiring experience. Not sure what to expect, I felt the tone was set even as we were waiting to check in to the hotel. A man introduced himself and we did the same. "Oh yes" he said, "I've been praying for you." We were already part of an inclusive, diverse, kind and welcoming group of people.



Synod participants 2024

Our Diocese covers a huge geographical area, thinly populated with Anglicans. It was good to spend time with delegates from churches in the South of Cyprus, some of whom we had met at Bishop Michael's retirement. Churches were represented from Nicosia, Larnaca, Derynia, Paphos and Limassol. We met Paul, who has just become the new priest in Paphos and Deborah, who will become the priest in Limassol in April.

Even more spread out than the Cyprus churches and with many more barriers between them are the churches in the Gulf area of the Diocese. They are in Baghdad, Kuwait, Bahrain, Doha in Qatar, five of the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi, Jebel Ali, Dubai, Sharja Ras Al Khaimah) and Muscat in Oman.

A common feature across the whole of our Diocese is that the congregations are almost entirely made up of people with roots elsewhere; migrant workers, ex-pats, students – all people with family in other places. For some this is particularly hard and many feel very distant and isolated from their families. Kuwait, for example, has only just begun issuing visitor visas since Covid. The church there works particularly hard with people in the labour camps - visiting and holding services there late at night after work has finished and stepping in to help in situations where families cannot.

Christ Church in Aden, Yemen has not run as a church since the civil war broke out in 2015 and all foreigners had to evacuate. Ras Morbat Clinic still operate however, specialising in eye care and corrective procedures. It also runs a vaccination programme for children and some of the staff go out to remote areas, including Somali refugee camps. Ras Morbat clinic is partially financed by our Diocese and run entirely by skilled and dedicated Yemini staff. Treatment costs are kept low and the clinic has a very good reputation for its work. The situation has become much harder for the clinic in recent weeks as there is only about 2 hours of electricity a day and Mansoor, the director, travels long distances to find enough diesel to power the generator which keeps the clinic operating.

In the geographical centre of our Diocese is the Diocese of Jerusalem, whose Bishop - Bishop Hosam - is also Archbishop for the whole Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East (made up of these two dioceses, plus the Diocese of Iran). Archbishop Hosam has also been the acting Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf since Bishop Michael Lewis retired last summer.



■ Diocese of Jerusalem
■ Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf
■ Diocese of Iran

The Archbishop, who carries an air of gentle authority, is a thoughtful man and a good listener. He smiles often and has a self-deprecating sense of humour. As well as chairing Synod, Archbishop Hosam, who is himself Palestinian, also spoke very movingly about the situation in his own diocese, which has 28 congregations scattered across Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. These 8,000 Anglicans are 90% Arabic speaking and comprise between 1-2% of the population. For a small group, they have a big impact, working for the benefit of the whole community, running 35 institutions, including schools, hospitals, clinics and guest houses for pilgrims and employing 2,500 local people to carry out this work.

One of these hospitals is Al Ahli Hospital, which has been in operation since 1882. Despite coming under attack last October, it was, at the start of February, the only functioning hospital in Northern Gaza. Archbishop Hosam said how much those involved with Al Ahli were sustained and encouraged by prayers from around the world and were grateful for the donations which enable the hospital to continue its vital work. He spoke of the selflessness, courage and love being shown in the midst of so much devastation and suffering in Gaza with over 26,000 people dead at that time (mostly women and children), 70% buildings destroyed and 1.5 million people displaced. He also talked about the less well-known situation in the West Bank, where over 400 Palestinians have been

killed in recent weeks. The Diocese of Jerusalem is, unsurprisingly, heavily involved in peace and reconciliation work in the area.



Clergy with Archbishop Hosam of Jerusalem after the Chrism Eucharist - when the holy oils are blessed.

Many other reports were given, including one by Bishop James Kamura of Thika (near Nairobi) in Kenya, and another by Archdeacon Jane Bakker of Exeter - our two sister dioceses. Canon Peniel Rajkumar was a superb guest speaker, there were excellent workshop facilitated by Archbishop Hosam, meetings, motions and worship.



The highlight of Synod was undoubtedly the election of our new bishop, Revd Sean Semple. Originally from South Africa, he has previously been a priest in Cyprus and it is hoped he will be installed in the summer.

We returned to Kyrenia bringing greetings, prayers and good wishes from all of the other churches on the island.

Revd Sean Semple

Rev George Vidiakin sent his love to the congregation of St Andrew's. He was at Synod with all of his family, including their beautiful new daughter Kira, who was just a week old.

It was wonderful to see and spend time with Rev Anne Fitcher, who has completed her chemotherapy and regained much of her spark and energy, although she is expecting to start radiotherapy in the near future.



We also made new friends from further afield, including Rev Christine Mbona, a priest in Kuwait and her husband, Michael, who is Archdeacon in the Gulf. Christina unexpectedly gave us a gift for St Andrew's when we left - a wooden ichthys Christian fish symbol with the text from Psalms: 'For you are my hope, O Lord God. You are my trust from my youth.'

It was wonderful to spend five days with such a loving and inspirational group of people. Our guest speaker, Peniel Rajkumar, talked about the 'ministry of presence' and what he termed 'Witnessing through with-ness'. He reminded us of anthropologist Margaret Mead, who said that the first sign of civilisation in an ancient culture is a femur that had been broken and then healed. She explained that wounded animals in the wild would be hunted and killed before their broken bones could heal. A healed femur is a sign that the wounded person must have received help from others.

This was a powerful symbol to take away from Synod, speaking to the support and solidarity between the churches and within the churches of our diocese.

Linda Balfe. February 2024



Let us Pray

Heavenly Father, what great love you have for me
that you would send your only begotten Son to die for my sins.
How can I ever doubt your love or your ways?
Yet in dark moments, I start to question and doubt.
I wonder what comes next and I fail to recall your great faithfulness.
Lord, forgive my unbelief and help me believe.
Help me to trust you in all things, in all times,
even through the valleys and dark seasons of my life.
For you are my rock and my refuge, my strength in the storm.
Your love never ceases, your mercies never end.
Help me to remember that all the days of my life.
Lead me to walk in love,
as a shining reflection of your love into this world.
And help me live the life you desire of me,
bringing glory to you in all that I do.
Amen.



ST ANDREW'S NEWS

Dates for your diary -

LENT COURSE. Continues on **Thursday mornings**, until Mar 21 - starting at **10.30am** and finishing around 12 noon. The meetings will be held at The Hermitage and be preceded by the Office of Morning Prayer in the Hermitage Chapel at 10.00am prompt.



The theme of the Course is '**WHY DID JESUS DIE? THEORIES OLD AND NEW**', and, as with the Christmas Unwrapped series in Advent, it will be an interactive, Biblically-based course.

Lent Lunch at St Andrew's



A Lent soup lunch will be served in the church hall on Sunday 17th March after the morning service. The lunch will consist of home-made soup, fresh bread and butter, plus a cup of tea or coffee. Volunteers to help with serving are needed, if you would like to help, please contact Earl.

There is no charge but Donations (200/300 TL?) will be appreciated. Proceeds will go to the Ras Morbat Clinic, Aden.

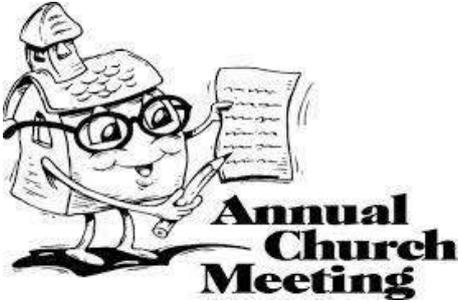
It is good for Christians to meet together informally, and food and fellowship are close friends!

Remember those to whom this meal would be a feast.

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

SUNDAY 7th APRIL 2024 - 12 noon

The ACM will be held in the church hall after the 10.30am service.



The annual meeting receives reports on changes to the electoral roll, general parish activities, financial matters, and a report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church. The annual meeting also elects new members to the Church Council and Church Wardens.

To be eligible to vote you should be a church member, recorded on the Electoral Roll. If you are not already on the Electoral Roll and wish to be included, please complete an application form which are available in church or speak to a council member. A copy of the Electoral Roll is on display next to the Vestry door.



Members of our Gujarati community after the imposition of ashes service on Ash Wednesday

Synopsis of the Febuary 2024 Church Council meeting

Subject to ratification

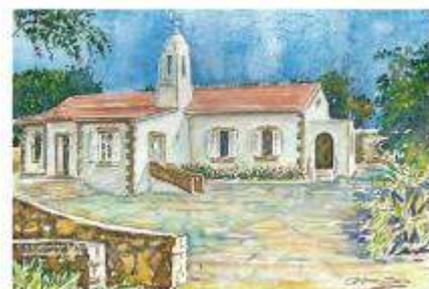


"Nobody could say that Hugh didn't take Lent seriously"



FRIENDS AND PEOPLE OF ST ANDREW'S

As we read our newspapers and magazines, we learn that these are difficult days for so many. We pray for family and friends, and we pray for all those who struggle.



As most of us know St Andrew's Church is self-supporting, receiving no finance from outside. We give thanks to God that this summer has seen many making the journey to Kibris and coming to worship at our lovely church of St Andrew's again.

Of course, the reduced numbers over the past few years have left St Andrew's without the usual generous collections. If you wish to donate from wherever you are to support the work of the Church, you can make payments to the Church UK Charity bank account by cheque or bank transfer and details are given below.

Bank Details:

Bank – Unity Trust Bank, 4 Brindley
Place, Birmingham B1 2HB

Account No. 20372187

Sort Code: 60-83-01

Account Name – St Andrew’s Church
Kyrenia UK Charity

BIC: CPBKGB22

IBAN: GB15UYTB60830120372187

Regular monthly Standing Order donations enable budgeting of church finances. You do not have to be a UK Taxpayer to contribute in this way. However, if you are a UK Taxpayer your Donations can be Gift Aided. Contact the gift aid officer at giftaid@standrewskyrenia.org for assistance with this.

You may ask what we do with your financial donations. In addition to keeping the church alive, in recent years the St Andrew’s community have made generous donations to local charities including Tulips, The Sarioğlu Foundation, Karakum Special Needs School and internationally to The World Day of Prayer.

Thank you so much for your support.



TODAY'S WORLD

Christian converts under pressure to leave Iran

By ABIGAIL FRYMANN ROUCH

CONVERTS from Islam are being put under pressure to leave Iran by the Shia regime, Christian charities concerned with religious freedom report. The charities – Open Doors, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Middle East Concern, and Article 18 – presented their findings in a joint report, **Faceless Victims: Rights violations against Christians in Iran 2024**. It was launched on Tuesday at an event at Portcullis House, Westminster.

Conversion from Shia Islam, evangelism, teaching in Sunday school, and being a member of a house church are all punishable offences under the penal code of the Islamic Republic founded in the 1979 Iranian revolution. Churches pre-dating the revolution – namely Assyrian and Armenian churches – are officially recognised, the report says, but, “unlike other places of worship”, four Persian-language Anglican churches have remained closed since the pandemic. Worshippers at these churches, the report says, “have been forced to congregate in private gatherings”, which are illegal.

The report analyses information from Christian networks in Iran. It says that at least 166 Iranians were arrested last year for offences relating to the practice or spreading of the Christian faith; and 21 were imprisoned for an average of two years. This compares with at least 134 arrests in 2022.

House churches, the report says, are facing “increased digital surveillance”, while more Christians are being forced to attend Islamic “re-education”. It also says that some converts who are imprisoned and then released are “actively encouraged” to emigrate “by intelligence agents, usually after they have refused to return to Islam or to accept a job as a spy of the Ministry of Intelligence”.

The news director for Article 18, Steve Dew-Jones, told the Church Times this week: “It is common practice for jailed Christians to be told they have just two choices upon release: to recant their faith and work for the authorities as spies within house churches, or to leave the country.” For those who decline these options, he said, “work and education options will be closed off to them; they will be monitored to ensure they don’t have any further contact with other Christians. . . It is also common for these Christians to be threatened that they and their family members may suffer an ‘accident’.”

The 40-page report gives examples of systematic abuse, including the case of a Christian who was detained arbitrarily, another who was arrested without being informed of the charges against her, and another who was told that his guilty verdict had been decided before his court hearing.

The report was published in the wake of accusations, led by the former Home Secretary Suella Braverman, that churches in England had been “facilitating industrial-scale bogus asylum claims”. This has been fervently denied by senior church leaders.

Home Office figures suggest that, between June 2016 and 2022, more people claiming asylum in the UK were Iranian than any other nationality. In the year to June 2023, Iranian nationals were the third most common nationality to claim asylum in the UK, making 7776 applications, the Home Office reports. In 2019, the House of Bishops authorised a Persian translation of the service of holy communion for the increasing numbers of Iranians in congregations.

The charities behind Faceless Victims estimate that Iranian Christians make up a “significant portion” of the more than 15,000 Iranian asylum-seekers in Turkey. They argue that the Shia regime is contravening 11 articles of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a signatory, and call on Iran to release “immediately and unconditionally” all Christians “detained on charges relating to their faith and religious activities”. The report also urges Iran to “clarify where Persian-speaking Christians may worship freely in their mother tongue, without fearing arrest and prosecution”.

Sense of powerless is ‘overwhelming’ says Welby after sheltering with Ukrainians from air-raids

By FRANCIS MARTIN



Archbishop Welby consoles Luba, one of the current residents at Heritage’s centre in Odesa

“LORD, we trust in the promise of your word. . .” The Archbishop of Canterbury broke off from his prayer as the slow, rising wail of an air-raid siren filled the room.

Last Friday, Archbishop Welby was in Odesa, in southern Ukraine, visiting a Christian charity, Heritage, which works with children, people with special needs, and those living in, or escaping from, areas near the front lines. Odesa itself is attacked frequently by Russian drones, but a check on a social-media feed that provides live updates on

military activity confirmed that the current alarm was related to a Russian plane that had taken off and could be carrying a hypersonic missile.

Slava, who with his wife, Alona, founded Heritage in 2007, advised that, until further updates, it was safe to continue as normal. The Archbishop resumed his prayer. After about one hour, it was the all-clear: no missiles had been fired. Two days previously, an attack, using similar weapons, had occurred, killing five people around the country. Archbishop Welby and his team had spent almost three hours in a shelter.

Later last Friday, in an interview with the Church Times, Archbishop Welby said that the sense among Ukrainians that life was “profoundly uncertain, unpredictable, and uncontrollable” had “really imprinted itself” on his mind. While visiting Heritage’s centre in Ukraine, the Archbishop met some of those who had had to flee areas near the front line, and who were now being housed temporarily by Heritage and supported in looking for long-term accommodation. The residents ranged in age from eight to eighties. Archbishop Welby spent time sitting with Kolya, an eight-year-old, who was building a model of a warship and setting it to sail on the “Black Sea” of the carpet.

Later, the Archbishop recalled being told that, “whenever there’s a bang, the trauma of having been in the village, and the entire village destroyed, is seen in [Kolya’s] reaction.” He also recalled a conversation with Luba, a 70-year-old woman whose daughter had been killed by artillery fire during the evacuation of her village. Luba’s husband, Viktor, sat silently while his wife spoke with the Archbishop.

“That sense of powerlessness, of all your plans for life being completely and permanently changed by the action of invasion” had been overwhelming, he said. The air-raid alert, he suggested, emphasised the precariousness of everyday life.

Heritage is one of several Ukrainian charities that have received support from Christian Aid, using funds from the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for Ukraine. Christian Aid’s Ukraine-response country director, Iryna Dobrohorska, said last Friday: “I think we are all in agreement that the war is not ending any time soon, and the needs are dire. “Our mission, as Christian Aid, is to support our partners, to support our people. For me, as a Ukrainian, it is a big honour to help the people of Ukraine, the people who suffered. I also underwent evacuation. And we are very grateful that there is still attention, that there is still interest in the most challenging time for our country.”



FRANÇOIS

Food supplies in Heritage’s centre in Odesa, ready to be transported to areas closer to the fighting.

One of the biggest humanitarian needs in the south of Ukraine arose last summer after the Nova Kakhovka dam was destroyed. This forced the evacuation of more than 80 villages, comprising more than 17,000 people. Heritage, supported by Christian Aid, helped by distributing food, drinking water, and medical supplies to the areas affected.

The charity was busy enough even before the full-

scale invasion, running summer camps for children, programmes for people with hearing impairments, and for children with special needs, and helping with the adoption process, alongside other work. Now, it is also heavily engaged in delivering aid to communities near the front lines. Anna and Vova are two of the Heritage workers who make frequent trips with supplies of food and fuel, and have helped to evacuate people from areas at risk of occupation. They could spend only 15 minutes at each stop, they explained, to avoid being targeted by Russian drones. Even so, Vova has come under direct fire from a drone.

Tania, a woman who fled from a village near the front line, was now helping Heritage with its aid deliveries, using her local knowledge. The risks remain high: her husband lost his leg below the knee to a drone strike while driving. After they had met some of the displaced people helped by Heritage and Christian Aid, and had looked around the centre, Slava asked Archbishop Welby to pray for a “lasting peace for Ukraine”.

“I hope we are alive when the peace comes,” he added, drily, before his prayer was interrupted by the air-raid siren. THE Archbishop of Canterbury, concluding his five-day visit to Ukraine on Friday, said: “We must long for peace — but not peace that increases the likelihood of more war.”

The UK, he said, “needs to show that we are committed as a nation to justice, to peace, to reconciliation on the basis of security, and respect for international law”, but he was “not capable of trotting out an answer that would probably be wrong” about exactly how this could be achieved.

Asked whether he thought the trip had been worth the time, expense, and risk, he said that he saw it as a “biblical and theological imperative to stand — as much as one is able — with those who are oppressed” and to say: “You’re not forgotten: we love you.” The trip had not unduly distracted him from other responsibilities, he said: even while sheltering during a missile strike early on Wednesday morning last week, he had been working on safeguarding and Living in Love and Faith.

Describing the differences that he had noticed since his previous visit, in November-December 2022, Archbishop Welby said: “The mood is more realistically hard-nosed, and consequently dour, about the length this is likely to last.” He believed that there was a recognition of “the enormous mountain there is to climb to achieve security and the objectives of Ukraine, and the colossal human cost at all levels”.

From Herefordshire to Cyprus & the Gulf

THE next Bishop in Cyprus & the Gulf is to be the Revd Sean Semple, Rector of Ross with Walford and Brampton Abbots, in the diocese of Hereford. The announcement was made by the Archbishop in Jerusalem, the Most Revd Hosam Naoum, on Wednesday. Fr Semple was ordained deacon in South Africa in 2009 and priest in 2011, after which he served as an associate priest in Larnaca, in Cyprus. It is one of three dioceses in the



**Announcing Bishop-elect
the Revd Sean Semple**

Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and covers several countries, including Cyprus, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Yemen, and Iraq. Fr Semple moved to Hereford diocese in 2015 on his appointment as Vicar of Weobley with Sarnesfield and Norton Canon.

Aled Jones: Singer, presenter — and now celebrant

By SARAH MEYRICK



THE singer and presenter Aled Jones has qualified as a celebrant, and is now permitted to officiate at weddings, naming ceremonies, funerals, and other ceremonies. Mr Jones, the former boy treble who sold more than seven million albums and now presents Songs of

Praise on BBC1, and two shows on Classic FM, spent a year studying with the Academy of Modern Celebrancy. He graduated in December 2023.

It was not something that he had planned on, he said. “I was talking to someone who told me that my version of ‘You raise me up’ is the most requested piece of music in crematoriums in the UK. I might have laughed it off, and maybe it’s old age making me think more, but I just thought, what an honour that it was my music, my voice, that was chosen at such a pivotal time. I decided I wanted to know more.”

He began to investigate what it took to become a celebrant, and, before long, he had begun the training, which often meant squeezing in modules in airport lounges or between filming sessions. The training included drafting scripts for ceremonies. “It’s been fascinating,” he said.

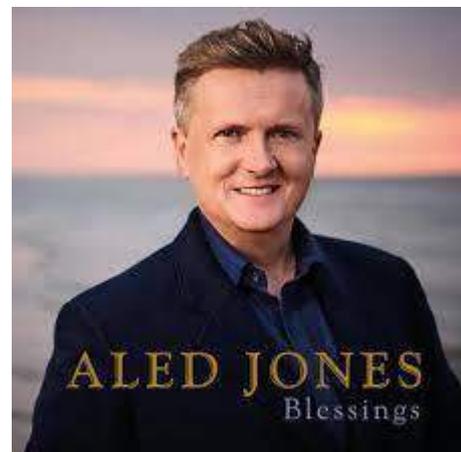
Mr Jones is yet to conduct any ceremonies, although he has had several requests. He expects that people may ask him to sing as part of the event, but this is optional. The world of music, he says on his website, has given him a deep appreciation of the importance of meaningful moments. “Whether you’re a fan of classical music or not, my commitment to creating a personalised, unforgettable experience . . . is unwavering.”

He played down the idea that anyone might be star-struck to find him in this position. “I’ve been doing this since I was 12 years old,” he said. “Anyone can come up to me, and I’m always up for a chat. It’s never a case of them and me; it’s always a case of us.” If asked, he would introduce elements of faith into the ceremonies. “I’m not a minister or a priest, but I can put faith in, if that’s what the people want. I’m a card-carrying Christian; so that’s what I believe. But, yes, I’m always up for a blessing.”

Mr Jones is unlikely to be conducting ceremonies in the first half of this year, as he is fully occupied with a new tour, “Full Circle”, in which he will perform at 74 venues around the UK this year. The show promises “Aled Jones as you’ve never heard him before.” “It’s just me on stage,” he said, “telling the story of my life from 40 years in the industry. I’m singing music that I’ve never done on stage before, plus some music that I [regularly] do. I’m also singing music that I’ve written, and singing some musical theatre. But, more than anything, it’s me telling my life story.”

There would be a big screen “with lots of embarrassing photos” and “really dodgy outfits”, he said. His show includes behind-the-scenes footage of some of his higher-profile moments: singing at the wedding of Paula Yates and Bob Geldof, working with Leonard Bernstein (“He wanted to adopt me, for goodness’ sake”), and performing for the Royal Family. There was “a terrible clip” of his first effort fronting Songs of Praise, when he was just 16: “I presented a programme from a seaside town in North Wales and, my goodness, I was terrible. It’s the most wooden piece of TV you’ve ever seen in your life.”

Mr Jones said that he was looking forward to the challenge. At 53, he had found himself looking back. “As a kid, I had this extraordinary career, which was only four years. I almost didn’t have time to savour some of the things I’ve done. Putting the show together has forced me to look back, and it’s been a great experience, actually.” The venues are not necessarily big ones, and 90 per cent are new to him. He refers to a tour in Australia which took him to smaller venues. “The tendency is that you just perform in the same places. I think for the first six or seven times I went to Australia, all I ever saw was the Sydney Opera House and the Melbourne Concert Hall. The best tour I ever did [there] was a regional one, where I went to places that no one had been before.”



The show would be different every night, he said. “I’m leaving some things for the moment. So, for instance, if I’m talking about my days when I was presenting Daybreak with Lorraine, my plan is to have on the big screen pictures of people I interviewed — everyone from David Cameron to Justin Bieber. On different nights, I might talk about different people. So that will keep it fresh for me as well.” Audiences will also have the chance to ask questions. He said that he enjoyed the spontaneity. “It’s always been like that with my concerts. I do prepare the music, of course, and you have to work on your voice and everything, but I never, ever plan what I say in between the music. I love that aspect of performance.”

The tour “Full Circle” runs from 20 March to 23 November.



Gaza: "What's happening now is the most brutal thing I have witnessed in my career"

Chris Hook MSF doctor

Here, the Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders (MSF) medical team leader shares his powerful testimony from the frontline of a humanitarian catastrophe.

By the time we arrived in Gaza on 14 November 2023, it had been five weeks since the escalation of the conflict. Bombing had been intensive, Gaza City and the north had been cut off, and hundreds of thousands of people had been forced to leave their homes and head south.

We went straight to Nasser Hospital in the city of Khan Yunis, in the south of the Strip, a hospital where Médecins Sans Frontières / Doctors Without Borders (MSF) had worked before. Our initial goal was to support with surgical capacity.

Overwhelming numbers of patients were arriving regularly at the hospital with severe burns and traumatic injuries. Some came in trucks with seven or eight people loaded in the back, some injured, some already dead. Others were brought in by their families, rushed in from cars, carried by brave bystanders determined to help.

Our international team included three surgeons and two anaesthetists, as well as ICU and emergency medicine specialists and other key roles. Whilst we had just arrived, we were joining Palestinian colleagues who have been at the forefront of this crisis from the start.

Nasser Hospital has a building where MSF has previously run a service treating bone infection. The building has two operating theatres, but when we arrived the immense pressures on the hospital staff meant they were only able to have one running, and only intermittently. With our team and resources we were able to work together with the hospital staff and open both operating theatres.

Many of the patients need orthopaedic surgery to fix broken bones, and then plastics: a surgery to treat wounds that are too large to be closed with stitches alone. In plastic surgery a specialist surgeon will move tissue from another part of the body to cover the wound, maintaining a blood supply to keep the tissue alive. The team also performed many skin grafts, often as treatment for severe burns.

Mass casualty incidents

"All doctors! All doctors to the emergency department!"

The emergency department is immediately full of people. There aren't enough beds, so patients are treated on the floor, which quickly becomes covered in blood. Sometimes there aren't enough medications, especially if it's the fourth or fifth bombing of the day.

There's no quiet space to take people whose injuries are not survivable, nowhere to gently explain to their families what is happening. Amid the crowds, doctors make incredibly difficult decisions about who to treat with the resources available.

I remember one girl in particular – around 11 years old. There had been a direct hit on her house, but somehow she had been pulled out of the rubble. None of her family had survived. She had extensive injuries, but the team managed to resuscitate her. A CT scan showed she had severe lung contusions – essentially bruising that causes blood and other fluid to build up on the lungs and can stop them functioning. Thankfully the ICU team were able to stabilise her and put her on a ventilator – a machine to help her breathe.

We knew that if she survived she would need multiple surgeries. The damage to her lungs meant the eleven-year-old was on a ventilator for several days. But, with the care of the ICU team, she was eventually stable enough for surgery. She had several large wounds, extensive burns and a broken leg. It's hard to imagine the pain and fear she must have experienced, despite the efforts of the team. She needed plastics, orthopaedics and skin grafts – a huge amount of surgery for anyone, but especially a child on her own.

After she'd been in hospital for around five days, the girl's extended family found her. They had heard that there might have been a survivor from the shelling and had started to search. She recovered well from the surgeries, and we were able to discharge her to their care, with an external fixator on her lower leg.

We don't know what will happen to her next...

While she was being treated, the cycle continued in the emergency department, with waves of injured people arriving and exhausted staff doing everything they could. During this time I was working on finding new spaces for MSF to work. With so many people displaced from the north, the hospitals in the Middle Area and south of Gaza were overwhelmed. After a lot of work, we opened a clinic to the south of Nasser, only for it to be closed a few days later when the road was cut off by tanks and a nearby air strike signalled a new phase of military movements in the area.

This road closure also meant our MSF colleagues in Al Aqsa Hospital in the Middle Area were isolated; remarkably, some of them chose to stay. The east of Khan Yunis came under attack, so the staff and patients at Nasser Hospital were also much less safe. We were cut off from our warehouse of medical supplies after the region was declared an evacuation zone, surrounded by troops.

The security situation in Gaza and the lack of humanitarian access means that MSF is not able to work as we normally would. In these circumstances, it's important to focus on what we can achieve.

In the three weeks it was operational, our surgery project meant Nasser hospital went from around eight plastic surgeries a day to just over 20. Our teams there supported the emergency and ICU departments to care for patients through multiple major mass casualty incidents a day – in my hospital in the UK we might not see one in a year.

After careful negotiation, we were able to move the supplies to a new warehouse, meaning our teams in the south still have some access to the medications and materials they need to care for patients. And just before I left, we were able to open a new field hospital in Rafah. It has a clinic providing outpatient wound care, physiotherapy and mental health services, and 60 beds for more critical care. This isn't an exhaustive list of what MSF's work in Gaza – just the things I got to be part of or see first-hand.

That healthcare is functioning at all in Gaza is thanks to our Gazan colleagues: both the 300+ who are part of MSF and the many other Gazan health workers with whom we work closely. We have colleagues who have escaped bombing in three or four different cities, trying each time to find somewhere safe for their families. But we opened the new field hospital in Rafah and there they were, asking what can we do? How can we help?

Most have lost family members, they've lost their homes. Some are living in tents with limited access to toilets, they can struggle to find food. Some have been besieged, they've seen colleagues killed in convoys of MSF cars, they worry about their families every time they leave them to come to work. But they keep turning up. They keep treating patients, even when there is a threat to their own lives. Even though they are exhausted and burnt out. And they find moments of humour and positivity among it all.

The situation in Gaza is brutal, and what Gazan health workers are doing is one of the most inspiring things I have ever witnessed.



The area around Nasser Hospital, where she was treated, has been declared an evacuation zone. Her external fixator, which is a metal frame holding her fractured bone in place, will be a risk for infection unless she's able to access appropriate follow-up care.

What this little girl needs is what everyone in Gaza needs right now: a ceasefire.

The violence needs to stop. We need improved humanitarian access, and more staff, medications and supplies. People need more food, water, blankets, shelter – everything.

They need to be able to return to and rebuild their homes. The humanitarian situation is urgent and the medical consequences of this conflict will be felt for years to come.

What's happening now in Gaza is without a doubt, the most brutal thing I have witnessed in my career. It must stop now.

Update: Since Chris returned from Gaza, Nasser Hospital has been forced out of action



THE DIOCESE OF
CYPRUS AND THE GULF
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN
JERUSALEM AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Diocesan News

Synod 2024

The annual Diocesan Synod opened on 5 February, with a Eucharist led by the Most Reverend Hosam Naoum, Archbishop of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East and Acting Bishop of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf.

During the opening Eucharist two priests were licensed—the Reverend Gill Nisbet as interim priest and chaplain in the chaplaincy of St Andrew Abu Dhabi, and the Reverend Paul Carr as parish priest in the parish of Paphos.

Synod Speaker the Reverend Canon Dr Peniel Rajkumar, Director of Global Mission at USPG, addressed Members on Tuesday, on the theme of *Witnessing through witness: exploring power*.

Synod met at the Golden Bay Hotel in Larnaca, until 9 February.



CONSECRATION AND ENTHRONEMENT OF BISHOP ELECT SEAN TEMPLE



The Consecration and Enthronement of Bishop Elect Sean Temple as the Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf will take place at St Christopher's Cathedral, Bahrain on Friday 24 May at 6 pm.

The Enthronement of the new Bishop in St Paul's Cathedral in Nicosia will take place on Saturday 22 June at 5 pm.

Both events will be followed by receptions. Anyone wishing to attend either, or both events, would be most welcome.

Canon Georgia marks 40 years of service

Georgia Katsantonis, PA to every but the first Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf, this week marks four decades working for the Diocese.

She took up her post on 1 March 1984, having been told the job requirements were simply the ability to speak English and Greek. Fortunately for the Diocese, Georgia's skill set far exceeds that. She rapidly became a key figure in the administration of the central office in Nicosia, as well as the wider Province in her later role as Provincial Secretary, offering unstinting support—and friendship—to successive bishops and their families.



At her installation in May 2023 as an ecumenical lay canon at St Paul's Cathedral in Nicosia—the first such canon in the Diocese—Bishop Michael noted Georgia's "remarkably long and devoted service and her accumulated shrewd wisdom and knowledge: an observant Orthodox laywoman who knows more about the ways and varieties of worldwide as well as local Anglicanism than most Anglicans". Canon Georgia's reflections on her early days at the office speak to the dramatic change in the interconnectedness of the world, and the Diocese, in the intervening years.

"I started working as the Bishop's PA just seven years after the Diocese was established, and was the only full-time member of the Bishop's staff in those early years," she recalls. "Back then, communication with the rest of the Diocese was very difficult—it was only the Bishop's regular travels across the two archdeaconries that maintained essential connectivity between their many different jurisdictions."

Indeed, she did not meet her first boss, Bishop Harry Moore, until a month after she began working for him, when he returned from a three-month tour of the Gulf. The office had no fax or telex, and telephone contact with many countries of the Diocese was near-impossible.

"While Bishop Harry was away, I had no communication with him at all."

The first Synod Georgia attended, in 1984 at the Lordos Beach Hotel in Larnaca, was the first joint Synod of the Cyprus and Gulf archdeaconries. "I still remember members' heart-warming pledge that never again would they have separate synods," she says. "They were thirsting to hear news from each other—it was like a family reunion." There was that same sense of family when, 15 years later, members from the north of Cyprus were welcomed to the Synod held in the UAE, at a time when contact with the Republic in the south was severely restricted.

"There was such excitement when Kyrenia was first able to be represented by laity, at the 1999 Synod meeting at a small hotel in Ras Al Khaimah—where members were also guests at the wedding of one of our priests. Again—such a sense of being part of a large and loving family."

Now eagerly awaiting the arrival of the sixth Bishop of the Diocese, the Reverend Sean Semple and his wife, Jenny, Georgia reflects on the predecessors she has served over the years.

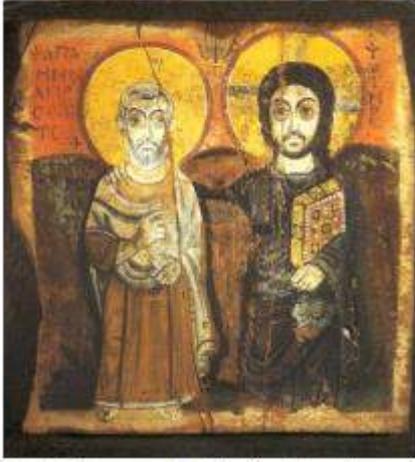
"Each has been different. Yet all, on leaving their post here, talked about how they grew to love this complex and exciting Diocese, and how they anxiously strived to keep it together, amidst its many ups and downs."





Compiled by Rev Gill Nisbet of the Barnabas Team

Lent 2024 By Rev Mark Derry, Church of the Epiphany, Qatar



Nowhere is this image of God drawing close to us more profoundly demonstrated than in this, the oldest known Coptic icon, written in the 8th century in Egypt and depicting Christ and Abba (Abbot) Mena (285-309 A.D.) currently hanging in the Louvre in Paris.

The French, however, do not call it 'Christ and Abba Mena'; they title it 'Christ and His Friend'. Reflection upon this icon can be used to demonstrate what it is to live the Christian life.

Christ, to the right, is slightly taller than the figure on the left; the inscription 'Saviour' is written near him. In a sign of introduction and as a protective gesture, his right hand is placed on the left shoulder of Saint Mena, who can be identified by the inscription placed to the left of his halo, 'Apa Mena superior.'

In the icon, we notice the unusual position of Christ with his arm around 'the friend.' This embrace can demonstrate the change of status we have with Christ. He no longer calls us servants but rather friends.

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I called you friends, for all that I have heard from the Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)

This icon shows the Lord Jesus Christ holding the Book of the Gospels, symbolizing that He is the Word, the Truth. We are like the friend in the icon, we also have been given something to share, as signified by the small scroll that the friend is holding.

The next detail of this icon to consider is that Christ has no feet. The fact that the friend has feet can be understood as being sent out like the father sent the Son.

As Teresa of Avila prayed:

'Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good, Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, Yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now but yours, No hands,

no feet on earth but yours, Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world. Christ has no body now on earth but yours'.

Finally, there is silence found in this icon, as in all icons. Christ and His friend have their mouths closed. The friend, however, is painted with very prominent ears. We are primarily listeners of God. There is a silence in the icon, a prayerful silence where not a word is spoken.

Discovering again ... Silence this Lent

One of the dangers we encounter in our modern technological world is that of constant noise. We are easily bombarded with chatter all day long. It could be through the radio, TV, Internet, or the ceaseless conversation of others. Rarely do we find times of great silence. As a result, when silence is offered to us, we often try to fill that silence immediately. But is this wise? Is it good to occupy our minds day and night with noise?

Though every person will be different, each and every person does need times of regular silence and solitude. Without it, it is hard to hear the Voice of God. God speaks in the silence and He desires to communicate to you through this sacred language. Do not run from silence for, if you do, you will be running from the Voice of God.

Try to take some time each day alone in silence. If you find that it is difficult to do even for five minutes, then this is a sign that there is too much noise in your life. Resolve to have more times of silence this Lent. Turn off the radio in the car, go for a walk, or sit and pray without thinking or speaking, just being quiet in the presence of God. The gift of silent communication with God is a gift that you need and you will learn more from silence than from hours of the noise of the world.

Lord, I desire to seek You in the silence. I choose to listen to Your quiet promptings of love spoken in this way. Give me the wisdom and strength I need to dedicate myself to moments of quiet every day. May these moments bring clarity to my soul and understanding to my life. Jesus, I trust in You.



Diocesan Prayers for March



Sunday, 3 March 2024 LENT III

The Church of the Province of Uganda Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Pray for those who continue to intercede, work for, and celebrate the lands and churches of the diocese even when they are far away.

St Helena, Larnaca, Cyprus

Sunday, 10 March 2024 LENT IV

The Episcopal Church of the United States Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Pray for the Provinces of the whole Anglican Communion, their people, and Primates.

St John's, Muscat, Oman

Sunday, 17 March 2024 LENT V

The Church in Wales Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Pray for those who support and promote our Province.

The Anglican Churches in Paphos, Cyprus

Sunday, 24 March 2024 PALM SUNDAY

The Church of the Province of West Africa Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Pray for Bishop Julius Wanyoike, his clergy and people, and for the three-way relationship between Cyprus and the Gulf, Thika, and Exeter.

Christ Church, Jebel Ali, UAE

Sunday, 31 March 2024 EASTER DAY

The Church in the Province of the West Indies Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Pray for Bishop Robert Atwell, his clergy, and people, and for the three-way link with us and Thika.

The Mission to Seafarers in Cyprus

Living God, you bring us together in community
And teach us to love one another as you have loved us.
May we be beacons of your light in the communities in which we are set,
That through truth, justice and action
We may see your kingdom come upon earth,
In Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



For our brothers and sisters at St Andrew's

We remember the needs within our church family of those that particularly need our prayers. These include:

Grahame Ashe, Duncan Hadfield, Sandi Richardson, May McKenzie, Anne Fitcher, Nasim Akhtar, Shane Barnes, Jenny and Bob Hayward and Padmesh Gartaula.

We pray also for strength and grace for those who carry the burden of care.

We remember those who have died and bring before you the life of **Anne Gilroy** and all who mourn her passing.

"The prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well ... pray for each other so that you may be healed" James 5: 15-16

QUOTES OF THE MONTH

Death is the tyrant's ultimate weapon to terrorise. . . But the promise of resurrection means that God intends to undo whatever the tyrant does. The worst of evil is no match for resurrection, the goodness of God's power and the power of God's goodness

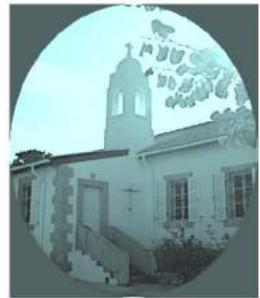
Michael Bird, deputy principal of Ridley College, Melbourne

People tell me horrible stuff every single day. They shout at you. They send you terrible messages. They tell you what they think of you particularly when you interview politicians, and it genuinely doesn't affect me. I know I'm valued by God and that gives me a real sense of perspective. I don't allow the praise to take me too high, and I don't allow the rubbish to drag me too low

Dan Walker, radio presenter and news reader, interview, The Times, 22 February



*Living God, help us at all times to be Christ to others
and to see Christ in all people.*



If you would like to contribute any articles or comments
to this magazine please contact
the Editor, Anne Lloyd at graniannie@hotmail.com

IMAM BAYILDI RECIPE

Total Time: 2 hours 15 minutes

Serves 4



Imam Bayildi (stuffed aubergines) is a simple, delicious vegan dish, packed with so much flavor! An amazing combination of fresh aubergines stuffed with a juicy tomato based filling, caramelised onions, garlic with aromatic herbs and spices!

Ingredients:

2 large aubergines	1 tbsp tomato puree
salt	1 tsp dried oregano
150ml olive oil	1 tsp sweet smoked paprika
1 brown onion	1 tsp ground cumin
4 large garlic cloves	4 large plum tomatoes
handful fresh parsley or mint, or a mixture of the two, plus extra to serve	
black pepper, to taste	

Pre-heat the oven to 150 degrees.

Half the aubergine and score the flesh on a cross hatch, trying not to break the skin with the tip of your knife. Rub a generous amount of salt into the flesh, and set aside.

Measure out the olive oil in a measuring cup or jug, and keep it by the stove. Add a generous splash to a large, non-stick frying pan set over a high heat. Fry the aubergines, working in batches and adding a little more oil if necessary until their exposed flesh is golden. As you remove them from a pan, nestle them cut side up in a baking dish just large enough to fit them snugly.

Reduce the heat to medium and add the onion, thinly sliced into half moons along with another splash of oil and another pinch of salt. Fry for 5-6 minutes or so until they're soft and just starting to colour.

Finely slice the garlic cloves before adding them to the pan and cook for another couple of minutes until they're soft and aromatic.

Roughly dice the tomatoes and add them to the pan, cooking for a further 5 minutes until they start to break down into a rough sauce. Stir in the cumin, paprika, oregano, tomato puree and the fresh herbs, finely chopped. Season generously to taste with more salt and a little black pepper.

Remove from the heat and stir in 4 tbsp of water before spooning the mixture over the exposed cut sides of the aubergine. Drizzle the remaining olive oil over the dish before covering with foil and baking for 1 hour and 30 minutes, or until the aubergines are soft and have collapsed.

Leave to stand and serve either warm, or at room temperature. Enjoy!



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TÜRK BANKASI

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entrance to the Church or in the Church Hall. When you have read it, please pass
on – the more it is read, the wider the message is spread, which pleases us (and
makes our advertisers happy too). Suggested donation: 5 TL.

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