

# FOCUS

*Portsoy Church Magazine*



August 2023—September 2023

# ***A Message from the Manse***

Many of you reading this will know that a while back I was in Edinburgh to see Bruce Springsteen in concert and I've got to say he was as good as ever. He really knows how to put on a show, although I'm far from the first person to say that. Apparently when he was still relatively unknown, Jon Landau, who would go on to become Springsteen's manager, said: 'I have seen the future of rock n' roll and its name is Bruce Springsteen.'

I couldn't help but think of that on a few occasions over the past weeks, because I think I've seen a glimpse of the future for our church here in Portsoy. I don't know what its name is, but it's filled me with hope.

Back at the beginning of June, we tried something new for our Sunday worship. Café Church. And I'm sure everyone who came along that day, when we had Beyond Boyndie providing the music and everyone sitting not in rows but at tables with teas and coffees in front of them, they'll all agree that it was a pretty resounding success. So much so that we repeated it on Boat Festival Sunday - which is traditionally one of the quieter services in our annual calendar, but not this time! Again, the Church Centre was full of regular worshippers and curious visitors - and again, it seemed to go down well with everyone.

And then there was the first of our summer joint services with our partner churches of Cullen & Deskford, and Cornhill & Ordiquhill. No-one really knew what to expect but I, for one, was more than happy to end up scurrying about to bring

out extra chairs in order that we could get everyone in and seated. I think it's the busiest I've ever seen the Church Centre on a Sunday morning. And there was such a feeling of enthusiasm and togetherness that day, again those who were there are bound to agree - I'm not much of a smiler, but I found it hard to shift the grin from my face for the rest of the day. Although the fact that I was heading off on holiday to Madeira the day after might have had something to do with that as well!

Then we followed that up with another joint service at the Auld Kirk in Cullen, which was further proof that there's a real appetite for collaboration between our churches. And if you throw in everything else that's happened over the past few weeks - Boat Festival teas, a successful Thrift Week, Coffee 'n Company continuing to welcome folks from all airts and pairts, you really get a sense that there's something happening here in Portsoy and the towns around us.

Recently there's been so much talk of decline in the church in Scotland and it's true, there is a decline. But not everywhere. Not here. We have a bright future ahead so let's keep working together to make it all the brighter. Bruce Springsteen's getting on a bit, he won't be around for ever - but the church will!

Blessings

John

If you need me for anything or if you just want to call for a chat, you can reach me at the manse on 01261 838 506.

## Quiz Time!

The Bible is full of surprises and some are stranger than others! Can you tell in which books of the Bible these unusual occurrences take place?

1. A man is swallowed by a fish.
2. A woman is turned into salt.
3. There's a talking donkey.
4. Someone gets called 'baldy'.
5. A wall falls down at the sound of trumpets.
6. Lions lose their appetite.
7. Someone falls asleep and then falls out of a window during a long sermon.
8. A man goes weak at the knees after he has a haircut.
9. There's a floating zoo.
10. Someone is murdered when (sorry!) he's sitting on the toilet.

## Funerals

27th July: Ella Munro

**Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.**

## WELCOME TEAMS

10.00am Portsoy Church Centre

### **August**

- 6 August Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay  
13 August Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay  
20 August Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie  
27 August Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown

### **September**

- 3 Sept Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay  
10 Sept Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay  
17 Sept Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie  
24 Sept Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown

### **October**

- 1 October Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay  
8 October Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay  
15 October Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie  
22 October Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown  
29 October Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay

**If any of the dates are unsuitable please ensure you arrange a swap.**

## Counting Rota

### **August**

- 6 Olwen & Raymond  
13 Moira & Sheila  
20 Margaret & Ian  
27 Ishbel & Helen

### **September**

- 3 Olwen & Raymond  
10 Moira & Sheila  
17 Margaret & Ian  
24 Ishbel & Helen

### **October**

- 1 Olwen & Raymond  
8 Moira & Sheila  
15 Margaret & Ian  
22 Ishbel & Helen  
29 Olwen & Raymond

## Portsoy Church Guild

As I type this, there is still some time to go before our Guild starts meeting regularly. But, before we know it, we'll be into September and the new session underway. Our first meeting is on Tuesday 5 September, when Olwen Christie will tell us about her cruise to the Antarctic, which promises to be a great start to our Guild session.

Then, on 3 October, we look forward to welcoming Andrew Simpson. He will give us an insight into his experiences of recent royal occasions and his role as the Lord Lieutenant of Banffshire.

Meetings begin at 2pm. We will have a complete syllabus of the upcoming Session soon. New members are always very welcome, so please feel free to bring a friend.

On Saturday 9 September, we plan to hold a special Guild meeting. Thanks to the wonders of technology, we'll be a part of the national Guild Annual Gathering held in Edinburgh. We'll be streaming the Gathering in Portsoy Church Centre from 11am - 4pm. The Centre will be open from 10.30am, with tea, coffee and biscuits available throughout the day.

We hope as many members as possible will come along for some, or all, of the day and are inviting our Guild friends from Cornhill and Cullen to join us. Please bring a packed lunch if you want to stay all day, or over lunchtime. There will be books and items for sale (supplied by the Christian bookshop in Peterhead) and some items from the Guild shop too.

Please put the date in your diary and come and support this event. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Margaret (Whewell) [margaret.whewell@btopenworld.com](mailto:margaret.whewell@btopenworld.com) Tel: 01261 843125 or 07879 124654



HOW CAN YOU HAVE THE MONDAY BLUES  
WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORK AGAIN  
UNTIL NEXT SUNDAY?

**Link  
&  
Ladies**

*A new and informal group to link ladies  
of every age and stage for fellowship, fun  
and a chance to explore faith together*

**Wednesday  
23rd August**

7.30 to 9pm

Venue to be confirmed

*For more information please contact Kath Findlay,  
Tel. 07759 692968 or email [findlaykath@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:findlaykath@yahoo.co.uk)*



# Prayer Focus

"No longer do I call you servants...but I have called you friends." John 15:15

What is a friend? According to the dictionary a friend is a loved one, intimate acquaintance, neighbour, well-wisher, proctor, partner, to name but a few. Some "friends" are fickle. In the book of Proverbs we read "Wealth makes many friends, but the poor is separated from his friend" (19 :4). A true friend, however, "Loves at all times" (17:17) and "Sticks closer than a brother." (18:24)

A genuine friend sets us free to be who we are and what we are. We can pour out our doubts and fears and talk freely about our concerns. We do not do well as a loner. In the press one day I read a story of a middle aged lady who was looking to buy a home somewhere in the wilds, miles from everyone. I thought it was so sad that she needed to cut herself off from everyone.

God designed us with a need for one another. As Christians we have a good reason to establish close ties. Loving relationships —they enrich our individual lives. They encourage us in our Christian faith. They make a house a home. We can be greatly blessed by them.

Be sure to have friends, and be a friend. Do you have one in need? Think of some way you can help. That's the only way to show God's plan for companionship and the love of Christ. You never know what might happen when you lend a helping hand.

Lord, please help us to be the kind of friend that is loving and



caring, gentle and forgiving, always with You in mind. May we never be guilty of criticising, being insensitive or belittling. Wherever we are, Father, may we be mindful to show friendliness—be it to those near us, the people in the street and within our church.

Thank you God for the blessings of friends and the love they give us. We give praise and thanks for the greatest friend we have in Jesus.

Amen



**Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.**

**John Wesley**

**FOCUS DEADLINE**

**The next edition of Focus will cover October 2023 to November 2023. Please let Johanna Sturrock have articles and any photographs for inclusion no later than Sunday 17 September. [unicornathome@gmail.com](mailto:unicornathome@gmail.com).**



**Thrift Shop  
time again:  
All ready for  
action on the  
first day. A  
very successful  
week. Thank  
you to all.**



## The Bible in 50 Words

God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Joseph ruled  
Jacob fooled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peaked  
Prophets warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained

## Working to Improve our Environmental/Fairtrade Impact

Now that Traidcraft is no longer in business, we have had to find other sources of ethically traded and environmentally friendly options for the Church Centre. Fortunately, supplies of Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar have been easy to source and you will continue to enjoy these fairly-traded drinks during any Church event.

We have always used Traidcraft toilet paper, so looked for alternative supplies. Did you know that 27,000 trees a day are cut down for regular toilet paper? Even the process of recycling paper for toilet rolls generates considerable carbon emissions. So what is the alternative? Well, we have swapped to toilet paper which is 100% tree free using sustainably grown bamboo pulp. The toilet rolls create **65% less carbon emissions** than regular toilet paper, and **30% less** than recycled toilet paper. Bamboo harvests use land more sustainably and help reduce the 15% of deforestation caused by regular toilet paper.

Bamboo has become one of the most important materials to the eco-movement, with more and more products being made from it. Bamboo is a highly versatile, strong and robust material. It's fibres are superior to cotton due to their natural anti-bacterial properties.

Bamboo also grows very fast, with some species growing up to 3 feet per day, which makes it a sustainable option for many household products including toilet rolls. This means that bamboo is ready for harvest in just 3-5 years, compared to 30-60 years for regular trees. This makes the entire harvesting

process faster, more efficient and more sustainable (less land is used for more produce).

Growing bamboo plants requires a lot less water (30% to be exact) than hardwood trees. This means there is less wasted water, and also less energy used supplying extra water when there is no natural abundance of rain. As bamboo plants are naturally self-generating, they require no additional fertilisers to grow.

We are trying various suppliers to see which is best for us and we are aware that the rolls tear off rather easily but we hope we can find a good option. So pull carefully!!!

So 'woohoo' for bamboo. We hope when you try it you will think so too!

### Flower Rota

#### August

#### September

#### October

6 Sheila McKay

3 Edith Stuart

1 Helen D'Arcy

13 FF

10 Eileen Brown

8 FF (Harvest Fest)

20 Olwen Christie

17 FF

15 Anne McArthur

27 Margaret Whewell

24 Helenor Henderson

22 Yvonne McKay

19 Sheila McKay

*Many thanks to all who donate to the Flower Fund. This allows us to have beautiful flowers in church each Sunday, which we gift to members of the community after the service.*

*If you would like to join the flower rota, and place flowers in the Church for the Sunday service please let Margaret know. More volunteers are always welcome.(01261 843125)*



Please contact Olwen Christie (Pastoral Care Convener) on 01261 843 680 if you know of anyone who is ill at home or in hospital (especially Dr Gray's in Elgin as we are not notified).

### Community Diary:

A diary of local events has been placed in the Portsoy Ice Cream Shop for use by everyone. This will enable event organisers to check that the date and time of their event will not clash with another already planned.

Please pass this on to any other local groups. To work effectively everyone will need to check the diary and ensure their own event is entered in it.

A Christian book lending library is available in the meeting room in the Church Centre

If you see something you fancy reading, just put your name in the register, borrow the book and sign it back in when you're finished.



## PRAYER CIRCLE

Name: .....  
(Not necessary)

Please pray for: .....  
.....  
.....

Please place completed slip in box at church door or hand to the minister or Edith Stuart.

# Directory

**Minister**

Rev. John Gow  
Tel: 01261 838 506  
E-mail: jgow@churchofscotland.org.uk

**Session Clerk**

Mrs Yvonne McKay, 11 The Steadings,  
Findochty, AB56 Tel: 07592 395 581  
E-mail: Yvonne@therealmckay.co.uk

**Treasurer**

Mr Raymond Wilson 5 St Tarquin's Place,  
Fordyce, AB45 2SH Tel: 01261 842204  
E-mail: raymondwilsonpfp@btinternet.com

**Gift Aid Convener**

Mr Ian Whewell, Eynhallow, 14 South High  
Street, Portsoy. Tel:01261 843 125  
E-mail: ian.whewell@btinternet.com

**Church Website**

Mr Ian Whewell - as above

**Church Centre Convener** Mr Ian Whewell - as above  
(For bookings)

**Centre Caretaker**

Mrs Sarah Willis, 40, Gordon Crescent,  
Portsoy Tel:01261 843 928 or  
07756 53 5731  
E-mail: sarahsfamily@btinternet.com

**Focus**

Mrs Johanna Sturrock  
21 Hill Street, Portsoy. Tel: 07766 390 318  
E-mail: unicornathome@gmail.com

## DIRECTORY (CONTINUED)

Pastoral Care Group Co-ordinator	Olwen Christie	01261 843680
Outreach Group Convener	Paul Williams	01261 842338
Finance & Property Group Convener	Ian Whewell	01261 843125
Social Group Convener	Helen D'Arcy	01261 842340
Administration Group Convener	Anne McArthur	01261 842474

## **Service Times**

**10.30am at the Church Centre every Sunday  
(refreshments served after Sunday services)**

### **Special Services**

**Sunday 27th August Joint Service at Cornhill  
Church**

**Sunday 8th October Harvest Festival**

**Please join us for all are welcome**

**Website—<http://www.portsoychurch.org>**

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**Scottish Charity No: SC 000522**