

FOCUS

Portsoy Church Magazine



April 2023—May 2023

A Message from the Manse

By the time you're reading this issue of Focus, we'll officially be in British Summertime. And I don't know about you, but longer days and lighter evenings always give me such a lift - how can they not?

As many of you will know, I like to get away to warmer climes every so often and one thing that always strikes me about Madeira (other places are available!) is that, unlike Scotland in wintertime, everything doesn't close down at 5 or 6 o'clock. People don't disappear behind their doors, closing their blinds and their curtains, not to reappear until the sun comes up. Shops stay open until 9 or 10 and the streets stay busy. And it's only when the clocks change and we enjoy extra hours of daylight that we become a little more like that - our days and our lives just seem to stretch that bit further.

And then we take it to the extreme! Unlike Madeira, when even in summer the sun continues to set no later than about 8pm, our days just get longer and longer - so much so that night-time only lasts a few hours. The sun hardly seems to go down and then we hear the birds singing to bring in the dawn.

I know it's all to do with the rotation of the earth (or something like that!) but I also like to think that it's God giving us our reward for having to endure the long winter nights. In Paul's letter to Timothy, he said, 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.' Or will, if we 'fight the good fight' as he did. Of course, Paul was talking about his life of faith, but the same holds true for us enduring dark days and long nights, whether of a Scottish winter or of

our hearts and souls. God stays with us, throughout them all. The sun always rises - and even if we don't see it (which is often the case!) it's still there. And God is there too, and he always will be.

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.

Easter Services

- Tues 4 April: 7pm, Cullen Hall Church (with Rev Douglas Stevenson)
- Wed 5 April: 7pm, Cornhill Church (with Rev John Gow)
- Thurs 6 April: 7pm, Tenebrae Service at Cullen Methodist Church (with Rev Jon Garde)
- Good Friday
- 7 April: 7pm, Portsoy Church (with Rev John Gow)
- Easter Sunday
- 9 April: 8am, St Colm's Well Portsoy (with Rev John Gow) & 10.30am Portsoy Church

Funerals

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 10 February | Anne Mitchell |
| 10 February | Ruth McKay |
| 24 March | William McKay |
| 27 March | James Marnoch |

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

10 Questions on Mark

We've been looking at the Gospel of Mark in church over the past couple of months and if you've been in church or watching on video, hopefully you've enjoyed it and maybe learned a little too. But how well do you know the Gospel? Try this quiz to test yourself!

In the Bible, Mark is the last of the four gospels. Is that true or false?

When the book begins, who is being baptised? Paul, Luke, John or Jesus?

Who does Mark record as Jesus' first two disciples? James and John, Judas and Matthew, Philip and Thomas or Peter and Andrew?

Where was Bartimaeus when Jesus healed him, was it Bethany, Jericho, Galilee or Jerusalem?

What kind of tree did Jesus place a curse on? Fig, plum, orange or apple?

A widow gave how many 'mites' to the treasury? None, 1, 2 or 4?

Jesus found a room for himself and the disciples for what reason? To have a party, for the Passover, to sleep in or to decorate?

Which three disciples did Jesus take aside in the Garden of Gethsemane? No clues!

Who claimed Jesus' body after His death? Was it Mary, Simon of Cyrene, Joseph of Arimathaea or John the Baptist?

How many verses are in chapter 17 of the Gospel?

Answers next time!!

WELCOME TEAMS

10.00am Portsoy Church Centre

April

- 2 April Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie
9 April Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
16 April Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
23 April Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
30 April Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

May

- 7 May Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
14 May Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
21 May Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
28 May Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

June

- 4 June Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
11 June Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
18 June Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
25 June Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

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

Counting Rota

April

- 2 Margaret & Ian
9 Ishbel & Helen
16 Olwen & Raymond
23 Moira & Sheila
30 Margaret & Ian

May

- 7 Ishbel & Helen
14 Olwen & Raymond
21 Moira & Sheila
28 Margaret & Ian

June

- 4 Ishbel & Helen
11 Olwen & Raymond
18 Moira & Sheila
25 Margaret & Ian

Food in Focus!

Everyone likes a good recipe, and thanks to Elma Littlejohn who sent in this mouth-watering one for Magic Chocolate Pudding, which her grandchildren love!

Ingredients

4ozs soft margarine or butter

4ozs caster sugar

2 lightly beaten eggs

2 tablespoons of cocoa powder

3ozs self-raising flour

Pinch of salt

1oz flaked almonds (optional)

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

A little milk

2ozs of chocolate of your choice chopped. Extra can be added!

And for the sauce...

1 tablespoon of cocoa

4ozs of muscovado sugar

10 fluid ozs (100mls) boiling water

Method

Pre heat oven to 190C (fan oven 170C). Grease a 2-pint oven proof dish. Cream butter and sugar till light and fluffy, gradually add beaten eggs. Sift the cocoa, flour and salt then fold into the mixture (with the flaked almonds if you're using them), add vanilla with enough milk to give a dripping consistency.

Scatter chopped chocolate evenly on bottom of dish and spoon mixture over.

Make the sauce by dissolving the cocoa and sugar in the boiling water, pour this over the sponge mixture and bake in oven for 40 minutes, until the pudding is risen and the top firm to touch. AND THEN ENJOY!



Food for thought!

I think we consider too much the good luck of the early bird
and not enough the bad luck of the early worm.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

There are two kinds of light—the glow that illuminates, and the
glare that obscures

James Thurber

What great thing would you attempt if you knew you
could not fail?

Robert H. Schuller



Prayer Focus

"Be exalted, O God, above the heavens: let Your glory be above all the earth." Psalm 57:5

Many of you would have seen the northern lights some weeks ago. I believe they were stunning by the pictures I saw of them and were the best they had ever been.

People sometimes say, "Isn't nature wonderful". How right they are. When we look around us there are many signs which have the "WOW" factor. Besides beautiful sunrises there are majestic mountains, rolling hills and fields, numerous animals and soaring swooping birds. So much breathtaking beauty and grandeur created by God's hand. Just look around and wonder with awe at what He has done. The following poem says it all.

Who paints the skies into glorious day?
Only the splendour of Jesus
Who breathes his life into fists of clay?
Only the splendour of Jesus
Who shapes the valleys and brings the rain?
Only the splendour of Jesus
Who makes the deserts to live again?
Only the splendour of Jesus

Thinking of all the glory should remind us that we must worship our Maker for His greatness, power and majesty. He alone deserves our praise and worship.

Father God, the wonder of creation speaks to everyone in different ways. May we sing of Your mighty power that made the mountains rise, that spread the seas and rivers, brought the flowers from the earth and built the great skies. "Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" (Exodus 15:11).

Thank you, Lord, for opening our hearts and minds to such beauty and wonders. Amen

The Beatitudes for Persecuted Christians

Blessed are the risk-takers,
The rebels and the rule-breakers.

Blessed are the grieving and the broken,
Blessed are the brave and the outspoken.

Blessed are the hidden and disguised,
Who watch their words,
Guard their footsteps, and fear for their lives.

Blessed are those in prison for their faith,
Blessed are those who are spied on by the state.

Blessed are the lied about and cheated,
The unjustly accused, the abused, the mistreated .

Blessed are those who flee when they want to stay,
Blessed are those who remain, when they could run away.

Blessed are the refugee and the displaced,
The exiled and excluded, shamed and disgraced.

Blessed are thos who worship in secret,
Who whisper their songs, hide their Bibles,
Forgive those who do them wrong.

Blessed are those who are scared,
but choose to follow just the same,
Blessed are those who are persecuted in Jesus' name.

Blessed are the risk-takers,
The rebels the rule-breakers.

Blessed are those who have nothing but prayer,
For God is always with them and the kingdom is theirs.

From "Open Doors" World Watch List 2023



On Mother's Day Sunday 19th March our first Cafe Church Service

Did you know?

Tennis is mentioned in the Bible. Well almost, because we're told that Joseph served in Pharaoh's court!

Moses was the first man to download something from a cloud to his tablet.

The area around the Jordan river was very wealthy, we know this because the banks kept overflowing.

Noah was the first ever financier. He was floating his stock when everyone else was in liquidation.

God's first words after he created Adam were, 'I can do better than that.' And He created Eve.

Focus on Holidays!

We thought readers of Focus would like to hear about the holiday memories of some of our church members, and we're starting off this time with Olwen Christie's memories of a once-in-a-lifetime trip as far south as it's possible to go...

Olwen says, 'We recently sailed on a wonderful cruise to South America and Antarctica. On our two-day passage through Antarctica we enjoyed the most perfect sunny weather as we were surrounded by both glaciers & icebergs. We witnessed a leopard seal on top of an ice stream and were blessed with beautiful penguins swimming at either side of the ship - a breath-taking experience.

One of the main highlights however was when two fin whales could be seen clearly port side, they're truly majestic creatures! An unforgettable and simply amazing trip.

Antarctic Facts

There is no Antarctic time zone .

Antarctica has active volcanoes.

The Antarctic has its own treaty.

Antarctica holds most of the world's fresh water .

Antarctica is a desert.

FOCUS DEADLINE

The next edition of Focus will cover June 2023 to July 2023. Please let Johanna Sturrock have articles and any photographs for inclusion no later than Sunday 21 May. unicornathome@gmail.com.

Portsoy Church Guild

Our Guild met in the Church Centre on Tuesday 7th March at 2pm. We were delighted to welcome Anne MacArthur who had agreed to officiate at our AGM.

After a brief time of worship followed by some intimations from National Guild, Margaret Whewell handed the meeting over to Anne MacArthur. There being no volunteers for the posts of Treasurer or Contact Person, Ian Whewell agreed to continue as Treasurer and Margaret Whewell agreed to continue as Contact Person (the latter somewhat reluctantly!)

Ian presented the accounts: Balance at end Dec. 2022 = £3,543. Ian proposed that the Guild should donate £1,000 to our church, and £1,000 to the Guild Projects. Membership fee for next Session will be £15. Ian suggested members should pay £10 each, and the balance should be paid from Guild funds. All these proposals were approved by the members.

This brought the business of the AGM to a close, and Margaret thanked Anne warmly for officiating.

Ian then spoke about the theme for the next Guild session - "New wine, New Wine Skins". He reminded us about the projects we haven't yet heard about at any of our meetings, and ran a short, fun picture quiz.

Margaret thanked Lorna Smith for accompanying us on the piano and the ladies standing ready to serve us refreshments.

At Anne's suggestion, we had a very successful "brainstorming" session, resulting in a useful list which should help greatly with our planning for the next Guild Session. Our thanks again to Anne for her help with this.

We had time to shop at our Sales Table, and then Rev. John Gow closed the meeting with prayer.

Note: It was also decided that the Guild would be serving teas & sandwiches on the Saturday of Boat Festival, and also hopes to run the Guild Thrift Shop in July.

We hope that, as always, many of our friends who are not Guild members will be prepared to support these events.

We can't do it without you!

Margaret Whewell.

Flower Rota

April	May	June
2 Eileen Brown	7 Yvonne McKay	4 Margaret Whewell
9 Easter	14 Sheila McKay	11 FF
16 Helenor Henderson	21 FF	18 Edith Stuart
23 Helen D'Arcy	28 Olwen Christie	25 Eileen Brown
30 Anne McArthur		

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)

FF = Flower Fund

Thank you: Dorothy Ross has sent her thanks for the flowers that were delivered to her after Church the other week



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 Convener	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)

Please see page 3 for Easter service times and locations

Please join us, for all are welcome

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

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Scottish Charity No: SC 000522