



PORTSOY CHURCH

FAMILY NEWS 26/10/25

Welcome to our weekly news bulletin, keeping you up to date with the latest information on what's happening in Church life in Portsoy, Fordyce and Sandend and also giving you a digest of John's sermon for the week. It is also available on the CFN page of the Church website.

If you know of someone in the community who isn't online and would like a copy delivered, please contact John on 07941 511192.

Weekly Prayer Topic

'Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless.' 1 Corinthians 15: 58

Give thanks in prayer for church volunteers who've given so much of their time and talents over the years. Ask God to bless them with joy and with the quiet assurance that their labour has never been in vain.

Blythwood Shoebox Appeal: We are again collecting for the Shoebox Appeal, and a collection box will be at the door on Sundays and at Coffee and Company. This year, if possible, we would like you to bring covered, filled shoeboxes to try to reduce the workload of the Buckie team who usually make up the boxes. There are information leaflets at the back of the Church detailing how to make up a complete shoebox. However, if you feel unable to do this we will still collect and pass on the items listed in the leaflet. All boxes and gifts need to be returned by next Sunday 2nd November.

Church Guild Meeting: The Guild meets on Tuesday 4th November at 2pm in the Church Centre when we will be having a Fun Fundraiser as the focus of our meeting, entitled "Food from the Bible". This fun activity has been suggested by one of our members who found it a very enjoyable experience when she visited another Guild. Please come along and join us. Non-members very welcome.

Guild Coffee morning: Guild members will be holding a coffee morning in the Church Centre from 10.00am to 12.30pm on 15th November in aid of Guild supported charities. As well as enjoying tea coffee and cakes there will be an opportunity to buy new and nearly new Christmas items and cards together with a raffle and tombola. Donations for tombola and raffle would be very welcome as well as any new or nearly new Christmas items.

Service of Union: A service to mark the Union of our church with Cullen & Deskford and Ordiquhill & Cornhill churches, forming the new Seafeld Parish Church of Scotland, Banffshire, will take place in the Church Centre on Sunday 16th November at 3pm. It will be conducted by Rev Shuna Dicks, Moderator of the Presbytery of the North East and Northern Isles. There will be no morning service on that day.

Coffee 'n Company: Coffee 'n Company is every Tuesday morning from 10.00am until 12 noon. Please come along and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, scone and pancakes and a time to catch up with friends old and new.

Well Café: Every Friday during term time from 9.15 to 11.15 providing free tea, coffee, fruit and snacks together with a play area for the children.

Monday Prayers: Our morning prayer meeting takes place every Monday at 8.30am in the Church Centre. Please join us for this short informal gathering.

Message from John

Matthew 5: 13-16 & 1 Samuel 16: 6-12

Looking back at my school prefects' photo from 1982, I'm struck by how we all look the same in our black blazers with yellow braiding - except for one boy, Stuart, who stands out in his grey jacket. It made me think about identity, about standing out, and about what makes us different.

Back then was when I had my first real encounter with Christianity when a schoolmate invited me to his church in Falkirk. I went a few times, but it wasn't for me. I wanted to be known as the hockey star, the one with great music taste, one of the cool kids. I didn't want to be known as a church-goer. Looking back, I wasn't any of those things I wanted to be known for, but I know I wanted to be seen. I wanted to be someone.

I think we all carry that longing. Even the most introverted among us wants to be noticed, valued, identified as somebody who matters. Jesus recognises this longing in Matthew 5 when he says, "*You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden.*" It's not a command, it's a statement of fact. *You are the light of the world.*

But here's the thing: light is visible. Light stands out. And while many of us want to be noticed, we don't always want to be fully seen. We want recognition on our terms, without exposure. But Jesus says, "*Let your light shine before others.*" Not so people will admire us, but so they'll catch a glimpse of God.

Notice what Jesus says: when people see our good deeds, they glorify our Father in heaven—not us. When we're truly reflecting God's light, people see past us to something greater. Just before talking about light, Jesus calls us salt - something that doesn't draw attention to itself but makes everything else better. We're the seasoning, not the main course.

This connects so well with the story of David in 1 Samuel 16. Samuel arrives to anoint the next king and sees Jesse's impressive sons lined up. Samuel looks at Eliab and thinks, "*Surely this is the one.*" But God says no. Seven sons pass by, and God rejects them all. Then someone asks if there are any others, and Jesse mentions the youngest, David, who's out with the sheep.

God says, "*This is the one.*" Because "*the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.*"

So what makes Christians stand out? Not perfect church attendance or scripture knowledge, but the light within us. The fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5: quiet kindness, unexpected generosity, patience when others are losing theirs. The way we show up, listen, and forgive.

Do we need to stand out, though? Well, yes and no. We don't need to perform or be the loudest or flashiest. But we *are* called to be visible, not for our own sake, but for others. A lamp doesn't shout; it just gives light steadily, consistently, faithfully.

The real question isn't "Do we need to stand out?" but "What do people see when they look at us?" Do they see someone trying to be impressive or someone trying to be faithful?

We don't need to be the star. We just need to be us, the us that God sees, the us that God calls, the us to whom God says, just like he said to David, "This is the one." Because God has already chosen us, not because we're perfect or have it all together, but because he looks at our hearts and sees light waiting to shine.