



# PORTSOY CHURCH

## FAMILY NEWS 31/3/24

### Happy Easter

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*

**"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life" John 3:16**

May the message of the risen Lord bring us peace this Easter time. May the reminder of God's love for us in the giving of His only Son bring us joy this day and for always.

**Portsoy Guild:** The final meeting of this session is **next Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April** when we will have our AGM together with entertainment kindly organised by Anne McArthur. Please come along and enjoy the entertainment and take the opportunity to look at our year ahead starting in September and discussing options for our activities.

**Donations:** The church is continuing to gather items for Teen Challenge, which gives hopes to adults and teens struggling with drug and alcohol addictions. Donations of men's toiletries (alcohol-free, please) would be very welcome. Also, we'd welcome donations of non-perishable groceries and household items for the giving table in the vestibule, which is for the benefit of the local community.

**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.

**Monday Prayers:** Our morning prayer gathering takes place every Monday at 8.30am in the Church Centre. Everyone is welcome!

#### **Weekly message from John Gow**

Luke 23:50 – 24:12

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is everywhere these days, so much so it's getting harder to tell what's real and what's not. So if we struggle to know what real in the modern world, how can be sure about the events surrounding a tomb just outside Jerusalem more than 2000 years ago?

These events are hard for us to comprehend, but they were hard for the people in our Bible reading for Easter Sunday too.

Mary, Joanna and Mary, the mother of Jesus went to the tomb soon after sunrise, to finish preparing his body for proper burial. They approached the tomb, wondering as they did how they'd manage to roll the stone away from its entrance. But when they found the stone already rolled away, they rushed in, expecting to find Jesus' body – but there was no body, no Jesus. But there were two men

outside – angels? And they knew things too, they knew something that Jesus had said, ages before. ‘Remember how he told you,’ they said, ‘While he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise.’”

Mary did remember. And she remembered wondering at the time how that could be possible. But then, why not? Whyever not? He’d raised Lazarus from the dead, he’d done the same with Jairus’ daughter and the boy at Nain. If he could have done all that, surely he have done the same with himself? And in remembering, her first thought was to go tell everyone else. Her second thought would have been, ‘What if they don’t believe me?’ What if they won’t listen to me? I’ve got to tell them, but what will they say?’

Then there was Peter. What would have been was going through Peter’s mind was, ‘Mary’s just told us Jesus has risen and I want to believe it, I really want to believe it. But surely it can’t be. I didn’t see Jesus die, but John was there – he did, he heard him say his last words, he watched him take his last breath.’

The story’s from a long time ago. So how can we know it happened, if we can’t even tell what’s real in our supposedly scientific age?

There are so many mysteries in this world. The trees starting to sprout new leaves after the winter, the flowers, the flowers that spent the winter under the earth that are bursting out now. How do they know how to do that? Caterpillars turning into butterflies, birds that migrate thousands of miles, salmon that somehow know, across hundreds of miles of sea, where their spawning ground was and manage to find their way back. How does that happen?

These things can be explained with processes and theories and scientific jargon – but they can’t be fully explained; there’s always going to be something in an explanation of them that’s bound to fall flat.

And the same goes for explaining Easter, for explaining the Resurrection. There isn’t anything that can explain the mystery of faith. So let’s not. Let’s use Easter to spend time in thought and in prayer about what God has done for us. Let’s each spend some time thinking about the wonder and the beauty of the empty tomb and what it means for us personally. Let’s not try to explain it, or even to understand it. Let’s just have a little faith, the faith of a mustard seed, in the promises of a God who brings new life – and let Him do the rest.

Amen