



# PORTSOY CHURCH

## FAMILY NEWS 9/3/25

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*

**"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" Matthew 5:44**

Please remember the men and women being persecuted for their faith. Although they are unknown to us please be faithful in prayer and to speak up to support them. May they be strengthened in faith by God's love.

**Movie Monday:** Only two more movie Mondays this winter. Movies start at 2pm in the meeting room in the Church Centre. For our penultimate movie we will be showing "The Notebook" based on the best-selling novel by Nicholas Sparks and starring Ryan Gosling, Rachel McAdams and James Garner. Come along then and enjoy an afternoon movie in a warm space with good company and teas, coffees and snacks at our interval. Everyone is welcome.

**Joint Service Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March:** Next Sunday at 10.30am we join our group churches of Cornhill and Cullen for a joint service at Cullen Hall Church. There will be no service in Portsoy. If you require a lift, please meet at the Church Centre at 10.00am.

**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:** Well Café is 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 Gow**

Luke 4: 1-13

In the Bible passage we're looking at in church this week, Jesus had been fasting for forty days, and the scripture tells us that He was hungry. Of course he was hungry.

Recognising this, the devil gave him a way out of his hunger. I should say that I can't bring myself to believe in the devil as a person, so I find it hard to believe that he, or it, was there with Jesus in person. I don't imagine God that way, and I don't imagine the devil that way. Jesus, yes, he was flesh and bones – the flesh and bones incarnation of God, but I can't bring myself to believe in a devil incarnate. I believe Jesus was struggling with inner demons, but for the purposes of our message, I'll go along with Luke!

The devil said, "*If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.*" The temptation he put Jesus' way here was simple. He was saying take the easy way out. But Jesus didn't give in.

Instead, He quoted scripture from Deuteronomy, saying, *“Man shall not live by bread alone.”* And I think that moment in the wilderness speaks volumes for us today. In our culture, we’re constantly going after our own instant gratification—whether it’s through fast food, through entertainment at the tap of a finger or the click of a mouse, through the endorphin rush we get when someone likes our post on Facebook. But none of these things are lasting, they’re not permanent. After Jesus resisted the first temptation, the devil tried another approach. He showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and said, *“All this will I give You, if You will worship me.”* He was offering power, he was offering fame, and glory—if only Jesus would give in to his desires and let them rule him, let them be his main motivation. But again, Jesus rejected him out of hand, quoting from Deuteronomy again, saying, *“You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.”* And then the devil tried one more time, taking Jesus to Jerusalem, to the pinnacle of the temple and telling Him to jump. *“If You are the Son of God,”* he said, *“Throw Yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command His angels concerning You, to guard you.’”* Here, the devil was misusing scripture, lifting a line out of Psalm 91 and twisting it to try to manipulate Jesus into testing God. Jesus responded firmly, *“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”* That’s Deuteronomy again. Jesus was constantly countering the devil with the word of God, except he always got it right. *“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”* And here’s another lesson for us. Sometimes, we need to stop testing God, and we need to start taking responsibility for our actions. When we come across our modern-day deserts—our periods of loneliness, hardship, or spiritual drought—I think we can draw strength from Jesus’ example. He turned to scripture for guidance, for one, but more importantly, he simply wouldn’t compromise his values. We can do that as well. We can lean on our faith, we can take comfort from God’s word, and we can get support from those around us, our faith community. This season of Lent that’s just begun gives us the chance to reflect on, and to renew our faith. And it reminds that, even in the driest of deserts, that God is with us, and he’ll give us strength, and comfort, and guidance.