



PORTSOY CHURCH

FAMILY NEWS 4/5/25

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

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble " Psalm 46:1

Please pray for protection and guidance in our schools for the safety of the children, teachers and staff that they may learn and grow in peaceful surroundings.

Christian Aid Week: Christian Aid Week begins next Sunday 11th May. Envelopes will be provided for your donations next Sunday in the Church and available during the week. Please give generously.

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 Gow

John 21: 1-19

After His resurrection, Jesus' disciples found themselves at a crossroads. Jesus had appeared to them, he'd proved that He was alive—but what now for them? They'd spent three years following Him, watching Him perform his miracles, listening to Him teach His teachings, and believing that God's kingdom had come, along with him. But now, things were different. They'd no way of knowing what was to come next.

The disciples had spent the entire night fishing but caught nothing. For experienced fishermen, it would have been discouraging, it had been frustrating. They'd gone back to what they knew best, but even in the thing they were best at doing, they failed. They might have been expert fishermen, but they couldn't catch a thing. And this moment of failure, it set the stage for Jesus to reveal himself, to reveal His power and his presence.

As the sun began to rise, a voice called out from the shore: "*Children, do you have any fish?*" And back came the answer, 'No'. And then came Jesus' instruction: "*Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.*"

It must have seemed a pretty strange thing to tell them to do. They'd been fishing all night—what difference would it make to cast the net on the other side? But in obedience, or maybe just humouring him, they did as they were told, and right away, the net filled with so many fish that they could hardly pull it in.

At that moment, John's eyes were opened: *"It is the Lord!"* he shouted. John realised what was happening, he remembered that wasn't the first time Jesus had done something like that. And Peter's reaction was immediate. The moment he realised it was Jesus, he couldn't contain himself. He jumped into the water to get to Jesus as quick as possible. For Peter, this wasn't just about a miraculous catch—it was all about his excitement to see the One who'd called him, the One he'd denied, the exact same One who was standing on the shore now, waiting for him.

When the rest of the disciples got to the shore, they found Jesus had got a meal ready for them – quick work, fish and bread cooked over a fire. And it's a lovely picture, when you think about it. Jesus wasn't just providing for their physical needs; He was welcoming them back into a relationship with Him. Even before Peter could say a word, Jesus had already invited him to sit and eat.

And then, three times, Jesus asked: *"Do you love Me?"* Three times, Peter answered: *"Yes, Lord, You know that I love You."*

With each question, Jesus was undoing Peter's failure and he was reaffirming his calling. Peter's denial had been public, and now his restoration was public as well.

And then each time Peter confirmed his love, Jesus gave him a commission. First he said, *'Feed my lambs.'* In this, I think he was telling him to care for the young and the vulnerable in faith, those who were just setting out on their faith journey. Then he said, *'Tend my sheep.'* Guide and protect the flock, he was telling Peter, give them leadership and direction. And then, *'Feed my sheep.'* Teach them, nurture them, lead them.

I think Peter's story is our story. All of us have failed in some way. We've all doubted, we've all stumbled, we've all turned away. But God doesn't cast us aside. What he does is restore us, as Jesus did with Peter.

Our failures don't disqualify us from God's mission. Instead, he meets us where we are, he transforms our brokenness with His grace, and he calls us forward, again as Jesus did with Peter, in love.

Today's passage reminds us that God doesn't need perfect people to build His kingdom—He needs those who are willing to follow Him, even after they've failed. He needs those who'll say, *"Yes, Lord, You know that I love You,"* and then go and feed His sheep.