

FOCUS

Portsoy Church Magazine



April 2024—May 2024

A Message from the Manse

At the time you're reading this, Easter Sunday will be just a few days away - or, perhaps, it was a few days ago. Easter comes (or came) early this year, but I wonder if you know why?

The answer is that Easter Sunday falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. Which is all well and good, but what's the vernal equinox? Well, it's the first day of spring, which is usually 21st March - which means that, if there's a full moon on that day, the earliest Easter can possibly be is 22nd March. It does happen, occasionally - very occasionally. None of us were around to see it the last time though, it was back in 1818, and we won't be around to see the next time either, as that'll be in 2285! Even having Easter as early as 31st March is relatively rare - it happened in 2002 and 2013 as well as this year, but the next time won't be until 2086.

And, of course, this year Easter Sunday will be (or was, depending on when you're reading this) an hour shorter than usual, making it all the more unusual.

All of this still doesn't answer why, though, does it? Why can't Easter be on the same day every year? Christmas Day, is, after all. Well, the answer is because Easter Sunday is linked to the Jewish Passover and when the Passover was instigated, astronomy and the state of the moon mattered much more than they do nowadays. That's the short answer - we'd need a few more pages in this issue of Focus if I were to give you the long one!

But whatever the reason for the date that Easter falls upon, it remains one of the most important dates - probably the most important - in the Christian calendar. Because it's the day on which our whole belief system is based, the day on which we remember the resurrection of Jesus. It's the day that He rose again. And in our part of the world, whether it's late or early Easter always falls in springtime, a time of renewal and re-growth - so whatever date it falls on, it's the perfect reminder to us that new life, through Jesus, is there for us all.

Every blessing, and Happy Easter.

John

If you need me for anything or you'd just like to call for a chat, my numbers are 01261 838506 and 07941 511192, or drop me an email at jgow@churchofscotland.org.uk

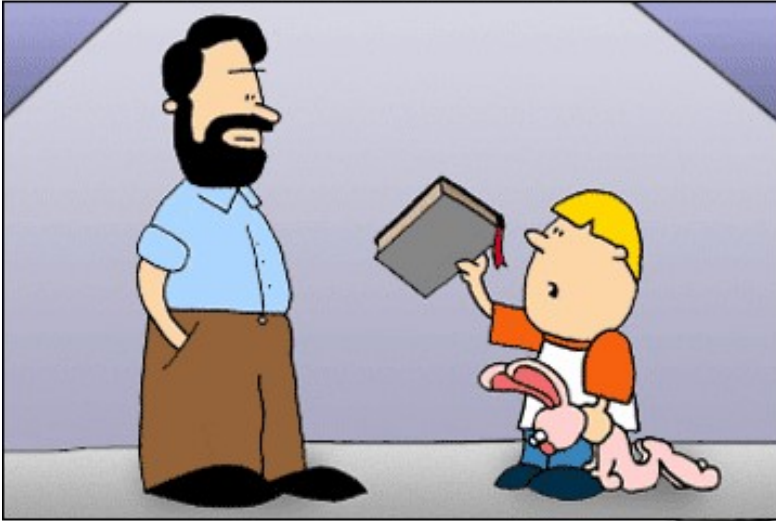
Christian Aid Week 2024

This year Christian Aid week runs from 12th—18th May and the theme is "Push back on Poverty".

We will here about people like Aline. Abused, homeless and hungry, Aline was on the brink of survival in Burundi.

But she transformed her life with a little help from Christian Aid, and secured a vital income and a home for her and her children.

Help push back against the inhumanity of poverty this May and give your support. There will be donation envelopes in the Church and at Coffee 'n' Company during the week and for a short while after. Please give generously.



DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT
WHERE IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY
IN THE BIBLE

Flower Rota

April

7 Margaret Whewell
14 Edith Stuart
21 FF
28 Eileen Brown

May

5 Helenor Henderson
12 FF
19 Cullen
26 Helen D'Arcy

June

2 Anne McArthur
9 Yvonne McKay
16 FF
23 Cornhill
30 Sheila McKay

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

WELCOME TEAMS

10.00am Portsoy Church Centre

April

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

May

- 5 May Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
12 May Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
19 May Cullen
26 May Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

June

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

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

Funerals

- 8 February: George Clark
22 February: Lynda Vann
4 March: Colin Murray
7 March: John Birch

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



Prayer Focus

"We love Him because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19

No one has to earn God's love. No one has to jump through hoops to earn His acceptance. No one has to crawl on his hands and knees to compensate for past sins. No one has to do such things because God already loves us. He has shown His love for us by the sacrifice of His Son.

The bible states, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8) Through the suffering of Jesus, we see the terribleness of our rebellion and the extent of God's love for us.

All we must do to experience His love is believe that He has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. (Romans 4:5) The answer is not to try harder to please God but to trust what Christ has done for us. God's love is offered to us as a gift, not a reward (Ephesians 8:10).

The apostle Paul wrote, " If we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:10-13) That's how much God loves us.

Sometimes we face struggles in life, and we are tempted to think that God has forgotten us. We may believe that God no longer loves us. But God's love for us is as broad as the open arms of Christ on the cross.

When we repent and receive Jesus' gift of amazing love, He becomes our Saviour, Lord, Teacher and Friend. Looking for someone to love you? Jesus loves us more than anyone else possibly could.

God, thank You for loving us so much. We realise that in our thoughts and actions we have broken Your holy law. We believe that You sent Your Son Jesus to take the punishment that we deserved. We believe He died for us and rose again. We now accept Your loving offer of forgiveness.

Amen



An informal group that's all about having fun, sharing friendship and exploring faith together - although existing faith is not required!

Link Ladies are continuing to look at the lives of women in the Bible. Can you work out who they might be?

24th April: Secrecy, treachery & genocide

22nd May: Social Evening (Kath's away!)

26th June: The loom to the tomb and back again

24th July: An unlikely heroine!

28th August: The judge and the tentpeg assassin. AND our first birthday (a good excuse for cake...)

We meet in the Church Centre from 7-8.30pm

For more information call Kath on 07759 692968 or ask a Link Lady!



Please contact John on 01261 838506 and 07941 511192, or drop him an email at jgow@churchofscotland.org.uk if you know of anyone who is ill

at home or in hospital (especially Dr Gray's in Elgin as we are not notified).

EASTER STORY

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1) WHAT DID JESUS RIDE INTO JERUSALEM ON PALM SUNDAY?

- A) CAMEL B) HORSE C) DONKEY D) ELEPHANT

2) WHICH DISCIPLE BETRAYED JESUS?

- A) PETER B) JAMES C) JOHN D) JUDAS

3) AT THE LAST SUPPER, WHAT DID JESUS PREDICT WOULD HAPPEN TO HIM?

- A) HE WOULD BE BETRAYED C) HE WOULD WALK ON WATER AGAIN
B) HE WOULD BE CROWNED KING D) HE WOULD TURN WATER INTO WINE

4) AFTER BEING ARRESTED, WHICH HIGH PRIEST DID JESUS STAND BEFORE?

- A) ANNAS B) CAIAPHAS C) HEROD D) PONTIUS PILATE

5) WHAT CHARGE WAS BROUGHT AGAINST JESUS BY THE PRIESTS?

- A) THEFT B) BLASPHEMY C) PUBLIC DISTURBANCE D) TREASON

6) HOW MANY PIECES OF SILVER WAS JESUS BETRAYED FOR?

- A) 10 B) 20 C) 30 D) 40

7) WHO DENIED JESUS THREE TIMES BEFORE THE ROOSTER CROWED?

- A) ANDREW B) BARTHOLOMEW C) THOMAS D) PETER

8) WHAT WAS PLACED ON JESUS' HEAD AS A FORM OF MOCKERY BEFORE HIS CRUCIFIXION?

- A) A CROWN OF THORNS B) A GOLDEN DIadem
C) A LAUREL WREATH D) A HELMET

9) JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED ON WHICH HILL?

- A) MOUNT MORIAH B) MOUNT SINAI
C) GOLGOTHA D) MOUNT OF OLIVES

Answers to last issue's crossword

Across - Mixed, River, Drawn, News, Songs, Women, Noah, Harps, Heart, Tower.

Down - Moved, Drown, Roots, Ruins, Noon, Sigh, Weigh, Night, Habit

Portsoy Church Guild

The April meeting of our Guild on 2nd April will be the last of the 2023 - 2024 session, and will be our AGM. Anne McArthur is kindly organising some entertainment for us. As I type this bulletin I am still in suspense as to what form it will take but I have no doubt that it will be very enjoyable.

Please come to the AGM with ideas for the year ahead, speakers you may have heard and think others would be interested to hear too, organisations that you would like to hear about, so that we can begin to plan for the Session which will begin in September.

Please also consider our summer activities - are we going to do the Boat Festival Teas this year, and how about our Thrift Week. Both of these were very successful last year, and they are our main fundraisers for both the church and the Guild Projects. They do require a lot of planning and energy though - can we do it again?

Also, a date for your diaries - on Tuesday 14th May we are hosting the Guilds Together Coffee Evening starting at 7pm, and Beyond Boyndie are coming to sing and play for us. This event is open to everyone, not just Guild members, so please bring your friends and family. Entry will be by donation on the door.

And please remember that you don't have to be a Guild member to join us at any of our regular meetings. We'd be delighted for you come along at any time.

Margaret Whewell

Funny, Isn't It?

It's funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray, but don't have any trouble thinking of things to say to a friend.

It's funny how hard it is to read a chapter in the Bible, but how easy it is to read 100 pages of a best selling novel.

It's funny how people want to get a front row seat at any game or concert, but immediately head for the back seats at church services.

It's funny how we need 2 or 3 weeks advance notice to fit a church event into our schedule, but can adjust our schedule for other events at the last moment.

It's funny how hard it is for people to learn a simple gospel passage well enough to tell others, but how simple it is for the same people to understand and repeat gossip.

It's funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says.

It's funny how everyone wants to go to heaven provided they don't have to believe, or to think, or to say, or do anything.

It's funny a silly video can go viral, but when you start sending messages regarding Jesus, people think twice about sharing.

Funny, isn't it? Are you laughing? Are you thinking?

FOCUS DEADLINE

The next edition of Focus will cover June 2024 to July 2024. Please let Johanna Sturrock have articles and any photographs for inclusion no later than Sunday 19 May. unicornathome@gmail.com.

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Service Times

10.30am at the Church Centre every Sunday

Except for the following joint service:
19th May 10.30am at Cullen Hall Church

(refreshments served after Sunday services)

Please see the Community notice board for any
special services

Please join us for all are welcome

(All services in the Church Centre are live-
streamed on the following web-page [https://
www.portsoychurch.org/weekly-video](https://www.portsoychurch.org/weekly-video))

Easter Services

Good Friday 29th March 7pm

Easter Sunday 31st March 9am at St Comb's Well

Easter Sunday 31st March 10.30am

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

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Scottish Charity No: SC 000522