



PORTSOY CHURCH

FAMILY NEWS 21/12/25

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

“Do not be afraid; I bring you good news of great joy for all people.” — Luke 2:10

Please remember in prayer all who will spend Christmas on their own this year: those who sit in quiet rooms, those who miss familiar voices, those who long for company but fear they've been forgotten. May the good news of great joy be real for those who feel most alone, and may we reflect the love of Christ to them where we can in gentle, practical ways.

Christmas services:

Wednesday 24th December at 6.30pm at Fordyce: Service of Carols and Lessons

Wednesday 24th December at 11.15pm: Watchnight Service

Thursday 25th December at 10.30am: Christmas Morning Service

Focus Magazine: The December to January edition of Focus the Church magazine is out now. Spare copies are available in the vestibule for those who do not have the magazine delivered.

Coffee 'n Company: Coffee 'n Company is currently taking a break until the New Year. Coffee 'n Company is usually 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 meeting takes place every Monday at 8.30am in the Church Centre. Please join us for this short informal gathering.

Message from John

What if Christmas had never happened?

I don't mean the holiday version, with all the lights, the glitter, the shopping and the traditions we've built around it. Those things can be lovely, but they're not the heart of the matter.

I'm talking about the coming of Jesus. About God choosing to step into our world, into its coldness, its questions and its shadows.

If that had never happened, we'd still be trying to work out who God is from a distance. Love would remain a feeling rather than a face. Forgiveness would be something we wished for rather than something offered. Death would still feel like a full stop. And fear would speak the final line.

The writer of 1 John puts it plainly: God is love — and we know this because God sent his Son.

Without Christmas, we could maybe imagine God, but we couldn't truly know him. We could talk about God, but we couldn't walk with him.

Maybe that's why a world without the *real* Christmas would feel a bit like Narnia under the Witch's spell - if you know the story, you'll remember CS Lewis's description: always winter, never Christmas. Cold without comfort. Waiting without fulfilment.

But the wonder, the wonder that the imaginary family we've spent time during these Advent weeks in church are just beginning to sense, is that God didn't leave the world unfinished. He didn't leave longing unanswered. He didn't leave winter to rule the year.

Christmas came. Love became flesh. Light entered the darkness.

The shepherds raced through the streets with their astonishing news. And suddenly the world was no longer stuck in endless waiting. Promises began to breathe, to come to life.

So what about us?

We live in a world that can still feel wintry. A world where people sigh at the state of it more than they'd like. A world where hopes seem slow to arrive, and where so many are waiting for something they can't quite name.

But unlike our imaginary family, we don't stand on the other side of Christmas, before it actually happened. We live in a world *shaped* by it. A world where God has already stepped into the cold. Where love has already taken form. Where light has already broken through.

So there's no sense in us asking, "What if Christmas hadn't come?" But maybe we should be asking, "Are we living as though it didn't?"

Do we carry our fears as if God's still far away? Do we shoulder our burdens as if forgiveness is still uncertain? Do we move through our days as if love had never drawn near?

Christmas isn't just a date. It's a way of seeing. A way of trusting. A way of living.

The invitation to us, in this final Advent week, is to become a little more alert to the signs of God's arrival and his presence, to be open to the knowledge that something so holy stirred at Christmas and is still stirring, to be confident that the world is not finished because God is not finished with it.