



PORTSOY CHURCH

FAMILY NEWS 17/9/23

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 digested version of John's message 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

"And the God of all grace, who has called to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

1 Peter 5:10

The devastating flooding in Libya has led to losses beyond measure. May God be close to the broken hearted and strengthen those who have survived. Please keep praying for them and for the rescue service trying to save them

Focus Magazine: The deadline for the October/November issue of Focus is today (Sunday). If you have anything you'd like included (stories, prayers, pictures, whatever!) there's still time to send your contributions in by email to Johanna at unicornathome@gmail.com.

Link Ladies: The first meeting of Link Ladies recently was a great success and the next is coming up soon! It's on Wednesday September 27th and between tea, coffee and chat the group will be discussing the story of the Woman at the Well. If you need any more information on Link Ladies, pick up a schedule in the Church Centre or contact Kath Findlay on 07759 692968 or email findlaykath@yahoo.co.uk

Blessing the Fleet: The Banff Area Churches Group is holding a Blessing of the Fleet service at Macduff Fish Market today (Sunday) at 4pm. It'll be an hour of worship songs, reflections and blessings, delivered by members of various denominations and those attending are advised to bring along their own chair!

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!

Well Café: Every Friday during school term-times, 9.15-11.15am. Coffee, tea, snacks and a play area for children – and maybe a story and a song if you're lucky!

Message from John Gow

Ephesians 4: 1-12

One of the central tenets of the Reformed faith is the '*Priesthood of the believer*,' the fact that all of us have the same opportunities of a relationship with God.

'Ministers' like myself, we had to go through years of education and training to take on the role we fulfil in church, but, in truth, it really shouldn't be necessary as God gives *all of us* authority to do ministry. What a minister's job is (amongst a few other things) is to bring out the gifts, to encourage the team. And these gifts are set out in verse 11 of the passage we're looking at this week in our joint service with our friends from Cullen and Cornhill: '*He appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers.*' These are really biblical words, but for a modern world maybe they need a little more explanation.

Some would say that apostles don't exist anymore, the apostles were those who were with Jesus, the 12 disciples. Maybe Paul too. So in the biblical sense of the word, maybe they don't. But the word 'apostle' just means 'sent one', or 'one commissioned with a message.' So the modern apostles, they're the visionaries, the ones who're willing to forge new paths, to start new groups, to lead new initiatives.

There's a visionary aspect to the prophets amongst us too. When we think of prophets, we think of men with long beards, making pronouncements on the future. Well, I do. But in essence, a modern-day prophet is simply an ideas man, or woman, the one who can discern God's purposes and see ways to put them into action.

Then there are the evangelists, and as I've said before it's a word that frightens a lot of people, they think it's all about proclaiming on street corners or knocking on folks' doors. More power to those who've got the confidence to do that, but most evangelists are quiet evangelists and I think they're just as effective, maybe even more so. Those who're only too happy to speak to those around them, friends, relatives, neighbours, about what God's done for them and what he can do for everyone.

Another on this list that's easily misunderstood is pastors. We're not talking here about pastors as in ministers or preachers, we're talking about anyone who've got a pastoral heart – those who care, who heal with their actions or their words, those who shepherd, those who come alongside the lost and the weary and help them to know that they're not alone. There are pastors everywhere, I see them at coffee mornings, on the streets – I see them quietly caring.

And then, last of all, are the teachers, those who've got the ability to bring clarity, to bring revelation from the book. Those who're gifted in helping people know the truth of God and how it applies to their lives.

All of us, whether we're regular churchgoers or not, have been given at least one of these gifts, and we've been given them by God in order that we can build his team here on earth. Some have been given more of one and less of another. All of us use them, without maybe even realising it, in our ministry. So I'm just going to ask you, as you read your Church Family News either at home or on the noticeboard outside the church, I'm going to ask you to think about what your ministry is, what part do you think you could play in the team God's building here in Portsoy?