

FOCUS

Portsoy Church Magazine



April 2022–May 2022

A Message from the Manse

I've never really considered myself a winter person. Sure, there's something special about crisp winter mornings with frost on the ground and a nip in the air, and a blanket of snow is always a pretty sight for me - especially as it makes the manse garden look as tidy as everyone else's! But how anyone can prefer spring to summer is beyond me, because why would you want to be cold when you can be warm? And autumn? Well, beautiful as it is, autumn means winter is just around the corner again. No, I think springtime, this time of year, it's got to be my favourite.

By the time you're reading this the clocks will have changed, we'll be enjoying lighter evenings, and they're only going to get lighter and lighter, for longer and longer. Colours are coming back to the garden (even the manse garden!) and there are signs of growth all around. Bulbs hidden beneath the soil are bursting through, the branches on the trees are filling out with their foliage. The birds are singing and the seagulls will soon be squawking loudly again! Springtime is a time of growth, a time of new beginnings.

There are new beginnings underway for the wider church too, new growth. Plans are currently being made to merge all of the existing presbyteries in the north east into a new 'supersize' presbytery covering the whole region, bringing in Orkney and Shetland too. It's all part of the Church of Scotland's 'Radical Action Plan', which is also looking at how churches are organised on a local basis. What does this mean for us here in Portsoy,

Fordyce and Sandend though? The new presbytery probably won't change things much for us, but due to the shortage of ministers in the area it looks like sometime in the next few years my role will be expanded to take in some surrounding parishes. But that won't change my relationship with you, be assured of that! Plans are at an early stage just now, and you'll be kept fully up to date with everything as it progresses.

So let's look forward with optimism. After all springtime is a time for optimism, a time to look forward with anticipation of better days to come and I think it's like that with the church too - there are good days ahead, good days for us all, days in which we can all '*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*' (2 Peter 3: 18)

Every blessing

John

If you need me for anything or if you just want to call for a chat, you can reach me at the manse on 01261 838 506.

Funerals

9 February	James Christie
22 February	Alan Henderson
28 February	James McBain
9 March	Nessie Findlay

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

Thank You!!!

Thank you to all who contributed to the farewell gift I received recently. I was very much blessed by being your locum, and I left with many valued memories of our times spent together in worship, work and laughter, along with the inevitable times of sadness which life and circumstances can bring. If I did anything to bring a greater love for God into your life, I am pleased....and for all I learned from you individually as friends and as a congregation, I give God and you thanks.

Until we meet again.....

Steve

The Guild

It's true to say that the past couple of years has been particularly difficult for the Guild, as meeting in person is so much a part of the friendship and fellowship it provides. Here in Portsoy the Guild has been in hibernation for the whole time, but we're looking now at breathing some new life into it. There will be a meeting in the Church Centre on Wednesday 6th April at 3pm to discuss the way forward, and everyone (whether they're a member of the Guild or not) is very welcome. Come along and bring your friends - let's get the Guild up and running again!

John

WELCOME TEAMS

10.30am Portsoy Church Centre

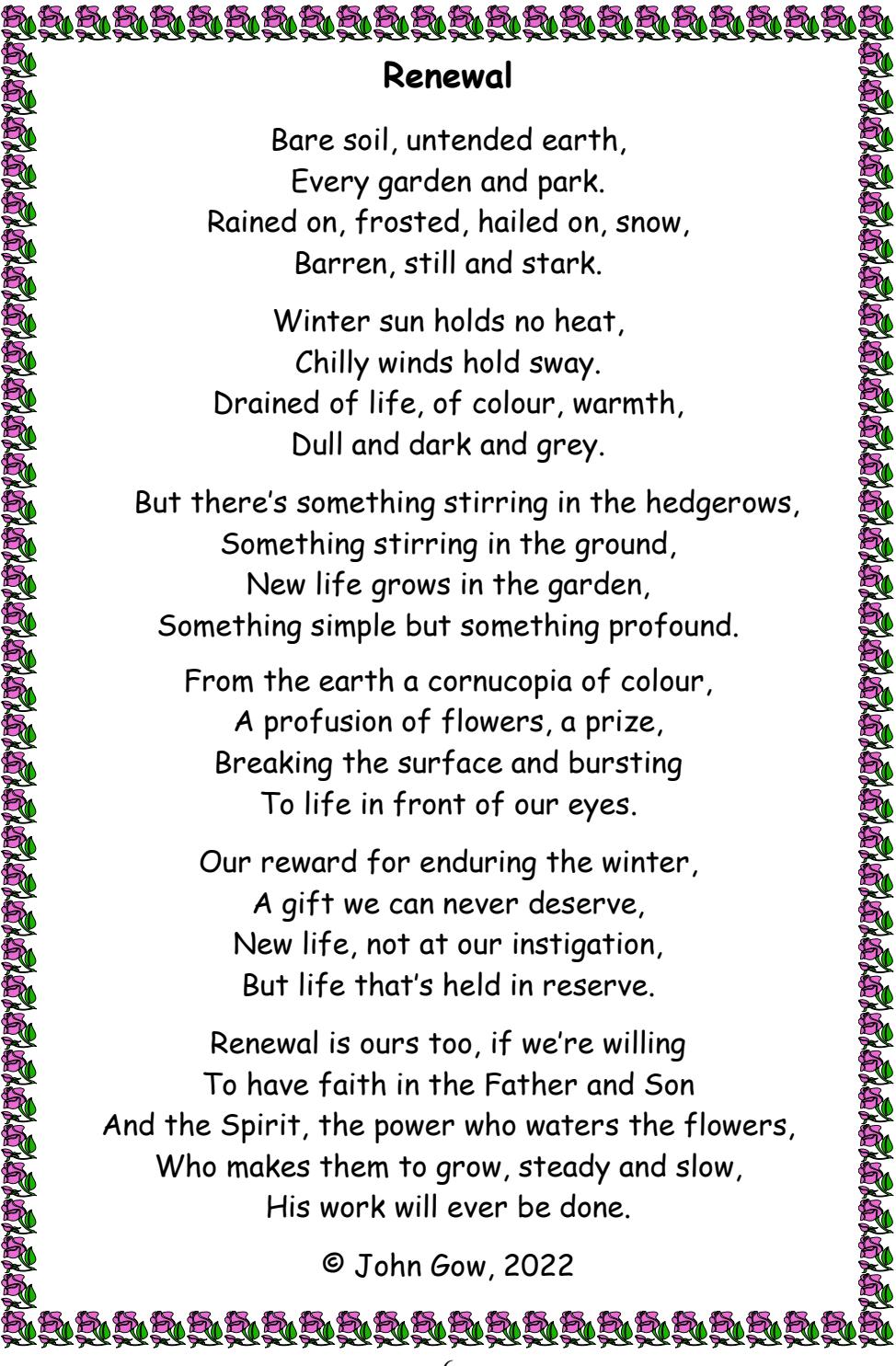
3 April	Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie
10 April	Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
17 April	Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
24 April	Moira McKenzie & Joan Morrison
1 May	Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie
8 May	Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
15 May	Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
22 May	Moira McKenzie & Joan Morrison
29 May	Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie
5 June	Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
12 June	Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
19 June	Moira McKenzie & Joan Morrison
26 June	Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

FLOWER LIST

April	May	June
3 Margaret Whewell	1 Helenor Henderson	5 Sheila McKay
10 Edith Stuart	8 Helen D'Arcy	12 Flower Fund
17 Easter	15 Anne McArthur	19 Owen Christie
24 Eileen Brown	22 Flower Fund	26 Margaret Whewell
	29 Yvonne 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, please let Margaret know.
(01261 843 125)*



Renewal

Bare soil, untended earth,
Every garden and park.

Rained on, frosted, hailed on, snow,
Barren, still and stark.

Winter sun holds no heat,
Chilly winds hold sway.

Drained of life, of colour, warmth,
Dull and dark and grey.

But there's something stirring in the hedgerows,
Something stirring in the ground,
New life grows in the garden,
Something simple but something profound.

From the earth a cornucopia of colour,
A profusion of flowers, a prize,
Breaking the surface and bursting
To life in front of our eyes.

Our reward for enduring the winter,
A gift we can never deserve,
New life, not at our instigation,
But life that's held in reserve.

Renewal is ours too, if we're willing
To have faith in the Father and Son
And the Spirit, the power who waters the flowers,
Who makes them to grow, steady and slow,
His work will ever be done.

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Fun and Frolics at the Church Centre

It was great to see the Church Centre full of happy folk at the beginning of March, enjoying the comedy of Eddie Rose and the music of the Garioch Blend and Bill Gray. The event was a fundraiser for the Institute Hall and an impressive £1160 was raised.

FAITH CUP

A Joyful'toon by Mike Waters



© 2007 Michael D. Waters



Prayer Focus

"God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

I am sure many of us in Portsoy, Fordyce and surrounding areas, along with others passing through, were aware at one time of a cross on top of Durn Hill. It was put there by Jim Cowie, a farmer who worked the hill and a former elder of our church, in 1983. Early on Easter Sunday mornings a group of us along with our minister, another Jim Cowie, would climb the hill to take part in a service of praise. It was wonderful to enjoy a time of peace and tranquillity there and also to view the sea and countryside for miles around. Looking at the cross from a distance conjured up a picture of what it must have been like at Calvary where Jesus was crucified. It also brings to mind the hymn:-

"There is a green hill far away
Out with a city wall,
Where that dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all."

Jesus died on the cross to provide a sacrifice for us. Although innocent of all wrongdoing, He was crucified, taking upon Himself the punishment for our sins and to establish a relationship with a holy God. He did it willingly out of love for you and me. Although his terrible death was underserved, there was no other way He could save us.

One favourite verse of mine in scripture is John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone

who believes in him may not die but have eternal life." It was summed up in a beautiful anthem composed by David Ashley White. It is lovely and moving. Simple words but so meaningful. Our organist, Raymond Wilson, taught it to our choir of the time and I loved singing it. I have heard Raymond play it on a few occasions since and it never fails to move me.

Thinking of the words, we cannot understand it, but thank God we can believe it. And when we do, we find peace that nothing else can bring.

The symbol of the cross on the wall of the Church Centre sanctuary is a reminder every time we look at it of the great sacrifice God and Jesus did so that we may be saved. Our praise and thanks from the heart should be, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift." 2 Cor. 9:15

Lord Jesus, what words can measure the height, depth, and breadth of Your love? We are sorry that our sins placed You on the cross and we praise and thank You that You did it because You love us with a love beyond our understanding. Blessed be Your name and we are glad that You have forgiven us and cleansed our hearts from sin.

May joy and peace be with all of us this Easter time and may we be blessed with thankful and grateful hearts.



If the Earth
were only a few feet in diameter,
floating a few feet above a field some-
where, people would come from everywhere
to marvel at it. People would walk around it, marvel-
ling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water
flowing between the pools. People would marvel at the
bumps on it and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the
very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended
in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures
walking around the surface of the ball and at the creatures in
the water. The people would declare it precious because it was
the only one and they would protect it so that it would not be
hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known and
people would come to behold it, to be healed, to gain
knowledge, to know beauty and to wonder how it could
be. People would love it and defend it with their
lives, Because they would somehow know that
their lives, their own roundness, could be
nothing without it. If the Earth were
only a few feet in
diameter.

(Source Unknown)

Who Am I?

Think you know your Bible? See how you get on with these Who Am I questions!

1. I am the first king of Israel. Who am I?
2. My brothers are Shem and Ham. Who am I?
3. I am Jacob's first wife. Who am I?
4. I asked God for wisdom. Who am I?
5. Until Jesus changed my name, I was known as Simon. Who am I?
6. I am the first farmer ever. Who am I?
7. John the Baptist is my son. Who am I?
8. Jesus called me a fox. Who am I?
9. I'm Joshua's father. Who am I?
10. I came to the world to 'seek and save the lost.' Who am I?

FOCUS DEADLINE

The next edition of Focus will cover June to July 2022.
Please let Johanna Sturrock have articles and any
photographs for inclusion no later than Sunday 22 May.
unicornathome@gmail.com.

The Twins

Those who were at the Sunday Service on Mother's Day might remember the modern-day parable John read out. For the benefit of those who weren't there or who didn't see it online, here it is again:

In a mother's womb there were twins and one of them asked the other: 'Do you believe in life after delivery?' The other replied, 'Of course I do. There must be something after delivery. Maybe we're here right now to prepare ourselves for what will come later.'

'No,' said the first, 'There's no life after delivery. What kind of life would that be?'

The second said, 'I don't know, but there'll be more light than here. Maybe we'll walk with our legs and eat with our mouths? Maybe we'll have other senses we don't even understand now?'

The first said, 'That's nonsense. Walking's impossible. And eating with our mouths? Don't be silly. The umbilical cord supplies nutrition to us, it gives us everything we need.'

The second baby insisted, 'Well, I think there's something, maybe it's just different from here. Maybe we won't need this physical cord anymore.'

The first said, 'Nonsense,' again, 'Besides, if there is life after delivery, how come no-one's ever come back from there?'

Delivery is the end of life, and in the after-delivery there's nothing but darkness, there's nowhere to go.'

'Well, I don't know,' said the second, 'But I think we'll meet Mother and she'll take care of us.'

The first said, 'Mother? Do you really believe in Mother? She doesn't exist, if she does, where is she right now?'

'I think she's all around us,' said the second baby. 'We're

surrounded by her. We live in her. Without Mother this world wouldn't, and couldn't, exist.'

The first said, 'Well, I don't see her, and if I can't see her then she doesn't exist.'

And then the second baby said, 'Maybe you don't see her, but sometimes when you're in silence and you focus and listen, you can perceive her presence, you can sense that she's there, and you can hear her loving voice, calling down from above. Mother is real.'

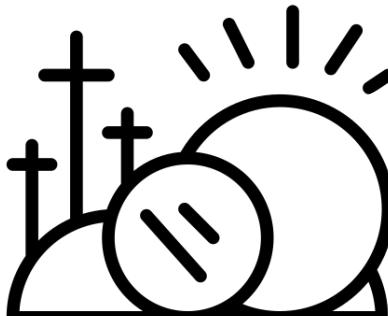
Special Services for Easter

Maundy Thursday 14th April at 7pm Bread and Wine

Good Friday 15th April between 2pm and 3pm Hot Cross Bun drop-in

Easter Sunday 17th April at 8am Sunrise Service at St. Colm's Well

Easter Sunday 17th April at 10.30am





Please contact Olwen Christie (Pastoral Care Convener) on 01261 843 680 if you know of anyone who is ill at home or in hospital (especially Dr Gray's in Elgin as we are not notified).

Community Diary:

A diary of local events has been placed in the Portsoy Ice Cream Shop for use by everyone. This will enable event organisers to check that the date and time of their event will not clash with another already planned.

Please pass this on to any other local groups. To work effectively everyone will need to check the diary and ensure their own event is entered in it.

A Christian book lending library is available in the meeting room in the Church Centre

If you see something you fancy reading, just put your name in the register, borrow the book and sign it back in when you're finished.



PRAYER CIRCLE

Name:
(Not necessary)

Please pray for:

.....
.....

Please place completed slip in box at church door or hand to the minister or Edith Stuart.

Directory

Minister	Rev. John Gow Tel: 01261 838 506 E-mail: jgow@churchofscotland.org.uk
Session Clerk	Mrs Yvonne McKay, Bayview, Sandend. Tel: 07592 395 581 E-mail: Yvonne@therealmckay.co.uk
Treasurer	Mr Raymond Wilson 5 St Tarquin's Place, Fordyce, AB45 2SH Tel: 01261 842204 E-mail: raymondwilsonpfp@btinternet.com
Gift Aid Convener	Mr Ian Whewell, Eynhallow, 14 South High Street, Portsoy. Tel: 01261 843 125 E-mail: ian.whewell@btinternet.com
Church Website	Mr Ian Whewell - as above
Church Centre Convener (For bookings)	Mr Ian Whewell - as above
Centre Caretaker	Mrs Sarah Willis, 40, Gordon Crescent, Portsoy Tel: 01261 843 928 or 07756 53 5731 E-mail: sarahsfamily@btinternet.com
Focus	Mrs Johanna Sturrock 21 Hill Street, Portsoy. Tel: 07766 390 318 E-mail: unicornathome@gmail.com

DIRECTORY (CONTINUED)

Pastoral Care Group Convener	Olwen Christie	01261 843680
Outreach Group Convener	Paul Williams	01261 842338
Finance & Property Group Convener	Ian Whewell	01261 843125
Social Group Convener	Helen D'Arcy	01261 842340
Administration Group Convener	Anne McArthur	01261 842474

Service Times

10.30am at the Church Centre every Sunday

(refreshments served after Sunday services)

See page 13 for Easter Services

Please join us for all are welcome

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

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Scottish Charity No: SC 000522