



PORTSOY CHURCH

FAMILY NEWS 29/1/23

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 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

"For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, "You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land" Deuteronomy 15:11

Please pray for the care of those trapped in poverty. May we do all we can to alleviate their suffering and help and improve the circumstances of their lives by giving generously, praying faithfully and speaking out for justice and mercy wherever possible.

Warm Welcome: Our Warm Welcome continues next week as usual. The Church Centre will open every weekday 10am until 3pm as a 'Warm Welcome' place for the community - somewhere to come to enjoy some company or just to sit quietly with a warming drink. We have been having difficulty filling the rota for helpers. If you can spare an hour or maybe two between 10am and 3pm **please** volunteer.

Church Guild: The next meeting of the Church Guild will be on Tuesday 7th February at 2pm in the Church Centre. Our speaker will be Vicky Priest who will be speaking about her work as a paramedic. Everyone is welcome.

Session Meeting: There will be a meeting of the Church Session next Thursday 2nd February at 7pm in the Church Centre meeting room.

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 and the evening gathering at 6.30pm in the Church Centre. Everyone is welcome!

Coffee and Tea after the service: Coffee and Teas are being served after the service. Please stay and join us if you can. Visitors especially welcome.

Weekly message from John Gow

Luke 11: 1-13

In church two weeks ago I said that the Lord's Prayer can be split into two halves. The first half is all about God and the glory of God, about giving Him His place. The second half is all about us, well,

not so much *about* us but more about us and what we need, it's about our requests, our petitions, to Him.

We're continuing in church this week to look at the prayer, line by line. The next we have is '*Give us today our daily bread.*' The word 'daily' seems to be a very ordinary word, doesn't it? We use it every day, daily in fact. But in the original Greek, the language that the New Testament was written in, the word is '*epiousios*' and in the whole of Greek literature, not just the Bible, it's only used twice. In Matthew and in Luke, in the Lord's Prayer. Because it's used so little, the translation 'daily' is just a best guess, but the story behind the word that I prefer is that the word we read is translated from Greek, and it itself was translated by the gospel writers from Aramaic, the language spoken by Jesus. And Aramaic is very similar to Syriac and in Syriac the word means lasting, or perpetual. '*Give us today the bread that doesn't run out.*' When we say these words, I think we're asking God for the sustenance we need to live, but we're also asking him for a life everlasting.

When it comes to the next line, some versions of the prayer say debts, some say trespasses and other simply say sins – they all amount to the same meaning. But what is that meaning? New Testament Greek has even more words for sin. One of them was originally an archery word, *hamartia*, and it means to miss the target, to fail to hit the mark, to fail to be what we could have been. And none of us can claim to be all that we should be, or all that we might have been. That's *hamartia*, that's sin.

Another word for sin in the Bible is *parabasis*, and it means to step across. This kind of sin is where we step across a line that's drawn between right and wrong. Do we always stay on the right side of the line? Between honesty and dishonesty? Between kindness and harshness? Sometimes we cross the line without meaning to, and there's a word for that too – it's *paraptoma*, and that means to slip across, like you'd slip on ice. It's not deliberate but if we're not careful, we all slip, we all slide.

But the word for sin that's used in the Lord's Prayer is *opheimela*, and that means a debt. That's why some versions say debts and debtors. It's a failure to pay what's due, a failure in duty. And which of us can really say we've perfectly fulfilled our duty to other people and to God? That's why we ask him for forgiveness for the times we haven't. The thing is though is that there's a condition attached to our asking, and it's that we extend the same forgiveness to others. When we say we'll forgive those who sin against us on a Sunday morning, or at any other time, we've simply got to mean it, or the words aren't worth saying.

And so we come to the last line of the Lord's Prayer. Luke just says, 'Lead us not into temptation,' and Matthew adds 'but deliver us from evil.' Imagine a mother and child in the Co-op in Portsoy. Now the mother knows where everything is and she knows that the last aisle, the one furthest away from the door is the one where all the chocolate and crisps are. We're the children, we're asking God not to take us down that aisle, the evil aisle, even though we, and he, know it's there. Temptation is out there, it's all around us, and I think in praying that God leads us away from it, we're simply recognising our nature, a nature that's weak, that's easily swayed, and putting our trust in his, a nature that knows what's best for us.