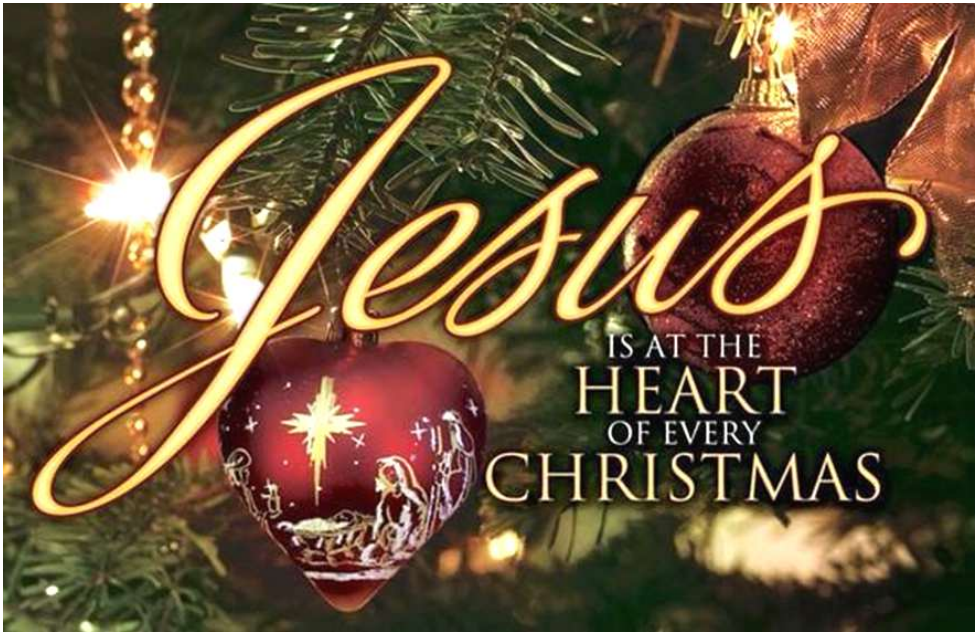


FOCUS

Portsoy Church Magazine



December 2024—January 2025

A Message from the Manse

Back in the days when I was more concerned with selling newspapers than telling the Good News of the Gospel, Christmas began for me around August, when I'd settle down to write a few articles for the first of our paper's 'Book Early for Christmas' supplements, which would appear around September. For me, back then, Christmas was about maximising profit and that, sadly, is how it remains for so many. The marketing of Christmas is big business, isn't it?

I'm glad I've left all that behind. But now, I see Christmas in a different light. I see it as a season of hope. I see it as a time to reflect on the birth of Jesus Christ and the immense gift of His love and salvation. For me, Christmas has transformed from a commercial frenzy into a sacred celebration of faith and community.

Now, instead of counting sales figures, I count the blessings in my life. I cherish the moments spent with friends, the joy of giving rather than receiving, and the opportunity to share the message of Christ's birth. For me, this shift in perspective has brought a real sense of peace and fulfilment that no amount of commercial success could ever provide.

In our church in Portsoy, we focus on spreading the true spirit of Christmas. We organise events and activities that bring people together, that foster a sense of community and remind everyone of the reason for the season. Whether it's in our Remembering service, at Carols and Teas or our Watchnight service, what we try to do do is to keep the message of Christ

Christ at the heart of our celebrations.

So as we prepare for Christmas, let's all remember the true reason for the season. Let's all approach it with hearts full of gratitude and a willingness to serve others. May our celebrations be marked not by the glitter of commercialism, but by the glow of genuine love and joy that comes from knowing Christ.

And this year, most of all, let's take every opportunity we can to reflect on the incredible gift of Jesus' birth. Let's all spread the Good News with passion and conviction and let all of our actions speak of His love and grace. And in doing all of that, we can transform Christmas from a time of stress and materialism into a celebration of love and generosity.

Every blessing, and a happy Christmas to you and yours.

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

Please contact John on 07941 511 192 if you know of anyone who is ill at home or in hospital.

Funerals

30 September: Linda Ferguson

11 October: Dinah Lorimer

24 October: Billy Gray

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

The Portsoy contribution towards this year's Blythswood Shoebox Appeal, which sent a total of 1387 shoeboxes to Moldova. Many thanks to all who contributed



Portsoy Church Guild

What a lovely photo of our smiling Guild members! I was so sorry to miss the meeting with Megan from Moray ReachOut, but gather it was enjoyed by all. And a huge thankyou to all those who helped to make our Christmas Coffee Morning such a resounding success. Our thanks go not only to the planners, helpers and servers, but also to all who came along and supported it so generously.

We look forward to our Christmas Lunch on 12th December, 12noon for 12.30pm in the Church Meeting Room.

Then we look ahead to 2025—can you believe it?! No meeting in January, but on 4th February Shona Milne will be our speaker from the Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution, which I'm sure will be most interesting.

With love & blessings for the Christmas Season, Margaret.

Guild Photos



Members of the Guild, pictured with Megan Fairley, of Moray Reach Out.



A busy morning at the Guild Coffee Morning and Christmas sale.
£936.69 was raised for Guild charities



Prayer Focus

"I give thanks to You, O Lord,And sing praises to Your name.
2 Samuel 22:50

Christmas is creeping up on us and I am sure that many will have begun the preparations making lists of things to do, especially one about gifts for family and friends. They will be carefully written out, making sure to match each person to the right present. They will be a giving list based on the desire to give to those we love. That is good, but sometimes we fall into a trap of what we want to receive rather than what we give.

You know, all too often this happens in our prayer life. There are so many times when we need God's help that we tend to make a prayer list just like a child would-- of the things he or she wants for Christmas. This would be rather one-sided in our praying so it would be helpful to keep two kinds of prayer lists: the needs list....in which we bring problems to the Lord...and the giving list in which we offer our praise and thanks to Him.

Some days we awaken with aching joints and feeling a bit dull and wonder how we can shake off the slowness and make it through the day. Our way should be to try lifting up our thanks and praise to God for all His benefits. We have so much to thank Him for: His healing, His love, kindness and tender mercies, His peace in times of chaos, comfort amid loss, forgiveness of our sins and strength with difficult tasks. The list goes on and on. Our hearts should be filled with praise and thanksgiving for all that God has given and done for us.

Going back to our prayer lists, remembering God's goodness and

giving makes our needs list seem very small indeed. All the more reason to dedicate each day in praising God.

Father God, may we spend time in silent thoughts of Your goodness in our lives. Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honour, power and might belong to You for ever. We thank You for listening to our prayers. You know all our needs and we thank You for Your unfailing pure unbounded love day- by- day and for all Your provision. In all things Lord, may Your will be done. Amen

Christmas in the Church

1st December: First Sunday of Advent & Holy Communion at 10.30am

8th December: Second Sunday of Advent at 10.30am

8th December: Remembering Service at 7pm

14th December: Carols & Teas at 2pm

15th December: Third Sunday of Advent at 10.30am

21st December: Christmas Concert with Beyond Boyndie at 7pm

22nd December: Fourth Sunday of Advent at 10.30am

Christmas Eve: Carols & Lessons at 6.30pm (Fordyce Village Hall)

Christmas Eve: Watchnight Service at 11.15pm

Christmas Day: Family Service at 10.30am



Thank you

Caroline Milne would like to say a big thank you for all the beautiful flowers I have received from the church following my partner's passing. Also to the members of the congregation who have sent me so many expressions of love and sympathy at this sad time. Thank you all



FOCUS DEADLINE

The next edition of Focus will cover February 2025 to March 2025. Please let Johanna Sturrock have articles and any photographs for inclusion no later than Sunday 19 January. unicornathome@gmail.com.

Quiz

Christmas Quiz

1. How do you say Merry Christmas in Spanish?
2. What is the name of Macaulay Culkin's character in Home Alone?
3. What colour are the berries on mistletoe?
4. On the seventh day of Christmas, what does my true love give to me?
5. When do the 12 days of Christmas start?
6. What vehicle does Santa Claus travel in?
7. Which artist had the most Christmas number 1 singles?
8. How many ghosts came to visit Scrooge?
9. What colour Christmas do people dream of in the famous song?
10. Which country created Eggnog?

ANSWERS
1. FELIZ NAVIDAD 2. KEVIN MCALLISTER 3. WHITE 4. SEVEN SWANS
5. A-SWIMMING 6. 25TH DECEMBER 7. A SLEIGH 8. THE BEATLES 9.
FOUR GHOSTS 10. BRITAIN

WELCOME TEAMS

10.00am Portsoy Church Centre

December

- 1 Dec Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie
- 8 Dec Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
- 15 Dec Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
- 22 Dec Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
- 29 Dec Margaret Whewell & Olwen Christie

January

- 5 Jan Edith Stuart & Eileen Brown
- 12 Jan Helen D'Arcy & Yvonne McKay
- 19 Jan Moira McKenzie & Sheila McKay
- 26 Jan Cornhill

February

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

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

Flower Rota

December

- 1 FF
- 8 Christmas
- 15 Christmas
- 22 Christmas
- 29 Christmas

January

- 5 Anne McArthur
- 12 Yvonne McKay
- 19 Sheila McKay
- 26 Cornhill

February

- 2 Margaret Whewell
- 9 Edith Stuart
- 16 FF
- 23 Eileen Brown

Many thanks to all donating to the Flower Fund. This gives us 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. More volunteers are always welcome.(01261 843125) FF = Flower Fund

Directory

Minister

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Session Clerk

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E-mail: Yvonne@therealmckay.co.uk

Treasurer

Mr Raymond Wilson 5 St Tarquin's Place,
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E-mail: raymondwilsonpfp@btinternet.com

Gift Aid Convener

Mr Ian Whewell, Eynhallow, 14 South High
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E-mail: ian.whewell@btinternet.com

Church Website

Mr Ian Whewell - as above

Church Centre Convener Mr Ian Whewell - as above
(For bookings)

Centre Caretaker

Mrs Sarah Willis, 40, Gordon Crescent,
Portsoy Tel:01261 843 928 or
07756 53 5731
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Focus

Mrs Johanna Sturrock
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E-mail: unicornathome@gmail.com

Service Times

10.30am at the Church Centre every Sunday

Except for the following joint service:
24th March 10.00am at Cornhill Church

(refreshments served after Sunday services)

Christmas services and events

See page 7

Please join us for all are welcome

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

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Scottish Charity No: SC 000522