



Dornoch, Lairg, Brora, Tain and Tongue News

MARCH 2025

‘Most People think that behaviour matters and prayer helps it. The truth is that prayer matters, and behaviour tests it’ – Archbishop William Temple

+ + + LENT + + +

When I attended confirmation classes (a few years ago now), at each of the weekly meetings, the priest read some verses from Philippians 3. In the Authorised Version, just about the only version available at the time, the words weren't very exciting. But they stayed with me, surfacing from time to time and coming to life anew as different New Testament translations appeared: *‘I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection’* (Philippians 3.10). On good days, when I'm asked what I really, really want, I know that's my answer: to know Christ, to be open to receive the gift of the risen life, to live it to God's glory and the benefit of my fellow humans.

Not all days are like that, though. There are all kinds of things that distract me from that focus. St Paul knew about that too, and wrote about our need for discipline as an athlete needs to keep in training. The season of Lent comes as a timely reminder, so, like so many, I shall select one of my self-indulgences and attempt to show it who's boss! But Lent isn't primarily a time for self-improvement, although that may be a spin-off. It is a time to grow, and my real aim, as it has been for some years, is to *do* less, and to *be* more; to spend more time doing nothing, being still, listening, looking, waiting in expectancy for God. And that kind of prayerfulness doesn't only operate in the times we label prayer, nor does it stop with the end of Lent, but grows in the whole of life, through Easter and beyond. It's another way of expressing what we Benedictines call conversion of life: a steady, continual turning to focus on God, opening up to God's Spirit, so that Christ can live His risen life in us.

Quite a challenge. And responding to it will keep me going for the rest of my life, let alone my Lents. But Lent comes to remind us to make space, paradoxically, to work at doing nothing, to make ourselves available to

receive God's gift of life. For it is all gift. The risen life is not something I can achieve by my efforts, nor is it something I can do better than anyone else. We are not in competition over this, as we sometimes are over our Lenten discipline (is it more merit worthy to give up chocolate or alcohol?). Receiving the gift of life means letting God free me to be 'God's work of art'; it is coming to know deep down that I am precious in God's sight and honoured, and loved. My response will be tested out in engagement with life, as I seek to enable others to receive God's gift, with all that that implies of involvement with issues of social concern.

For me the question is not so much how I can best use Lent, but how can I best let God use it in me.

- Rev Simon

DIOCESAN SYNOD



On Saturday 1st March, clergy and lay representatives from the charges across Moray, Ross and Caithness will gather at the cathedral in Inverness for our annual Diocesan Synod. Rev Simon Scott will be attending on behalf of all our charges in East Sutherland and Tain. The lay reps attending are Carol Janes for St Andrew's, Tain and Elizabeth Doyle for St Finnbarr's, Dornoch. The lay reps will give a report at the annual church meeting for each charge.

PANCAKE BASH!

Our annual Shrove Tuesday 'pancake bash' will take place at St Andrew's, Tain on Tuesday 4th March, starting at 7pm. Bring along any fillings you would like, and if you want to do a 'turn' to entertain us, even better – a fun evening together, with a quiz, before we enter the season of Lent.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and we have two opportunities for you to attend a Holy Eucharist with ashing on this day (Wednesday 5th March). Rev David will be leading a service at St Finnbarr's , Dornoch at 11am and Rev Simon will be leading at St Andrew's Tain at 7pm. This is a really good way to begin the season of Lent and it would be great to see you at one of our two services.



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER – Friday 7th March

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice.

Our sisters from the Cook Islands have spent the last few years deepening into the theme: “I Made You Wonderful,” based on Psalm 139:1-18. The 2025 program invites us into the knowledge that each one of us was made with care and love by God. When we can receive this profound truth, everything in our life changes and we begin to radiate and shine from within. We also learn how to treat every other person as made wonderful by God.

Services at St Finnbarr, Dornoch at 2pm and St Andrew, Tain at 2pm.

THE ANNUNCIATION

On Tuesday 25th March we celebrate the solemnity of the Annunciation.

This special day celebrates the appearance of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to announce the incarnation.



Come along to a special Eucharist at 7pm in St Finnbarr's Dornoch to find out what's going on and why this day is so important!

REV SIMON TO BE MADE A CANON

The Rev Simon Scott is to be installed as a Canon to the Cathedral Chapter on Sunday 23rd March. It would be really good to see as many as can make it at Evensong at the Cathedral when his installation will take place. Anyone who would like to go, but needs help with transport, please do get in touch. (See the invitation from the cathedral below).



Sunday 23rd March 2025 at 1730



INVERNESS
CATHEDRAL

Choral Evensong

with installations
of new Canons to the Cathedral Chapter

—◆◆◆—
Revd Julia Boothby
Revd Simon Scott
Revd Tembu Rongong
—◆◆◆—

All warmly invited
RSVP

<https://invernesscathedral.churchsuite.com/events/yrorudfu>

Services this month

Sunday 2nd March

8.30am – St Maelrubha, Lairg – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

11am – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Rev Lizzie Campbell

11am – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

Wednesday 5th March - ASH WEDNESDAY

11am - St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist with ashing – Rev David Balfour

7pm – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist with ashing – Rev Simon Scott

Friday 7th March – WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

2pm – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Ecumenical Service

Zz – St Andrew, Tain – Ecumenical Service

Sunday 9th March

11am – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Bishop Mark

11am – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist – Rev Cliff Piper

4pm – St Columba, Brora - Service of Prayer and Healing – Rev Simon Scott

Sunday 16th March

8.30am – St Maelrubha, Lairg – Communion from Reserved Sacrament – Monica Dargie

11am - St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Rev David Balfour

11am – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

Thursday 20th March

12 noon – St Trolla, The Crask – Holy Eucharist - Rev David Balfour

Sunday 23rd March

11am – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

11am – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist – Rev Alexander Gordon

4pm – St Columba, Brora – Communion from Reserved Sacrament – Elizabeth Doyle

Tuesday 25th March – THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

7pm – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

Sunday 30th March

11am – St Finnbarr, Dornoch – Holy Eucharist – Rev Lizzie Campbell

11am – St Andrew, Tain – Holy Eucharist – Rev Simon Scott

A regular service of either Holy Eucharist or Communion from Reserved Sacrament happens at St Andrew's in Tain EVERY Thursday at 6pm. Thanks to Janet McDonald and the Rev Cliff Piper for their efforts in making sure this mid-week service continues to take place.

READINGS THIS MONTH

Sunday 2nd March – The Transfiguration of the Lord

Exodus 34:29-35 Psalm 99 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2 Luke 9:28-36

Sunday 9th March – Lent 1

Deut 26.1-11 Psalm 91.1-2, 9-11 Romans 10.8b-13 Luke 4.1-13

Sunday 16th March – Lent 2

Genesis 15.1-12, 17-18 Psalm 27 Philippians 3.17-4.1 Luke 13.31-35

Sunday 23rd March – Lent 3

Isaiah 55.1-9 Psalm 63.1-8 1 Corinthians 10.1-13 Luke 23.1-9

Sunday 30th March – Lent 4 – Laetare Sunday and MOTHERING SUNDAY

Joshua 5.9-12 Psalm 32 2 Corinthians 5.16-21 Luke 15.1-3, 11b-32

CONTACTS

Priest

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Scottish Charity Numbers: Missions: SC023271, Dornoch: SC009639, Tain: SC009500