



**The Scottish Episcopal Church on the Black Isle
Eaglais Easbaigeach na h-Alba san Eilean Dubh**

Charity Number SC010781

St Regulus' Cromarty + St John's, Arpafeelie + St Andrew's,
Fortrose

The Most Rev'd Mark Strange,
Bishop of Moray, Ross & Caithness

Interim Rector

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If you wish to receive the newsletter via email, please
contact Isla Cruden: isla@ricruden.net who will add you to
the circulation list.

THE ADVENT WREATH

Third Sunday of Advent

The prophet reminds us that we are to bear fruit
worthy of repentance.

**The Messiah is coming who will baptise with
the Holy Spirit and fire and all flesh shall see his
glory.**

We light the third Advent candle in preparation for the
coming of God's Messiah.

We prepare by repenting of our sins, and living lives
devoted to loving God and serving our neighbour.

Light the candle.

Sing... (Tune: Away in a Manger)

A candle is burning, a candle of *Joy*:

A candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.

Our hearts fill with wonder and eyes light and glow

As Joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.

Come Lord Jesus.

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord.**

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Collect

Stir up our prayers, Lord, and hear us: that they who
are sorrowful and suffering may rejoice at the Advent
of your only-begotten Son; who lives and reigns with

you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world
without end.

+FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the
LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good
news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the
prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all
who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion--
to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of
gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise
instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of
righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his
glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise
up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined
cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and
wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their
recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant
with them.

Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples; all who see
them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom
the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being
shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the
garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe
of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a
garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden
causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord
GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up
before all the nations.

+PSALM 126

The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad
indeed.

**The Lord has done great things for us and
we are glad indeed.**

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we
were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled
with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;

**The Lord has done great things for us and
we are glad indeed.**

Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has
done great things for them."

The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad
indeed.

**The Lord has done great things for us and
we are glad indeed.**

Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses
in the Negeb.

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for

sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

The Lord has done great things for us and we are glad indeed.

+ SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit.

Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

+ GOSPEL John 1:6-8, 19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah."

And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No."

Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.

They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal."

This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE (18-23)

MON:

TUE: 7:00pm Eucharist in St Regulus'

8.00pm Advent Study Group St Regulus - to join please contact annegillianewman@gmail.com

WED: 9:00am Celtic Morning Prayer via

Zoom - to join please contact annegillianewman@gmail.com

10:00am Charity Shop

10:00am Advent Study Group in Fortrose

7.00pm Carol Service, North Kessock Hall

THU: 10:00am Eucharist in St Andrew's

7.00pm Carols by Candlelight in St Regulus

FRI:

SAT: 10:00am Charity Shop

Sunday 24th December 2023
Christmas Eve Morning/Advent 4

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

9.45am at St John's with Rev. Christine

11.30 am at St Andrews with Rev David & Lorna Balfour

RESERVED SACRAMENT SERVICE

9.45am at St Regulus with Jill & Simon

(Readings 2 Sa 7. 1-11,16; Canticle Lk1. 46b-55; Ro 16. 25-27; Lk 1. 26-38)

Midnight Mass at St Andrew's Fortrose

10.00pm (midnight in Bethlehem)

Rev. Christine presiding

PRAYER REQUESTS

For grace to be Jesus' hands, feet, voice, eyes, and heart in the world...that we may all LIVE and Be the GOOD NEWS.

OUR WORLD

For healing and peace among all nations. For an end to terrorism and hatred in all its forms. For our fellow Christians and all who are persecuted for their faith.

OUR COMMUNION

Pray for the peace and unity of the Church. Pray for our sisters and brothers of The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea.

OUR DIOCESE

For our brothers & sisters in the Porvoo Communion of Churches. For all who are studying for Ordination or Readership. For their instructors & all who support them. For Mark, our Bishop, and all priests, lay readers and Eucharistic Ministers, helping to maintain our cycle of worship during the interregnum. For the congregation of St. Maelrhubha, Poolewe; Heather Widdows. For our sister Dioceses of Québec, Canada & Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe, Ireland.

OUR CHURCH & COMMUNITY FAMILY & FRIENDS

For our three congregations, those who can join us in public worship and those joining us in spirit at home. For the Eilean Dubh care home & all care homes and for our church members who are living in them. For Laura S, Stuart T & all studying for ordination & readership. For Igor, Oleksii & Families. For all who are ill in mind, body, or spirit. Pray for our Granny in Guatemala: Santos De La Cruz Mendez. For all we know to need our prayers.

A DAILY PRAYER for the WEEK

Spend a moment in silence and call to mind any concerns... then pray:

Christ is the high priest of his people: it is in him that we come together to make our prayers to the father of us all.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

We thank you for calling us into the Church: bless us with constant faith and make it a source of life for others.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

Lord, bless Mark our Bishop and Primus: we pray that his faith may not fail, and that he may strengthen his sisters and brothers.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

Turn sinners back to you: grant us a humble and contrite heart.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

Your Son knew what it was to be excluded from his homeland. Be mindful of those who must live far from their family and country.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

Give eternal rest to the dead: bring the whole church together in heaven.

- *Father, put new hearts within us.*

In a moment of silence, call to mind the concerns of your own heart with those listed above and lift them up to God. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The craft group, normally responsible for the Blythswood boxes, ask that we save our Christmas cards for their later use.

DECORATING THE CHURCHES

We will be meeting in St Andrew's, Fortrose on Monday 18th December from 11am to prepare for the Christmas decorations, accompanied by mince pies! Everyone is very welcome, and donations of greenery would be greatly appreciated. These can be left in the church on Sunday 17th afternoon or Monday 18th morning if you unable to join in person. Thanks to all the flower team for their hard work on this and all the church decorations over the last year.

Heather.

St John's will be decorating the church on 23rd December starting at 10am. All help welcome!

Isla.

DIOCESAN ADVENT MEDITATION CALENDAR

The Diocese has produced an interactive online advent calendar. It can be accessed by clicking the following link (or pasting into your browser). There is also a link on our FB Page

<https://calendar.myadvent.net/?id=j6yqx3y2eoojtd275b5nm7rowkwk6vzv>

ADVENT TALKS 2023



Here is the link for more information and to register.

<https://www.scotland.anglican.org/new-series-of-talks-in-advent-2023-the-coming-of-the-christ/>

COFFEE MORNING

**The Scottish Episcopal Church
on the Black Isle**



Seasonal Coffee Morning



Image by xvector on Freepik

**Home
Baking &
Stalls**

Saturday 16th December

10.30 - 12 Noon

At

Seaforth Lodge, Fortrose

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Charity Number SC010781
Charge Website: episcopalblackisle.scot

DIOCESAN WEBSITE

Please note the following information received today from the Diocesan office: -

The decision has been taken to close down our existing Diocesan website and this will take effect from today, 12th December 2023. Our Facebook page will not be affected by the website closure and a new website will be created in due course.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Copies will be available in the churches, and it is posted separately on the website.

<p>OUR CHURCHES</p>  <p>St Andrew's Fortrose</p>  <p>St John's Arpafelie</p>  <p>St Regulus' Cromarty</p>	<p>OUR MISSION</p> <p>We are a community where ALL are welcome.</p> <p>We are a community where all seek to be loving and caring, welcoming and forgiving, serving and healing.</p> <p>We are a community where the poor can go for help, the lonely for company and the sorrowing for comfort.</p> <p>We are a community where, with fidelity to our own faith and respect for that of others, we seek the unity for which Christ prayed.</p> <p>In the spirit of faith, service, and community, we strive to bring people closer together and closer to God.</p> <p>The Most Rev'd Mark Strange, Bishop of Moray, Ross & Caithness Interim Rector Phone: 01463 811333 Email: bishop@moray.anglican.org Charge Website: episcopallblackisle.scot Facebook https://www.facebook.com/blackislecharge</p>	<p>THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON THE BLACK ISLE EAGLAIS EASBAIGEACH NA H'ALBA SAN EILEAN DUBH</p> <p>SERVICES & EVENTS FOR ADVENT & CHRISTMAS</p> <p><i>Come and join us for all or any of our events and services. All are welcome!</i></p>  <p>Photo by Robert Thiemann on Unsplash</p> <p>The Scottish Episcopal Church on the Black Isle. A Charity registered in Scotland Charity Number SC010781</p>
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<p>EVENT Octavoce Friday 22nd December 7.30pm A Candlelight Concert At St Andrew's Fortrose</p>  <p>Followed by festive refreshments. Entry is by donation (suggested at £10).</p> <p>10th December</p> <p>One service only at 11am in St Andrew's Fortrose & to be followed by Black Isle Charge Annual General Meeting</p>	<p>Sunday Services During Advent/Christmas 9.45am in St Regulus' Cromarty 9.45am in St John's Arpafelie 11.30am St Andrew's Fortrose (Apart from 10th Dec - see separate announcement re AGM)</p> <p>Midweek Services Tues 7pm Eucharist or Reserved Sacrament at St Regulus, Cromarty Wed 9am - Celtic Morning Prayer (via Zoom, Contact: AnneGillanNewman@gmail.com for details) Thur 10am - Eucharist at St Andrew's Fortrose</p> <p>Services at St Andrew's Fortrose Sun 3rd December 7pm - Order of St John Carol Service</p> <p>Events & Services at St Regulus' Cromarty Advent Posada Trail daily at 4pm. The Holy Family journeying around Cromarty & arriving at St Regulus at 9.45am Christmas Eve. Thurs 21st December 7pm - Carols by Candlelight (community choir)</p> <p>Service in North Kassock Hall Hosted by St John's Arpafelie & The Church of Scotland Wed 20th December 7pm - Carol Service</p> <p>CHRISTMAS SERVICES CHRISTMAS EVE Morning services at usual times Sun 24th December 10pm - Midnight Mass at St Andrew's Fortrose (10pm is midnight in Bethlehem)</p> <p>CHRISTMAS DAY St Regulus' Cromarty - 9.45am St Andrew's Fortrose - 11.30am St John's Arpafelie - 10.30am</p>
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Note the Posada events in Cromarty will not now be taking place.

OCTAVOCE

Friday 22nd December at 7.30pm,
St Andrew's Church, Fortrose

UNRESERVED SEATING - FIRST COME FIRST SERVED.

Followed by festive refreshments
(entry by donation - suggested at £10)



Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and people. Luke 2:52

Consider how we might find favour with people. For instance, how we work.

What makes a good worker?

Most would put obedience, doing what we are asked,

high on the list. And reliability. Punctuality. Not wasting time. Listening carefully and checking in with the boss regularly and certainly checking when we don't know exactly how the boss wants a job done. Getting started promptly. Doing the best job possible. Not working to our own agenda, but doing what the employer asks.

Mark's gospel is about Jesus as servant. In Ezekiel's prophetic vision, this is the face of the ox (see Ezekiel 1:10) which tirelessly, with all its strength, serves unreservedly, singlemindedly working for its master.

In Mark's gospel, one word which is repeatedly found is the word: "Immediately" or "straightaway".

The servant, our Lord Jesus, goes straightaway, to work, to do his father's will, to be about his father's business.

That promptness of response is exemplary. He doesn't think or say "No" and then change his mind. (see Matthew 21:29)

He does and says what he sees and hears the father doing and saying.

The servant who goes about doing good, bringing glory to God and obedient until death, even death on a cross. We will pray to have a mindset, a will and a love to be like this too.

Sally Ann

A message from the editor.

A reminder to send any information you want in the newsletter to me by email by (normally) noon on Tuesday.

There will be no newsletter published on 26th December. Information necessary for all services up to and including 31st December will be published in the previous week's newsletter.

If you have any notices to be published, please get then to me by noon on TUES 19th December.

The first new year publication date will be WED 3rd January. Please get any information to me by noon.

I have also been reviewing some of the 'tabs' on the website and editing pages. Hopefully all is clear to navigate but if anyone notices any problems, please let me know. (& to those who pointed out some issues, which, I hope, have now been resolved - a big thank you).

There may be some further updating and tidying in the New Year but I'm not risking any further editing during this important season!

For the FB page, information about St Regulus' activities should go to Stuart Thomson, St Andrew's, to Alison Garraway & St John's to me.

If anyone is housebound and would like to receive Holy Communion or simply a visit, please contact a member of the Ministry team of your local church who will be happy to arrange.

Jean (jeanmedavis@gmail.com)