

## CHURCH BULLETIN

We are a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland. We gather each Lord's Day to praise and worship the only true and living God

4th May 2025



### WELCOME TO OUR SERVICES TODAY

Today's services will be taken by Rev Iain Thomson (11am and 6pm Gaelic in Bragar) and Rev Calum M Smith (6pm, Church Hall). Our 11.00am service is livestreamed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/@shawbostfreechurchofscotland>

At the **11.00am service**, the Scripture reading will be from Genesis 11:28-12:9 and Hebrews 11:8-10. The sermon text is Hebrews 11:8-10 and the sermon is entitled *The Call and Hope of Abraham*.

At the **6.00pm Gaelic service in Bragar** the Scripture reading will be from Genesis 3:22-4:15. The sermon text is Genesis 4:3-5 and the sermon is entitled *Acceptable Worship*. The items of praise are as follows: (1) Salm 51:16-19 (2) Salm 5:3-7 and (3) Salm 4:5-6

At the **6.00pm service in the Church Hall**, the Scripture readings will be from Matthew 25:31-46 & 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12. The sermon text is 2 Thessalonians 1:8-12 and is entitled *Final Destination*.

	11.00am Service		6.00pm Service (English)	
1	Ps 89:1-5	Scottish Psalter (Pg 344)	Ps 84:1-6	Scottish Psalter (Pg 338)
2	Ps 34:8-14	Sing Psalms (Pg 40)	Ps 63:1-8	Sing Psalms (Pg 80)
3	Ps 105:6-12	Scottish Psalter (Pg 375)	Ps 27:9-14	Sing Psalms (Pg 32)
4	Ps 73:23-26	Scottish Psalter (Pg 316)	Ps 23:1-6	Scottish Psalter (Pg 229)

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

There is no Sunday School today.

### CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

There will be a congregational fellowship in hall tonight immediately following the evening service. Mr Rohan Meir, General Secretary of the Society for the Distribution of Hebrew Scriptures, will be the guest speaker.

### SERVICES NEXT LORD'S DAY

The services next Lord's Day will be taken by Rev Roddy MacRae.

### PRAYER MEETING AND BIBLE STUDY

The prayer meeting and Bible study will take place on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm in the Church Hall**. Everyone is most welcome and encouraged to attend.

### DEACONS' COURT - PROPERTY UPDATE

In light of some progress made regarding property projects, as well as significant funding awards made recently by Horshader Community Development Trust and the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund, the Deacons' Court has prepared a property update which is available at the door.

### BEREAVEMENT

It is with sadness we note the passing of Alasdair Scott, Ross Terrace, Stornoway (formerly of Doune Park Bragar). We remember Catherine, David, Mairi and the wider family in prayer. It is anticipated the funeral service will be in the Church early in the week (Monday) with the interment in Bragar. Details will be confirmed via the funeral notices on the usual websites.

### INTERDENOMINATIONAL GAELIC SERVICE

Everyone is warmly invited to an Interdenominational Gaelic Service being held on **Friday 9th May at 7.30pm in the Clan MacQuarrie Community Centre, Borve**. The service will be conducted by Rev. Hugh M. Stewart, Uig Church of Scotland. Tea/Coffee will be served after the service. All donations will go towards Bethesda.

### PRESBYTERY OVERSIGHT VISIT (QUINQUENNIAL)

On **Wednesday 28th May**, there will be a Presbytery Oversight Visit (POV) from the Presbytery of the Western Isles, who have the responsibility for the wider pastoral and spiritual oversight of Shawbost Free Church. As part of this oversight, the Presbytery is required to meet with each congregation within its bounds once every five years. The purpose of the visitation is to provide an opportunity and basis for a conversation and conference with the congregation and its office-bearers so as to strengthen, confirm and encourage them in the Lord's service, and to provide them with an opportunity for self-assessment and examination of the work of the Church in the local area. The goal of the process is to challenge congregations to take prudent measures to build up the cause of Christ in fulfilling the great Gospel commission. The whole process is not in any way meant to be inquisitorial, but simply an opportunity to reflect and pray about the ongoing progress of the Gospel in the congregation.

The Presbytery would like to receive comments from the Congregation through a questionnaire in order to complete the consultation process. Once completed, the questionnaire will be returned to the Presbytery Visitation Committee. All questionnaires must be signed, and anonymous questionnaires will be discarded. There will also be an opportunity for the Congregation to make their views known to the Committee on the day of the visit at the Congregational Meeting. Questionnaire forms are available at the door and should be returned **by Lord's Day 11th May**. Electronic forms are also available (and preferable) and will be sent out with the weekly bulletin or can be obtained by emailing Dan Macphail at [dan.macphail@icloud.com](mailto:dan.macphail@icloud.com)

### THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD – CH SPURGEON

*"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered!"* Matthew 10:29-30

Providence is God's gentle yet firm hand that orchestrates all of the events of our lives, weaving together our joys and sorrows, triumphs and trials, into a beautiful masterpiece! God's providence is the unseen force behind every moment, every decision, and every outcome. Providence teaches us to trust in our unseen Creator, Sustainer, and Savior—and to surrender our fears and doubts to the One who holds all things in His hands, and "causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him, to those who are called according to His purpose!" Romans 8:28 As we journey through life, we may encounter obstacles that seem insurmountable, and moments of despair that threaten to overwhelm us. But even in the midst of chaos, divine Providence is at work, as God leads us through the darkness. He is the steady anchor that holds us firm amidst the storms of life.

To embrace the Providence of God is to embrace a life of faith, rooted not in our own strength or understanding, but in the unchanging nature of God Himself. It is to relinquish control and surrender to God's divine plan which is unfolding before us—knowing that His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. In every season of life, whether we find ourselves on the mountaintop, or in the valley—we may take comfort in the Providence of God, trusting that He who began a good work in us, will be faithful to complete it. Our lives are held securely in His hands, and His tenacious love will never fail us.

### THE HEAVENLY GARDENER (JAMES MEIKLE, "CONVERSE WITH THE UNSEEN WORLD")

The wisdom of the gardener is seen in the cultivation of his plants; some he sets in the sun, others in the shade; some in a rich, fertile soil, others in a dry and barren ground; and thus the gardener's skill is conspicuous, for each thrives best in its own soil. Then, since Infinite Wisdom has allotted a great part of my life to sorrow and solitude (not that I complain)—I realize that I could not grow well in another soil. Behind the high wall of adversity, and in the shade of affliction, the saints will bring forth fruits of humility, self-denial, resignation and patience. These graces cannot grow so well in the sun-beams of prosperity. Now, if another soil would be more agreeable to my spiritual growth—the Heavenly Gardener would soon transplant me there. It does not matter, though I grow in the shade—if the Sun of righteousness shines on my soul, and makes every grace to flourish. He knows better what lot is best for me, than I do myself. In choosing it for me, I should rather admire His wisdom, than complain of His conduct; the more so, when I consider that on a barren soil, and in a lonely shade—He can cultivate plants that shall bask in the eternal beams of glory!