

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.

21st January 2024



WELCOME TO OUR SERVICES TODAY

The 12.00 noon service today will be taken by Rev Calum M Smith. The evening service will be taken by Mr Calum Maclean (Back).

Our services are livestreamed at: <https://www.youtube.com/@shawbostfreechurchofscotland>

At the **12.00noon service** the Scripture reading will be 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16. The sermon will consider the section from verses 1 to 8 and is entitled *What's Your Motivation?*

At the **6.00pm service** the Scripture reading will be from Mark Chapter 1:35 to 2:17. The sermon will focus on verse 41 of the chapter 1 and is entitled *The Leper Cleansed*.

The praise will be led by our precentor(s) and the Psalms for this Lord's Day are as follows:

	12.00 Noon Service		6.00pm Service	
1	Ps 27:1-4	Sing Psalms	Ps 34:1-9	Psalter
2	Ps 27:7-14	Sing Psalms	Ps 61:1-5	Sing Psalms
3	Ps 84:1-6	Psalter	Ps 107:10-15	Psalter
4	Ps 122:6-9	Psalter	Ps 147:1-6	Sing Psalms

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School will be at the usual time today. The children will go to their classes in the hall during the second item of praise.

SERVICES NEXT LORD'S DAY

The services next Lord's Day will be taken by Mr Joe MacPhee (12.00 noon) and Mr Calum M Smith (6pm).

BEREAVEMENT

We note with sadness the passing of Katie Ann Maclean (late of Grant Square, Stornoway and New Shawbost). We extend our prayerful sympathies to her husband Angus, sister Annie and the wider family. There will be a **service tonight in the Church at 8pm** and the funeral will take place tomorrow (Monday 22nd January) from the Church at 2pm with the **service commencing at 1.30pm**.

VACANCY: CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - 24TH JANUARY 2024

There will be a congregational meeting at **7pm in the Church Hall on Wednesday 24th January 2024, DV**. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the congregational schedule and vacancy committee which will be forwarded to Presbytery prior to onward transmission to the Board of Ministry. Everyone in the congregation is encouraged to attend the meeting. In advance of the above, there will be a Deacons' Court meeting at **6pm** and a Kirk Session meeting at **6.30pm**.

VISIT OF DAVID MEREDITH, MISSION DIRECTOR

Free Church Mission Director, David Meredith, will be visiting the island at the end of this month. As part of his visit, he will be speaking at an open meeting at the MA Macleod Hall on **Tuesday January 30th at 7.30pm**. The focus of the evening will be 'The Next 10 Years: building a vision for our church' and will include a talk along with opportunities for questions and discussions. The meeting is open to all and everyone is warmly invited to attend.

THE ISLANDS STUDY CONFERENCE

A detailed programme for this three-day conference, and information for day visitors and residential bookings, is provided within a leaflet available at the door today. Please take a copy. The Islands Study Conference relaunches on the weekend of **2nd - 4th February 2024** and the venue is North Harris Free Church and the Harris Hotel.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

The next scheduled online training session is **22nd February**. Participants require to register online seven days in advance of the chosen date. Register at <https://freechurch.org/safeguarding-training/>

PRAYER POINTS 22nd-28th JANUARY 2024

Monday 22nd January - North Tolsta

Please pray for us as we continue to engage with the wider community, seeking to share the good news to our community.

Tuesday 23rd January - Dumisani

Pray for the gathering of new and former students at Dumisani Theological Institute for Term One which starts on January 29th, Dumisani's 45th year! May there be a wonderful spirit of Christian unity (Psalm 133) present between lecturers and students for this First Term of the new academic year.

Wednesday 24th January - Stirling

Pray that God will lead the congregation and guide them, for his glory. Pray for the weekly ministry, that God would strengthen and bless it.

Thursday 25th January - Board of Trustees

Please pray for the Board of Trustees as they meet for their first meeting of 2023, that God would guide them and grant them wisdom as they make decisions to steward our resources well.

Friday 26th January - Dumisani

Pray for lecturers Tembani Zani, Ikho Magodla, Luan Goosen, and Wilbert Chibenyu as they return to lecture for Term One at Dumisani starting January 29th. May the Lord bless their labours.

Saturday 27th January - North Tolsta

Please pray for us, as we give praise to God for some recent encouragements, that we keep growing in our discipleship and love for our Saviour.

Sunday 28th January - Stirling

Pray that as the congregation would be rooted in the gospel, and that the Lord would grow a passion for His word and seeing the lost come to know Jesus through it.

CH SPURGEON DEVOTIONAL READING 21ST JANUARY

"He was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst?" [Judges 15:18](#)

Samson was thirsty and ready to die. The difficulty was totally different from any which the hero had met before. Merely to get thirst assuaged is nothing like so great a matter as to be delivered from a thousand Philistines! but when the thirst was upon him, Samson felt that little present difficulty more weighty than the great past difficulty out of which he had so specially been delivered. It is very usual for God's people, when they have enjoyed a great deliverance, to find a little trouble too much for them. Samson slays a thousand Philistines, and piles them up in heaps, and then faints for a little water! Jacob wrestles with God at Peniel, and overcomes Omnipotence itself, and then goes "halting on his thigh!" Strange that there must be a shrinking of the sinew whenever we win the day. As if the Lord must teach us our littleness, our nothingness, in order to keep us within bounds. Samson boasted right loudly when he said, "I have slain a thousand men." His boastful throat soon grew hoarse with thirst, and he betook himself to prayer. God has many ways of humbling his people. Dear child of God, if after great mercy you are laid very low, your case is not an unusual one. When David had mounted the throne of Israel, he said, "I am this day weak, though anointed king." You must expect to feel weakest when you are enjoying your greatest triumph. If God has wrought for you great deliverances in the past, your present difficulty is only like Samson's thirst, and the Lord will not let you faint, nor suffer the daughter of the uncircumcised to triumph over you. The road of sorrow is the road to heaven, but there are wells of refreshing water all along the route. So, tried brother, cheer your heart with Samson's words, and rest assured that God will deliver you ere long.