



# PARISH

## NEWSLETTER

To Communicants and Friends of  
Tay, Rannoch and Lyon Churches

February 2026

### Armchair Musings from Sandra Seath, Outreach Elder

Hello everyone, and welcome to your latest newsletter.

Here we are, carefully making our way through the challenging grips of the hands of winter – sometimes cold, sometimes wet, sometimes snowy, sometimes icy, sometimes windy...ever-changing day by day! Change is never easy!

Nationally, the Church of Scotland is moving through a period of necessary change and we in Loch Tay and Glen Lyon have played our part in that, when in November, we had our final service in Kenmore Church – a building that has served the community for hundreds of years, change is never easy. It means an end to the comfortable familiar and all that we have come to love and know, but change can also result in opportunities to try something new and offers fresh experience of something which may just become that 'comfortable familiar' of the future.

Our ministerial responsibility has also greatly extended in area – the Church of Scotland's reorganising of its worshipping map has linked us to Rannoch and all that lies between us! We have already had some interesting meetings between us

and look forward to having some joint services and events with our new friends – new beginnings and new experiences.

We are delighted to warmly welcome our new Minister, the Rev. Joanne Foster, into our midst, enjoying her friendly, relaxed approach, embracing the congregation and wider community. We hope, Joanne, you are finding your way and feeling happy ministering amongst us, as you take us forward together, on our journey.

I hope this finds you all warm and well.

Warmest good wishes,

Sandra Seath (01887 830316)

### Rev. Joanne Foster, Church Minister *New beginnings....*

I write this first article as your minister with thanksgiving. It has been a very busy four months, since my arrival among you and I am deeply appreciative of the warm welcome that you have given me.

#### ***A little about me:***

In August, I will celebrate 30 years, as an ordained Church of Scotland minister. Over the years, I have been richly blessed to work in ministry, and, I have had the privilege of serving in town, rural linkage and city charges. I have also served as a hospital chaplain, both part time and full time.

When I'm not working, I enjoy time spent with my husband, family and friends. I have a great love of music and enjoy singing, playing the piano and watching ballet. The latter being a rare treat, these days. One of the gifts of living in such a beautiful part of Scotland is that it affords opportunities for walking and geocaching. This has become a favourite pass time for

my husband and myself when we are off duty.

### ***Challenges and hopes...***

One of difficult tasks in a ministry is overseeing the sale of church buildings. Navigating the closure of a church building is an emotionally demanding task for all involved in the process. For congregational members whose memories are linked to the building through important family events— baptisms, weddings and funerals— it brings a deeper level of loss. As your minister, I recognize that saying goodbye to a physical home is a bereavement, a loss of the 'sacred geography' where some families have worshipped God for generations. The thanksgiving service that took place, in Kenmore Church, in November, offered an opportunity to give voice to all the above whilst honouring the sanctity of the past and the pain of the present. As we journey together in faith, we hold a gentle spirit with compassion. We lean on the promise that God is already standing in our future, beckoning us toward new ways of being community and inviting us to new opportunities of service.

I said at the beginning of this article, 'it has been a very busy four months.' It has also been a fulfilling four months. I have appreciated the opportunities to meet individuals, to be in the four primary schools and to engage pastorally with members and their families. It will, of course, take time to get to know the communities in which I serve. The new linkage means that my time, as minister, is divided between two congregations, spread over a large geographical area. Both have different ministry requirements.

I am thankful for the opportunities that each will bring.

### ***As we journey towards Lent and Easter, I offer you this blessing –***

Bless to us, O God, the road that rises to meet us,

the ancient Yew that stands as a witness to your years

and the quiet waters of Loch Tay that mirror your peace.

As we journey by the shore and through the glen

may the spirit of Saint Adomnan guide our steps

from the mouth of the glen to the high passes,

turning our hearts, like the 'Praying Hands' of the mountain, towards the heavens.

Grant us the strength of the hills and the light of your Holy Spirit

that our Lenten journey may bring us at last to the joy of resurrection, Amen.

Shalom, Rev. Joanne

### **Glen Lyon Church Update**

Loch Tay & Glenlyon Church Trustees unanimously decided at the Kirk Session meeting on Thursday 5th February 2026, to inform the General Trustees, Church of Scotland, that they are ready to move forward with the sale of Glenlyon Church.

The decision was made easier, with awareness that Innerwick and Meggernie estates are exploring a joint approach to purchase the church, with pre-emptive right. It is heartening to know that their communication with the General Trustees, of the Church of Scotland, strongly

indicate their desire to retain the building as a church.

As the new minister of the parish [just over four months], it gave me great joy to see the community gathered on Christmas Eve. It was a privilege to conduct this service and to meet over refreshments afterwards. It is my hope that further opportunities will arise in coming years to host special services in the building.

### [“What is it about snowdrops?” by Anne Towns](#)

What is it about snowdrops?

This seems to have been a particularly long and dark January but there is something in the natural world, promising that Spring is really on the way. Snowdrops aren't really very noticeable but somehow they really matter.

The Victorians chose to plant snowdrops in graveyards and there are some in Fortingall. They are generally regarded as symbols of hope and resurrection, appearing so early in the year and especially when they are so small and frail.

Longer days, birds starting to sing and snowdrops popping up! Spring is almost here!



### [“Change is never comfortable” Alec Towns, Session Clerk](#)

Change is an inevitable part of human existence, woven intricately into the fabric of both our personal lives and the wider world around us. Whether we welcome it with open arms or resist its approach, change challenges the status quo and compels us to adapt, grow, and redefine ourselves. From the shifting seasons to the evolution of societies, change is one certainty we can always rely on. Yet, change is not without its challenges. It can bring discomfort, anxiety and the resistance, especially when it threatens deeply held beliefs or routines. How true has this been for our Parish in Highland Perthshire! With the winds of change blowing through the Church of Scotland, it was inevitable that we could not escape the draught.

Now, we find ourselves with Kenmore Church about to be purchased by the local Community Council and Glenlyon Church subject to a pre-emptive right to buy from two local estates in the Glen. Both of these changes have received the approval of the Kirk Session in the knowledge that these buildings will be saved for the communities in whose midst they stand.

*“When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills.”*

Difficult as it may have been, the majority of our congregation have displayed the ability to navigate change gracefully. Now, with the Rev. Joanne Foster some four months into her ministry, we can look forward to a new beginning in our worship. Let us all welcome the changes which she will bring and do all we can to support her in the challenging times

ahead.

*“Be willing to embrace change - for, if you have an open mind, surely the blessings will flow.”*

Just to finish, while it may sometimes seem unpredictable or unwelcome, embracing change can enable us to create meaning and purpose from uncertainty and can often be the key to new opportunities and a brighter future.

With my sincere thanks to all members of the congregation for their loyal support,

Alex Towns (Session Clerk)

### Thank you!

Every week, at the end of our service, we all enjoy a happy, chatty time of fellowship with each other. A time to catch up with everyone and make plans for the week

ahead. Thank you to all the volunteers who provide us with the tea, coffee and goodies which make this a very special time.

And for our comfort, no longer do we need to make our way round to the back of the church to make use of a rather antiquated loo!

We are very grateful to the Fortingall Hotel owners who have offered the use of their very comfortable facilities to all attendees of church services and meetings within the church. Thank you so much for this very kind gesture. The entrance is by the door at the back and on the side of the hotel.



# Pictures Tell A Story

Since the last newsletter we have celebrated various festivals within our beautifully decorated church...here is a wee reminder!!



## Harvest Celebrations in October

In November we celebrated Armistice Day.

And then we enjoyed Christmas.... all our windows were so expertly decorated to illustrate favourite carols. Our Church looked so wonderfully warm and welcoming.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to creating this very special space. Here are just a few of these windows.



# Holy Week Services

- Maundy Thursday Service (2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026) is at 6:30pm in Rannoch Church.
- Good Friday Service (3<sup>rd</sup> April 2026) is at 11am in Fortingall Church.
- Easter Sunday (5<sup>th</sup> April 2026) is at 10am in Fortingall Church and 12 noon in Rannoch Church.
- **Communion will be served at both Easter Sunday Services.**



## Advanced Notice:

On the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2026, the Annual General Meeting (finance) will be part of the church service in Fortingall Church.

