



Rev Robert Nicol, Interim Moderator

The invention of “what3words” has been a recent navigational phenomenon. The system works by allocating three random words to every 3 metre square of the world’s surface. It makes for much more accurate place-finding than addresses and postcodes, and is now being used regularly by the emergency services. If you go on the “what3words” website you can find your own house, and choose one of the many squares it will identify. Sometimes people find that their three words are strangely appropriate.

As our thoughts turn to Christmas again, the words we are supposed to associate with it are joy, peace and fun. I know that not everyone will be looking forward to it with such enthusiasm. Maybe the words that come to mind are things like disappointment, sadness and loneliness. With the on-going war in Ukraine, and a cost-of-living crisis, some will be thinking of Christmas in terms of cold, hunger and fear.

The Christian Christmas, as opposed to the commercialised festival that is thrust upon us from every angle, does not turn away from the harsh realities of life. How could it, when it features an unmarried mother, Mary, giving birth in a barn, in a country under brutal occupation by a foreign power?

Despite the frightening challenge of what she had been asked to do, the young Mary sang a song of praise and thanksgiving to the God who had honoured her with the task of bearing and bringing up his own Son.

There are three words in her song which point us to the significance of that first Christmas:

Mindful – Mary sings that God has been mindful of her specifically, and of his people generally. He remembers the promises he made in the past that he would bring blessing and would himself address the problem of sin and evil in the world. It’s a promise he made about 2000 years earlier to Abraham, the father of nations, and repeated in the following centuries through his prophets. Now the time had come for the promise to be fulfilled.

Mighty – Mary sings that God is the mighty God, who has the power to do what he promises; who is not impressed with human pride, and will bring justice for the poor and downtrodden.

Mercy – Mary sings that God acts in tender mercy, not treating us as we deserve, but with a love that seeks to win us rebels back to himself.

It is a perversion of the Christian Gospel to promise an easy, prosperous life for all. But the first Christmas shouts that God, in his love, knows where we are, and what we are, and wants us to know him as he really is.

I looked for the three words allocated to the doorway of Fortingall Church, and found: **establish.promises.deduced**. They could hardly be better. Here is a place

where people have deduced that God established his promises long ago, and that he is to be completely trusted to carry them through.

I hope you will come through the doorway of one of our churches over the Christmas period. I hope too that you will have a wonderful Christmas, whatever your current circumstances, and will receive blessings from God, who made you and loves you.

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## CHURCH SERVICES DECEMBER 2022

| Date               | Fortingall | Kenmore | Glenlyon | Preacher     | Notes                                               |
|--------------------|------------|---------|----------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 4 December         | -          | 11.00   | -        | Worship Team | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent - Gift Service               |
| <b>11 December</b> | 11.00      | -       | -        | Robert Nicol | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Advent                              |
| 18 December        | -          | 11.00   | -        | Elders       | 4 <sup>th</sup> Advent -<br>Nine Lessons and Carols |
| 24 December        | -          | -       | 17:00    |              | Christmas Eve Carols                                |
| <b>24 December</b> | 19.00      | -       | -        | Robert Nicol | Christmas Eve                                       |
| <b>25 December</b> | -          | 11.00   | -        | Robert Nicol | Christmas Day                                       |

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The Church of Scotland: A Glimpse of the Proposed New Parish Landscape

by Elaine Melrose

In the July Summer Newsletter, I outlined **our Kirk Session's submission** to the Presbytery of Dunkeld and Meigle. Those of you who attended church on 30th October or 6th November would have been aware of an edict which invited congregations to send representatives to a special Presbytery meeting on 9th November.

Along with three others, I attended this meeting where there were representatives from all 19 congregations in the Presbytery. Given the enormous work that the **Presbytery Reappraisal Committee** has

done over the past few months listening to all the congregations' concerns over the new Church of Scotland arrangements, it was gratifying to hear that all agreed with the plans that our Presbytery had suggested. These plans will now pass to a *higher authority*, that is, **the Faith Nurture Forum**, who may or may not accept our Presbytery's proposals.

The plan from our Presbytery is that *Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore and Lawers* will be linked with *Foss and Rannoch* and *Braes of Rannoch* to form a new Parish.

The churches at **Fortingall** and **Kenmore** are recognised as the main centres of worship but are also iconic buildings in a much-visited tourist area. Although the church building at **Glenlyon** is used only occasionally for worship, it is considered essential as a community mission hub. The Presbytery Reappraisal Committee has put forward an argument for retaining all the church buildings in our new Parish.

At the northern end of our proposed Parish, *Foss and Rannoch* and *Braes of Rannoch* lie at opposite ends of Loch Rannoch, with *Foss and Rannoch* being the more populated area. *Braes* enjoys its own enthusiastic mission community and fears that the loss of its place of worship would have a devastating effect on the local community.

The plan is to unite these two congregations - the minister for this large charge is likely to be based at **Kenmore**, but even as our parish minister, he or she would not be present in our churches of **Fortingall** or **Kenmore** every Sunday. Because of this, congregations will be supported in developing their own worship leaders.

Once the **Faith Nurture Forum** has accepted Presbytery's plans and we have joined the Presbytery of Perth, the Presbytery Mission Plan will move from the planning to the implementation stage, and at this point the Presbytery of Perth might permit the appointment of the minister for the new charge of *Fortingall, Glenlyon, Kenmore and Lawers, linked with Foss and Rannoch and Braes of Rannoch*.

A few thoughts from Sandra, your Outreach Elder

As I sit down to write this item for your Newsletter, I think about the last few months in our lives and one word comes to mind to describe them - CHANGE! This is something we have all had to become accustomed to in recent years. No one is immune to the changes being made to our everyday lives, changes made by those who govern, changes happening to our climate, the horrors that are happening within our world, and closer to home, changes being made within our local church family and the wider local Presbytery.

In the face of all those happenings within our lives and around us, keeping our faith and hope alive is rather challenging our every thought. For me there has never been such a pressing need to keep that candle of faith and hope shining brightly as we try to embrace change and further the love and Peace of God in our lives.

And now to the future of the Newsletter and the way forward with parish communications.

The electronic version arose during lockdown helping to keep us fully aware of all our parish happenings when meeting up with folks became difficult. It has been a great way of communicating information not necessarily best delivered from the pulpit!

For three years and 16 editions, Ros Grant has been our Newsletter Publisher giving up lots of her time to put together all our contributions. Now, Ros is retiring from this role and this is her last issue. Ros, a very big thank you from all of us for the support you have given. Do enjoy your new hobbies of puppy walking and puppy training! So, if there is anyone out there with IT skills PLEASE come and talk to me!

I hope this finds you all well. Take care! Have a wonderful Christmas and please join us in one, some, or all of our Christmas services. A really warm welcome awaits you.

Very best wishes, Sandra (01887 830 316)

Rev. Ladd Fageron (1935-2022)

Ladd Fageron, who died on 4th September, will be remembered in our parish with affection and admiration.

We shall long remember as well, the beautiful and moving service of thanksgiving for his life in a thronged Kenmore Kirk on 23rd September. In a celebration full of music and poetry, we heard tributes from three generations of Ladd's talented family. The elegiac Swedish Hymn sung by his grandson, Nathanael, lingers still in our minds.

It is a strange truth that we almost always learn something new about friends at their funeral services. We knew about Ladd's distinguished academic record at Harvard University and that he had taught and served as a much-loved chaplain at Ranoch School. Not all of us knew, however, of his 7 year ministry to a Christian congregation in Afghanistan and probably none that he held the record as the *longest* baby ever born in the renowned Mt Sinai Hospi-

tal in USA. However, we were unsurprised to learn—in his brother, Jon's delightful poem entitled 'Shoes' -that Ladd's were size 12!

Unsurprised too, because Ladd was a big man in every way imaginable - in wisdom and magnanimity as well as in stature. It was our good fortune that he and Thea spent the last phase of their life together in our community and congregation.

We shall miss Ladd and Thea (whom we wish well in her new home in Kirriemuir) and give thanks that, in both time and place, our short lives have overlapped with theirs.

Tribute by Gordon Stark



EVENTS IN AND AROUND THE AREA

Harvest Thanksgiving, Glenlyon Church

The church looked splendid for Harvest Thanksgiving celebrated on Sunday 9 October, not only with the autumnal display and donated goods but following redecoration, which took place this summer.



Donations of dried and tinned goods were later taken to the Aberfeldy Community Larder for further distribution where needed. Our next Glenlyon service will be on Christmas Eve at 5pm with lots of carols.

from Lindsay Brown

Gift Service, Kenmore Church

The Annual Gift Service takes place on Sunday 4 December at 11am in Kenmore Church where you can bring gifts for less fortunate children in our area for Christmas.

Each parcel should be wrapped and labelled with the appropriate age range and for girl or boy if necessary.

This is a lovely service. Please join us if you can and help us bring a little sparkle to someone's Christmas in these difficult times. A really, great big thank-you in advance!

from Sandra Seath

War Memorial Services - Sunday 13 November 2022

Kenmore

James Duncan Millar led a short service of Remembrance at Kenmore War Memorial. Poppy wreaths were laid by Lois Duncan Millar from the church and Peter Ely on behalf of the council. After the service, the tolling of the bell signalled 11:00am and the two minutes silence followed. Inside the church, wreaths were laid at the Lawers Memorial, Major Bobby Hutchison Memorial and in memory of all the parishioners who fell in the second World War.

Fortingall

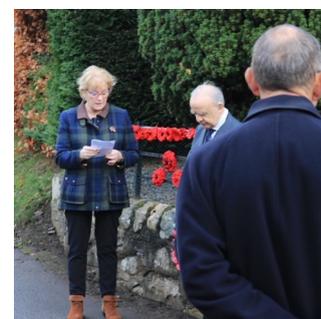
Around 20 people gathered at the war memorial to pay their respects to those who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their country giving of their lives during the two World Wars. Our session clerk, Mr Alex Towns, led us in a very fitting Act of Remembrance when we thought of all servicemen and women, including those in more recent conflicts, who gave of their lives for their country.

A wooden stake behind the memorial has a QR code imprinted on it. If you download the code you will gain information about all the names on the memorial.



Fearnan

People gathered at the war memorial at the corner of The Brae and the loch road for the Remembrance Service which was led by Shirley Shearer. Three wreaths were laid in honour of those who died in WW1 and WW2 and in subsequent conflicts.



Continuing the local custom, one of the wreaths was laid for the Russian airmen and their Czechoslovakian colleague, all members of the WW2 Allied Forces in 1943, when they died in a plane crash in Fearnan Cow Park. This year, additional poppies in the colours of the Ukrainian flag were added. (Adapted from <https://fearnanvillageassociation.com/>; photos Fiona Ballantyne)

Remembrance in the Glen at Innerwick



We were fortunate to have a clear, dry morning this year in the Glen on Sunday with nine in attendance from the community, including a dog! Glenlyon Primary school had delivered their wreath on the Friday before, which was made from red pipe cleaners and black buttons, under the watchful eye of Naomi Billimore, the classroom assistant.

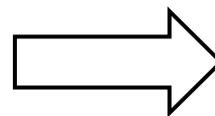


Christmas is coming to Kenmore on Saturday 3 December! A celebration in Kenmore Square from 4 - 8pm with live music and carol singing, a yule torch event rekindling the light, food and drink provided, plus:

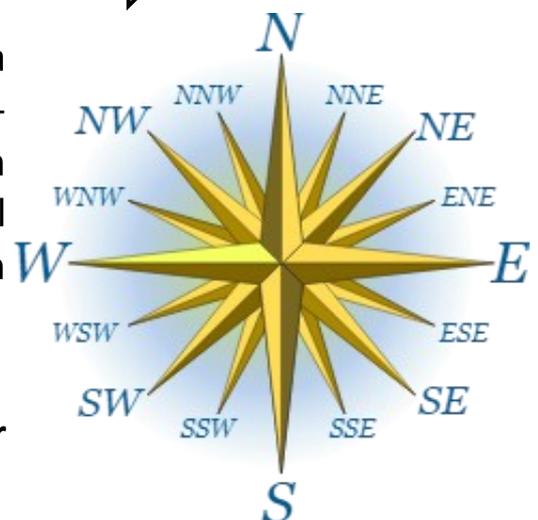
- ◆ Santa's Grotto
- ◆ A reindeer procession with Santa and Mrs Claus
- ◆ An enchanted light trail
- ◆ Christmas market with childrens' crafts (cash only at the stalls)
- ◆ Fire pits and marshmallows

This new event comes with good wishes from Taymouth Castle. Donations may be made to SCAA (<https://www.scaa.org.uk/>) Scotland's Air Ambulance Charity.

TAY AND LYON GUILD – THE WAY FORWARD



On Thursday 19th January 2023 there will be a coffee morning in Fearnan Hall at 11am for EVERYONE! Please join us in helping decide the direction our local Guild should take. We do hope you'll come and let us all share our views and ideas on the way ahead. Looking forward to seeing you!



Happy Christmas and a bright New Year
from the **Tay and Lyon Guild.**

FINALLY, a tale of FOUR FORTINGALL CHAIRS

“People buy a chair, and they don’t really care who designed it”. This was the complaint of famous Danish furniture designer Arne Jacobsen, but we in Fortingall thought otherwise. When four dusty old oak chairs were discovered languishing in long-term storage under the church, we set out to find out where they had come from and who had made them.



It didn’t take long, thanks to Bernard Cotton’s book on Scottish vernacular furniture, to identify William Wheeler of Arncroach in Fife as the maker. Wheeler was a well-known early 20th century cabinet maker who produced quantities of chairs in the styles loosely classified as ‘Chippendale’. The book included an illustration from Wheeler’s pattern book of five different styles of splats— chair backs —and yes, there was our identical chair back in the top right-hand corner!

All very exciting, but what really clinched the identification was the fact that Wheeler commonly used sheepskin to cover the seat pads, and our chairs had leather-covered seats, much stained and faded over the years, but sheepskin leather none the less.

So how did Fortingall church come by these chairs, which were used in the vestry until some years ago? There again Cotton’s book came in handy, as he mentions that Wheeler often undertook work for the noted architect Sir Robert Lorimer who lived not far from him in Kellie Castle. Lorimer was the designer of the beautifully carved wooden rood screen installed in the church in 1913 in memory of the late Sir Donald Currie of Glen Lyon House. It seems very likely that the four chairs would have been acquired at the same time as the screen was erected.

As the chairs were no longer of use to the church the decision was made to sell them, and so the welcome sum of £420 has now been added to the Fabric Fund.

from Fran Gillespie, with thanks to Andy Walker for the research