



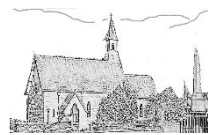
Holy Trinity



St Andrew's



Kilmaveonaig



All Saints'

The Newsletter of Highland Perthshire Linked Charge

**HOLY TRINITY, Pitlochry
KILMAVEONAIG, Blair Atholl
ST ANDREW'S, Strathtay
& ALL SAINTS', Kinloch Rannoch
SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCHES**

**Rector - The Reverend Canon Liz Baker
01796 472005**



Winter 2025/6

December, January & February



Loch Faskally: Photo by Mhairi Hastie Smith



Rector's Reflections for Winter 2025 - And Winter came

The past few days have been a foretaste of what may be to come this winter, dark and cold, snowy and frosty, I have always thought that the choice of 25th December as the celebration of Christ's birth was an inspired one, as we don't know the actual date, because it comes in the Northern Hemisphere at the darkest time of the year, with months of cold and hunger ahead and what better time to celebrate the coming of Emmanuel, the bright Morning Star, then at a time when we who follow his way need to be aware of others, their needs and how important the words 'love you neighbour as yourself' can be to those who are struggling against the cruelty of the world.

You will be aware that being cruel to the 'other' seems to be becoming a *Modis Operandi* for many of our world leaders today, sowing division among their people, teaching them to hate not love their neighbour for all sorts of reasons, thus bringing cold winter into the hearts and minds of those who listen. At Christmas we need to remember that we, as followers of the Babe of Bethlehem, for whom there was 'no room at the inn' need recall these words:

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25: 35 – 40

This was brought home to me one Christmas Eve at 'the Well Community' when one of our regular homeless gentlemen turned up on the doorstep, he was not a particularly nice man, difficult, could be rude, not too clean; you get the picture. We had a houseful of paying guests who had come for the Christmas Retreat, but we were committed to hospitality in Christ's name for all. Basically he stayed for 3 days, upset a lot of people, but when several years later he died, his estranged family told us that we were one of the only places that ever showed him kindness and compassion.

So although it is not easy, as we enjoy the warmth of family and friends, as we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child, let us remember that, no matter what we look like, how we behave, how we differ from each other, we are all beloved children of God and let us try to treat our fellow human beings as Charles Dickens says in 'A Christmas Carol'

"I have always thought of Christmas time... as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys".

Thus emphasizing that at all times people should see each other as equals on a shared human journey, regardless of the dividers between us

Wishing you all a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas & New Year.

Liz Baker
November 2025.

Rector's Reflection for January & February. From Cradle to Cross



I don't usually write two pieces but, in our Winter Newsletter, Christmas always has a tendency to take over, but winter extends sometimes well into the early spring. In January most people take down their decoration, even though it is still dark and cold. For some Boxing Day is the time for taking down the tree and the lights, when the Christmas Season has only just begun.

Christmas traditionally ends after the 12 days of Christmas, which is celebrated on 5th January, or 6th January known as Twelfth Night or the Feast of the Epiphany. In some Western Christian traditions the official liturgical season ends on 6th January. Some traditions extend the season even further, such as until Candlemas on 2nd February .

Christmas until Candlemas is a tradition where the Christmas season is extended to 2nd February, the date of the feast of Candlemas. This 40-day period is seen as the official end of Christmas, with decorations and celebrations traditionally lasting until this date. Candlemas, which commemorates the presentation of Jesus at the temple, is when churches traditionally bless candles for the year ahead. In medieval times, the Christmas season continued past the 12 days of Christmas and Epiphany (January 6th) to Candlemas.

The idea of taking down decorations on January 6th is a recent convention. Extending the Christmas season until Candlemas is a way to keep the light of Christ shining through the darkness of winter until we see the days lengthening and the promise of new life in the spring. Keeping our trees in church until Candlemas reminds us that the baby in the manger becomes the man on the cross, that the one cannot happen without the other and the story of Jesus' life that we experience from Christmas to Easter and beyond, points to this great truth. Christmas can't be truly understood apart from the cross.

Ash Wednesday in 2026 is on 18th February and Lent is a time when we focus on our relationship with God through repentance, self-reflection, and generosity. So as this winter season unfolds let us reflect on all it means from the warmth and light of the Christmas Candles to the darkness of Gethsemane and the Cross.

Worship Christ the newborn baby
Born to die upon the tree
Thorns and nails will one day pierce Him,
Bearing wrath to set us free.

May our gracious and loving
God bless you all today and
always.

Liz Baker
November 2025



'The Christmas Story'

Celebrate the Christmas Story with
Christingle & Carols.



**Children and adults
are invited to dress as
their favourite Nativity
Character**

**Service followed by
Seasonal refreshments
& a visit from Father
Christmas.**



**3.00pm 13th December
at**

**Holy Trinity Church
Perth Road
Pitlochry**

Scottish Charity SC007020



Collection for The Pitlochry Food Bank.

Serenity Garden Update

After a beautiful summer, Autumn crept up on the garden and before we knew it, it was winter. In a world of ever-changing seasons, there are always some constant factors in a garden. There's the weeding, pruning and cutting back hedges and shrubs and then, there are always the leaves – which fall, fall and fall again and need to be constantly raked up and turned into our leaf mould enclosures.



Photo: Woody Woodpecker, a new visitor

Which reminds me, if any of our green fingered readers would like some leaf mould to place on their garden beds, please come along with an empty compost bag or tub and, for a donation of a couple of pounds, help yourself to our previous season's leaf mould which is now well rotted and full of organic matter.

Last month the Athol Distillery funded the purchase of a few rhododendrons, yew and a clematis, which the eagle eyed amongst you will have noticed have been planted around the rather unsightly tree trunk on the other side of the boundary wall opposite the front door of the church. Hopefully in the Spring they will provide a little bit of colour for you when leaving the church.

Another donation was received in the form of two hundred daffodil bulbs which the volunteers are currently planting in a new location which will provide a patch of yellow sunshine in the Spring.



The garden volunteers have not only been busy in the garden but have also ventured out to a couple of reclamation yards in search of interesting (and tasteful!) artefacts for the garden. We are trying to find something suitable for the centre of the Celtic cross but although we have toyed with the possibility of a rather splendid fire hydrant, a weather vane and a Victorian chimney pot, we haven't found anything quite right but if anyone has any ideas, please let us know. We did however manage to secure a couple of interesting items for our 'musical corner' which will need to be worked on over the winter months.

Happy gardening.
Pam Godwin x

Photo: Our ever present Robin friend

Merry Christmas

By Ann Lewin

From "Watching for the Kingfisher"

At the heart of Christmas there was
Pain, bleeding and crying;
Love was with difficulty brought to birth.
Not to a sanitized stable did God come,
But to a world that needed mucking out;
His birth, no tidy affair but through
A single parent, in bed and breakfast
Shelter; an inconvenience, not welcomed
By bureaucrats with important business;
Acknowledge mainly by low-paid workers,
Foreign visitors, and animals.
The sequel: attempted murder, exile.

People wounded by indifference
Struggle to give love birth in the
Cold comfort of charity, largely
Unrecognised by those with power.
At the heart of Christmas, still there's
Pain, bleeding and crying,
A sword piercing the heart of God,
Opening the wounds of love.

Could we be midwives for the love of God,
Cradling that strength born in fragility,
Delivering healing to the crying world?

Submitted by Ann Covell



And here, at last, we can be still before Him The
while His Light our inmost soul discloses; Just as
the small bowed buds of Christmas roses - All
pink and tight with cold - towards Him turning
Will, in a white warmth of wonder, open wide.

Anon

Submitted by Libby MacRae

NATIVITY

So, modern pundits tell us,
They got it wrong, the Old Masters,
With their serene, golden-haired
Marys
Demurely receiving on Tuscan ter-
races
Angels in pastel robes, with wings -
Gilded feathers, absurdly small -
Against a backdrop of pointed
pines and vines and olives
Climbing sun-lit hills.
Then there are the wooden stables, straw-thatched,
With shepherds, donkeys, cows and kings
Neatly arranged around
Plump, placid Christ-children,
Calmly displayed by blue-gowned virgins.



Beautiful but wrong.

We know better now.
We face reality.
Two Jewish adolescents, in occupied territory,
Were driven from their home village
By the lust of an imperial power
For more oppressive taxes.
No room for them in the inn
Because their fellow travellers
Refused to give up their places.
"Pregnant? Nothing to do with us."
An indifferent innkeeper offered the enclosure
Where the animals were kept:
"You can put it in the manger when it comes.
There's straw enough."
Visitors came: horny-handed farm-workers,
Reeking of sheep and humanity;
A few dabblers in the occult
Bringing wildly inappropriate gifts
When food and clothing and hard cash would have been more suitable.
Finally, a paranoid tyrant forced the little family
To become asylum-seekers,
Strangers in a strange land.

And what's the message in all this reality?
Life's a bitch –
Face it; endure it; plod on?

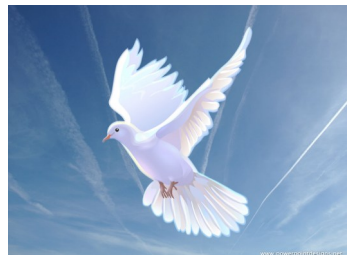
Such realism keeps its eyes firmly fixed
On the flotsam on the water,
Misses the clear, bright depths.

One star-lit night
Shepherds saw the veil between heaven and earth
Lifted.
Were wrapped in God's glory;
Received the message of salvation;
Heard the heavenly host rejoicing.
In a stable of sorts, God was made man,
Saw, for the first time with human eyes,
His own creation.
Was cradled by his mother, felt the love in her bending face:
God and humanity at one,
Just as He always intended.
Men from afar who understood it all
Brought gifts for kingship, priesthood and death.

Yet, realism would say,
This new life, badly begun, ended in premature death,
With whips and fists and thorns and nails.
But, oh, look deeper to the splendour of love and forgiveness,
Begun in a stable and completed on a cross.
Begun on a Bethlehem night
When glory shone around,
When love came leaping from the sky,
When joy erupted into the world
And peace became more than a pious hope.
Oh, feel it even now, this very Christmas.

Maybe the Old Masters were right
To paint not the reality,
But an ever-present, transforming beauty
- A deeper truth.

Cherith Nixon



HPLC Christmas Cards

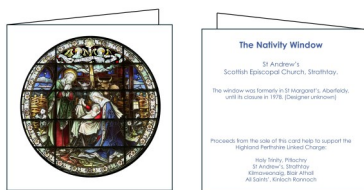
A Message from Lesley Whitwood

Thank you all for your generosity in purchasing HPLC Christmas cards. We sold out of the first batch of 500 very quickly and there are still a few left of the second order of 300 if you are interested.

Each church has received a donation of the profit on the cards.

Let Lesley know if you would like any: £7 for 10

lesleywhitwood@btinternet.com



Seasons of the Year Journey



It is nice to remember the good summer we had before the beautiful autumn's colours we have enjoyed in the countryside, where it looks especially picturesque when the sun comes out, and before winter comes to the Northern parts of the world while the summer arrives in the Southern parts. We can then all look forward to enjoying Christmas with our loved ones, families and friends reunions and to give and receive presents and cards from each other. We will sing carols for charity and at Church services to remember the birth of Jesus, born in the early hours of Christmas Day.

Once we move past the New Year celebrations, and past the last snows we can look forward to Spring again when the daylight returns.

Robert Morris, (our frequent visitor at Holy Trinity and St Andrews, from Llanisloes, Wales)

Update from the Church Archive Project

Your faithful archivists have completed their second season of sorting and cataloguing the church records. So far, we have sifted and assessed all the available materials and sorted them into categories. We are now producing a catalogue which is based on Microsoft Excel. This lists each document, or group of documents, with a unique reference number and includes details of those documents including keywords and names. This will make it easy for any researcher to search for key elements like names, dates and topics, and then tell them exactly where that document is.

For older manuscripts, we are also scanning those documents and providing a typed transcript to make reading more easy. These scans and typescripts are easily accessed by clicking on a link in the catalogue. An interesting observation is that, despite fairly neat copperplate handwriting, some of these manuscripts are very difficult to read and one has to wonder how easy they were to read hundreds of years ago.

The archives are not confined to Holy Trinity – there is a wealth of documentation relating to the other three churches in the linked charge and some of it goes back four centuries. One church that is no longer in existence, but has documentation, is the church at Tummel Bridge. This was built in 1812 as an outreach from St Andrew's and, like All Saints' in Kinloch Rannoch, never really had a year-round congregation. Both seemed to cater for the huntin' shootin' & fishin' visitors from the south. It was demolished in the 1920s. The puzzle we are left with is the name of the church at Tummel Bridge. The ordnance survey maps of the time clearly name it as *St George's* and Liz has the communion plate which also bears that name. However, we also have handwritten church accounts from Tummel Bridge which are clearly marked *St Mary's*, and there's a clerical directory which also refers to it as *St Mary's*. So which was it? Anyone with any knowledge on this, please get in touch!

So, you see, archiving isn't just about cataloguing the history: it is about unravelling it as well. And that's one of the many things that makes this project so interesting and absorbing. Oh – and the cake too, of course!

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas from the Archive Team:
Agnes, John, Judith, Pam.

To a New Year

"I'm glad you're finally here",
The Old one said at last,
"But before you take over
You must heed a few facts:
Things are in a perilous state
And it isn't my fault;
When the powers-that-be claimed good intentions
I took them with a grain of salt.
I stood back to let it happen
Thinking power would destroy itself.
I had no regrets and no solutions.
I put doubts on the shelf,".
"I see what you are," the New Year said.
"You're nothing but a fake—
You allowed despair and havoc -
Peace is not a piece of cake.
It needs compassion, skill and gumption
To heal man's and nature's wounds;
You merely endured them
While uttering the voice of doom."
"OK, New Year, if you make a better world
You'll be the century's hit, so get your golden skates on
And get on with it.
You seem to have sufficient pluck—
Gook Luck".

Rhoda Mackenzie 2025

Edinburgh

Submitted by her friend, Alison Wyllie)



A Warm Welcome from the Charge

I was so heartened by the welcome I was given from members of Holy Trinity Church Pitlochry, back in April of this year, that I thought I must let you all know!

My husband Ken and I were searching for our new home in Pitlochry and were nomads in the true sense of the word, as we had sold our Edinburgh home in November 2024 and our belongings were all in storage. We were moving from place to place, with only minimal belongings, patiently awaiting to get settled again. As a Christian, I put my whole trust in the Lord that all would be well and praise and thanks to Him, as we are now settling into our new home! I can therefore very definitely affirm that the Scottish Episcopal Church Highland Perthshire Linked Charge is living as Christ has called us all to live - 'To Love thy neighbour as thyself'.

My Christian heart immediately felt welcomed and at home, here with my new spiritual family in Perthshire. My sincere thanks to all those I have met and who have welcomed and encouraged my husband and me along this new path in our life.

I look forward to meeting more of you in the near future.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas
and all the very best for 2026.
In Christ,

Julia Henderson, Piper's Croft, Killiecrankie.



Highland Perthshire Linked Charge

Holy Trinity Church is a Registered Scottish Charity No SC007020
 Kilmaveonaig is a Registered Scottish Charity No SC005481
 St Andrew's is a Registered Scottish Charity No SC017058
 All Saints' is a Registered Scottish Charity No SC003117

Contacts



The Rector Reverend Canon Liz Baker 01796 472005

Holy Trinity & All Saints' Vestry

The Rector		
Robin Baker	<i>Secretary/Treasurer/Investments</i>	01796 472005
Gina Charleson	<i>Lay Rep./Rector's Warden</i>	01796 473025
Ann Covell	<i>People's Warden</i>	01796 470129
Paul Covell	<i>Technical Co-ord.</i>	01796 470129
Val Holton	<i>Zero Carbon Co-ord.</i>	01796 549235
Agnes Keegan	<i>Fabric Convenor</i>	01796 549235
Peter Wickes	<i>Alt. Lay Representative</i>	01796 635139
Pam Godwin (co-opted)	<i>Serenity Garden Co-ord.</i>	01796 482826
John Martin (co-opted)	<i>Archiving / Kilmaveonaig Rep.</i>	07801 233412
Carol Powell	<i>All Saints' Rep.</i>	01882 634205
Charlotte Baker	<i>(All Saints') PVG Co-ord.</i>	07940 907712

Kilmaveonaig Committee

The Rector

Lavinia Gordon	<i>Secretary</i>	01796 481230
Duncan Gordon	<i>Treasurer</i>	01796 481642
Pam Godwin	<i>Lay Rep.</i>	01796 482826
John Martin	<i>Alt. Lay Rep.</i>	07801 233412

St Andrew's Vestry

The Rector

Lesley Whitwood	<i>Lay Reader & Secretary</i>	01887 840416
Jennifer Valentine	<i>Rector's Warden & PVG</i>	01796 474444
Mary Barclay	<i>People's Warden</i>	
Alison Wyllie	<i>Lay Representative</i>	
Loretta Davis Reynolds	<i>Treasurer</i>	01887 840266
Angela Gibbs		01887 840223
Sue Sherriff		01887 840332
Roger Pope		
(Vacancy)	<i>Fabric Convenor</i>	

HPLC Website:

Facebook:

The Rector: Liz Baker

Lay Reader: Lesley Whitwood:

Website Co-ordinator:

[HPLC Webpage](#)

[Highland Perthshire Linked Charge](#)

bethmaybaker@yahoo.co.uk

lesleywhitwood@btinternet.com

a.barclay@btinternet.com

Newsletter Editor:

Seonaid Hastie Smith, Barra, Knockfarrie Road, Pitlochry, PH16 5DN

Tel: 01796 472439

seonaidhs@blueyonder.co.uk

Copy for the Spring issue to the Editor

by

Noon on Tuesday 24 February 2026

We cover many of the notices weekly in the pew sheet but the newsletter allows opportunity for interesting and relevant articles, posters for special occasions such as fairs, special lunches, Festivals (Christmas!) and reports etc. Also, In Memoriam obituaries. Most welcome are poems, stories, accounts, historical items linked to the Charge and anything you may feel might interest others.

Scottish Episcopal Church

HIGHLAND PERTSHIRE LINKED CHARGE SERVICES

Holy Trinity, Perth Road, Pitlochry & **All Saints'** Kinloch Rannoch
Contact – Robin Baker - 01796 472005

Kilmaveonaig (St Adamnan's) Blair Atholl
Contact - Mrs. Lavinia Gordon 01796 481230

St Andrew's, Strathtay
Contact - Ms. Lesley Whitwood 01887 840416

Usual Service Times

Holy Trinity 9.30am

St Andrews 11.15am

Kilmaveonaig 11.15am

All Saints – 9.30am 1st Sunday of month

ONLINE ZOOM SERVICES

Sundays - 6.00pm Evening Services

Thursdays - 10.30am Morning Prayer – from Holy Trinity

Events

Holy Trinity Serenity Garden Group – Tuesdays 11.00am and Open Church with Coffee and Conversation. All welcome

St Andrew's House Group – Last Wednesday of the month contact Ms. Lesley Whitwood 01887 840416 for details

Sundays and other Festivals

December 2025

Mon1 St Andrew Apostle
Sun 7 Advent 2
Sun 14 Advent 3
Sun 21 Advent 4
Mon 22 St Thomas Apostle
Wed 24 Christmas Eve
Thu 25 Christmas Day
Fri 26 St Stephen,
Deacon & Martyr
Sat 27 St John, Apostle &
Evangelist
Sun 28 First Sunday after
Christmas

Mon 29 Holy Innocents

January 2026

Thu 1 The Holy Name
Sun 4 Christmas 2
Tue 6 The Epiphany
Sun 11 Epiphany 1
Sun 18 Epiphany 2
Mon 19 Confession of St
Peter, Apostle
Sun 25 Epiphany 3
Mon 26 Conversion of St
Paul, Apostle

February 2026

Sun 1 Epiphany 4
Mon 2 Presentation of
Jesus in the
Temple
Sun 8 Epiphany 5
Sun 15 Last Sunday after
Epiphany
Wed 18 Ash Wednesday
Sun 22 First Sunday in Lent
Tue 24 St Matthias,
Apostle