

## From the Manse: A Thought for the Week

Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025

Dear Friends,

The other morning, I woke to the gentle warmth of the sun streaming through my window—yet, as I stepped outside, frost still clung to the car. A reminder that, though we are in spring, winter has not fully loosened its grip.

Winter is often a season of stillness, a time when the earth seems to hold its breath. The trees stand bare, the fields lie fallow, and the world hushes beneath the weight of cold. And yet, beneath the surface, something remarkable is happening. What appears lifeless is not dead—it is preparing for renewal. We catch glimpses of this as the snowdrops emerge, then the daffodils and crocuses, bringing colour and the promise of brighter days ahead.

In our spiritual lives, we, too, experience winters—times when we feel stuck, weighed down by the past, burdened by old wounds, regrets, or fears that keep us from stepping forward into what God has planned for us. It is easy to cling to what is familiar, even when it no longer serves us. We hold onto past mistakes, to sorrows that linger, or to ways of thinking that no longer bear fruit. But just as the earth must release winter's grip to embrace spring, we too must learn to let go so that we can grow.

Jesus spoke of this rhythm of life when He said:

"Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." (John 12:24)

New life only comes when the old is surrendered. Trees must let go of their dead leaves; the soil must be broken before new shoots can emerge. In the same way, we are called to release the things that hold us back—bitterness, guilt, fear, or even good things that have simply run their course—so that we can make space for the new work God longs to do in us.

I wonder are there things in your life, in my life, that we are holding onto that prevent us from flourishing? Old disappointments, unhealthy patterns, or doubts that whisper you are not enough?

Spring is a season of hope and transformation. What was once barren now bursts into bloom, and what seemed lost now thrives with new life. This is the rhythm not only of creation but of our faith. As the Apostle Paul reminds us:

"If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation; the old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Whatever your situation, winter or spring, please remember, God is always at work, making all things new—including us. When we surrender the things that weigh us down, we open ourselves to His renewing power. We step forward with faith, trusting that even after the hardest winters of our lives, God's promise of new life still holds true.

Thanks be to God.

With every blessing,

Rev Jade

