

# Interim Ministry Update - January 2024

From Stewart McPherson, Interim Minister - Kirkcaldy Town Centre Churches



While on our recent trip to New York we visited St Thomas' Episcopal Church on Fifth Avenue. It turned out to be the setting for the painting *Lift Up Thine Eyes*, by Thomas Rockwell—a copy of which features inside the building.

It depicts the sermon topic being displayed on the noticeboard as passers-by all have their heads cast down towards the pavement/sidewalk. It could just as easily be people today looking at their mobile phones. I could not help but think of how we can shape a church which catches the eye, attracts the passer-by, touches the heart and soul of people in our time. How does our church life, our activity, our message catch the attention of the individual in a world with so many distractions, let alone any apathy or even antipathy towards things religious? If there is spiritual need, then how do we communicate that what we are all about actually lies at the very heart of the human condition? As we journey forward, we keep in mind that how we communicate the message of the gospel of compassion matters. Whether through our individual or corporate living, our worshipping, our activity, we do so in the hope that those whom we encounter may turn their eyes towards the one whom we serve. — Stewart McPherson, Interim Minister

## Focus on Mission



An opportunity to focus on the shape of our future mission as a new congregation in Kirkcaldy

**When?** Saturday 10th February 2024  
**Time?** 10am — 12noon with coffee from 9.30am  
**Where?** Linktown Church Hall

**Led by Lorraine Orr**  
**Mission Director, Fife Presbytery**

This is open to all from our four congregations

*To help us plan for numbers, please let your Session Clerk or Stewart McPherson know if you hope to attend*

*Look at the Mission we already do  
What future Mission we would like to do  
What will we have the resources to achieve  
How a Parish Audit might help us*

## A New Name for a New Beginning

All the names you suggested for the new congregation—when it is formed—were gathered and sent to each Kirk Session. After consideration each sent 3 names to the Strategy Team to create a Short List. During discussion, agreement fell on these two options.

**Kirkcaldy Central Kirk**  
*or*  
**Langtoun Central Kirk**

It was felt the word 'Central' gives focus for the new congregation and its mission to a parish stretching from the Town Centre to cover what is currently four parishes. The name respects the names and geography of the other Church of Scotland Congregations, Pathhead and Hope Church. There was discussion about the name Langtoun which has real local significance and fondness in the area, even if less familiar beyond the town.

### Considerations

Any new name must have a geographical reference (*Kirkcaldy/Langtoun*) in the name; an additional name to identify the congregation within that location (*Central*). The word 'Parish' or 'Kirk' are optional and if preferred the words 'Church of Scotland' may appear in brackets

### Basis of Union

Once agreed, this name will be included in the Basis of Union at the time of coming together. The name will require the agreement of Presbytery, which informs the Law Department which informs OSCR (*Charity Regulator*). Then it will probably be simplest to retain the Charity Number of one of the congregations.

### Your Preference

Paper return slips for your preferred name are available at the back of each church to complete or simply email to me at [smcpherson@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:smcpherson@churchofscotland.org.uk) and I will then collate all returns.

**Please return to me by the 24th February.**



## New Kirk Session & Church Governance

Each of our four Kirk Sessions has been discussing how our new Kirk Session will work once we are united. The Strategy Team then considered all the feedback as we seek to take the best practice from each and all we can learn from one another to shape as effective a Session as we can. Of course, any new Kirk Session can make decisions as it goes along, but we need to have an idea of our strategy for leading the new congregation.

Representatives from each Session will be meeting with the Interim Minister shortly in order to detail how this is to be achieved. Although yet to be finalized ...

**Clerk**—There was agreement of having a Session Clerk, Depute or Assistant Clerk, and a Minute Secretary to carry out the main administrative work.

**Meetings**— will take place around four times in each year plus a conference of some kind.

**Teams**— will carry out the main work under the authority of the Session. Each Team will contain at least one elder, while members of the congregation will be asked or encouraged to identify a team or an area of the church's life and work in which you would like to play a part, if able. Numbers serving on a team will depend on the remit of that team. Although yet to be decided, there will be some necessary teams such as Property, Finance, and Safeguarding, while there could be, for example, Worship, Children & Families, Community engagement, Pastoral Care ... etc. The intention is for the number and remit of these teams to be manageable and focused to utilize the gifts and skills of many members, while not overstretching our resources and energy.

**Size**—all current members of Kirk Sessions are eligible to be on the new Kirk Session. Of course, this may make it large, but some may feel this is an opportunity to step back from active eldership and attending Session with all the responsibilities of a Trustee, while continuing to be involved as she or he feels able.

**Be involved**—Once more formalized, we will be distributing clearer information on the Kirk Session, Teams and remits, along with the opportunity to offer your gifts and talents to be involved.

All this reminds me of words of

**St Teresa of Avila**

*(16th century Spanish nun and reformer)*

Christ has no body now on earth but yours,  
no hands but yours, no feet but yours,  
yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion  
is to look out to the earth,  
yours are the feet by which He is to go about doing good  
and yours are the hands by which He is to bless us now.

## Want to Chat?



If you would like to ask anything or have a chat with your Interim Minister, Stewart, then please get in touch. For example, there may be something not included in this Newsletter you are wondering about, so do phone or email.  
Email: [smcpherson@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:smcpherson@churchofscotland.org.uk)  
Phone: 07814 901429

## Nurturing Fellowship

The Transition Team has been seeking ways for members to get to know one another a little more as we move towards Union.

As part of this there is of course the joint services, with a few additional ones in different formats taking place on Christmas Eve and New Year. The **Carols and a Pint** at the Duchess in December was a great success with the pub already wanting us back next year! *(I am sure it was because of the enjoyment and not the bar bill).*

### A Social Team

has been formed with from the four congregations which has already organised—



### A Scottish Night

on the 31st January with music by Bruce Davies and a Haggis Drive in Abbotshall Halls.

### A Christian Aid Lunch

will take place one Sunday in the Spring following one of our joint services. Details to come.

### Facilitating Change

The Team continues to explore ways of facilitating the transition from four congregations to one. We also remember that so much of our current work is to facilitate that journey, such as Joint Services, shared meetings, Strategy Team work, while almost everything the Interim Minister does is with that goal in mind. We are intending to undertake a Parish Audit to help us all get to know our new larger parish.

### Ideas?

If you have an idea that the Social Team might consider, then let us know.

