

Interim Ministry Update - November 2023

Kirkcaldy Town Centre Churches

A wee update from Stewart McPherson

As I head off on annual leave to visit family, I want to give a little update regarding our journey towards union. It seems appropriate as we approach the season of Advent and think of the journey towards the celebration of Jesus' birth, that our new beginning as a new church is getting closer, although there remains that advent aspect of waiting and anticipating. We remember that waiting is not passive, but is an active expectation during which there is work being attended to amidst some anxiety, but also faith that hope and light lie at the heart of the Christmas story, and that the central message of the incarnation is "God is with us". We need to continually trust in that promise.

Future Leadership & Participation

Each Kirk Session is discussing a model for the shape of the new Kirk Session when the four congregations become one. This will be under the 'Unitary Constitution' where the Kirk Session oversees all aspects of congregational life. This work, however, is carried out through various 'Teams' made up of both elders and members of the congregation so that there is greater participation in the discussing, planning, and decision making of your church.

There will be some essential teams such as Finance, Property, Safeguarding, as well as those essential for the various dimension of church life: Perhaps teams, for example, focusing on Worship and fresh expressions of it; Children & Families work; A Social Team to encourage and enrich opportunities for fellowship; the oversight and organizing of our Pastoral Care; the education and Christian Nurture of Children and of Adults, and the important place of Communication. These are only an idea of what might be formed.

Can you play a part?

You will receive full information on this once the Kirk Sessions have a look, and you will be given the opportunity to think if there is an area of church life in which you may like to participate if you feel able. We can only do so much, therefore, we will need to prioritise and make the best use of our resources.

Identifying the gifts of others, recognizing the gifts within us, and offering them to work together for the church's life and mission is the way to be a community where everyone feels valued and of equal significance and when we are more truly The Body of Christ!

As St Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. (1st Corinthians 12. 4-7)

"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to all for their particular service. The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all."



We want to ensure everyone has a place, each can play their part, and no one feels excluded.

Ensuring this is not always easy, but if we work together to achieve it, in faith we will.

Presbytery Review

As you know, the appeal against the planning process was upheld and Presbytery has now set up a group to come and revisit the way the decision was made regarding the selecting of the two churches to be retained and those not.

I am not part of this review process in order that I can retain some kind of neutrality, and therefore able to continue to remain with you on this journey.

The Review Group will, I understand, be in touch with each congregation via your Interim Moderator and Session Clerk, who will let you know of progress.

The aim is to have a decision as soon as possible, but with the thoroughness required. So, the group have identified January/February as the goal, however, all are aware this is a tight schedule—*especially with Advent and Christmas in the middle.* A few weeks more may be needed.

Take time to pray for the group, and pray for those from the four congregations who will be in conversation with them.

Whatever the decision, we know well that it will not be pleasing to everyone. We must seek to discover the strength and the grace to participate and to help create a church reflecting the core of the gospel—where worship, discipleship and our mission to the community are centred in Jesus who calls us into a community of faith, of hope, and of new life.



Please, if you want to ask anything or have a chat with your Interim Minister, then please get in touch. *However, I am on holiday 20th Nov—4th Dec visiting family in the USA.*

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A New Name

Thank you to all who offered suggestions for the name of our new congregation once we come together in union. Some similar names, or variations of the same, were suggested by a number of people while there were many creative options offered. Each Kirk Session is going to create a shortlist which will come to your Strategy Team to decide the next step.

There were a number which focused on the town, such as ...

Kirkcaldy Church (or Kirk)
Kirkcaldy Linked Church
Kirkcaldy Parish Church

A number emphasized that it is something 'new'. Such as ...

Kirkcaldy New Church (or Kirk)
Kirkcaldy New Parish Church
Kirkcaldy New Church of Scotland
Or even simply
New Kirk

Some suggestions focused on the town centre location, such as ...

Kirkcaldy Central
Kirkcaldy Central Church or Kirk
Kirkcaldy Central Church of Scotland
Kirkcaldy Central Churches
Kirkcaldy Central Parish Church

Quite a few liked the more historic and local name such as ...

The Langtoun Church/Kirk
Lang Toun Church
Langtoun Central Church
Langtoun United Church

Some focused on the coming together of the congregations ...

Together in Worship
Unity Church
The United Church
United Kirkcaldy Churches
Unity Church Kirkcaldy
Kirkcaldy United Church of Scotland
United (in) Faith Church

There were also a number of single suggestions, listed here in alphabetical order ...

All Saints Church of Scotland
ALBS United Church (*using the initials of the four congregations*)
Christ's Kirk
Church 4 all
Connect Fellowship Church
Faith Church
The Fold
Forth Unity
Forth Parish Church
The Fourways
King's Church Kirkcaldy
Kirk o' the Culdees
Raith Church
Raith Community Kirk
Saint Abbenlinks
SLABbith
St Abbenlink Church
St. Barts

St Brycedale & St John's
St. Catherine's
Saint Columba's Church
St John's Community Church
St. John's
St Matthews
St. Michael's
St. Servanus (or St Serf's)
The Pilgrimage
The Pilgrims' Church

Selecting ...

In choosing a name consideration will be given to existing churches with the same or a similar name, the relation of the name to the other churches in the town, and a name which says something about our new identity.

Legality ...

The name must include a geographical reference to indicate where it is located, while the words *Church of Scotland* must be included although those could be in brackets.

Process ...

The congregations will have the final say as it will be included in Basis of Union when each congregation are asked to agree whole thing. After that there is the formality of receiving Presbytery approval, which then informs the Law Department of the Church, which then informs OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) before it can be officially used once the four congregations become one in the new United Congregation with a single Charity Number.

What to look out for ...

A joint Social Event in the New Year being organised by a small group formed for the task.

Mission - the new Presbytery Mission Director, Lorraine Orr, who will come to assist us identify our shared mission.

Worship—we will hold an event to explore how we might worship in the future in traditional and fresh ways (this was postponed from the autumn due to the number of meetings taking place at the time).

Both the Mission and Worship events will be open to anyone who would like to attend.

Abbotshall manse—is in the process of being sold with a more appropriate modern manse being purchased if required.



Christmas Eve—there will be opportunity to come together at a time to suit everyone with:

Morning worship on the 24th at 11am being held in Abbotshall, Bennochty (shared with St Bryce Kirk) and Linktown.

Carols by Candlelight service in St Bryce Kirk at 7pm and a

Watchnight Service at 11.15 into Christmas Day in Linktown Church

A Joint Service will see out the year on Sunday 31st December at 11am in St Bryce Kirk. *Come to any or all of these!*