

Langtoun Central Church

interim ministry update - january 2025

News from your Interim Minister



There have been some obvious and, perhaps, some less obvious changes since I last published an Update. My role with you has changed a little as I am now Interim Minister for Langtoun Central Church which is in essence being your 'minister' for this period. I have moderated the first meeting of your new Kirk Session, while regularly leading Sunday worship, and in the background attending or arranging conversations and meetings to move us forward. This means picking up on some things which were put on hold, as well as identifying how best to prepare for and take each new step towards a settled congregation in readiness to call a minister and appoint the other posts. I am committed to being with you at least until Easter for two days each week plus a Sunday, which, as you might realise stretches somewhat.

Assistant Minister



To assist during this period, Rev Ewan Ritchie has joined us to provide support particularly with pastoral care while he will also participate in worship although not every Sunday. His time is divided between ourselves and Heart of Fife Church in the Glenrothes area which is similarly going through the process of bringing a number of congregations together. He is keen to be contacted if someone is ill, in hospital, in a Care Home, or is at home and would like a chat. He has in recent times been involved at Dunfermline Abbey, Forthview Church as well as time with the hospital spiritual care service. You can get in touch on by phone on 07814 674974 or by email via ERitchie@churchofscotland.org.uk

New Kirk Session



The first gathering of your elders as a Kirk Session took place on Sunday 19th January when we shared a soup lunch together before constituting our inaugural meeting. 35 elders attended, while there were a number who were unable to

attend but are committed to participating in our new venture. Of course, some have taken the opportunity to step back from active eldership having served the church for many years. They are thanked for their service. It was important to meet to make certain appointments and set a few priorities. We were delighted to be able to make progress and plan to meet again on 5th February to continue our work.

New Office Bearers



I am delighted to share that your Kirk Session has been able to appoint various people to some of the essential posts. This provides good governance as well as getting things underway. Others will be appointed in due course.

Session Clerk—George Drummond.

We may well also appoint a Depute Clerk.

Minute Secretary—Anne Hunter.

Will take and distribute minutes of our meetings.

Treasurer—Steven Hay.

He will work along with a Finance Team.

Safeguarding Coordinator—Dianne Waddell

Will work alongside a Safeguarding Panel

The above posts are for one year until 1st March 2026, thus providing some continuity of knowledge & skills to these important posts at this time of change into our new setting. It also means in one year they can step down and others can be appointed or indeed they may put their own names forward for re-election at the time.

Director of Music



Richard Michael has agreed to be our Director of Music and will begin regularly leading our praise on Sunday 2nd February. Being 'Director of Music' rather than 'Organist' indicates that he does not simply play the organ, but organizes and leads a choir while seeking to progress the Kirk Session's desire to develop the congregation's musical life.

Choir



Richard will be delighted to welcome anyone who wants to 'make a joyful noise to the Lord' whether you have been in a choir recently, not for a while, or never before. You do not have to have music reading skills—just a willing mind, an adventurous spirit, and a desire to "give it a go". **Come along on a Sunday at 10am from 2nd February. A new start ... a new song!**

We thank all who have participated in the musical life of our congregations: organists, musicians, singers, and especially Stewart Abercrombie who most recently has been leading the praise at St Bryce.

Service of Union

The date is to yet to be finalized, but negotiations are underway with presbytery to arrange this. This is a service led by Presbytery and we hope as many as possible can attend when it occurs. It will be a recognition of the Union in an act of worship, while we will also come together to celebrate our new beginning at our Ceilidh on Saturday 22nd February.

Worship location



Discussion took place at the Kirk Session around how we will utilise the Bennoch and St Bryce buildings for the future worship and mission of our congregational life. As our Kirk Session meeting was time-limited we did not wish to rush this at the same meeting as making a number of important decisions.

Views were expressed and benefits and preferences as well as practical issues about our buildings were shared. There was consensus around the benefit of naming a single location for Sunday morning worship and not to have the congregation moving between buildings week by week as this can create confusion and also lacks decisiveness. This will be a major agenda item at our next meeting on 5th February. It was decided that, in the meantime, worship throughout February would take place in the Bennoch building.

Other Buildings

The disposal of the Abbotshall and Linktown buildings will not be immediate, but consultation and planning will begin. There has been some interest from outside bodies regarding their future use,

while negotiations have to take place with the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland. There are also insurance issues around buildings which are unused or used occasionally, with higher premiums imposed which can impact on the church's finances. This is to be handled with sensitivity and practical care of the properties which is the responsibility of the congregation, with all the associated costs and oversight.

Pastoral Care



A meeting is taking place with Stewart, Ewan, and some who have been involved in pastoral care teams. This will inform our planning for how we undertake care of our members, especially, the ill, bereaved, frail, and lonely. Meanwhile, please contact Ewan or Stewart for any pastoral issues.

Congregational Roll



It will take a little time, but we will need to create an accurate and up to date roll of our membership. In due course, I imagine all members will be contacted and asked about your desire to be a member, what level of pastoral contact you expect, and in what way you feel you may be able to contribute to congregational life. An accurate roll (called an Electoral Roll) is required to be in place in order to 'call' a minister.

Website www.langtouncentralchurch.org.uk



Our new website is now up and running with continual updates. Thanks are due to Allan Morton for doing this. If you have any suggestions how it might be improved then please let us know.

Facebook



Thanks to Maura Lee and Nancy Gilmartin for setting up and maintaining our Facebook page with daily posts about faith and information about our church life. Search for **Langtoun Central Church** on Facebook.

This update was created by Stewart McPherson and is limited in content. A fuller Newsletter is intended for around the end of February. If you have any questions then please ask. Contact Stewart on 07814 901429 or email at smcpherson@churchofscotland.org.uk