



The Church of Scotland

Appointment of

# **TRANSITION MINISTER**

Gretna Area Churches, Presbytery of the South West

Closing date – 12 noon Monday, 18 December 2023

Job Reference Number: M22/23

Responsible to: Ministries Development Manager, Faith Action



## About the Church of Scotland

The Church of Scotland is a national Church providing ministry, care, witness and service across the whole of Scotland and engaging in other parts of the UK and across the world. It has been a significant part of the life of Scotland for more than 450 years. As well as providing worshipping communities of faith that testify to the truth and relevance of the Christian faith, it also plays a significant part in community life of Scotland in a variety of ways and adds significantly to its social capital.

The Church of Scotland today works in partnership with others, including churches from around the world, ecumenical partners, interfaith networks, charities and individuals. It engages with Government and civic society, believing that the Good News of Jesus is relevant within the spheres of politics and decision-making, as well as in our local communities and congregations.



## Transition Ministry

The Church of Scotland employs a national team of Interim and Transition Ministers to provide specialist ministry support for local congregations and presbyteries across the Church. As part of this team, a Transition Minister works in a specific charge to lead on and deliver a set of identified and negotiated aims and objectives to support the shape of ministry across an area of presbytery to effect change and sustain the future mission of the Church.

All Interim and Transition Ministers are highly experienced Church of Scotland Parish Ministers with a broad range of skills and ministry attributes, who undertake additional specialist training, where required. Transition Ministers are appointed on fixed term employment contracts, by the Ministries Council (on behalf of the Faith Action programme), and are line managed by a member of the national office management team.





## About the Parish

This is a new linkage of these congregations under the approved Presbytery Mission Plan which is the first stage towards the development of a parish grouping with these two congregations extending over the course of the plan to include both Annan charges.

Both congregations are small but have a tenacious air about them. They each serve a number of small communities with seven primary schools of varying size. They are united not only in this, but by farming, wedding tourism and hospitality, with many in each congregation in the hotel trade or supporting farming services.

### **Congregations:**

**Gretna Old, Gretna St Andrew's, Half Morton and Kirkpatrick Fleming Parish Church linked with Hoddum, Kirtle-Eaglesfield and Middlebie [HKEM] Church of Scotland.**

These linked congregations worship in three churches and share two Sunday services.

Hoddum, Kirtle-Eaglesfield and Middlebie (HKEM) became vacant in March 2022. The parish area is made up of about five small rural communities. While each, until about 2010, had their own church and congregation, under the former presbytery plan, a union of the various linkages came about. As a united charge, a new minister was called who spent five years guiding the congregation through a process of building refurbishment. Two of the buildings were chosen – Eaglesfield and Middlebie. Each were refurbished. Eaglesfield, which would be the most frequently used building, had pews removed, and a media and sound system installed as well as a small hall with hospitality area and toilets. Middlebie also had work undertaken. During this time, strides were taken to keep connected with each of the communities. As such, services take place in three different communities – Eaglesfield, Middlebie and on a five Sunday month, the village hall in Ecclefechan; the location of the manse for the linked charge.

Gretna became a united charge 44 years ago, when Gretna Old united with Gretna St Andrew's then linked with Kirkpatrick Fleming and Half Morton. The parish became vacant in October 2020 after a long ministry and an Interim Minister was appointed. The membership has worked hard and effectively to reduce some historic debt, having sold Kirkpatrick Fleming and Gretna Old Church Hall, and have now voted to pursue the refurbishment of Gretna Old. Strong and compassionate leadership is now required to re-build the connections between the Church and the community and to support the small number of office-bearers for their next phase of ministry. Local community councils carry much power within these communities and sensitive management of these relationships will be required, as this is crucial to the wellbeing of the local church and elders.

## Context of the Role

Providing strong and visionary leadership to both congregations.

Developing and implementing effective strategies to increase the visibility of both worshipping communities, promoting Christian values and mission, and guiding them through the challenges and opportunities they face as they seek to connect with one another and serve the broader communities.

Leading the people in planning to identify needs and opportunities for meaningful community engagement as both congregations work to increase the church's involvement in their local communities, building relationships and partnerships with relevant organisations and initiatives.

Introducing and developing a variety of worship styles and services, reflecting the diverse needs and preferences of the congregations and the communities and incorporating the use of IT equipment and digital platforms to enhance worship experiences.

Supporting church members to actively participate in community activities and volunteer opportunities through the development of outreach programs targeting local schools, parent teacher councils, care homes and day centres, and other community groups, fostering meaningful connections and support.

Providing careful and sensitive leadership to support office-bearers in financial planning to ensure outstanding deficits are paid and future ministry is secured.

Developing and leading creative and engaging initiatives to revitalise the church, engaging both existing and potential members of each uniquely small and special rural community to foster vibrant, growing and outward looking congregations.

Cultivating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere which encourages active participation and involvement from all members as they move towards a wider parish grouping with the congregations of Annan.

Leading and supporting the congregations through a ministry of transition, enabling others to participate and lead in worship, mission and the life of the church.

### **Key aspects of the transition will include:**

- Both congregations finding a focus for themselves while developing ways of working together as they mutually move forward, bringing a sense of connection within both congregations and with the various communities that are served
- Preparing and planning for working towards a new parish grouping that will include the Annan churches
- Developing and implementing achievable and sustainable plans to optimise the use of each church building for both church activities and community gatherings
- Promoting the churches as welcoming and accessible spaces for various forms of community events and meetings

The provision of able leadership will be key not just to offering the two linked congregations the necessary ongoing support, but also to engaging and enabling them to work effectively with external groups and the wider parish grouping.

### **Key relationships and interfaces**

Congregational office bearers and kirk sessions; Presbytery of South West; Transition Support Group, National Interim Ministry Team.

# Role description

## Title of Post:

Transition Minister – Gretna Area Churches

## Responsible to:

Ministries Development Manager – Faith Action

## Purpose of Post:

To lead the kirk sessions and congregations in a new linkage and to establish strong values and ways of working as the first step towards a parish grouping with the Annan charges

## Main Duties

- Through worship, prayer and praise, to lead, motivate, build and inspire the local congregations to develop a common positive vision for future mission, as individual parishes with diverse communities and as part of a developing wider parish grouping
- To manage a process of dynamic change which will lead to development and implementation of plans to optimise the use of the buildings for both church activities and community gatherings
- To develop and implement methods of mission in order to support outreach to people of all ages, recognising the individual needs of rural and urban communities by empowering office-bearers and members to go forward in faith
- To provide inspiring and compassionate leadership in exploring ways of reconnecting with established community groups, demonstrating the value of church and community working in partnership

## Additional Duties

- To communicate to the presbytery, information, and vision for the work at least half yearly
- To contribute fully to the appraisal process

## Role Objectives

Congregation Priorities:

- Affirm, sustain and develop the existing congregational communities in their worship and witness
- Develop new and creative forms of outreach to local communities
- Provide leadership in planning and executing efforts to rejuvenate local mission and outreach, making each church building a vibrant and functional space for both church and community events
- Work with both kirk sessions to develop a comprehensive five-year vision and strategic plan for the church's growth and development

Community Priorities:

- Development of outreach to communities in need including, for example, to primary and secondary school, care homes and other community groups
- Rebuild the church's visibility among all who live and work in the parishes
- Work in partnership with both congregations to develop new forms of community outreach and social concern

Presbytery Priorities:

- Offer a template to presbytery and build confidence in congregations who wish to explore the possibilities of developing future parish groupings
- Determine long-term and sustainable accommodation plans for all church buildings

## Person Specification

It is an essential requirement of this role that the post holder has a minimum of five years' experience in full-time, ordained parish ministry within the Church of Scotland and as a result, this is a Genuine Occupational Requirement in terms of the Equality Act 2010.

The post holder will have a broad theology and acknowledged preaching skills, as well as a commitment to the life, work and witness of the Church of Scotland. Other essential skills include:

- Experience of planning and leading effective mission and outreach
- Experience of successfully planning and implementing change initiatives
- Experience of initiating and leading congregational development
- A strategic thinker and effective planner, with excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Understanding of, and proven ability in, creatively engaging with established community groups
- Proven experience in managing multiple projects
- Strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills
- Experience in church revitalisation, community outreach, and strategic planning
- Experience in motivating and encouraging office-bearers
- Proven track record of working with groups of volunteers to achieve results
- Highly developed interpersonal skills
- Excellent influencing and negotiating skills with the sensitivity to achieve mutually satisfactory outcomes
- A heart for community service and a passion for building connections between the church and the broader community
- Ability to effectively oversee budget management and implement cost saving strategies
- Effective team leader and team member
- Sensitivity and an empathetic nature
- Drive and enthusiasm, a positive attitude and resilience
- Working knowledge of MS packages and social media
- Mediation and problem-solving

It is also desirable, however not essential that the postholder has:

- Post-graduate or further study / commitment to study in a relevant discipline
- Training in conflict resolution and management
- Training in managing change and transition

Applications will be assessed in respect of the above criteria.



## Employment Benefits

As a member of staff within the MDS, you will be able to access a number of benefits. All eligible MDS employees will be automatically enrolled into a defined contribution pension arrangement where you will be auto-enrolled at the default rate of 2.5% employee contribution and 14% employer contribution. You will have the option to reduce your contribution or opt out of the scheme.

### Current Pension Contributions

Employee Contribution	Employer Contribution
0%	11.5%
0.5% and less than 2.5%	11.5%
2.5% and above	14.0%

You will also have access to our Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Sick Pay, enhanced family friendly policies, Flexible Working Policy, Hybrid Working Policy, Cycle to Work Scheme, Chaplaincy Service and Death in Service Benefit.

## Terms & Conditions

- The salary for this post is £48,798 per annum.
- Whilst the hours for the post are 37.5 hours per week the postholder will, however, be expected to work such hours as are required for the efficient and conscientious discharge of their duties and responsibilities and these will vary from week to week. The working pattern will include evening and weekend work, with Sunday worship as a core activity.
- In line with principles of Transition Ministry, this post is fixed term for five years from date of appointment.
- You shall be entitled to six weeks annual leave per calendar year. You shall be entitled to six days off in lieu of public holidays if you work on those days. Seven Sundays' Pulpit Supply is payable, and an additional Sunday when the minister is a Commissioner to the General Assembly.
- You shall be entitled to study leave under the terms of the Ministers' Study Leave Scheme.
- Travel expenses by public transport or by use of own car (if appropriate) at rates agreed by the Employer are payable and reviewed annually.
- Membership of Disclosure Scotland PVG Scheme will be required.
- In order to comply with the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the successful applicant will be asked to provide document(s) confirming their eligibility to work in the United Kingdom.
- An employment medical check will be undertaken as part of our recruitment process.

**For a confidential discussion regarding the role, please contact Daran Golby,  
Ministries Development Manager  
Email: [dgolby@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:dgolby@churchofscotland.org.uk)**



## How to Apply

Applications should be sent by email to [recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk) and must be received by 12 noon on the closing date.

Applications should comprise:

- A personal statement, outlining how your skills, experiences and personal qualities match the requirements of the role outlined in the job description. Please provide reference contact details for your last two periods of employment (this would normally be your direct line manager/supervisor). If you have had more than two employers in the last three years, please provide referee contact details for that period. References will not be contacted until later in the process.
- A full CV, including educational and professional qualifications alongside a full employment history showing positions held, responsibilities and relevant achievements.
- A personal information form, to be downloaded and attached.
- Applications without a CV, personal statement and personal information form will not be taken forward in the process.

Each document should be a maximum of two sides of A4. For more information on any of our roles, please contact **[recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@churchofscotland.org.uk)**