



# *Towards our Union*

News from Craigmillar Park, Mayfield Salisbury and Priestfield Churches

Issue 4: June 2023

This is the fourth in our series of monthly newsletters to keep us all up to date with progress towards our union.

Don't forget, if you have any questions don't hesitate to ask your Session Clerk.

## **Basis of Union**

As we set out in last month's update, the "Basis of Union" is the document each congregation is invited to vote on separately to confirm the high-level agreement that the union can proceed.

The Basis of Union is a short document which covers the main pillars of the union. These are outlined below.

The draft Basis of Union was submitted to Presbytery on 26 April following many weeks of discussion in the Missional and Integration Teams and in the Union Steering Group. Following a meeting of Presbytery's Deployment Group it was returned to us with a number of minor changes. These related to presentation rather than substance.

Our Steering Group was happy to accept these suggested amendments and advised Presbytery's Deployment Group of this.

The Deployment Group will now consult with the Church's Faith Nurture Forum, the Principal Clerk and the Law Department of the Church.

The draft Basis of Union covers the following issues.

### ***The name of the new congregation***

Reflecting our votes this would be **Edinburgh: Newington Trinity Church of Scotland**. Our proposed new charity number is also included.

### ***Transfer of property and funds***

As one would expect, all the property and funds of the three existing congregations would be transferred to the new congregation.

### ***Place of worship***

The principal place of worship of the new congregation would be the building currently used by Mayfield Salisbury Church.

### ***Mission***

The new united congregation commits to develop its missional life based around what are known as the Five Marks of Mission. These are;

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation; and

- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

### ***Ecumenical working***

The united congregation also commits to continue working ecumenically, including through existing structures such as Newington Churches Together.

### ***Other buildings***

A clause deals with the other church buildings of the three congregations. Those of Priestfield would be retained as a Pioneer Hub while those of Craigmillar Park would be sold.

The clause in the draft Basis details how the money raised from the sale can be used, subject to Church law.

### ***Parish boundary***

The new parish would be the sum of the three uniting parishes.

### ***Kirk Session***

The elders of all the three Kirk Sessions will form, with the Minister, the new Kirk Session. This is required by Church law. The number of elders serving on the Kirk Session will be reviewed to ensure the efficient fulfilment of duties.

### ***Management***

The new Kirk Session will operate under the 'Unitary Constitution.' This has the single body of the Kirk Session and its constituent committees to oversee both civil and ecclesiastical issues. These include everything from property to pastoral care and from finance to vision for the future.

### ***Minister***

The Rev Dr Alexander Forsyth is proposed as the Parish Minister. The congregations at Priestfield and Craigmillar Park will have a

specific vote to confirm whether they are content with this.

### ***Pioneer Minister***

A second minister will be recruited as a Pioneer Minister.

### ***Manses***

The existing Mayfield Salisbury manse will be used as the manse of the new congregation.

The Priestfield manse will be used, if needed, by the Pioneer Minister. The Craigmillar Park manse will be sold.

### ***Ministerial support***

A clause in the draft Basis deals with ministers' stipends.

### ***Future change***

A final clause allows for any future adjustment of the arrangements, with Presbytery approval.

If you would like a copy of this draft Basis of Union contact your Session Clerk. The final Basis may vary from the current draft, but any changes are not expected to be significant.

The current expectation is that Presbytery will bring a finalised Basis of Union back to the three Kirk Sessions and congregations for formal votes from late July onwards. If approved, this would allow for final Presbytery approval to be given at its meeting in mid-September.

### ***Other News...***

#### ***Shared Worship***

Proposals are currently under consideration for shared services over the July/August holiday period. Listen out for details!