

VACANCY UPDATE

In my Session Clerk's Report that appeared in the last edition of the magazine I advised that there would be no formal update on the vacancy until the Nominating Committee was either in a position to recommend a sole nominee to the congregation or had reached the end of the two year period (30th September 2017).

At that time the Nominating Committee had not yet identified a suitable candidate for the vacant charge but what a difference three months have made! In three months we have moved to a position where the congregation has now elected and appointed Reverend Elspeth McKay to be the next minister of Cumbernauld Old. It has been a busy but exciting three months, particularly for all those involved in the vacancy.

On receipt of Elspeth's application, the Nominating Committee arranged to hear Elspeth preach at South Holburn Parish Church in Aberdeen, a neighbouring church to Elspeth's current charge in Gordon Presbytery. Following the visit Elspeth was invited to interview and thereafter was recommended by the Nominating Committee to preach as sole nominee at a joint service in the church at the Village on Sunday 30th April.

Immediately after that joint service, our Interim Moderator, Reverend Grace Saunders, conducted a ballot in the church, where members of the congregation whose names appeared on the Electoral Register, were invited to vote. In preparation for the ballot on the 30th April, the revised Electoral Register was made available for inspection by the congregation on Sunday 16th April. The Electoral Register was then attested by the Kirk Session and Falkirk Presbytery. This was an important step in the vacancy process as only those whose name appeared on the Electoral Register were entitled to a vote in the ballot. The result of the ballot was 116 For Electing Reverend Elspeth McKay and 2 Against. Thanks to those who voted and to those who stayed behind after the ballot result was declared to congratulate Elspeth on her appointment.

The Interim Moderator then invited people on the Electoral Register to sign the Call, a document that formally invites Reverend McKay to accept the Call, on Sundays 7th & 14th May. Those not on the Electoral Register signed a Paper of Concurrence and those unable to be at church in person on the 7th & 14th May were able to mandate the Session Clerk or another member of the Kirk Session to sign on their behalf. The Interim Moderator then transmitted the signed Call and Paper of Concurrence with 132 signatures to Falkirk Presbytery Vacancy Procedure Committee who met to resolve to sustain the Call. To have 132 signatories was pleasing and hugely encouraging. Thanks to everyone who took the opportunity to sign the Call and Paper of Concurrence, either in person or by mandate.

Falkirk Presbytery has now confirmed that Elspeth's induction will take place on Thursday 3rd August in the church at the Village. Please put this date in your diaries and keep an eye on the weekly Church News for further details on the arrangements for Elspeth's induction.

A big thank you to everyone in the congregation for your patience and understanding while we have been working through the various steps on the vacancy process.

Thanks also to the Nominating Committee for their time and effort in delivering a successful outcome, with particular thanks to Alex Edwardson, Chairperson and Anne Morrison, Secretary to the Committee.

Due to her current commitments in Gordon Presbytery it will be a few months before Elspeth can formally join us. Over the next few months the work will continue behind the scenes in preparation for Elspeth's arrival; however it would be remiss not to take this opportunity to thank the Interim Moderator, Reverend Grace Saunders, for her wise counsel, guidance and support during the vacancy. The role of Interim Moderator can be both time-consuming and difficult at times, and for Grace this has been an add-on to the demanding day job of being the parish minister of Condorrat Parish Church.

Last but not least, huge thanks to our Locum Minister, Reverend Marion Perry, who has been responsible for mostly everything associated with the day-to-day running of the church during the vacancy. Marion has been conducting most of our Sunday Worship Services, Communion Services, Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, and lots more since February 2016. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to both Grace and Marion for their contribution over the past 12–18 months. Both have become an integral part of church life here at Cumbernauld Old and I know that everyone greatly appreciates everything that they have done for this congregation during our time together.

Brian J Smillie
Session Clerk