



Murrayfield
PARISH CHURCH

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2027



“TEACHER, WHICH COMMANDMENT IN THE LAW IS THE GREATEST?” HE SAID TO HIM, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ THIS IS THE GREATEST AND FIRST COMMANDMENT. AND A SECOND IS LIKE IT: ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.’ ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.”

OUR MISSION:

TO ENABLE THOSE IN OUR PARISH AND CONGREGATION

TO LOVE THE LORD THEIR GOD AND TO LOVE THEIR NEIGHBOUR



AIMS

1. TO RE-CALIBRATE POST-PANDEMIC

- The pandemic has had a major impact on congregational life. Honestly acknowledging this underpins this 3 year plan. Not everything we previously did is sustainable and building back will need to be by small steps with deliberate resolve.

2. TO REVITALISE THE EXISTING CONGREGATION

- The aspiration is to revitalise, as best possible, the current congregation. This will involve quality pastoral care as well as seeking to re-connect with people who have become detached from church life.

3. TO RE-MISSION IN ENGAGING WITH THE PARISH

- The other side of the coin is looking to engage beyond the current congregation with the community around the church. This will entail some creative ventures responding to need and context.

4. TO RE-AFFIRM ECUMENICAL WORKING (MCT)

- The Murrayfield Churches Together Ecumenical Partnership has been, and remains, immensely valuable. Consideration needs to be given as how best to adapt ways of working so as to maximise effectiveness.

5. TO RE-ORIENTATE TOWARDS OUR CofS PARTNERS

- The new Presbytery Mission Plan envisions a three-way grouping with St. Stephen's Comely Bank and the union of Gorgie and Palmerston . Stepping towards this partnership will necessarily be a major focus.

6. TO RE-IMAGINE CHURCH AND FIND A WAY FORWARD IN AN ERA OF DECLINE

- The challenges facing the congregation are significant. Prayerfully seeking guidance and openness to the leading of the Spirit will be vital ways of discerning the shape of church life over the next few years.

GOALS

1 WORSHIP

A = High priority

a. TO MAKE THE MAIN SUNDAY SERVICE AS ENJOYABLE AND ACCESSIBLE AS POSSIBLE.

- Reinstate the family area in the sanctuary. This alleviates stress free space for parents with babies/toddlers during the first part of the Sunday service when everyone is together. [action by Families Group by Spring 2024] A
- Encourage wider participation from all ages in the duty teams for Sunday services, either on a regular or an occasional basis. [action by session clerks - by beginning 2024, and consolidate on ongoing basis] C
- Offer lifts to Sunday services (and weekday groups) for those who need transport subject to insurance provisions. [action by Pastoral Group and/or Pastoral Care Team - by summer 2024] C
- Include in the church diary several 'all age services' which can be promoted well in advance eg Palm Sunday, S-Club prize giving, Harvest, Nativity. [action by minister & Families Working Group by spring 2024] A
- Continue to work on variation in hymnody. [action by minister and organists] C
- Liaise with St. George's Music Department about school participation eg at Remembrance. [action by minister - autumn 2024] B

b. TO OFFER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPATION IN SUNDAY WORSHIP (IN SINGING & MUSIC, IN LEADING PRAYERS, IN READING, IN ALL AGE TALKS).

- Build on the current rotas to increase participation from a wider group of people. Offer occasional opportunities to those who want to 'test the water'. [action by office in magazine and by Kirk Session - by summer 2024] A
- Encourage any musicians in the congregation to contribute to Sunday services. [action by minister, organists, session clerks - by summer 2024] B
- Invite members of the congregation who enjoy singing to join in with occasional seasonal choirs [ongoing] A
- Continue to use multimedia as a way of including participation eg S-Club nativity videos [ongoing] A

c. TO RUN MESSY CHURCH IN A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFECTIVE WAY.

- Messy Church runs best when it is a regular recurring event. This is important also given its aim of cultivating a community. Re-launching Messy Church is a major challenge needing careful planning and organising. A
- Invite a Messy Church champion to run a workshop on the principles and vision of Messy Church. [action by minister by early 2024] A
- Re-launch and trial Messy Church for a half year and review. If a Children & Families Worker is recruited they would take a lead on Messy Church. [January 2024 by minister + volunteers + with MCT input] A

d. TO HAVE WORSHIP AVAILABLE DURING THE WEEK BUILT IN TO OTHER PROGRAMMES

- The TOR project for retired and older people aims to have worship as part of its MMM, TTT, WWW sessions. [action by Pastoral Assistant once in post, and by Minister, to plan forthcoming sessions] A
- The Murrayfield Club has monthly worship. [action by Pastoral Assistant and/or Minister to contribute] A
- A toddler group (like our previously very successful TOTs) is a future possibility depending on volunteers and staff. [further consideration by Session Clerks and those involved with interest in family work, Spring 2023 and update plan accordingly] A
- Messy Church (see above 1c).

e. TO TRAIN MORE PEOPLE IN LEADING WORSHIP IN VARIOUS FORMS.

- Run a workshop for those interested in leading prayers/all age talks. This is an ideal parish grouping and/or MCT activity and would encourage those who feel they don't have the experience. [by autumn 2024 minister in liaison with MCT + grouping clergy] B
- Encourage suitably gifted people to attend Presbytery worship training [minister] C

f. TO PLAN JOINT/SHARED WORSHIP WITH OUR MCT AND CofS PARTNERS

- Continue to hold joint MCT services. [action MCT clergy - ongoing] A
- Consider joint/shared services as part of CofS Grouping [action by ministers + clerks summer 2024] A
- Consider pulpit swaps amongst CofS Grouping [action by ministers + clerks summer 2024] B



2 DISCIPLESHIP

a. TO HELP SUSTAIN THE MCT FAITH DISCUSSION GROUP.

- Continue to promote the MCT faith discussion group and ascertain support needs. [Action via church office, ongoing; and via MCT clergy by spring 2024] A

b. TO ENCOURAGE WAYS OF PRAYING TOGETHER, AND MEETING IN SMALL GROUPS.

- Set up a small working group to evaluate our current activities in this area and draw up a plan for revitalising this important area. [Action set up discipleship working group spring 2024] A

c. TO RUN GROUPS AND COURSES WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS eg. BEREAVEMENT.

- Run a new session of MMM, TTT, WWW (TOR project groups for retired plus age group). [Action by Pastoral Assistant, once in post, and minister summer 2024] A
- Consider running courses for other sectors of the congregation and community (eg a parenting course or marriage course). [Action by minister + session clerk team to consider by early 2025] C
- These could also be something run (as previously) via MCT or as a Parish Grouping initiative. C

d. TO ENCOURAGE OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR FAITH THROUGH eg. S-CLUB, THE BRIDGE, AND RELATED ACTIVITIES.

- Recognising the challenges post-Covid in our work with children and young people and families we need to take stock and develop a clear strategy in this area. A
- Consideration to be given to re-launching Messy Church and a TOTs style group. The viability will depend on volunteer commitment, as well as potential support from MCT/grouping, and also potential staff. A
- As a first step consult with a core-group from the congregation of leaders in this area. [action minister + session clerk to meet with working group autumn/winter 2023] A
- Develop a better understanding of activities and plans across the CofS grouping. [action by spring 2024 by families core-group]. A

e. TO LEARN FROM AND COLLABORATE WITH OUR CofS PARTNERS IN SMALL GROUP INITIATIVES.

- Some of our CofS grouping partners have more of an emphasis on house groups/bible study/prayer groups/discipleship groups and we can learn from them. [Action find out about current activities and encourage sharing of expertise - by discipleship working group by summer 2024]. A

3 SERVICE

a. TO RESTRUCTURE THE DELIVERY OF PASTORAL CARE AND CREATE A PASTORAL CARE TEAM

- Agree on a way forward to ensure pastoral oversight of the whole congregation by the Kirk Session. [action by Kirk Session, phase 1 by winter 2023/4, phase 2 winter 2024/5] A
- Launch this new system with clear communication to the congregation and suitable materials for the visiting elder. [action by session clerk team and office by winter 2023/4] A
- Set up a small Pastoral Care Team for those needing more dedicated input (eg housebound church members or those who are ill). [action by session clerk team + minister in liaison with pastoral group convenor by spring 2024] A
- Organise training in pastoral care. This is an ideal MCT and/or grouping-wide activity. [action by autumn 2024 by minister + other clergy] B

b. TO MAINTAIN MPC'S PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE MURRAYFIELD CLUB

- Check with the chair of the Murrayfield Club trustees as to our representation and seek further trustees as required. [session clerk team by winter 2024] A
- Schedule annual reporting on the Murrayfield Club to the Kirk Session. [session clerk team + minister + current Club trustee by winter 2023]. A

c. TO SUSTAIN THE CHURCH CENTRE AS A VALUED COMMUNITY RESOURCE

- Build good relationships with Church Centre users by making regular connections. [ongoing by church administrator + session reps]. A
- Consider running an annual community event eg coffee morning. [action by spring/summer 2024 by a task group with a couple of planning meetings, perhaps link with a project we support eg Fairtrade or Christian Aid or Fresh Start]. A
- Carry out annual visits to regular hall hirers groups and report to Kirk Session [action by Kirk Session and report back by summer 2024] B

d. TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY PROJECTS INCLUDING FRESH START, CANS FOR CHRISTMAS, GIFTS FOR PRISONERS' CHILDREN, CROSSREACH XMAS CARDS.

- Consider how to use these projects as a way to increase community engagement eg open church up for people to drop in during Cans for Christmas, or run a coffee morning raising awareness of Fresh Start or Fairtrade. [action by Pastoral Group + Kirk Session by Xmas 2024].A
- Review how we engage with Fresh Start [action by Fresh Start rep + several others to present a report by spring 2025] B
- Discuss with local schools and nurseries if they want to get involved. [action by minister autumn 2023 and ongoing]] B

e. TO FOSTER OUR ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS IN MCT

- Start discussions around a new MCT covenant agreement. [action by MCT clergy and MCT steering group by summer 2024].A
- Review what is working well with MCT and consider what needs refreshed. [as part of the above]. A

f. TO MAINTAIN OUR COMMITMENT TO ECUDARE (KENYA) AND SUPPORT OF CHRISTIAN AID AND FAIRTRADE

- Plan how best to sustain our commitment to supporting the ECUDARE (Kenya) project. [action by ECUDARE subgroup and report to Kirk Session summer 2024].A
- Review how we promote Fairtrade and plan suitable activities. [action by Fairtrade rep and several others by summer 2024].B
- Consider how best to support the work of Christian Aid. [action by Christian Aid convenor and several others by summer 2024].B

g. TO ACT ON OUR ECO-CONGREGATION SILVER AWARD

- Review progress on the commitments made when we obtained our silver award. [action by ECO sub-group and present to Kirk Session by summer 2024].C

4 EVANGELISM

a. TO RUN A RANGE OF SESSIONS FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY - COVERING PRACTICAL ADVICE INC. IT (MMM) , PHYSICAL HEALTH (TTT) , AND WELL-BEING (WWW).

- The TOR project is not only for the congregation but also the surrounding community and is a good way to connect with people. Plan for next MMM, TTT, WWW sessions by summer 2024. [Action by Pastoral Assistant when in post and Minister]. A

b. TO CONNECT INTENTIONALLY WITH GROUPS USING THE CHURCH CENTRE.

- To develop relationship with regular users of the church centre, including passing on information about church events and initiatives. [action by church administrator on an ongoing basis; action by Kirk Session reps to conduct annual visits and report back by summer 2024]. B
- To design new church information pack to be sent along with user guide to hall hires [action by church administrator and session clerks by autumn 2024]. B
- To request hall hirers' permission to be added to our mailing list for weekly news [action by end of 2023]. A

c. TO ORGANISE A TODDLER GROUP WITH A CHRISTIAN ELEMENT (SIMILAR TO TOTs PRE-PANDEMIC).

- This is a sizeable but very worthwhile project. See 2d. A

d. TO MAINTAIN AND RE-DEVELOP LINKS WITH LOCAL SCHOOLS AND NURSERIES.

- Maintain links with St. George's and seek to develop these where appropriate eg charity appeals, involvement of their music department etc [by minister ongoing]. B
- Try to revive links with Roseburn Primary. This would be a key aspect of the job of a Children & Families Worker if/when we recruit and appoint. [staffing convenor to meet with Session Clerks by Spring 2024 and present an options paper to Kirk Session by summer 2024] B
- To continue links with Wester Coates Nursery School eg maintaining their annual use of the church for their Nativity and their summer show. [by minister and in due course Children & Families worker ongoing].B
- To develop ties with the Montessori Primary School who meet in the Upper Room. [by suitable person to be identified]. B

e. TO COLLABORATE WITH THE OTHER CONGREGATIONS IN OUR PROPOSED PARISH GROUPING IN TERMS OF EVANGELISM COURSES

- GAPP and SSCB have much more experience than us running Alpha-style courses and we can learn from them. Try to set up a working group across the 4 congregations on evangelism. [minister & nominated elders by summer 2024].C

5 FELLOWSHIP

a. TO REVIEW THE CHURCH CALENDAR AND PLAN FOR ADDITIONAL EVENTS eg. CHURCH LUNCHESES.

- Since lockdown we haven't held church lunches nor have we had church coffee mornings for quite a few years. Revive the programme and link with eg Fairtrade or Christian Aid or Fresh Start. [Involvement from those in each interest area, aiming to have a coffee morning by summer 2024]. A
- Tie this in with the new pastoral areas with elders encouraging church members in their area to participate. [summer 2024] C

b. TO OFFER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE INTEGRAL TO MMM, TTT, WWW.

- Provide tea and coffee or lunch [Pastoral Assistant by Summer 2024].A

c. TO OFFER OTHER FUN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

- eg Scrabble and Rummikub [by Pastoral Assistant in liaison with the Pastoral Group by Autumn 2024] B

d. TO EXPLORE WITH THE PROPOSED PARISH GROUPING ABOUT JOINT FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

- This would be a good opportunity to get to know people from the other congregations better in a relaxed atmosphere [suggest a planning group action by session clerks by summer 2024] C



6 MINISTRY TEAM/LEADERSHIP

a. TO EMPLOY A PART-TIME PASTORAL ASSISTANT

- Following the resignation of our Ministerial Assistant make a re-appointment to the TOR Christian Foundation funded post working with older people in the congregation and community. A
- Revise the job description [by autumn 2023 Staffing Convenor] A
- Seek permission from the Presbytery [winter 2023 by Minister] A
- Run a recruitment process [January 2024] A
- Induct the new employee [March 2024] A

b. TO EMPLOY A PART-TIME CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR

- Following the resignation of our Church Administrator recruit a replacement. A
- Revise the job description [by autumn 2023 Staffing Convenor] A
- Run a recruitment process [April 2024] A
- Induct the new employee [June 2024]A

c. TO CONSIDER OPTIONS AROUND EMPLOYING A CHILDREN'S AND FAMILIES WORKER.

- We have restricted funds set aside for an 18 month part-time post [action by staffing convenor to revise job description and with session clerks present discussion paper to Kirk Session by Summer 2024] B
- To gather information about youth activities and explore collaboration options across the proposed parish grouping [action by nominated individuals by Spring 2024] B

d. TO CARRY OUT ANNUAL STAFF APPRAISALS

- These are important to ensure our objectives are being met and support is offered as appropriate. [action by staffing convenor + minister + identified others on a rolling basis] A

e. TO ENSURE THE TOR PROJECT IS SUSTAINABLE BEYOND THE GRANT PERIOD.

- Submit annual review reports to the TOR Christian Foundation and evaluate the project. [action by Pastoral Assistant according to the reporting schedule provided by the TOR] A
- Seek to encourage and support volunteers in greater involvement in running the various sessions. [action by minister + Pastoral Assistant by spring 2025]. A
- Alter the post to part-time (0.5) for 3 further years in order to improve sustainability. [Kirk Session Winter 2023]. A

f. TO IDENTIFY AND INVEST IN THOSE WHO WILL BECOME NEW LEADERS IN CONGREGATION

- Ordain and admit our new elders to the Kirk Session [action by autumn 2023 by session clerk team]. A
- Encourage more participation from our working age church members. [refresh rotas to include more younger people and consider some social activities]. A

g. TO TRAIN LEADERS IN WORSHIP AND PASTORAL MATTERS

- see 1e (in Worship Section) and 3 a (Service Section) B

7 PROPERTY

a. TO PRODUCE A PROGRAMME FOR TACKLING ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED IN THE 2022 QUINQUENNIAL PROPERTY INSPECTION.

- Carry out annual inspections of church, centre, and manse as normal. During these inspections assimilate the various issues highlighted in the Presbytery Inspection Report (Interim property team summer 2023) A
- Get professional advice where required [by winter 2023] A
- Obtain estimates for the major work [by spring 2024] A
- Draw up a plan of works and propose costs to Kirk Session [by summer 2024] A

b. TO BE PRO-ACTIVE IN MAINTAINING ALL PROPERTIES TO A HIGH STANDARD.

- Organise a survey of the lighting circuitry in the church centre. The current system is about to be obsolete (due to new regulations re energy usage). The survey will help inform us as to our options going forward. [by summer 2024] A
- Continue to carry out thorough annual inspections as well as regular weekly walk-arounds. A

c. TO UPDATE THE MANSE TEN YEAR MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME, INCLUDING COMPLYING WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTION IN RELATION TO ENERGY PERFORMANCE.

- Congregations are required to have a 10 year rolling maintenance plan for looking after the manse. Ours current 10 year plan runs until 2024 and now needs updated. [by spring 2024]. A
- The General Assembly has instructed that manses should be adapted so they achieve an EPC C rating. If this is not possible a new manse which complies is to be purchased. Common sense options to be considered and report back to Session [by winter 2024]. A

d. TO UPDATE THE CHURCH CENTRE USER GUIDE WHICH IS SENT TO ALL HALL HIRERS, ENSURING H&S COMPLIANCE

- The current user guide for those renting the church centre has served its purposes well but it needs a refresh and brought up to date. A working group could handle this task [by autumn 2024]. A
- Use this as an opportunity to include information about church activities. A

8 STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE

a. TO REVIEW GIVINGS AND RUN AN APPROPRIATELY PITCHED STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN.

- Our last stewardship campaign focusing on 'money' was in 2019. The Stewardship & Finance group recognise that it is time to run a fresh campaign (although not necessarily a 'fully blown' one!). A
- Information needs gathered so an accurate picture can be sketched out, including giving patterns and expenditure trends. [S&F group by summer 2024]. A
- Material to be drawn up which communicates clearly the successes and challenges of the financial situation [by autumn 2024]. A
- A launch event planned and campaign run [Harvest 2024]. A

b. TO PROMOTE LEGACY GIVING.

- It is now very common for charities to encourage people to leave legacies in their wills. Explore how best to engage the congregation on this topic. Include this in the campaign above at 8a. A

c. TO MAKE APPLICATIONS TO GRANT FUNDING BODIES, INCLUDING WITH OUR PARTNER CONGREGATIONS, AS OPPORTUNITIES ARISE.

- The Stewardship & Finance Group has identified a couple of possible funding options for the quinquennial stonework and stained glass repairs. Once reports have been prepared and costs gathered in applications can be made. [by S&F Group Spring/summer 2024]. A
- Applications for other aspects of congregational mission will also be explored [by Staffing Convenor Winter 2024]. B



9 COMMUNICATION

a. TO CONTINUE OFFERING HIGH QUALITY COMMUNICATIONS VIA WEBSITE, WEEKLY NEWS, MAGAZINE, POSTERS, PARISH CHRISTMAS & EASTER CARDS, FACEBOOK.

- Major strides have been made in communications and we have a very good set of media in use. This needs to be worked at continually and kept on top of. Ensure that recruitment for a new church administrator makes this aspect of the role a priority [by Staffing Convenor Winter Spring 2024]. A
- The office relies on good information from Group convenors and Reps to keep the website up to date. Encourage those responsible to send updates to the office (and have as an agenda item at group meetings). [All convenors/reps by winter 2023/24].A
- Posters promoting Congregational Values are displayed in the various rooms in the Church Centre. These would benefit from updating. [Effectiveness of these posters to be reviewed and costs to be obtained for replacements by Spring 2024]. B

b. INCREASE PERSONAL COMMUNICATION THROUGH EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS

- The various ways of sharing information above (9a) are not impactful unless they are accompanied by relational communicating. Whilst a poster or Christmas Card might put the thought of church into someone's mind it is personal invitation that is the more important factor. A
- Reflect as a Kirk Session on how to cultivate an invitational culture. Consider inviting a speaker who could share expertise. [by summer 2025]. A
- Use relationships within the new Pastoral Areas as an opportunity to raise awareness of church activities and groups and campaigns and services. [Kirk Session from Spring 2024]. A

c. BE PRO-ACTIVE IN OBTAINING CONTACT DETAILS FOR FOLLOW UP ON SUNDAYS

- Consider ways to make it easy for those beginning to worship with us to sign up to our mailing lists. [by Communication Reference Group Spring 2024]. A
- Be as welcoming as possible to new folk at church in order to help them to integrate quickly. A