



Towards our Union

News from Craigmillar Park, Mayfield Salisbury and Priestfield Churches

Issue 7: September 2023

This is the seventh in our series of monthly newsletters.

Whether you have been away on holiday or been staying here in Edinburgh, we hope you've been enjoying the summer.

Our Union – an Update on the Legal Issues

We still haven't had any feedback on our draft Basis of Union although we are hopeful that as the main players all return after their summer breaks the pace will pick up.

The tenure issues around the linkage between Craigmillar Park and Reid Memorial remain to be addressed. These are complex issues that require sensitive treatment. An appropriate way forward that supports the Rev Alex McAspurren in finding his future ministry is being actively pursued. This requires collaboration between Presbytery and the team at 121.

While the high-level legal procedures grind slowly on, we have also had a bit of a break over the summer in addressing our local issues around governance. As things get back into full swing in the next few weeks we are keen to progress discussions with elders of the three existing Kirk Sessions to understand individual aspirations and potential roles going forward in the new Kirk Session and its Activity Groups. You'll recall that the

Activity Groups are where elders and members alike can contribute their skills and talents.

Getting Together

For seven Sundays over the summer we have worshipped as a single congregation. We've been welcomed into church by new faces and it's been a real joy. We've been led in worship by our three ministers, with Rev Dr George Whyte OBE taking a turn too.



We have had the fruits of Norman Weibye from Craigmillar Park, William Mearns from Mayfield Salisbury and David Forbes from Priestfield working together on the visuals Sunday by Sunday. This development has given us the words of the hymns up on the screen.



We shared communion together on Sunday 6 August and many of us were

able to experience a slightly different style of service. It has also been lovely having our children in with us; the whole family together.

We were able to use the south transept for coffee and chat after our Sunday services. This gave us space for 'mingling' informally and making new friends.

Early in August Craigmillar Park welcomed us to a Coffee Morning and in September Priestfield will host a Summer Barbecue.



Mayfield Salisbury's intrepid walkers have welcomed new ramblers from the other two congregations and we have enjoyed fresh air and exercise together.



We've also 'crossed boundaries' to 'Knitting Together!' at Priestfield and 'Coffee and Blethers' at Mayfield Salisbury.

So, it has been a good summer when we have made the first steps to Union; getting to know one another.

Pioneer Ministry

In September we will be beginning in earnest the process of putting some flesh on the bones of 'What is Pioneer Ministry in our local context?'

We hope to begin the process of listening and discerning what this new work might involve. Crucially we'll need to explore how the missionary imperative might be shared by all of our new congregation and not merely rest on a few members who might be interested.

This may involve a presentation or presentations to our existing congregations and a series of gatherings to begin to map where prayer and mission have taken place in our local areas and plan for future activity.



By Spring we hope to have a clearer idea of what mission means for us and what pioneer ministry might look like. These are exciting times!



Just as this newsletter was being finalised we received a comprehensive response to our draft Basis of Union. Our Union Steering Group will now consider the points raised in consultation with Presbytery's Deployment Group.