

Appointment of
PASTORAL ASSISTANT / DEACON

Upper Braes Parish Church, Presbytery of Forth Valley and
Clydesdale Closing date - 12 noon Thursday, 17 October 2024

Job Reference Number: M20/24

Responsible to: Parish Minister



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 the 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.

Ministries Development Staff

Working in the parishes across Scotland, our Ministries Development Staff (MDS) provide additional support locally to complement the work of Parish Ministers. Employed by the Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland, the work that is carried out by our MDS colleagues is invaluable in making a difference to the lives of people in our churches and communities. The Ministries Council employs over 100 staff who are working in roles such as Deacons, Parish Assistants, Children, Youth and Family Workers, Outreach Workers, Pastoral Assistants and Community Development Workers. With support provided centrally from the Faith Action Programme and Human Resources team in the national offices, our MDS colleagues will have access to a full suite of wellbeing and learning opportunities. This sits alongside local collaborative working between line manager, kirk session and presbytery.



About the Parish

We understand our purpose as being to invite, encourage, and enable people of all ages to follow Jesus Christ, and with God's help we prayerfully covenant together as fellow pilgrims in faith to engage with a range of ages and backgrounds to proclaim, nurture, serve, transform, share and sustain.

As such, we are:

- A family of all sorts of people, journeying in community towards wholeness.
- Meeting with God in a personal and life-changing way.
- Maturing in faith and character as God's people.
- Sharing our lives and the Good News of God's love in word and deed.

Church life

We are a Union of four congregations with two of our buildings being retained for worship – Brightons being the main place of worship and Slamannan as Local Mission Church. Each legacy congregation brings a range of ministries to our Union, particularly in the area of Pastoral Care.

We anticipate having worship at the same time each Sunday morning at our two worship locations, with each service led by our Minister or member of our Preaching Team, which is made up of staff and 'Local Worship Leader' volunteers. Services at our Brightons location are live streamed and viewable on our website and YouTube channel. All-age communion is now a regular feature with two of our quarterly communion services being all-age.

Our range of activities show a very committed and able church family, with many offering their time sacrificially. Ahead of our transition to our new website, you can view our church calendar on the Brightons' website <https://www.brightonschurch.org.uk/>, along with our weekly newsheet and quarterly magazine which have much more information about our activities.

Our Minister

The Rev Scott Burton joined us in January 2019 after completing his training for the Church of Scotland and serving in the Highlands as a Locum Minister. Scott has a background in youth work and organisational development, and he is passionate about partnering with God to see the Church renewed and God's kingdom experienced in the Braes area.

Scott is married to Gill and their children are Hope and Innes, with cocker spaniel, Hector. Besides leading our congregation as our Teaching Elder, Scott likes walking, climbing, drone-flying, reading, a dram and playing the guitar.

Our Halls

We benefit from having three halls at Brightons and a multi-functional building at Slamannan. The halls are heavily used by our own church organisations but we try, wherever possible, to help other groups in the community.

The Area

Whilst the area of the Upper Braes forms part of the wider Falkirk conurbation, it still retains its own distinct villages and community feel with access to beautiful countryside on our doorsteps, yet close enough to enjoy easy access by train and car to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling.

Context of the role

The Upper Braes Parish Church is a four-way Union of Brightons, Slamannan, Blackbraes and Shieldhill, and Muiravonside Parish Churches. We have been working together for many years in a number of ways but with separate systems of pastoral care. With the upcoming Union, we have been allocated 2FTE, which will be used 1FTE for a Full-Time Minister of Word and Sacrament, 0.5FTE for a Youth Worker and 0.5FTE for a Pastoral Assistant. Brightons also currently self-employs a Pastoral Assistant and this self-funded post would continue into the new Union.

Currently we envisage there being a Pastoral Care Team under the oversight of the united Kirk Session working alongside a Ministry Team, as outlined above. The area currently sees around 60 funerals per year, has a population of around 18,000 people and a potential future combined congregational Communion Roll of 580-600, many of whom are elderly and a significant number are in care homes or housebound. Combined with a future change of pastoral care system, wherein Elders do not have a District, it is especially important that we have capacity in our future pastoral care system.

Whilst there is much ongoing pastoral care and many volunteers involved, the Upper Braes Parish Church would benefit from an expanded Pastoral Care Team to provide good quality, consistent and manageable levels of pastoral care, wherein volunteers and those in ministry posts are not overstretched and all can bring their gifts and passions to a collaborative team effort to care and support a wide range of pastoral needs.

We seek an individual to take on this role and work alongside us, with a God-given passion for compassionate care for others and a desire to bring God's presence, comfort, strength and hope to any in need.

As such, the Pastoral Assistant is expected to worship as part of the Upper Braes Parish Church and be actively involved in the life of the congregation, with Sunday as a day of work. There is, however, no requirement for the individual to live in the parish.

Role description

Title of Post:

Pastoral Assistant/ Parish Deacon

Responsible to:

Parish Minister

Purpose of Post:

To assist the Upper Braes Parish Church in providing and multiplying the range and quality of pastoral care for people in the church and community.

Main Duties

- Within the Pastoral Care and Ministry Team, take an active role in pastoral visits/calls to members and adherents of the congregation and to others within the parish.
- Take a share in the conducting of funerals.
- Provide training to others in the leading of funerals and the provision of pastoral care.
- Take a share in contributing to and leading worship in either morning Sunday services at Brightons and/or Slamannan and the local care homes. If not ordained, then completion of Presbytery's 'Local Worship Leader' course will be expected.
- Attend meetings of, and play an active part in, the Pastoral Care Team and Ministry Team, and when required the Kirk Session.
- Attend relevant training as required for legislative or developmental purposes to ensure that good working practices and knowledge are maintained.
- Meet on a monthly basis with the Line Manager and discuss in advance with the Line Manager any proposed new activities.
- Attend regular reviews at a frequency of not less than once a year with the Line Manager and up to two Elders who would be invited by the Line Manager to attend, and to contribute fully to the appraisal process.
- To communicate to the Presbytery information and vision for the work at least half yearly
- To contribute fully to the appraisal process

Additional Duties: (for those candidates applying for the post as a Parish Deacon)

Ordained/probationer Deacons appointed to a Parish or Presbytery role, are called, and equipped to carry out additional duties consistent with their office and supported by their training including, but not limited to:

- Attending Kirk Session meetings of Upper Braes Parish Church.
- Fulfilling tasks associated with the work of the Kirk Session or Presbytery that might be understood to be missional, pastoral, prophetic, community- orientated, educational, or collaborative and therefore consistent with the training and ethos of the Diaconate (Deacons of Word and Service: A Vision Statement of the Church of Scotland Diaconate 2018)
- Leading worship including where appropriate, conducting weddings and funerals – in consultation with the Parish Minister/Line Manager.
- Attending Presbytery meetings and participating in the work of the Presbytery in which they serve.
- Accepting a commission to the General Assembly when appointed by Presbytery.
- Attending and participating in the work of the Diaconate Council and local Diaconate associations.
- Maintaining links with the wider church in accordance with the ethos of the Diaconate and the mission of the Church of Scotland.

Person Specification

It is an essential requirement of this role that the post-holder is a committed Christian with a live Church connection which is a Genuine Occupational Requirement in terms of the Equality Act 2010.

The successful candidate will have:

- Ability to carry out effective, sensitive and empathetic pastoral care across a range of pastoral settings
- Experience in relating to people across all ages
- Ability to engage with people who have no Church connection in times of pastoral need
- Experience of conducting funerals and worship in a range of contexts
- Ability to communicate effectively with others using highly developed interpersonal skills
- Ability to work unsupervised with readiness to use own initiative
- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and contribute to effective team working
- Holder of full valid driving license or full access to alternative private transport if required
- A compassionate, caring attitude
- Qualified to degree level or similar or accredited training in a relevant discipline, or similar, or significant, relevant and recent work experience in this area
- On-going commitment to continuing professional development including willingness to work towards qualification and accredited training

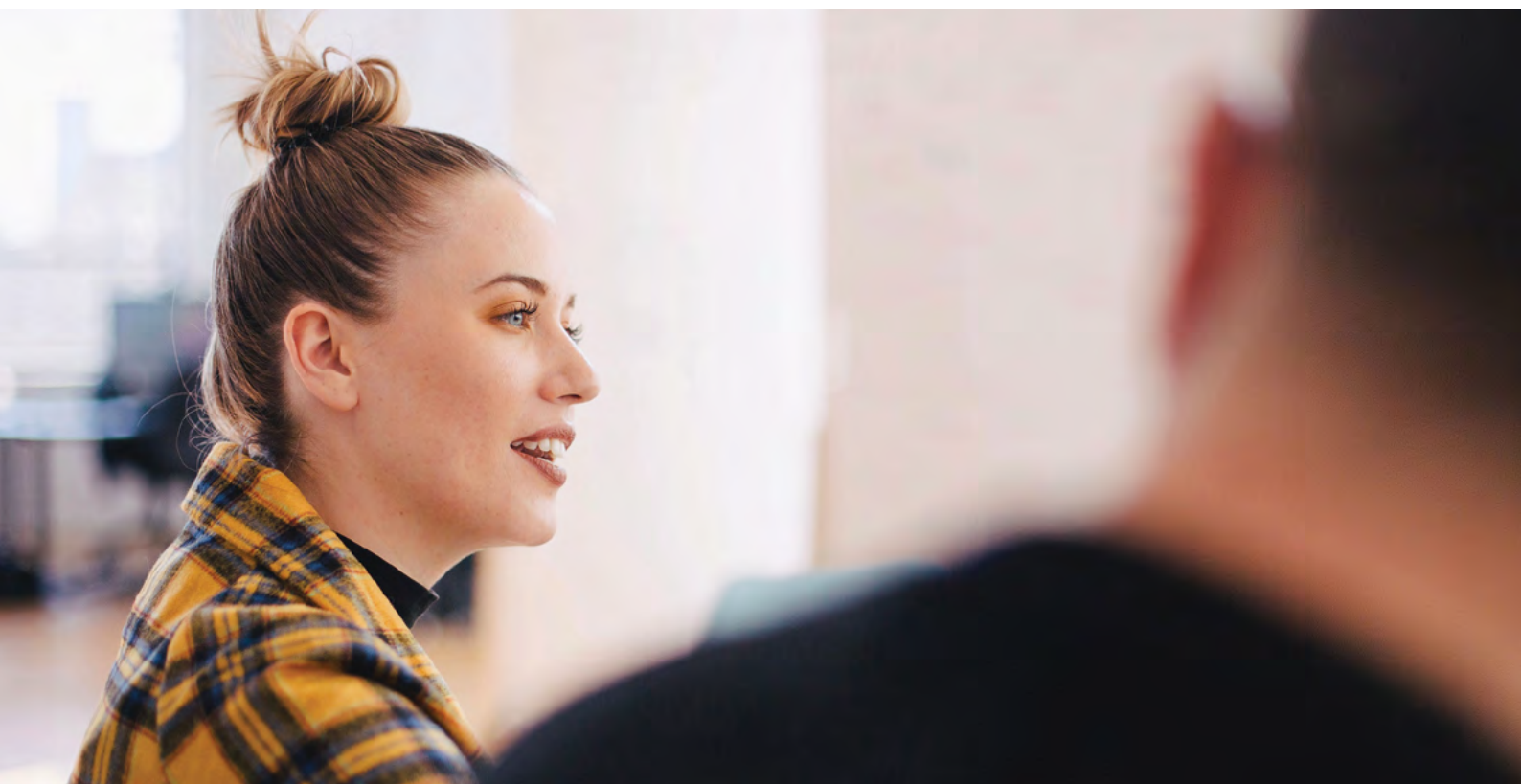
It is also desirable, however not essential, that the successful candidate will have:

- Experience of providing training and support to enable others to provide pastoral care

For those candidates applying for the post as Parish Deacon, it is essential that you are:

- An ordained Deacon of the Church of Scotland or a probationer Deacon eligible for ordination in terms of the General Assembly's Act 8, 2010

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

- Salary is based on the MDS scale of £28,815 - £32,575, pro rata, per annum. This is the full-time salary scale and actual salary will be pro rata to 0.58 FTE.
- Normal hours of work will be 21.75 hours per week.
- The nature of the work calls for a degree of flexibility, thus hours of work, which are as agreed with the line manager, may vary from day to day.
- This is a permanent post.
- The post is based at Brightons Parish Church and Slamannan Parish Church.
- There are five weeks paid leave (187.5 hours pro rata) in each full holiday year which runs from 1 January to 31 December. Entitlement is based on full weeks worked. There are also nine statutory holidays. Entitlement increases after five years' service to six weeks (225 hours pro rata) annual paid leave
- 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.
- It is essential you have the right to work in the UK before applying to work with us. You will be asked to provide proof of your eligibility to work and remain in the UK if you are invited to attend for an interview.
- 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.

Informal enquiries can be made to Rev Scott Burton, telephone 07739838754, scott.burton@churchofscotland.org.uk

Interviews are scheduled to take place on Friday, 25th October 2024

How to Apply

Applications should be sent by email to **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**