

# Cairneyhill Parish Church



## Update on the West Fife Village Churches Cluster

Members and friends of Cairneyhill Church will be aware of changes that have been taking place throughout the Church of Scotland to address what has been a significant reduction in membership and attendance and in financial income. Back in 2019 we were tasked with working out ways of sharing our resources and our mission to the community with five other West Fife Village Churches. These are Limekilns, Carnock & Oakley, Culross & Torryburn, Tulliallan & Kincardine and Saline & Blairingone. It was announced that a future allocation of 2.5 full time ministry posts would require to be shared amongst our cluster.

Towards the end of 2023 we announced that all six Kirk Sessions had agreed to work towards a single union, to be achieved by the end of 2025. Last year it quickly became clear that two of the cluster churches no longer supported this objective and since May we have been engaged in finding a way to resolve their issues.

On Wednesday evening this week Cairneyhill Kirk Session agreed to support a new plan which if approved would see the creation of two unions. One will embrace Carnock & Oakley, Tulliallan & Kincardine and Saline & Blairingone. The other will put Cairneyhill and Limekilns and Culross & Torryburn together. Each new united church will be allocated one ministry post. The two new churches will also form a Parish Grouping and the Grouping will then employ a Mission worker (50% - not full-time). The proposals include the formation of a Local Mission Church based in Culross, which will utilise rented space for services. The new Mission Worker will focus exclusively on the Mission Church in Culross for an initial period. The Grouping will also seek to put in place additional mission resource which may be funded locally and could benefit from grant support.

If these plans come to fruition we will see our existing linkage with Limekilns become a union, with one Kirk Session in place of two and the ability to share our resources even more effectively. The union will have two principal places of worship, namely our two churches, both of which have already been substantially upgraded. The formation of the mission church in and around Culross with a dedicated mission person provides a positive way forward for that part of the new parish.

The Kirk Session consider it is right to provide this information to the congregation however we do need to emphasise that these plans require various approvals and are not certain to go ahead. In addition, Culross and Torryburn Church require to sell Culross Abbey before they can take part in a union and our own situation needs to align with the future retirement of our minister on a date still to be decided.

If matters do progress there are formal documents to be produced, a Basis of Union (including Mission Church) and a Basis of Parish Grouping. All the Kirk Sessions and all the Congregations involved will be asked to vote to approve or reject these formal agreements in due course.

If you have any questions please contact any elder or our minister and we will try to respond.

On behalf of the Kirk Session,  
March 2025