# 

# Cathedral Church of St Machar Old Aberdeen

Charity No. SC 008157

**MINISTERIAL PROFILE**

The congregation of St Machar’s Cathedral is looking for a new minister. The charge has been vacant since the retiral of our previous Minister, Rev Barry Dunsmore, in June 2019. This will be an unrestricted call.

Eligibility to be nominated elected and called is as defined in Clause 17 of Act VIII, 2003, as amended, from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland,

The Kirk Session have made a resolution in terms of Act 1 of 2015 to depart from the Church of Scotland position on Candidates in Same Sex Marriages and Civil Partnerships. Candidates in such relationships are therefore able to apply for this vacancy.

**Presbytery Plan and Parish Grouping**

For the past two years, what was then the Presbytery of Aberdeen (now the Joint Presbytery of Aberdeen and Shetland) has been involved in the production of its Presbytery Plan, a far reaching document with the aim of reducing substantially the number of church buildings in use and the number of active churches. That Plan is now complete and has been approved. But during the preparation of the Plan, no congregation was given permission to call a minister. St Machar’s received that permission only in July 2020.

The Plan does not alter St Machar’s status in that we remain a separate charge with a single Minister and Kirk Session. The intention of the Presbytery Plan, however, is that a Parish Grouping is formed between us and the congregations of St George’s Tillydrone, St Mary’s and St Stephen’s. The basis of Parish Grouping has not yet been determined but the other three churches will be looking to unite into a single charge during the lifetime of the Plan. The current church building at St George’s will be retained and its use will be determined by the Group.

The commitment of St Machar’s to the Group will form a significant part of the ministry of the successful candidate,

**Repair Refurbishment and Rejoicing**

St Machar’s is currently in the final stage of works to renew the roof, restore the ceiling, and repair the stained glass windows at St Machar’s. This work follows on from our replacement of the pews in the chancel and nave two years ago. The building is first and foremost a place of worship and prayer, but it also a concert venue and a major tourist attraction, drawing visitors from all over the world.. We believe that our mission to our parish and our community embraces all these roles, and these ongoing works express our commitment to ensure that the Cathedral remains an active worshipping church, a place for performance of music, an attraction for tourists, and a resource for the community we serve.

One of the main attractions for visitors to St Machar’s is the heraldic ceiling. Constructed in 1520, it is of great historic and artistic importance and we have plans, on hold pending the Corona Virus outbreak, to mark its Quincentenary with a commemorative ecumenical service at some point in 2021.

**Worship and Witness During And After a Pandemic**

Like other churches, we have been prayerfully searching for ways to maintain our links with our parish and our community and to provide opportunities for worship and prayer during these challenging times. What we have attempted is listed in more detail in the Parish Profile. But we know, however long the pandemic lasts, that we cannot be certain that when or if we can ever return to the world as we knew it before. It will therefore be necessary for us all to ensure that no one is feels excluded from worship and prayer and that we find ways of reaching out to support those who need our pastoral care.

**Our New Minister**

Against that background, the Kirk Session is looking for a Minister who will be an outstanding preacher and pastor, with a clear understanding of the needs of our Parish and those of our neighbours serving the part of Aberdeen in which we are situated. We would be looking for someone with a sense of vision for us and an ability to communicate that vision by working with the Session and the congregation. No one candidate can combine all the desirable characteristics but we are seeking someone with the following:

* A broad theological outlook;
* An ability to preach the Word of God in a way which is informed by up to date scholarship and theology and is both accessible and challenging;
* A commitment to the pastoral care of the congregation and the community.
* An awareness of the impact, globally and locally, of covid19 and an imaginative approach to finding appropriate ways of delivering worship and pastoral care in a changed and changing world.
* An ability to work in partnership with other churches both as part of the Local Parish Grouping and in other ecumenical partnerships such as the Donside Christian Partnership;
* A commitment to Christian Education for all ages and in many forms, which will inspire and attract those within the congregation and those who are drawn to it from outside, be they students, visitors, people wishing to be married in St Machar’s or others.
* A commitment to the environment which recognises the diversity and richness of creation and our responsibilities to it.
* Respect for the traditions of worship and music in the Cathedral.

And it is hoped that whoever is called will develop an understanding of the congregation and its parish and community. They come from a broad range of backgrounds, many being drawn to the Cathedral by the beauty of the building and its traditions of worship.

The age and unique beauty of the Cathedral attracts a large number of visitors, and welcoming them is part of our mission. Equally, we work in partnership not only with the churches in our Partnership Grouping but also through ecumenical bodies such as the Donside Christian Partnership,

The list of attributes should be read in conjunction with the Parish Profile which is available on our Website, [www.stmachar.com](http://www.stmachar.com), or in hard copy from the Clerk to the Nominating Committee.

For more information please contact the Interim Moderator, Rev Ian Aitken,

[iaitken@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:iaitken@churchofscotland.org.uk); Tel: 01224 686929

Or to Alan Grant, Convener of the Nominating Committee :[bryce.grant@outlook.com](mailto:bryce.grant@outlook.com); 07801078000

Jan McRobbie, Clerk, [janmcr@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:janmcr@tiscali.co.uk)