

Fife Pilgrim Pastorate

Summary Report – October 2023

1. Introduction

When the Fife Pilgrim Pastorate was launched on St Andrew's Day 2022, there was no guarantee the initiative would succeed or have the impact that the stakeholders and Steering Group hoped for. Since then, we have been delighted with the progress made by Rev Duncan Weaver as Scotland's first Pilgrim Pastor.

This report summarises what Duncan has been doing; the strategy of the Steering Group to extend the life of the Pastorate for at least a further three years; and the actions we are taking to achieve this.

The current stakeholders comprise the Abbey Church of Dunfermline; the SEC Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane; the parish churches of Auchterderran Kinglassie; Ceres, Springfield & Kemback; and St Columba's, Glenrothes; and the Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum SCIO. This report is being sent to each of them in the first instance but has a much wider audience, including potential new funders. It is also going to the Church of Scotland Fife Presbytery, whose initial grant of £10,000 from the 2:10 Mission Fund provided the initial platform for the launch of the Pastorate. The current pilot phase of the Pastorate expires on 30th November 2023.

2. Achievements To Date

We asked Duncan to record his activities during his first six months in post up to June 2023, according to the core responsibilities in his Job Descriptions shown below.

1. Speaking to church congregations and groupings of congregations (area meetings, fraternals, Presbytery groups, deaneries etc) about possibilities of engaging with the Fife Pilgrim Way and using it as a resource for mission /outreach / church and community-building and spiritual health.

Taken two church Sunday services as PP and spoken to two Kirk sessions. Attended Episcopal Diocese Clergy Conference. Visited churches along the way and made contact with numerous clergy of different denominations. Spoken to Cub Scout group about pilgrimage and the FPW route. Visited Orkney and walked with and shared knowledge and ideas with those involved in the St Magnus Way. Made contact with Director of Hamburg Pilgrimage Centre in Germany and walked with him and other Lutheran Churches pilgrim pastors along a section of the St Cuthbert's Way to share knowledge and good practice. Organised a pilgrimage walk for Christian charity "Signpost" and spoken to Levenmouth churches about a pilgrimage walk and celebration, both planned for September. Currently helping a Kirkcaldy church start planning pilgrimage walks as part of their anniversary services in 2024.

2. Leading walks along the Fife Pilgrim Way which will involve prayer, reflection and conversation as well as providing information on significant historical and environmental aspects of the route, open to all but with a particular focus on churches and church groups.

Led three pilgrimage walks for three different churches, with 22, 12 and 8 participants.

One walk for Veterans Chaplaincy Scotland, with 8 participants.

One walk for St Andrews Churches Environmental Network, with 25 participants.

One Good Friday Walk, with 4 participants.

Led five walks as part of a 'Walk the Fife Pilgrim Way in a Year with the Pilgrim Pastor' programme - maximum 12 and minimum 1, with average 7 participants.

Those who have attended are people from very differing church / faith backgrounds and denominations, as well as those with no faith.

3. Offering training to members of church congregations about how they might make their places of worship places of pilgrimage and open their church buildings to walkers and cyclists on the Fife Pilgrim Way and so enhance their spiritual experience.

Spoken to three different churches and how they might develop their congregations' spiritual growth in this way. Online consultation input to Fife Presbytery Historic Churches Working Group with SPRF Secretary, looking at the potential re-purposing of church buildings as part of the Fife Presbytery Plan.

4. Using digital and other media to communicate with local communities to publicise the project widely and work effectively with the Steering Group, local churches and others in order to 'demystify' the role of a Pilgrim Pastor.

Created a Fife Pilgrim Pastor page on Facebook which is regularly updated and now has over 350 followers – see <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=pilgrim%20pastor> Used Eventbrite to publicise and organise pilgrimage walks. Pilgrim Pastor page now on SEC St Andrews Diocese website news page. Short interview on BBC Scotland and article in 'Life and Work' CofS magazine. Regular meetings with Steering Group which include updates of activities and issues.

5. More widely the Pilgrim Pastor, supported by SPRF, will help to reinforce links with Fife Coast & Countryside Trust and local community groups and also between local churches and public bodies in Fife interested in developing the faith tourism and heritage markets, e.g. Fife Tourism Partnership, Visit Scotland, and Historic Environment Scotland.

Had regular meetings with members of FCCT and shared concerns and ideas, leading to the Trust now becoming a member of the Steering Group. Attended Dunfermline Heritage Meeting and Fife Tourism board forum meetings. Visited local locations offering accommodation along the FPW. Visited local Scout Groups interested in walking the FPW route.

To celebrate all that Duncan has achieved in this first year, we are organising a walk from Lochore Meadows to Auchterderran Church hall (3.5 miles) where there will be a free lunch of home-made soup and other delights and a chance to hear what's been going on and future plans. Please sign up on Eventbrite for more details - <https://www.eventbrite.com/.../pilgrim-pastorate...>

3. Future Development

During the past year, we have identified several strategic goals that we feel the Pastorate should work with others to achieve, so that walking the Fife Pilgrim Way can be a genuine spiritual experience and not just completing another long-distance route. Over the next three years, we will enable:

- the majority of churches on the FPW route to open regularly for visiting pilgrims and offer a 'sanctuary space' publicised via an online directory of church contacts.
- one or more churches on the route to provide hostel-type accommodation and simple kitchen facilities, as an example to other providers of hospitality.
- use a 'pilgrim church' on the FPW as a pilgrimage centre offering training and learning experiences similar to some Lutheran Churches in Europe.
- publication of a 'pilgrim companion' booklet to accompany a FPW walking guidebook.
- SPRF accreditation of the FPW as a Scottish Pilgrim Way™ Silver or Gold standard route.
- Fife Council investment in the re-siting of the pilgrimage labyrinth at Riverside Park, Glenrothes as a permanent feature of the FPW route.
- collaboration in field research to develop 'green pilgrimage' criteria to minimise environmental impacts and take action on climate change awareness within the FPW infrastructure.

It should be noted that the FPW route was originally opened in 2019 purely as a long-distance walking route (LDR) in which historical pilgrimage was presented as an important part of the cultural heritage of Fife. Since then, churches and Christian faith groups have shown a growing interest in the route as a contemporary spiritual resource, of which the Pilgrim Pastorate is a very tangible outcome. A similar process is also happening on other pilgrim routes in Scotland.

FCCT maintains and promotes the FPW as part of Fife’s LDR network and the recent addition of FCCT to membership of the Steering Group is significant. We are most grateful for their in-kind support of Duncan’s work; maintaining this working relationship will be a high priority over the next 3 years.

The Steering Group would welcome ideas and suggestions from current stakeholders and others on what other information we should provide to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the Pilgrim Pastorate over the next 3 years.

The Steering Group currently operates as an unincorporated association. The possibility that in time the Pastorate could be established as an independent charitable body has been noted.

4. Extending the Fife Pilgrim Pastorate: 2023 - 26

There is much more to be done if the Fife Pilgrim Pastorate is to achieve its full potential. Duncan has already made important plans for pilgrimage activities in 2024. He has also been invited to the annual ‘Pilger Messe’ event at St Jacobi Hauptkirche pilgrimage centre in Hamburg next February, a major event in the German Lutheran Church.

We have agreed that, due to the current demands on his time, Duncan’s employment contract should increase from 16 to 20 hours per week.

To achieve this, our strategy comprises:

- (a) ensuring a minimum 1 year financial commitment from existing and new stakeholders to cover projected costs in 2023-24 (see below).
- (b) Developing a cohesive operating plan, budget and project outcomes for a further two years up to 31 October 2026.
- (c) Securing grants from new funders over the full 3 years.
- (d) Inviting all church congregations in Fife to support the Pastorate.

Projected 2023-24 operating costs of the Pilgrim Pastorate are:

Salary (£25.6K) plus NI costs for 2.5 days / 20 hours /week pro rata.	£14,750
Pastor - Computer & IT support	£600
Pastor - local travel	£1,000
Steering Group and Pastor - SPRF support	£2,000
New spiritual resource materials – online and hard copy production	£1,000
Events - publicity, insurance, hospitality etc.	£500
TOTAL	£19,850

5. Conclusion

This report is addressed to current Pilgrim Pastorate stakeholders and Fife Presbytery in the first instance but is also relevant to all potential new funders. It has been approved by members of the Steering Group under the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement that established the Pastorate a year ago. See list of members below.

Please address all enquires relating to this report to the Chair or Secretary of the Steering Group in the first instance. Email Nick@clearserv.co.uk

Rev Canon Kenny Rathband (Chair)
Nick Cooke - SPRF (Secretary)
Rev Duncan Weaver (Pilgrim Pastor)
Rev MaryAnn Rennie - Abbey Church of Dunfermline.
Rev Jane Barron, Ceres - Springfield & Kemback Church.
Rev Lara Dose - Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Dunfermline.
Alan Tricker - St Andrews Episcopal Church, St Andrews.
Rosemary Wallace - Auchterderran Kinglassie Church.
Sarah Jane Latto - Fife Coast & Countryside Trust.

25th October 2023



Joint Commissioning of Rev Duncan Weaver as Fife Pilgrim Pastor (centre) at Ceres Church – 30th November 2022