

Retiring Rector will miss 'wonderful St John's



THE retiring Rector of St John's Scottish Episcopal Church in Dumfries has said he will miss 'being part of a wonderful church community'.

Canon Robin Paisley will take his last service on Sunday morning (26th June) after ten years of leading the congregation at the Newall Terrace church.

With his wife Helen, who has also had significant roles at St John's, Canon Paisley will be retiring officially on June 30 and heading back north to their home in Glasgow.

He said: 'St John's is very special - there is a great variety of people in our congregation and our motto has been "all are welcome". We value unity in diversity and it has been a real privilege to be among this congregation.'

Canon Paisley arrived in 2006 after being the Rector at St James in Bishopbriggs, Glasgow.

Reflecting on his time at St John's, Canon Paisley said there had been many highlights but pointed to the signing of a covenant between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Methodist Church in Scotland, as one of them, a culmination of work started by Methodist Minister, the Revd Andrew Mackenzie, some years earlier.

'It was a very memorable occasion,' said Canon Paisley. 'There was a very big service, the church was full and we did it in the context of a big sing of Charles Wesley hymns which Andrew organised.'

'It was a roof-lifting sort of service.'

'The ecumenical partnership has continued and has become a very significant feature of the ethos of St John's. As a result we are a Scottish Episcopal Church with connections not only to the world-wide Anglican Communion of Churches but also to Methodist Conferences world-wide. '

Helping the church to open ten hours a day as a sanctuary for those in need of spiritual comfort has been an important feature of his ministry, said Canon Paisley, as was encouraging congregation members to be active in the town, such as making contributions to the founding of Christian Care of the Homeless, the First Base Agency Dumfries Food Bank, and the Fairtrade status of Dumfries.

The Rector said he also valued the opportunity to contribute as a part-time healthcare chaplain in the NHS as well as his role representing faith communities on Dumfries and Galloway Council's Education Committee.



'I believe that the integration of spiritual care into the service delivery of both education and health care is vital to building healthy communities.' he added.

St John's is not expected to replace Canon Paisley with a full-time appointment until either the

spring or summer of next year but the retiring Rector was in no doubt the church would be in good hands until then.

‘God has been very kind in providing people who can contribute to the interim arrangements,’ he said.

As to retirement, Canon Paisley and Helen are looking forward to spending time with their wider family in Scotland, Ireland, England, Australia and the USA, and having time to explore new directions, particularly in health and social care.

He added: ‘I will apply the same principle as I have done throughout my ministry and that is to take time and discern what God will call me to do.’