

Malcolm named as minister of new Edinburgh congregation



Rev Malcolm Ramsay (60) has been announced as the transition minister of a brand new congregation in Edinburgh formed from joining New Restalrig and Craigentiny St Christopher's together.

In the next five years the former solicitor will build the community of Willowbrae Parish Church following a turbulent few years in both congregations. Craigentiny lost many members, and New Restalrig lost its minister and members of the congregation due to their disagreement with the Church of Scotland's decisions about ministers in same-sex relationships.

Mr Ramsay and his wife Cati spent some time in Kathmandu with a Christian development agency and he was in Nepal when the 2015 earthquake hit.

He helped with the relief work afterwards to help survivors. He said : "I came back to Scotland a changed man.

"The experiences of these earthquakes are way beyond what we experience in the West.

"More earthquakes will happen because of Nepal's geological position. There is no stability there really. Life in Nepal is very precarious on many different fronts. To live and work there made me much more conscious of my need for God's help, and much more aware of the varying ways in which God answers that need."

The father of two, who was ordained in Edinburgh 31 years ago, said: "Willowbrae may be a long way from Kathmandu, but human

beings are much the same everywhere. I imagine the wear and tear brought on by long-term transition and constant change will be similar in both places. So although the two situations are utterly different, I suspect the effects of relentless change will be comparable in some respects."

He added that he understands the importance of listening to the needs of his congregation : "The people have been very welcoming and are glad to have a settled situation now. I'm not arrogant enough to think I have all the answers. There has already been very good Christian work going on in this parish before me. My first task is to get to know the people, and listen to them. I believe that God is present everywhere, so once I have begun to know the folk, our task together is to find out what God is doing in our lives and our church, and then to follow that lead."