

New minister at St Martin's Church Portobello

Rev Bill Wishart, 51, who is a member of the West Lothian Magic Circle, has been ordained as a Church of Scotland minister and inducted into St Martin's Church, Portobello.

He has been an elder and a deacon and has held every ordained Kirk leadership role.

✖ Ministry is a family affair as his wife, Rev Erica Wishart, has led Tranent Parish Church in East Lothian since 2014.

Rev Bill began to feel a "call" to parish ministry after serving as the full time Deacon at St Ninian's Ferguslie, Paisley.

He said : "The folk there were lovely – generous to an absolute fault from a base of very little.

"We did some great stuff in those nine years."

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He has attended church since he was eight years old and he cites a retired Methodist minister who stood in as the parish minister at Cessnock Church for seven years, as his inspiration.

"Mr Sealey just knew how to engage young people. If I had to say who started the journey it was him", he said.

"In my Bible class he once said 'I would love to hear you preach.'"

After becoming a Deacon in 1994, Mr Wishart spent 12 years based at Hillhouse Church, Hamilton.

His love of magic began 17-years ago, and he now performs

under the stage name 'Bill's Ministry of Magic'.

"My son wanted a magic set and I started to play with it," explained Mr Wishart.

A keen guitar-player, he plays in a band, Yo Stooshie which includes his wife and the minister he trained under, Rev Dr Robin Hill, as part of the line-up.

☒ Appropriately the congregation of St Martin's have welcomed their new minister with a gift of an electric guitar.

South Glasgow born, he describes it as his "ambition" to get Edinburgh residents to learn West-coast dance, the Slosh.

For his first baptism, which took place on Sunday, Mr Wishart used water from the River Jordan, collected when he led a pilgrimage to Israel last year.

Describing his worship style as "relaxed", he is looking forward to getting to know his new community.

"I love working with people and getting to know people and show God's love in the parish and community", he said.

"I love working with schools and kids."

A year-long trip to Pakistan doing voluntary work when he was 20 years old began Mr Wishart's lifelong interest in the World Church, and he now sits on the World Mission Council's Africa and Caribbean Committee.

Having two ministers in the family makes for an incredibly busy period around Christmas, and this year the couple, who have three children, are expecting their fourth grandchild [on 22 December](#).

Still Mr Wishart sees the upside, saying "because we're both in it we can understand the challenges."

“Ministry is a great privilege but it has some unique challenges. But you’re there to support each other.”