

Stewart's Announcement to St Michael's Congregation, 10 June 2018

You may have already heard what I am about to say – the news has been getting around. Still, it is good to tell you myself. And with Sarah, Imogen and Alexander present.

For some time now I have been engaged in a process of discernment regarding my calling, and the question of whether God was calling me to a new ministry. There are times and seasons in life and work, a time to come and a time to go, a time to stay on and a time to make a move. In my late 50s, and having served St Michael's for 14 years now, I have become convinced – through prayer, reflection and consultation, not least ongoing conversation with Sarah – that I am indeed being called to new ministry.

Last Sunday I preached as sole nominee to the congregation of St John's–Renfield Church in the west end of Glasgow, and was elected their new minister by an overwhelming margin. The processing of the call is now in the hands of the two Presbyteries. That and a bit of manse work lead me to anticipate a date of induction sometime in late August or early September.

Family has figured largely. For over a year now Glasgow has been the direction of travel for Sarah and the kids, at about 7.20 am every school day morning. They are looking forward to their commuting days being over. The manse is across the street from Balgray, the sports ground of their school, Kelvinside Academy, where Sarah has been teaching music for just over a year now.

The bede board in the St Katherine's aisle bears the names of the priests and ministers who have served here, going back to the 13th century. Each name and

year of arrival encode a story. We know some of their stories through Dr Ferguson's excellent book *Ecclesia Antiqua*, published in 1905, and the stories of those who came after him through tales told from living memory. In that light, fourteen years seems like a fortnight. It will not be easy to leave. It has been a privilege to serve you, and to be part of the Lord's life and work among you.