

Former Eco-Congregation Scotland coordinator with a passion for social justice ordained

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A former Eco-Congregation Scotland coordinator with a passion for social justice has been ordained during a service at Hilton Church in Inverness on Monday.

Rev Judith Macleod, who previously worked as a teacher, will now be the assistant minister at St Columba Church, which currently meets in Drummond School in the south of the city.



Rev Judith Macleod cutting cake at her ordination.

Whilst being open to where God might eventually lead her to, she says she is "loving" St Columba.

"It's a congregation with so many young folk and it's wonderful.

"The whole ethos of having a church family together, worshipping together and often eating breakfast together whilst studying the Bible is wonderful so these are definitely things I'll go into the future with.

"I do love doing things and getting people up to learn in different ways and explore different ways for people to connect with God in prayer."

The Highland Theological College graduate said that being called to ministry happened "gradually and that alongside prompts from others, working for Eco-Congregation Scotland was "part of sensing out where God was leading me".

Unsurprisingly, caring for creation will be central to Mrs Macleod's ministry.

"I do feel this is something that is part of who we are as Christians," she said.

"I spent part of my probation working alongside the Rev David Coleman on the eco-chaplaincy team at Eco-Congregation Scotland and have learned a tremendous amount from him, including learning new skills in video production and editing.

"If you look at the five marks of missions the environmental stuff really underpins everything.

"It's there very explicitly but it's involves the other parts too.

"How we care for the world around us, how we bring justice to people – all these things are very interlinked, interwoven.

"It's not just the overseas stories that we see on the news, it's about how we deal with this stuff as generations – where is the hope for all these people who are suffering from eco-anxiety?

"The hope is in God, in Christ, the idea that everything will be made new eventually.

"That message that we have can bring hope to people where it can feel hopeless, and a bit overwhelming."

Asked about considering a call to ministry, she said that people shouldn't ignore it.

"Explore it, dig deeper, find out what's going on there – don't hang back," she added.

"Even if it means studying for a new degree at the same time as your child."

Mrs Macleod said that fellow probationers were "really very supportive of one another".

"We've gone through the sleepless nights, and supported one another with those essays that you can't get your head around, together."



Rev Judith Macleod with fellow Highland Theological College students and lecturers.

During the ordination, Rev Scott McRoberts who is the minister of St Columba, commented that it was a privilege to bring the charges to her, saying: "While Judith was making her promises, I was sitting there thinking that I know Judith well enough to know that she means every one."

"Pray for Judith as she lives out the keeping of those promise in the grace of God. Pray for all in ministry who do that."

He also highlighted her passion for environmental and justice issues.

"Judith, you have told me that your passion, your advocacy around good environmental stewardship is absolutely about the world, about creation, but it is primarily about justice.

"You care about what happens to the forgotten and the oppressed, the millions around the world you will never meet and those across the street that you've noticed and the rest of us haven't.

"Justice matters to Judith. There are many who hold up placards and then forget what they were doing last week, but Judith has a constant long-term passion for justice. Just keep going with that. It does rub off on people. Help us keep justice high on our agenda. It is nowhere near high enough on the agenda of the church. Grant a desire for it in our hearts."