

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL MAY 2018

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report
2. Instruct Kirk Sessions to explore how the fresh vision for eldership outlined in section 2.3 applies to their particular local context. *(Section 2.3 and Appendix I)*
3. Instruct Kirk Sessions to consider how the aspirations outlined in the report shape their ongoing ministry and engagement with children and young people in the parish. *(Section 2.5 and Appendix II)*
4. Urge Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to engage fully in the Year of Young People initiative. *(Section 2.6)*
5. Urge Kirk Sessions to use the Conversations in Worship resource within a Kirk Session meeting in 2018. *(Section 3.2)*
6. Encourage Kirk Sessions to draw on Pray Now (including the sections on How to Pray/How They Prayed) for fostering the congregation's prayer life. *(Section 3.3)*
7. Instruct the Council, in collaboration with the Theological Forum, to develop creative, instructive and grace-filled pathways for the spiritual development of children and young people in order to support congregations in welcoming them to the Lord's Table. *(Section 3.6)*
8. Commend the Weekend of Invitation to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions and encourage congregations to think of ways of developing a culture of invitation. *(Section 4.2)*
9. Urge Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to consider ways in which congregations can more effectively support Christians from minority migrant communities living and worshipping in their neighbourhoods. *(Section 4.3)*
10. Urge every congregation to actively promote Life and Work, the magazine of our Church, as a tool to encourage, inspire and resource. *(Section 5.2)*
11. Instruct Kirk Sessions to explore what opportunities exist for a fresh expression of church in their parish. *(Section 5.5)*
12. Instruct the Mission and Discipleship Council and Ministries Council to bring a joint report from the Joint Emerging Church Group to the General Assembly of 2019, bringing recommendations on the future strategy of the JECG. *(Section 5.5)*
13. Instruct the Mission and Discipleship Council and Ministries Council to seek an extension of their partnership with Fresh Expressions until 30 September 2020. *(Section 5.6)*
14. Urge Kirk Sessions to use the resources listed in Appendix VI and to promote their usage in the wider congregation. *(Section 5.10 and Appendix VI)*

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Mission and Discipleship Council's calling is, individually and together, to follow Jesus and to encourage and equip others to do the same. This year has seen the Council increasingly focus its work around the theme of discipleship. Going forward, this will increasingly be the lens through which we will be viewing all our work: are we helping people to follow Jesus and to grow in faith?

1.2 This year our report is deliberately built around the proposed themes within the Council of Assembly's Strategic Plan: Active Discipleship; Worship; and Connecting with Communities. In each of these sections we are asking: Are we offering the chances for people to discover the love of God? Are we supporting people to grow in faith, individually and collectively? Are we finding out where God is already at work and joining in?

1.3 This is an exciting journey, but it is also a challenging one. It is not just travelling forward in faith which is easier to say than to do. It is also about leaving behind much of what has felt safe and secure. Think of those young fishermen at the edge of Lake Gennesaret, barely adults themselves, just finding their feet. Yes, there was the excitement of following Jesus but there was also the uncertainty of leaving behind much of what they and their families had known.

2. DISCIPLESHIP

2.1 The Council could spend a great deal of time seeking to agree the perfect definition of discipleship; however, our calling is not to define discipleship but to be disciples. In our work we have adopted the definition, which will be enriched by experience, from the Anglican Consultative Council which states: "Discipleship is a God-ward transformation which takes place when individuals and communities intentionally, sacrificially and consistently live every aspect of their daily life in commitment to following Jesus Christ. It is a lifelong, whole-life reorientation which will have challenging implications for our self-identity, our belonging within community, our belief systems and our daily behaviour."

2.2 Learning About Our Faith

In order to grow as disciples, we need to deepen our understanding of what we believe and who we believe in. Last year, as part of that deepening of faith the Council published

a new Learn publication on *Understanding Our Faith* (<https://goo.gl/njXn4p>). It takes people on a journey through seven core issues of Christian faith, equipping them to understand and communicate their faith more clearly and with increased confidence. In the Foreword, the Very Rev Dr Derek Browning, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland writes: 'Faith is thought and prayer and contemplation put into action. To understand our faith better requires constant questioning and wondering and imagining. Wherever we gather to contemplate what and why we believe, part of the process of belief must lead us to authentic action that demonstrates what we believe, and how it has transformed us and may, even in a small way, transform the world in which we live.' A Learn 'Understanding Our Faith' conference was held in November 2017, attended by over 100 people. A copy of the presentations from the day are available at <https://goo.gl/PPZGfP>.

2.3 Elders as Disciples

2.3.1 Elders continue to play a vital but changing role in the life of the church at every level. Alongside teaching elders, ruling elders are front line leaders who point others to Jesus through their words and example. Over the last three years the Eldership Working Group of the Council has brought to successive Assemblies, a renewed and developing vision for the eldership focused deliberately around the promotion of a discipleship culture at individual and congregational levels.

2.3.2 Most if not all of us can think of an elder who through the way that they live their lives point others to the transforming love of God. These are people like Agnes, who people have always recognised as a woman of deep and persistent prayer. Or like John, whose wise leadership has led many young people into a living faith with God. Or like Pat, whose ability to overcome great sadness and suffering has pointed others to Jesus.

2.3.3 Elders have a critical leadership role in the development and delivery of this vision that is primarily focused on local contextual mission and distinctively concerned with the discipleship of God's people. The elder's role is multifaceted and Kirk Sessions take the lead role in practical and pastoral duties, fulfilling trusteeship obligations and encouraging others to faithfully follow Christ. The Council is committed to supporting and equipping elders to be disciples, and in turn, enabling our elders to support others associated with the church community to faithfully follow Jesus. Appendix I details some of the support that is currently

provided for elders, along with materials the Council is in the process of producing. These are grouped under the broad headings of 'call'; 'preparing to serve'; and 'ongoing support and development'. We are asking the question, 'What does it look like in practical terms for elders to take a fresh approach to promoting a discipleship culture?'

2.3.4 There are many examples of where this is already happening. For example, in Arbroath St Andrew's: 'The Kirk Session has deemed it to be important that new, younger people are brought into leadership circles even while overall eldership numbers are being reduced. To this end, a long-term approach to leadership development has been adopted. All of those within the 18 to 25 year age group are invited to be part of this process. The group meets monthly with the minister and at those meetings food is shared, fun is had and time is given over to the reading of scripture, to prayer and to discussions concerning the nature of being a Christian in 21st century Scotland and concerning the shape of church necessary for this time and place.'

2.3.5 In Irvine Fullarton, Fullarton ConneXions, is also pioneering a different model: 'For discipleship and leadership training, our Grow Groups meet monthly and encourage buddies to meet/be in touch weekly to pray with and support each other in our walk with God, intentionally asking, "What is God doing in your life?" and "What has God been teaching you?" In our Grow Groups people are paired with buddies to which they are accountable.'

2.3.6 Any fresh vision must involve a letting go as well as a taking up and the Council recognises the need to streamline the critical administrative and governance tasks which elders undertake as trustees. The Council has produced two new guidance documents which enable Kirk Sessions to look afresh at congregational administrative requirements, particularly for the circumstances where certain skills may be in short supply. These guidance documents, *Church Organisation from Scratch* (<https://goo.gl/tEJR9G>) and *Frequently Asked Questions to the General Trustees Department* (<https://goo.gl/zVZs7F>), provide clarity about the requirements for specific roles, such as treasurer or aspects of Church, such as buildings and fabric. Although initially produced with the rural context in mind, the guidance provided is of broader relevance.

2.3.7 The Council supported the recommendation of the Eldership Working Group that a formal process be devised

whereby an elder can continue to be actively involved in the life of a congregation, without the associated obligations of trusteeship that come from being a member of the Kirk Session. The Council understands that the Legal Questions Committee, following its consultation on membership of church courts, has identified other associated aspects, such as the notion of elders being appointed to serve on Kirk Sessions for fixed terms and the granting of sabbatical leave. The Council looks forward to working with the Legal Questions Committee to address these important aspects associated with the eldership.

2.3.8 Elders and other office bearers carry out vital roles within congregations across Scotland that ensure congregations are able to function. The Council has developed Office Bearers online (<https://goo.gl/uGrkmw>) to assist office bearers in this significant work. Whether it is a treasurer, session clerk, clerk to the board or safeguarding officer, to name a few, easily accessible information has now been gathered into one clear, concise and easily accessible section of the Church of Scotland website.

2.3.9 In the midst of all this work, the Council's primary focus and concern, however, must remain on supporting, enabling and encouraging elders to be disciples and to develop a culture of discipleship within the congregations which they help lead. In 2017, the Council continued its practice of hosting a series of retreats across various locations in the Highlands and Islands (Skye, Braco, Nethy Bridge and Lairg). This year the theme of the retreats was 'Being Disciples'. In April the Council hosted a national conference for elders, 'A Journey of Discipleship', to enthuse and inspire current and future elders with a fresh vision of discipleship. For those who were unable to attend videos and resources from the event can be found at <https://goo.gl/PPZGFp>.

2.4 Pastoral Care as Discipleship

2.4.1 While elders may often have specific pastoral responsibilities, all disciples are called to care for one another and for wider society. There remains a strong and welcome tradition of pastoral care and support across the Church. Moving forward this is one of the gifts of the Church which we must maintain and strengthen, with an increasing recognition that the task of caring is a responsibility of the whole church and not just a few.

2.4.2 It is therefore very encouraging to report that last June over 300 people attended the Council's Pastoral Care conference; a testimony both to the ongoing commitment to care and to the desire to do so in ways that are relevant for today's society and Church. Focusing around the why, what, how, when, where, and who of pastoral care, the conference was an opportunity to increase participants' understanding of pastoral care and also to plan for more effective pastoral care ministry in our churches and communities. Comments about the day included: "[This] clarified my thinking about pastoral care. As there is not an 'organised' care structure in my church, it has helped me to see a way forward." "Excellent to hear something thoroughly Bible based. Things like this give me hope for the Church of Scotland." "Inspirational, with much love and thought given to the topic." A follow-up conference will be hosted and supporting publication, *Learn: Pastoral Care*, will be available in the autumn of 2018.

2.4.3 The 2016 General Assembly instructed the Council to 'promote congregational learning and awareness of the issues transgender and gender non-conforming people experience, in order to better facilitate pastoral care to and inclusion of transgender and gender non-conforming people at a local level'. The Council has responded by developing *Diverse Gender Identities and Pastoral Care*, a resource that shares the stories of everyday folk in Scotland, some of whom identify as transgender people. Others are a spouse, a parent or a minister of a trans person. The resource, which has been sent to every congregation, provides a space for the publication's contributors to share their experiences in their own words.

2.5 Young People as Disciples

2.5.1 There are many examples throughout the Scriptures of children and young people being more acutely aware of the presence of God than their elders. Yes, the Church has a responsibility to reach out to children and young people with the Good News of the Gospel but it also needs to listen to young people and to learn from them what it means to follow Jesus today. Writing in the Foreword of the Council's *Children & Young People Learn* publication, Jamie Milliken, one of the Council's vice-conveners writes: 'Children and young people matter. The dynamic and life affirming presence they bring today matters. The hope and potential they bring for tomorrow matters. Living faith shared between the generations matters. If all this matters to you, then this book has been written for you; may God challenge, affirm and bless you as these words take shape and bring life within your congregation' (<https://goo.gl/njXn4p>).

2.5.2 If children and young people are to become followers of Jesus, People of the Way, the Church must find ways of sharing and nurturing faith. It must also find a way for the faith, curiosity and enthusiasm of children and young people to speak to and disturb the rest of the Church. The Council's *Towards a Theology of Children and Young People* report was accepted by the General Assembly in 2017, and the Council was instructed to continue to work on developing, articulating, and employing a theological framework for the Church of Scotland in its ministry with children and young people. Hence, the Council, in collaboration with the Theological Forum, has spent a further period of reflection in order to develop a theological framework for the Kirk's work with children and young people. This is expressed as 'Aspirations', a summary of which is provided in Appendix II (with more detailed descriptions provided at <https://goo.gl/Vjsmgr>). The Council believes that whilst these have been developed for the purposes of developing congregations' ministries with children and young people, they are in fact relevant to the whole Church community. In due course the Council intends to develop resources to equip local congregations to engage with the aspirations.

2.6 Year of Young People

2.6.1 Throughout 2018 the Scottish Government is 'encouraging generations to come together to celebrate our nation's young people' (<https://goo.gl/DyQf9M>). The Council has taken a lead facilitative role to enable the Church of Scotland to do so. Our overall aim is to foster a renewed focus on, and celebration of, the role of children and young people in our churches and communities.

2.6.2 At the time of writing, the Council is scheduled to be hosting a series of 'Encounter and Celebration' roadshows in Dumbarton, Dalkeith, Dundee and Inverness, seeking to encourage churches both to celebrate the fantastic contribution young people are making in many of our churches and wider society as well as helping them to develop their work alongside children and young people. We will explore how churches can engage with children and young people in new ways, with fresh vision and in different contexts, sharing new thinking, ideas and examples of what is happening across the country. Examples of workshop content includes developing faith that sticks; developing faith in the home; engaging with schools; and intergenerational church and worship.

2.6.3 The Council has produced a special Year of Young People toolkit to support congregations to participate in the initiative (<https://goo.gl/tUHZUo>). There has been an enthusiastic response to it with over 370 toolkits being sent out to churches who have signed a pledge to be involved in the Year of Young People. Some have passed on their feedback: "Thank you for the wide range of materials and suggestions included in the excellent YOYP Toolkit. It is full of useful resources and ideas that can be used in worship, with children and young people and our Kirk Session. It is very well presented and we appreciate the supplementary material on the website as well. It is helping us as a church to plan to engage in lots of ways through the Year of Young People, to listen to our young people and reshape how we work with children and young people."

2.6.4 A number of congregations responded to the idea of holding a launch service for the initiative on 28 January 2018. In Aberfeldy, "Over 100 people from across the generations attended the youth led evening service. Showcasing the last 15 years of The Breathe Projects development, young people welcomed, led worship and delivered presentations about their current work as well as their hopes and aspirations for 2018. We had an exceptional turn-out of parents, young people and congregation members who have benefitted from our youth work over the years and we also got the opportunity to thank our many volunteers past and present, many of whom have prayed for decades for a time such as this."

2.6.5 At Dalmuir Barclay, "Our YoYP launch service was fantastic and included five-year-old children saying prayers, an eight-year-old reading the church reading and children taking in the Bible and the collection. The minister even dressed up as Mr Potato Head - it was amazing!"

2.6.6 At Livingston United, "We developed and signed our own Charter for Children and Young People to mark Year of Young People 2018, recognising that children and young people are equal partners with adults in the life of the church and we look forward to lots of ways to express that during this special year and beyond."

2.6.7 At Marchmont St Giles, "We had a cut out body shape and everyone came up and stuck on post-its of what they will commit to do during the YoYP. Then a seven-year-old read the reading (previously children had only been involved in the Nativity play but not been asked to read). The

congregation loved the service and there was real enthusiasm and energy for the whole body worshipping together."

2.6.8 Through active involvement in the Year of Young People 2018, which by the time the General Assembly meets will be almost half way through, the Council hopes to see the Church of Scotland change, develop and grow so that following on from the year, young people will have more opportunities to be welcomed, included and accepted as equal members of local churches; churches are more intentional about engaging with children and young people; there are more opportunities for intergenerational work and conversations; young people have a greater say in decisions about the church and their lives; and young people are recognised and valued within the Body of Christ. In the proposals for a Young People and Education Forum, which are being brought to the General Assembly through the Church and Society Council, there is an important opportunity for the national councils to work together more effectively to support young people growing up in Scotland today.

2.6.9 In all of this we need to recognise that Jesus challenged the people of His day to recognise that children were the first members of the Kingdom of God, not the last or latest additions.

2.7 A Successor to the National Youth Assembly

2.7.1 The 2017 General Assembly instructed the Council 'to address the proposals contained within its report on the subject of the National Youth Assembly Review and as part of that process to create a working group of fourteen people comprising seven members of the Mission and Discipleship Council and seven young people (including former and current members of the National Youth Assembly, youth workers and other young people), young people to form the majority of the group and the group to be co-chaired by a young person and a member of the Council, and to bring an interim report to the General Assembly of 2018 considering the vision, scope, structures and resourcing that engage young people in spiritual formation and decision making processes at all levels of the Church.'

2.7.2 In June 2017, the Council selected seven people to be part of the working group and Esther Nisbet and Norman Smith were invited to co-chair it. This initial group had the task of selecting an additional seven young people who would join them to carry out the work. Applications were invited from across the Church and open to anyone of secondary school age and above with a particular interest in those under

30. The application form and references submitted by applicants were used to select people who demonstrated: a willingness to engage positively throughout the process; an ability to see beyond their own situation; a live church connection with the Church of Scotland; the capability to see outside the box; a vision for the discipleship of young people; and a willingness to listen to different points of view.

2.7.3 The working group held its first meeting in October 2017, during which it explored what information it would need and from whom in order that the process of envisioning new ways of doing things was built from an informed position. Since then the group has been meeting regularly and consulting with young people, those who work with young people (volunteers and paid workers), the national Church (councils, committees and 121 staff), Presbyteries, congregations and our ecumenical partners.

2.7.4 Tamsin Dingwall, a member of the working group, says: "I am very blessed to have been chosen to be a member of the Church of Scotland and Young People working group. Having only recently discovered the National Youth Assembly my faith has grown dramatically and whilst I understand it may not be possible to continue this past 2019 I am so pleased to be able to work towards finding more options for younger members of the church to flourish in their faith. I pray that we can find new ways to engage youth within the church that helps both the church and the spiritual development of the members." Entirely appropriately, young people are driving that process.

2.7.5 The working group will bring a full report to the 2019 General Assembly. In the meantime, it is inspiring to see this group working together as they seek to discern the most effective ways forward.

2.8 Life Stories

2.8.1 People tend to follow Jesus because they know others who do or they hear about people whose lives have been deepened by faith. Stories matter. The Why Believe? Group has continued to gather stories of people's faith. There are now 13 available at <https://goo.gl/9aaVUq>.

2.8.2 Sharing our faith can be an awkward thing to do, perhaps especially in our naturally reticent culture. We are grateful for the example of people like Tracey, Susan, James, Michael and many others who have been willing to share how God is changing them. Their stories are part of the wonderful

story of what God is continuing to do in our churches and in our country. One of the notable features of the Life Stories is that, in each case, the person concerned is able to recognise, and express thanks for, the accompaniment of their fellow disciples at key points on their journey. Let's never forget to give thanks to God, and to one another, for the people who have introduced us to the Gospel and have nurtured us as people of faith.

3. WORSHIP

3.1 God loves us and we, in turn, are called to love God. We do so as individuals, in times of quiet reflection and listening. Critically, we do so together; Christianity is a community faith. The Council continues to develop resources designed to support us individually and collectively to worship God and to enable us to be aware of God drawing near to us.

3.2 Conversations in Worship

3.2.1 In worship we draw close to God and allow God to draw close to us. Yet many of us find it hard to express this and our worship can, on occasions, become empty, shallow and routine. We need to learn to talk about worship not just in terms of the words that were used, the hymns that were sung but in terms of the experience: how it impacted us; how we felt; and how our lives have been changed in the process. To that end, *Conversations in Worship*, launched at last year's General Assembly, is being used by congregations to help people gather and share stories of how they have encountered God in worship. The process lasts only 60-90 minutes. It enables exciting and moving conversations to take place. As such, it is perfect for mid-week services, Kirk Session meetings, Café Church style worship, Guild meetings and similar gatherings.

3.2.2 One congregation reported that they enjoyed using it so much that it inspired them to begin writing their own 'conversation resources,' looking at prayer and other related themes. One participant, who used it amongst colleagues, said: "I've shared more deeply here than I ever have shared at work." Another participant at a Presbytery gathering said: "We spend so much time and energy on keeping the show on the road. This has reminded us what the show is about."

3.3 Prayer

3.3.1 Prayer is the life-breath of the Christian; without it we are starved of the oxygen of our encounter with God. We cannot be disciples, followers of Jesus, without prayer.

3.3.2 This year, *Pray Now* followed the theme 'Word of Life' and was launched at the 2017 General Assembly. The book contained 52 individual prayers relating to the theme as well as 12 articles at the back of the book entitled *How We Pray*. These articles were drawn from a range of sources and reflect on issues such as praying with doubt, praying for healing, praying prophetically, praying with learning disabilities and praying pastorally. Five of these 12 articles were recorded as short instructional videos and are available to view on the Church of Scotland website. The book has sold 1290 copies and a further print run was made to be included in the resource pack for the National Day of Prayer 'Together We Pray'.

3.3.3 As part of the wider theme of 'Stories E.T.C.', *Pray Now*, *Stories of Encounter* was launched in December 2017. This book followed a similar format to *Word of Life*. In this year, the 12 articles focus on 'How They Prayed,' exploring the lives of 12 historical figures widely regarded as having contributed to the prayer life of the Church.

3.3.4 In both publications, there has been a blend of *what* we might pray and *how* we might pray. The content always relates directly to a whole variety of Scripture verses, hopefully making them ideal resources for prayer groups, house groups, Bible studies or even as a starting point for mid-week services. *Pray Now* deliberately draws from a pool of writers that represent a breadth of theological opinion as well as a rich variety of approaches to God in prayer.

3.3.5 The Council provided a large part of the creative input and material for the Together We Pray packs. Furthermore, the inclusion of our *Conversations in Worship* resource and *Pray Now*, *Word of Life* offered a way for groups and congregations to reflect on how they encounter God in the midst of their worship and community life. Full details of the Together We Pray project can be found in the Council of Assembly report section.

3.3.6 The Church of Scotland social media platforms have continued hosting the daily prayers and blessings created by the Council as a way of promoting a more reflective moment for Church of Scotland Twitter and Facebook followers. From

the start of 2018, the Communications Team has been developing this resource. The prayers and blessings have continued to be widely appreciated in 2017 with the total 'likes' on Facebook reaching 61,302 and the total 'shares' reaching 25,304. Special calendar days were often very popular, such as New Year's Day, Christmas Day and Easter Day. However, some ordinary days seemed particularly engaging with users such as 7 November:

*'May God's grace,
like golden leaves,
fall gently and silently around you
and those you love this day.'*

3.3.7 The Resourcing Worship team was part of the writing team for the worship material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This process of writing alongside ecumenical partners from CTBI has created worship material that allows the whole Church to join together in prayer and worship across the world. The material was downloaded around 6000 times.

3.4 Ecumenical Work and Worship

3.4.1 The Church of Scotland is part of the worldwide Church and our worship and practice is strengthened and deepened through learning from and worshipping alongside others from a wide variety of traditions. Hopefully, we also have a little to offer from within our own denomination. As part of the Joint Liturgical group of Great Britain, a London-based ecumenical working group, the Council hosted two day-long conferences focused on contemporary worship and liturgy under the title 'Shaped by Worship'.

3.5 Resourcing Worship

3.5.1 Over the past year the Council has continued to coordinate the production of materials to support those leading worship through 'Weekly Worship'. Over the last year this has been viewed 110,000 times and accessed by 81,000 unique visitors, making it one of the most visited pages on the Church of Scotland website. One congregation offered this feedback: "I would like to thank all who provide the Weekly Worship resources. We are in vacancy without a locum minister, and when pulpit supply is not available our small worship team leads services in both churches. We have found the worship resources on CofS website a great help, especially on occasions when, as volunteers, we struggle to find time to meet and share the preparation of a service."

3.5.2 The Church of Scotland also has a rich tradition of hymn writing and sharing. In 2017 we recorded a significant number of hymns and songs within CH4 to assist worship leaders, especially those who cannot read music, to expand their diet of worship music and explore the richness of the content of CH4. We are currently exploring the best way to make the short samples available online and hope to have them ready for download via the Church of Scotland website in the second half of 2018.

3.5.3 The Council was delighted to be involved with the development of the 2017 online Advent Calendar. The short videos focused on the characters of Nativity Story and who they might represent in today's society. Fuller details on the Advent calendar can be found under the section on Together We Pray as part of the Council of Assembly report.

3.6 Children, Young People and Communion

3.6.1 Since 1992 the Church of Scotland has actively encouraged the participation of children at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Where this has happened, the impact has often been transformative for the children concerned, their families and friends and the wider community of faith. Yet Church of Scotland statistics reveal that only 6% of the under 18s who are associated with our congregations are receiving communion. There will inevitably be a wide variety of reasons for this, including the fact that many children and young people may not wish to participate or, although involved in a wide range of church activities, would not think of themselves as naturally part of the worshipping community of the Church. However, the reality remains that even the children and young people that are involved in the life of many of our churches are not being given the opportunity, or are choosing not to come to share the meal that Jesus encouraged His disciples to share together.

3.6.2 The 2017 General Assembly instructed the Council to consult with Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions in order to determine the extent to which the Church is finding Act XV (1992) Act Anent Admission of Children to Communion, subsequently consolidated into Act V (2000) Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments, to be pastorally helpful in the discipleship of children and young people.

3.6.3 This was done through a survey conducted in October 2017. A summary of the findings of the survey are available in Appendix III. Its principle conclusions are: too few of the under 18s who are present in our congregations are

receiving communion; there is a need to develop congregations' understanding of the theological relationship between baptism and communion; congregations need support in developing an improved understanding and practice of communion; further guidance on the discretion allowed within the permissive nature of Act V (2000) Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments is needed to give guidance to Kirk Sessions who experience being caught between keeping within Church law while facing the practical and pastoral challenges associated with restricting access to communion to those who are baptised; and there is a lack of Church of Scotland specific communion resources, both for preparation and liturgy.

3.6.4 The Council is grateful to the Theological Forum for the work undertaken over the last year on this important issue. At this point, the Council is clear that the Church must do more to welcome children and young people to the Lord's Table.

3.7 Healing and the Church

3.7.1 Healing was an integral part of Jesus' ministry and the Church, in various traditions, has retained a commitment to healing through the centuries. In November 2017, The Council, working alongside the Guild of Health and St Raphael, hosted the annual Denis Duncan Lecture, a lecture which focuses on the health and healing ministry of the Church. The lecture, given by the Very Rev Dr David Lunan, was entitled 'The Kingdom of God is Creation Healed' and was attended by around 70 people from a variety of Church backgrounds. Feedback on the event and the lecture itself has been very positive and the recording, provided by Sanctus Media, has been viewed a further 500 times. Over the coming year, the Council, in collaboration with others, will explore how this ministry of healing can be further strengthened and more effectively resourced across the Church.

3.8 Buildings Matter

3.8.1 God is in all of life and the Spirit of God is present in every place and situation. And for many, God is also associated with a particular space or place, often a church building. It is true that church buildings can become idols – they prevent us from encountering God or involve us in the worshipping of false gods – but they can also be icon, which point people towards God and create the space where we can become aware of God's presence in our lives.

3.8.2 Throughout 2017 the Committee on Church Art and Architecture (CARTA) dealt with 318 applications (compared to 190 in 2014, 202 in 2015 and 274 in 2016). These were all processed through the 'single gateway agreement' in place with the General Trustees. This involved visiting 170 congregations to discuss proposals, frequently on more than one occasion. Congregations not visited were sufficiently uncontroversial as to be approved under powers. In early 2018 CARTA and the General Trustees have been taking time to evaluate the single gateway process and make improvements where required.

3.8.3 In addition to the advice given in relation to specific cases, the Committee has also worked on some resources to help congregations to learn more about 'Church Art and Architecture.' Using digital technology, it successfully piloted 360° filming of a range of churches across the country. These were produced to help people to get an experience of being inside a church and to explore some of the key elements of our church buildings. Photographs and films were shared via the Church of Scotland website and social media channels. The videos in the test phase were viewed over 45,000 times and the photographs had a combined reach of over 500,000. Whilst many of these may well have been from people who already knew the church, for others this is proving a door into church. Comments have included: "Wow, I live close to the cathedral and have never been in. Thank you!" "This church brought a tear to my eye when I went in." "So peaceful and beautiful." "Thank you for sharing – I felt like I was inside."

3.8.4 Guidance notes for congregations wishing to develop their own 360° videos and images are available on the Resourcing Mission website (<https://goo.gl/KQJcp9>).

4. ENCOUNTERING COMMUNITY

4.1 The Church can easily fall into a false polarity which suggests that God is to be found in the Church rather than in wider society and which sees, somehow, the Church as separate from rather than fulfilling its call to be salt, leaven and light as an integral part of the wider community. George Macleod prayed about the glory of God in the High St as well as in the highest. We have a responsibility to build one another up in faith and to deepen our faithful following of Jesus as a community. But following Jesus leads us to the people and places that Jesus, during his earthly ministry, spent time with; people who are frequently found outside the walls of the community of faith.

4.2 Creating a Culture of Invitation

4.2.1 Put bluntly, people are unlikely to become disciples unless other disciples invite them to start the journey of following Jesus. We need to get far better at encouraging one another on that road. For too long many of us have considered it to be someone else's task to invite people to be disciples. It isn't. With the support of the Holy Spirit, it is our individual and shared task.

4.2.2 Research conducted by Michael Harvey, of Season of Invitation, has revealed that while 70% of people say that they have a name in mind of someone they feel God wants them to invite to something, between 80 and 95% say they have no intention of making that invitation. Overwhelmingly the reasons given for this reticence are to do with our own anxieties, rather than any external circumstances.

4.2.3 Over the past two years the Why Believe? Group of the Council has been working in collaboration with others to help encourage a 'Culture of Invitation' in the Church. It is important to emphasise that this is not simply, or even primarily, an invitation to come to Church. It is an invitation to follow Jesus, to be a disciple. The Council has been working with Michael Harvey and Season of Invitation to help those in our congregations feel supported and resourced to simply invite people to come with them to a church service or to other church-based activities. This follows on from 'Talking Jesus' (October 2016) in collaboration with the Church of England, which showed that those not in church are generally well disposed to both the person of Jesus and His followers (<https://goo.gl/PGMQDA>) and 'Creating a Culture of Invitation' (March 2017), in collaboration with Alpha Scotland and Season of Invitation.

4.2.4 In preparation for a 'National Weekend of Invitation' (15 to 17 June 2018), the Council hosted a series of 10 roadshows across the country which brought together participants from 34 Presbyteries to get churches planning their invitation events and how, indeed, we create a culture of invitation in our churches. More information about the initiative, and how your congregation can get involved can be found at <https://goo.gl/u3mS3g>. Specific information about the Church of Scotland's involvement is on the Council's website at <https://goo.gl/bpqDKX>.

4.2.5 Following his attendance at one of the roadshows, George Fiddes (St Nicholas Parish Church, Prestwick) wrote: "Just have to share with you the fantastic service we had

yesterday prior to our invitation Sunday we are planning for 24 December. I expected perhaps 20-40 people to come forward to place [their commitment to invite someone] on the cross and more than 80 people came forward, more than I could have expected. God is good."

4.2.6 Another participant, Jim McCaig (Bellshill West Parish Church) said: "[We] have been astounded at the positive benefits in personal spirituality we have accrued as a result of accepting the commission to invite new members, we have seen the power of real prayer at work."

4.2.7 What would it look like if over the next year every church in Scotland ran a special invitation event for its friends and neighbours? What, indeed, would it look like if every member invited just one other person to join them on the journey of faith and discipleship?

4.3 Migrant and Multi-Cultural Church in Scotland

4.3.1 The 2016 General Assembly instructed the Mission and Discipleship Council, in collaboration with the World Mission Council and the Ecumenical Relations Committee, 'to reflect on the evolving church situation in contemporary Scotland, by undertaking a study of 'immigrant' churches in Scotland and developing initiatives to strengthen relations for mutual learning, partnership and closer working with the Church of Scotland, and present an interim report to the General Assembly in 2018.'

4.3.2 This work was carried out by the Mission Forum, also drawing on the expertise of the Church and Society Council. The Forum quickly agreed to use the term 'Migrant and Multi-Cultural' as opposed to 'immigrant.' In summer 2017 an online survey was carried out, to which there were 227 responses; an excellent return rate, highlighting how significant this issue is for a growing number of congregations and communities. Fuller details about the survey and the Forum's reflections are available at <https://goo.gl/Vjsmgr>.

4.3.3 The survey's findings provide a fascinating and important lens into the life of our communities and congregations:

- Around one third were aware of groups of people born outside of the UK sharing in Christian worship or fellowship. 40 different nations from five continents were mentioned.

- A quarter said that they currently have a formal or informal connection to one or more of these groups in their area. 15% of respondents said that their premises were used by or shared with one or more of the groups in their area.
- More than half of respondents had people born outside the UK who were regular members of their own worshipping community.
- Around a quarter of respondents reported that office bearers of their worshipping community were born outside the UK.
- Most people (80%) said they thought that their worshipping community had fewer people who were born outside the UK as members, compared to the wider population. 16% said they had about the same and 4% of respondents said their congregation had more people born outside the UK as members than the wider population.
- Around a quarter of respondents said that their congregation offers practical support or services aimed specifically at people born outside of the UK, including asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.
- Few respondents (less than one in 10) observed Racial Justice Sunday in their congregation, but that nearly two thirds did observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

4.3.4 Behind these statistics are people; people who demonstrate that the nature of many of our churches and communities is changing and how we are being immeasurably challenged and enriched by that experience. There is the growing number of Church of Scotland ministers who have come from other parts of the world to serve. There is the growing network of Minority Ethnic Churches Together in Scotland (MECTIS). There is the growing number of churches that share their premises with congregations that have their roots in other parts of the Christian family, including Pentecostal and Orthodox, and many other parts of the world such as Russia, China, Zimbabwe and Iran. There are congregations where the worshipping community is increasingly diverse and others which struggle to relate to their changing environment. And then, of course, there are churches that are part of the International Presbytery where they continue to live out their faith as part of a minority culture, often attracting people from many parts of the world

with their combination of English as a shared language and Reformed tradition.

4.3.5 It is difficult to underestimate the significance of these changes, particularly at a time when there is an increasing rise of xenophobia and racism. Within this context the Church is called to celebrate diversity of church life in Scotland; affirm that we find our identity primarily in Jesus Christ and that our own nationality, culture, race and language should be no barrier to the fellowship we seek in order that we might fulfil Christ's wish that we may all be one, so that the world might believe (John 17). The Church, from that first day in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit came upon the crowds who had gathered in the city from across the then known world, has always been racially, culturally and socially diverse (Acts 2). We must find ways of nurturing that diversity today and of celebrating and supporting those who already are.

4.3.6 The survey also highlighted the need for action nationally, considering whether there are better ways of managing the expectations of congregations to celebrate the apparently ever-growing number of special Sundays and the ways in which our current ecumenical structures can more effectively reflect the increasing diversity of Scotland's Christian communities.

4.4 The Rural Church

4.4.1 Almost half (43%) of our congregations serve rural communities and the Council has continued to seek ways that it can support and enable these congregations and communities. These are often small congregations with limited resources which are being spread increasingly thinly across multiple communities. Many encounter poverty, isolation and the fragmentation of neighbourhoods as public services come under increasing strain. In many cases, the local Church continues to play a vital role but it too is facing significant strain and pressure.

In 2017 Church members in remote and rural areas were encouraged to attend a series of free roadshows designed to help them overcome challenges and embrace the opportunities that are found in their context. The roadshows, organised by the Mission and Discipleship Council's Rural Working Group (RWG) showcased a suite of eight new resources created by the RWG and were held at Lairg Parish Church in Sutherland, Kilmonivaig Church near Spean Bridge in the Highlands, St Madoes and Kinfauns Parish Church in

Perthshire, Melrose Parish Church in the Scottish Borders and Aberlour Church. Attendees were given the opportunity to connect and consider how they might support each other after the event by establishing their own local forum, with help from the RWG, based on the highly successful forum in Ayr Presbytery. Following requests, more Rural Roadshows are planned for 2018, in different rural locations. Copies of resources from the roadshows can be found here (<https://goo.gl/R5azb2>).

4.4.2 The Roadshows also gave the RWG an opportunity to consult with members about what would most benefit rural congregations going forward. From this the RWG has set the following areas on which to focus its working during 2018: research into the current landscape of rural ministry, minister vacancies etc. and analysis of the future implications; develop a partnership with the Arthur Rank Centre to review, tailor and distribute their excellent resources; consult with the Ministries Council about providing a much requested resource looking at questions around recruitment, training and retention of rural ministers; work with the Scottish Churches Rural Group (an ACTS committee) to create a rural-focused response to the Scottish Church Census, including the rural Church's practical response to rural poverty.

5. RESOURCING

5.1 The Council's work is fundamentally about supporting the Church to be as effective as possible in its work of sharing the Good News of the Gospel and in encouraging people to grow in faith and in love of God. Much of this work it undertakes through engaging with and working alongside local congregations. It also does so through national publications, activities and resources.

5.2 Life and Work

5.2.1 The power of *Life and Work* is its ability to make readers feel they are a part of something bigger: an encounter with the magazine can make readers feel they are not just part of their congregation but part of a national and world Church as it tells the stories of churches and Christians the length and breadth of Scotland, the wider UK and across the world.

5.2.2 Its overarching message is: 'You are not alone' for congregations, ministers, Christians and faith seekers who will find a pre-eminent source of news and views on Christian life with information and stories that cannot be found anywhere else. Its monthly and daily online mix of news, features and devotions weaves a web of unmissable reading for those interested or seeking the life of the national Church in Scotland.

5.2.3 Evidence of the power of *Life and Work* comes from congregations and is demonstrated by this email: "I am a Session Clerk in Edinburgh. I'm scheduled to do intercessory prayer next week and would like to use the prayer on page five of the December issue. Can I use the prayer as a base for mine?"

5.2.4 The magazine is also the basis for creating encounter: "I also want to give a personal thanks for the magazine's unwitting help this Remembrance Sunday, when I was taking services locally. I focused on contemporary Chaplains to the Forces and used extracts from articles by Chris Kellock and Marjory MacLean as well as Sheila Munro's contribution to the 'Big Question' feature on forces chaplaincy.

"What, though, the people found particularly telling (and for some, moving) was to quote from letters from chaplains at the Front in WW1, which you recently reprinted. These were so vivid and provided a backcloth for the service, using them as a 'backbone' for the liturgy."

5.2.5 It can also encourage encounter with new ideas and thinking: "Thank you for your excellent issue containing articles on Communion."

5.2.6 But the work of the magazine can only be sustained through the power of promotion. Around 1000 volunteers lovingly distribute parcels of magazines delivered to their doors or collected from offices and the *Life and Work* team needs every congregation's help in promoting the magazine to a new and wider audience, either in print or via a digital subscription.

5.2.7 In 2017, for the first time, *Life and Work* became a multi-platform title, which is extending our reach into a new marketplace, thanks to now being available digitally. There has been small but encouraging growth in this area and we hope to reach even more new readers in the years to come, amid the ongoing challenges facing the media marketplace.

Although holding its own in challenging circumstances for printed media and declining church attendance, there is an opportunity for growth.

5.2.8 Today we challenge every congregation to increase its sales of *Life and Work* to reach as many readers as possible both in Scotland and across the world in growing the reach of the magazine of our Church, enabling them to encounter our love and faith filled communities. For the magazine of our Church needs support from its members, elders and ministers, not only in terms of distributing, sharing, reading and buying it, but in spreading awareness of its very existence and reaching a new audience and offering fresh encounter for all participating in the life of the Church of Scotland. It is also a touching place for those who are new to Christian faith. (Subscribe at <https://goo.gl/FXyt7q>)

5.3 Show and Tell

The Church faces real struggles but, at the same time, there are many stories of good news; of faithful followers of Jesus growing in faith and doing wonderful things. One way in which we have been able to help share those stories is through the 'Show and Tell' Video competition. Congregations were asked to submit a short video about their congregation. The videos, limited to just three minutes, were judged on how informative, inspiring and imaginatively they told their stories of community engagement. The winner was Musselburgh Northesk Parish Church and close runner-up was Glasgow Wallacewell New Charge Development. Both videos can be viewed on the Church of Scotland YouTube channel (<https://goo.gl/Yk6L1A>). The success of the competition was not limited only to the prize-winners; one of the entrants has reported: "At Oxnam Kirk are so delighted with your idea that, subject to passing it at session, we are going to purchase an iPad or similar, so making it possible to have a new film made every year with our activities. This will then be shown at the church and also in the local hall and community. It may also be possible to put it on our Facebook page... So thank you for such a brilliant idea."

5.4 Future Focus

5.4.1 One way in which the Council seeks to encourage churches to develop a more deliberate discipleship culture is through Future Focus. This is a facilitated process offered by the Council to congregations, which enables the congregations themselves to reflect on their vision within their own context, and to begin to plan the steps that can turn the vision into reality. (Information about Future Focus is

available at <https://goo.gl/QwGhiR>.) Future Focus has been under continuous development, and a committed team of volunteers have been invaluable in supplementing the staff team, and keeping waiting times down for congregations to a minimum. In April a day conference was held to help facilitators, both staff and volunteers, develop ways of learning from one another, and improving the content and delivery of the resource for congregations.

5.4.2 Since Future Focus was first offered a decade ago, Local Church Review (LCR) has become the primary vehicle by which Presbyteries can support congregations to both reflect and look forward. Future Focus is still being used fruitfully by individual or groups of congregations, however, to help them reflect and plan. LCR in many respects has made the principles of Future Focus a part of the normal cycle of reflective practice in the church. It is therefore right that Future Focus is not perceived as a rival process, but one which is complementary and can be useful to assist working together across congregations, or when circumstances change in between LCR cycles. The Council does not expect that demand for Future Focus will increase, and is confident that the requirements of congregations from Future Focus can be met with our current level of resourcing.

5.5 Joint Emerging Church Group and Fresh Expressions

“Forty years ago, around three new churches a year were being set up – nowadays this number has shot up to 300! Most people are unaware that the Church of England is experiencing this level of growth in the creation of new Christian communities who see themselves as Anglican yet are entirely relevant in today’s society.”

5.5.1 This was the response of Rev Dr George Lings, then Director of Research at Church Army, when asked what the most encouraging aspect of fresh expressions of church was that he had discovered during his research. (<https://goo.gl/3C5gmF>)

This is the kind of growth and energy in the church that we long to see in our own denomination. Extensive research over more than a decade has consistently shown that one of the most significant factors resulting in the growth of the church within the United Kingdom, is the intentional establishment of new worshipping communities, referred to in different contexts as church planting, emerging church or fresh

expressions of church. Already, we are aware of more than 50 such initiatives in Scotland.

5.5.2 Building on the work of earlier groups, such as the Emerging Ministries Task Group, the Joint Emerging Church Group (JECG) has existed since 2012. It is a joint group of the Mission and Discipleship and Ministries Councils, with involvement also from the Panel of Review and Reform. The JECG was reconstituted during 2017 and, going forward, it aims to promote, co-ordinate and encourage take-up of the initiatives related to growth and renewal developed by the Councils. It will do this under the existing banner of ‘Going for Growth’, the next phase of which will be launched during 2018. The JECG will also continue to have oversight of relevant research, and the partnership with Fresh Expressions (<https://goo.gl/n9299>). At this key moment, the Mission and Discipleship and the Ministries Councils will bring a joint report to the 2019 General Assembly outlining the shared future strategic direction of the JECG.

5.5.3 ‘Going for Growth’ has been part of the response of both Councils to the Deliverance from the 2014 General Assembly, instructing them to train people throughout the Decade of Ministry in the theology and practice of mission. This has been a collaborative response by the Councils, and remitted by them to the JECG to oversee. The JECG has now invited every Presbytery in Scotland to participate in ‘Going for Growth’ day conferences, has offered follow-up support (through Fresh Expression Vision Days) and has hosted a series of three residential ‘Going for Growth’ Summer Schools.

5.5.3.1 The ‘Going for Growth’ day conferences comprised of sessions tailored for those with a particular relevant remit within Presbytery, and other sessions which were open to everyone from congregations. Their purpose was to inspire, encourage, share stories and information, and inform. So far, 332 people have attended the day events, with more planned in 2018.

5.5.3.2 On each occasion the team offered to return to the region to run a Fresh Expressions Vision Day. This offer has been taken up in all areas. Vision Days are one of the resources available from the Fresh Expressions agency. As a Fresh Expressions partner, we have been able to offer these to Presbyteries and groups of churches. We have been grateful to our partners in Fresh Expressions, which has enabled these days to be run ecumenically. So far eight Vision Days have

been run as follow-up to 'Going for Growth' day conferences, attended by 272 people. Additional Vision Days in Fort Augustus and Mull have been run by the wider Fresh Expressions partnership in Scotland. More days are planned in 2018.

5.5.3.3 In 2017 it hosted the last of the three residential Summer Schools, entitled "The Heart of the Matter", which looked beyond the initial phases of a fresh expression of church, to look at how discipleship is nurtured in a pioneering context, believing this to be key to the future growth and health of the church. The event marked the concluding stage of the 'Going for Growth' initiative, planned to run from 2014 to 2018, and with it a time to review, evaluate and refocus. Over the three years there has been a mix of ordained, non-ordained church employees and other church members.

The planning group aimed to provide support, a sense of community and strong relationships, high quality input from contributors, mutual support, and providing time and space for refreshing and renewal of participants. As a result of the Schools, several participants have gone on to further training; others have been inspirational in their local context, becoming a catalyst for Vision Day and other training in their own area. There has been an increased sense of possibilities, an increased awareness of resources and help available, and a growing sense of optimism for the future, as the church finds new ways to love and serve the communities it is part of, in Jesus' name.

5.6 Fresh Expressions Partnership

5.6.1 Much of what has been achieved has been inspired and supported by the work of our friends in other denominations and agencies. In particular, the ecumenical agency Fresh Expressions UK has been generous with its research and resources for over a decade. Their track record in the area of pioneering new expressions of church persuaded the Mission and Discipleship and Ministries Councils that strengthening our relationship with Fresh Expressions could be a mutually beneficial arrangement, and so the two Councils entered into a five-year partnership with Fresh Expressions on 1 October 2013. (The impact of Fresh Expressions has been extensively researched; more information on that can be found at <https://goo.gl/2N6D7j>).

5.6.1.1 It is now time to review that partnership, and the JECG has committed to an evaluation of the impact of Fresh Expressions in the Church of Scotland, to help us understand the impact and value of the partnership for the work and mission of the Church of Scotland. The original partnership agreement will come to an end in October 2018. While the JECG expects to have completed its own evaluation by then, it is also a time of review and evaluation for our denomination, and in the light of this, it would seem prudent to refrain from making major policy changes at this time. Additionally, Fresh Expressions is also in a period of strategic planning. It would therefore seem prudent to seek an extension of this partnership until the more wide-ranging strategy of the Kirk becomes clear, and we have a clearer understanding of what a longer term partnership would entail.

5.6.1.2 Evaluation of Fresh Expressions in Scotland

The impact of 'Going for Growth' and the partnership with Fresh Expressions cannot be measured solely by attendance figures at conferences and events, encouraging though these are. An evaluation of our Partnership with Fresh Expressions is underway and comprises three main sections:

- Case studies on a variety of projects reflecting the range of models, contexts and stages of development of initiatives in Scotland. (See Appendix IV)
- A review of what the Church of Scotland is contributing to the wider church, through its relationship with Fresh Expressions partners in Scotland, in the UK, and overseas.
- An exploration of how Fresh Expressions UK is developing its vision and strategy.

5.7 Research

5.7.1 Initiated by the Panel on Review and Reform, research is being carried out by the University of Glasgow into Pioneer Ministry. Further information about the Pioneer Ministry Project is included within the report from the Ministries Council. A short interim summary of this research can be found in Appendix V.

5.8 Conclusion

5.8.1 The ongoing work of the JECG aims to support growth in the church, but this growth must be rooted in the local church. In a time when resources seem to be growing scarcer, this may seem like an additional and unwelcome burden. The good news, though, is that many of these new

expressions of church have not required great resources to make the first crucial steps – for some, all that was required was a cup of coffee and a place to sit. The main components are faithfulness, imagination and the willingness to try something. Echoing the challenge in the JECG’s 2013 *A Time to Grow* report, what would it look like if every congregation considered the opportunities that were present within their parish?

5.9 Scottish Storytelling Centre

5.9.1 The Council continues to have responsibility for the work of the Scottish Storytelling Centre (SSC). This is a major responsibility for staff, buildings and strategy.

5.9.2 The Mission and Discipleship Council is the owner of the SSC and John Knox House. The Council retains ultimate responsibility for both these properties. Since 2015, the cultural programme of the SSC has been the responsibility of Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland (TRACS) through a three-year contract that ended in 2018. TRACS have received confirmation that they have funding to continue this funding through until March 2021, underpinning the current cultural offer in the Centre. The Council is currently engaged in discussions with all interested parties to determine how this relationship develops in the coming years.

5.9.3 The SSC continues to deliver on its purpose to be a resource for the arts and culture, not only in Edinburgh, but nationally and internationally, through its varied and accessible nature. The work of the SSC attracts people from a broad range of ages, backgrounds and abilities to celebrate and to practise creativity through performance, exhibition, tuition, professional exchange and participatory activities.

5.9.4 The SSC has enjoyed a successful year in terms of visitors, audience numbers, and turnover, meeting all contractual budgetary targets and delivering successful public programmes of activity. The calendar year contains three major festivals, all of which are popular and creatively engaging. These are TradFest Edinburgh Dùn Èideann, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and the Scottish International Storytelling Festival. The 2017 public programme also included a series of events related to John Knox House as part of ‘Previously... Scotland’s History Festival’ and a St Andrew’s Day event celebrating refugees’ contribution to Scotland, in collaboration with Scotland’s Winter Festivals.

5.9.5 In addition to the public programme of events, the venue is in demand as a space where other organisations can collaborate, hold conferences and discussions, and launch policy/project developments. The SSC is popular with third sector organisations. This strand of the business is vital to the ongoing financial pressures faced and is currently being used to capacity.

5.9.6 The SSC is central to the ongoing Edinburgh’s Netherbow developments, alongside Creative Scotland, TRACS, Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust, the City of Edinburgh Council, and with neighbouring organisations in the area. This is a new proposal to develop the area around the building as ‘Edinburgh’s Netherbow’ – a focus for celebrating the literature and related arts of the country – in which the significance of John Knox’s own literary contribution will be promoted. John Knox House remains an integral part, both literally and metaphorically, of the visitor experience at the SSC and this proposal offers the prospect of significant development to improve the museum. The future direction and development is being informed by discussions and workshops.

5.10 Saint Andrew Press

5.10.1 Saint Andrew Press’ publishing year runs from October 1 to September 30, and in the year ending September 30 2017, four new titles were published, three fewer than in the previous year. Two regular annuals, *Word of Life* (the *Pray Now* volume for 2017) and the *Church of Scotland Year Book* (which again required no subsidy because of strong advertising revenue) were published. Finlay Macdonald’s lively and informed history of five centuries of the Kirk, *From Reform to Renewal*, was published to great acclaim, as was Doug Gay’s *Reforming the Kirk*, based on the 2017 Chalmers lectures. Two Learn volumes, *Understanding Our Faith and Children and Young People*, were also published. (For more details see Appendix VI.)

6. CONCLUSION: PUSHING OUT INTO THE DEEP

6.1 In Luke’s account of the call of the first disciples, Jesus encourages Simon Peter, after a fruitless night, to “push the boat out to the deep water and you and your partners let down your nets for a catch” (Luke 5:4). The result was so many fish that the boat they were in nearly sank under the strain. It struck fear into the young fishermen; they did not necessarily understand what it was but they knew that something was happening. We read: “They pulled the boats

up on the beach, left everything and followed Jesus" (Luke 5:11). It is time for us to push out into the deep; it is time for us to leave behind many of the old securities and to follow Jesus.

In the name of the Council

NORMAN SMITH, *Convener*
DANIEL CARMICHAEL, *Vice-Convener: Resourcing Worship*
MARTIN FAIR, *Vice-Convener: Church Without Walls*
JAMIE MILLIKEN, *Vice-Convener: Congregational Learning*
MARTIN JOHNSTONE, *Acting Council Secretary*
RON CLARKE, *Team Leader: Congregational Learning*
GRAHAM FENDER-ALLISON, *Team Leader: Resourcing Worship*
LESLEY HAMILTON-MESSER, *Team Leader:*
Church Without Walls
In the name of CARTA
BILL HOGG, *Convener*
JAMES ALEXANDER, *Vice-Convener*
GRAHAM FENDER-ALLISON, *Team Leader:*
Resourcing Worship

Addendum

Rev Daniel Carmichael

Dan Carmichael has been a constant source of encouragement, affirmation and wisdom in the work of the Council. His desire to see the Church flourish in every context has been a huge inspiration to all of us and his willingness to give freely of his time and consistently go the extra mile has been immensely supportive to the work. Dan has served on our Liturgical Group as its Convener, before becoming the Council's Vice-Convener with responsibility for Resourcing Worship. Dan's leadership and support has had a significant impact on the direction and content of the work in particular the process of consultation that resulted in our *Conversations in Worship* material and the new developments within *Pray Now*.

Rev Jamie Milliken

Jamie Milliken has brought enthusiasm and humour to the role of Vice-Convener. He has played a pivotal role in leading all that the Council has delivered to develop learning and discipleship in our congregations over the last five years. Having first served as member, he took on the convenership of Congregational Learning Group at a time when the Council instigated a fresh start to this area of work. He has been very effective in his leadership through this time, supporting and

enabling the Council to deliver a broad range of congregational resources, most notably the Learn publications, events and online provision.

Rev Dr Alister Bull

Alister Bull held the position of Council Secretary from February 2013 until August 2017. The Council wish to express their thanks to Alister for the passion for mission and the drive he brought to the post over the last four years. Having previously been a parish minister, hospital chaplain and leader of a Fresh Expression of Church, Alister's wide experience of Church life in Scotland gave him an ability to appreciate not only the importance of the Church's tradition but also the need for change in today's culture.

In the name of the Council

NORMAN SMITH, *Convener*
MARTIN FAIR, *Vice-Convener: Church Without Walls*
MARTIN JOHNSTONE, *Acting Council Secretary*
RON CLARKE, *Team Leader: Congregational Learning*
GRAHAM FENDER-ALLISON, *Team Leader: Resourcing Worship*
LESLEY HAMILTON-MESSER, *Team Leader:*
Church Without Walls

Appendix I

DEVELOPING THE ELDERSHIP - 2018 UPDATE

A. Executive Summary

The Eldership Working Group, operating within the Mission and Discipleship Council, reports below on the progress made in addressing the action points given to it by the 2017 General Assembly and makes the following proposals:

- That Kirk Sessions be urged to embrace the fresh vision for eldership which is a role that is primarily focused on local contextual mission and distinctively concerned with the discipleship of God's people.
- That Kirk Sessions be encouraged, when seeking new elders, to engage with this fresh vision to identify potential elders with diverse giftings and from a variety of ages and backgrounds.
- That Kirk Sessions urge elders to engage with the resources, as they become available, that enable them to be proactive about their individual, congregational and leadership responsibilities in the area of encouraging a contextualised Church-wide active discipleship culture.
- That Kirk Sessions be encouraged to use the new resources available to assist with streamlining their approach to addressing vital administrative tasks.
- Assuming that the work undertaken by the Legal Question Committee supports this, the appropriate committee develops a formal process that will provide a recognised means by which elders can continue to be actively involved in the life of a congregation, without the associated obligations of trusteeship that come from being an elder on the Kirk Session.

B. Background

The purpose of the Eldership Working Group (EWG) has been 'to look at patterns and models of Eldership currently in use across the Church today and to bring to the attention of the General Assembly ways in which these could be shared, reflected upon and, in some cases, adapted to encourage appropriate practice in our changing contexts'.

The proposals made by the EWG to the General Assembly of 2017, contained in Appendix III of the report of the Mission

and Discipleship Council (MDC) (Appendix III, section 20 <https://goo.gl/1agjuN>), were approved. They provided a clear focus for the group's work in supporting and developing the eldership, which can be summarised as follows:

- That the EWG develops support provision that is informed by the overall vision of the office of eldership as being one that is shaped by local contextual mission and distinctively concerned with the discipleship of God's people.
- That, as key leaders in our denomination, it is not competent to separate trusteeship from eldership. However, the EWG should provide guidance on new and improved ways to carry out vital administrative tasks, which are required by civil and Church of Scotland law under which elders operate.
- That a process be formalised whereby an elder can resign from the Kirk Session and thereafter the Kirk Session may, if appropriate, appoint the elder as a non-governing emeritus elder.

This report on developing the eldership provides specific details on how the above areas of focus are being addressed.

C. Discipleship: A fresh vision for eldership

The whole Church is being called to nurture an active discipleship culture, as reported by the Mission and Discipleship Council to the 2018 General Assembly (Mission and Discipleship Council report to the 2018 General Assembly). The significance of this for elders is threefold:

C.1 Individual responsibility

Elders are responsible, as are all in our congregations, for proactively considering how they are progressing in their walk with Christ. Whether first exploring a call to the eldership or continuing to serve in active response to this call, we travel alongside the Christ who continues to call us to 'follow me'. This is an ongoing and dynamic relationship that changes as our relationship with Christ, context and understanding of the call develops.

The EWG has collated a variety of examples of the way in which congregations enable discernment and support the call to eldership.

C.2 Congregational responsibility

When the role of elder becomes distinctively concerned with the discipleship of God's people, then elders, acting within the Kirk Session, become actively engaged with nurturing a discipleship culture within the congregation. This will involve taking a proactive interest in the Christian development of individuals and playing a strategic role that addresses which approach, support and resources are required to encourage a contextualised Church-wide active discipleship culture.

The Mission and Discipleship Council is developing guidance to enable elders to take a strategic overview for nurturing active discipleship in individuals and the congregation.

C.3 Leadership responsibility

As discussed in the Mission and Discipleship Council report to the 2018 General Assembly, the evidence is that it will require people to be supported to 'take the lead' in nurturing an active discipleship culture. Hence, as key leaders in a congregation, elders have a significant role to play, not necessarily in doing the work required, but in creating space, giving permission and facilitating others to do so. Elders will need to operate as effective leaders who recognise the gifts and skills in others, and then empower and support them to take the lead and 'go and make disciples'. Indeed, this should be a significant by-product of moving into a culture of whole-life active discipleship where people grow and develop in the outworking of their own discipleship. The EWG hopes that this fresh vision of eldership will enable Kirk Sessions to identify potential elders with a greater variety of gifts, from a wider variety of backgrounds and age-groups in congregations. Christ equips all his followers for works of service, and elders can operate as key leaders to facilitate this.

An important strand of the Mission and Discipleship Council's discipleship provision for congregations will be the equipping of all those who are to 'take the lead' in nurturing active discipleship.

D. Resourcing

The Mission and Discipleship Council is in the process of developing eldership training provision in the areas of 'call'; 'preparing to serve' and 'ongoing support and development'. These will be made available through a variety of channels including a dedicated section on the Church of Scotland website, conferences and publications.

D.1 Call

The EWG has collated examples of how different congregations have gone about identifying potential new elders, helping their discernment process, accessing what skills and gifts they have (or have potential to develop) and then enabling them into that area of service. The responses, which are offered to the Church to enable reflection on good practice, are available on the Church of Scotland website.

Each response is shaped around how potential elders have been enabled to consider the following four elements in a call to their ministry as an elder:

- The nature of the individual's call to grow in their walk with Christ through personal active discipleship.
- The inner call by which the individual feels motivated to serve in a particular way. This describes how the individual has gone about discerning their call to eldership.
- The providential call, whereby the gifts and skills to sustain ministry are evident in the individual. This describes how new elders have been helped to discern their gifts and skills.
- The ecclesiastical call, whereby the call is recognised and made by the Church. This describes the process that the Kirk Session, congregation and/or minister go through in identifying the call of an individual to become an elder.

D.2 Preparing to Serve

The EWG decided that the 'Learn: Eldership' publication (find out more about the publication at <https://goo.gl/KAuAtc>) and associated web pages should be used to equip elders preparing to serve in the role, and there was no immediate requirement for new material.

D.3 Ongoing support and development

The Council has a range of resources available, or in development, for the ongoing support and development of elders. For example:

- The 'Learn: Pastoral Care' conference (engage in some learning from this conference at <https://goo.gl/PPZGfP>) and publication (soon to be available via <https://goo.gl/njXn4p>).

- Various faith formation and sharing resources ('Learn: Exploring Faith' publication <https://goo.gl/JCz4G3>), 'Learn: Understanding our Faith' publication (<https://goo.gl/GmXN2M>) and the 'Sharing Faith' resource (<https://goo.gl/2R33oE>).
- The regular national Elders conference (engage in some learning from this conference at <https://goo.gl/PPZGfP>).
- Other 'Learn Online' provision (<https://goo.gl/eKfZ4J>).
- The 'Office Bearers' section of the Church of Scotland website (<https://goo.gl/uGrkmw>).
- Materials prepared for worship development (<https://goo.gl/1iydj>).

The EWG proposes that the eldership section of the Church of Scotland website should be significantly developed to make all the above support and development provision readily accessible.

In general, there is a growing amount of useful and highly relevant material available online on the Church of Scotland website and the EWG recommends that emphasis be given to effectively communicating this to the Church to enable it to be accessed by as many people as possible.

E. Trusteeship

The EWG has recognised that many congregations have concerns about the burden of carrying out administrative tasks, however, the EWG also note that due to the nature of civil and Church of Scotland law applied to congregations as registered charities it is not competent to separate trusteeship from eldership.

E.1 Streamlining

The Mission and Discipleship Council has produced two new guidance documents which enable Kirk Sessions to look afresh at congregational administrative requirements, particularly for the circumstances where certain skills may be in short supply. These guidance documents, 'Church Organisation from Scratch' (Church Organisation from Scratch <https://goo.gl/tEJR9G>) and 'Frequently Asked Questions to the General Trustees Department' (Frequently Asked Questions to the General Trustees Department <https://goo.gl/zVZs7F>), provide clarity about the requirements for specific roles (such as treasurer) or aspects

of Church (such as buildings and fabric). Although initially produced with the rural context in mind, the guidance provided is of broader relevance.

Contained within these is the perfectly appropriate concept that, whilst elders as trustees are ultimately responsible for certain administrative functions, there is a difference between being responsible for doing the tasks and making sure that they are carried out competently, by whoever is judged to be competent.

The EWG recommends that Kirk Sessions creatively consider areas of administrative work that they may be able to delegate to others, or possibly share between a number of congregations, thereby enabling Kirk Sessions to spread the burden, draw upon the gifts of others and wherever possible enable elders to focus on other aspects of their call, such as nurturing an active discipleship culture.

E.2 Elder Emeritus

The EWG has been in discussion with the Legal Questions Committee (LQC) on the subject of Elder Emeritus status. Specifically, it has asked that a formal mechanism, by which someone transfers to the non-governing Elders Emeritus status, be formally recognised in an Act of the Church. This is for circumstances when an elder considers it appropriate, through age or infirmity, to step back from active service as a member of the Kirk Session. The LQC is currently undertaking a review of the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000), starting with a consultation process which is seeking comment from across the Church. The LQC has intimated that the issue of Elder Emeritus may well be addressed in any new legislation. The intention in seeking formalisation of this process is that it will provide a recognised means by which elders can continue to be actively involved in the life of a congregation without the associated obligations of trusteeship that come from being an elder on the Kirk Session.

F. Proposals Arising

The EWG seeks affirmation from the General Assembly of the following proposals arising from its most recent work:

- That Kirk Sessions be urged to embrace the fresh vision for eldership; which is a role that is primarily focused on local contextual mission and distinctively concerned with the discipleship of God's people.

- That Kirk Sessions be encouraged, when seeking new elders, to engage with this fresh vision to identify potential elders with diverse giftings and from a variety of ages and backgrounds.
- That Kirk Sessions urge elders to engage with the resources, as they become available, that enable them to be proactive about their individual, congregational and leadership responsibilities in the area of encouraging a contextualised Church-wide active discipleship culture.
- That Kirk Sessions be encouraged to use the new resources available to assist with streamlining their approach to addressing vital administrative tasks.
- Assuming that the work undertaken by the LQC supports this, the appropriate committee develops a formal process that will provide a recognised means by which elders can continue to be actively involved in the life of a congregation, without the associated obligations of trusteeship that come from being an elder on the Kirk Session.

The Eldership Working Group
November 2017

Membership

Ron Clarke
Marshall Halliday
Andrew Kimmitt
Jamie Milliken
Lynne McEwen
Robert McQuistan
John Notman
Hongsuk Um
Graeme Wilson

Appendix II

ASPIRATIONS FOR MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND (SUMMARY)

Made in God's Image

We affirm that being made in the image of God each child and young person is precious and valued in God's sight and that we were made to live in community together. We therefore seek to be a church that is relational, desiring deep relationships with God and one another regardless of age.

Body of Christ

We affirm the place of children and young people as important parts of the Body of Christ and the gifts that they bring to the whole worshipping community. We therefore seek to be a church that involves children and young people in worship enabling them to use their gifts and talents.

Community of Faith

We affirm the responsibility of the whole church to be involved in passing on faith to children and young people and in particular the role of parents and carers. We therefore seek to be a church that functions as a community of faith continually passing on the faith to the next generations.

Hospitality

We affirm that offering hospitality is central to the identity of the Church of Jesus Christ; our doors and hearts must always be open, enabling people to discover community and find belonging in God's family. We therefore seek to be a church that is hospitable, offering a safe and welcoming community of faith to all children and young people.

Faith Formation

We affirm that children and young people are fellow pilgrims on the journey of faith. We therefore seek to be a church that encourages children and young people to live life in all its fullness, encountering God through being actively involved in all aspects of discipleship.

Inclusive Participation

We affirm the radical inclusivity of the Gospel and that all children and young people, no matter their abilities or stage of spiritual development, are part of that. We therefore seek to be a church that enables full participation of all children and young people in the life of faith.

Service and Justice

We affirm that we live in a broken and hurting world and that God calls us all to be the means of healing and reconciliation. We therefore seek to be a church that empowers children and young people to live a life of service and seek justice.

Excellence

We seek to be a church that ensures appropriate training and support for all ministering with children and young people.

Appendix III

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNION – SURVEY FINDINGS REPORT 2017

Executive Summary

Church of Scotland statistics reveal that only 6% of the under 18s who are associated with our congregations are receiving communion.

The Mission and Discipleship Council was instructed by the 2017 General Assembly to consult with Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions in order to determine the extent to which the Church is finding Act XV (1992) Act Anent Admission of Children to Communion, subsequently consolidated into Act V (2000) Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments, to be pastorally helpful in the discipleship of children and young people.

The following conclusions have been drawn from the findings arising out of the Council's 'Children & Communion' survey:

- A small percentage of the under 18s who are present in our congregations are receiving communion.
- There is a need to develop congregations' understanding of the theological relationship between baptism and communion.
- Congregations need support towards developing an improved understanding and practice of communion.
- Further guidance on the discretion allowed within the permissive nature of Act V (2000) Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments is needed to give guidance to Kirk Sessions who experience being caught between keeping within Church law while facing the practical and pastoral challenges associated with restricting access to communion to those who are baptised.
- There is a lack of Church of Scotland specific resources to help children and young people understand communion and appropriate liturgy to use in services with children and young people present.

Background

Since 1992 congregations have been able to include baptised children and young people in receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when Act XV (1992) Act Anent Admission of Children to Communion was passed by the General Assembly.

For a number of years the Church of Scotland annual statistical returns have identified that only small numbers of under 18s receive communion. Furthermore, the following examples of anecdotal feedback have been received from congregations, locally based workers, volunteers and ministers:

- some congregations actively decide not to include under 18s because they do not believe it is right to do so
- some congregations do not include under 18s because it is judged better to not include any, rather than separate out the baptised from the unbaptised, as they understand the Act requires
- some congregations do not include under 18s, not because they disagree with the concept but because church practice isn't adjusted to allow it, e.g. young people leave the main worship service for separate groups and aren't there when communion occurs
- some congregations admit all under 18s and for practical and pastoral reasons choose not to determine whether individuals are baptised or not, thereby including all but contravening their understanding of the Act

At the General Assembly of 2017 the following Deliverance section was passed:

'Affirming the importance of including children and young people in the community of faith' (10.1.2), and noting the Council's intention to focus on the question: 'How and when are children and young people to be fully involved in the Sacrament of Holy Communion:

Instruct the Mission and Discipleship Council to consult with Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions in order to determine the extent to which the Church is finding Act V 2000, Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments, to be pastorally helpful in the discipleship of children and young people."

In response to this Deliverance, the Mission and Discipleship Council sent out a survey in October 2017, to the 700 congregations that had recorded they have under 18s involved in their life and worship, to explore the extent that children and young people are included in Holy Communion, and how this is helpful in children and young peoples' faith development and discipleship.

Summary of Act XV (1992)

Act XV (1992) Act Anent Admission of Children to Communion was passed in 1992 and then, subsequently, consolidated into Act V (2000). Key points stipulated in the Act are that:

- Communion should only be offered to those who are baptised, no matter what their age is.
- Kirk Sessions are responsible for testing faith before admission to communion.
- Any children and young people admitted need to be being nurtured within the life and worship of the church and love the Lord and respond in faith to the invitation to 'take and eat'.
- It is recognised that Kirk Sessions have free discretion as to how they respond in this matter.

Findings from the Church of Scotland Annual Statistical Returns

The Church of Scotland annual statistical returns for 2016 reveal that:

- Only 6% of under 18s associated with congregations received communion.
- 747 congregations with under 18s had no under 18's receiving communion.

Findings from the Mission and Discipleship Council 'Children & Communion' Survey

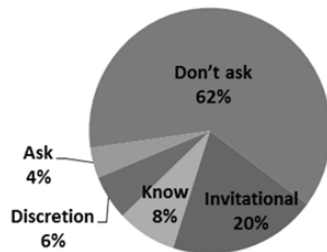
The findings from the survey that the Mission and Discipleship Council sent out in October 2017 to the 700 congregations that had recorded that they had under 18s, is summarised below.

- i. 11% will not admit under 18s to communion. The reasons given include:
 - Lack of understanding of both the theology and the Act regarding children and communion.
 - Negative attitudes amongst Kirk Sessions, elders and previous ministers.
 - Children should not receive as 'they do not understand'.

- Tradition and carrying on doing things the same way they have always done.
 - A legacy of 'worthiness', with a number of adults not taking communion.
- ii. 40% have no under 11s receiving communion while 47% have no 12 – 18s receiving communion. Practice that is preventing under 18s receiving communion includes:
 - Congregations have a mix of baptised and unbaptised children.
 - Communion services are not child friendly or accessible.
 - Churches don't want to lose the formality of the sacrament.
 - Confusion over who authorises admission to communion (the minister, Kirk Session or parents?).
 - Lack of Church of Scotland specific resources and opportunities to prepare people suitably.
 - The feeling of being prevented by the stipulations of the Act and not wanting to segregate the few under 18s who are present.
 - iii. There is a significant gulf between what the Act stipulates and what is happening on the ground, including:
 - There is a notable difference in practice expected between adults and under 18s in relation to confirming if they have been baptised prior to receiving communion.
 - It is practically and pastorally very difficult to prevent admission to communion based on whether someone is baptised or not, hence the table is often made open to all, whatever their baptismal status.

- 63% of congregations responding to the survey don't ask if those receiving communion have been baptised.

How do you know if those receiving communion have been baptised?



iv. Responses were received about the impact of under 18s being included in communion, which included:

- 'Children and young people feel from the outset that they fully belong to the family of God, they feel that it is their church and they belong. They feel very much part of the community of faith as a result of being included.'
- 'Understanding the meaning of communion contributes to the development of the understanding of faith. It is a family meal. It reflects Jewish Passover (and therefore the Last Supper). It reminds us that no one truly understands the mystery in sacraments. It keeps it simple and relaxed. It becomes a converting ordinance.'
- 'Children have probably the best sense of understanding what mystery is when it comes to communion, which frankly some adults are never going to appreciate.'
- 'It avoids the young person thinking that there is something odd or magical or secret going on.'
- 'What is the impact of excluding them? As leader of the youth in the church, we asked to bring the teenagers into communion. We were 'permitted' to sit at the back with nearly 30 teenagers, but they were not to be served. All of my leaders and I refused to take communion that day. The damage of being treated like 'second class citizens' was one which we had not anticipated. We had hoped to encourage young people further in their faith, but many of them were [rightly] critical of being judged.'

Conclusions

The following conclusions have been drawn from the findings arising out of the 2017 Mission and Discipleship Council's Children, Young People & Communion survey:

- A small percentage of the under 18s who are present in our congregations are receiving communion
- There is a need to develop congregations' understanding of the theological relationship between baptism and communion.
- Congregations need support towards developing an improved understanding and practice of communion.
- Further guidance on the discretion allowed within the permissive nature of Act V (2000) Consolidating Act Anent the Sacraments is needed to give guidance to Kirk Sessions who experience being caught between keeping within Church law while facing the practical and pastoral challenges associated with restricting access to communion to those who are baptised.
- There is a lack of Church of Scotland specific resources to help children and young people understand communion and appropriate liturgy to use in services with children and young people present.

Appendix IV

JOINT EMERGING CHURCH GROUP

a) Attendance at Going for Growth Day Conferences

2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Ayr	70	Linlithgow	50	Aberdeen	21	Inverness	7	Orkney (TBC)	
Dornoch	24	Oban	20	Glasgow	31				
Dundee	80	Lerwick	29						

b) Attendance at Fresh Expressions Vision Days, hosted as follow-up to Going for Growth days

2015		2016		2017	
Dornoch	42	Kilmelford	42	Glasgow	16
Kilmarnock	44	Linlithgow	44	Aberdeen	30
Perth	27	Lerwick	27		

106 people attended the Summer School programme, from 28 different Presbyteries, with around half attending all three.

c) Attendance at Going for Growth Summer School

Total	106
Ordained	55
Church employee (Church of Scotland or other)	12
Other	39

This echoes findings in the Church of England on the importance of ordained, and lay pioneers. Of particular note is the number of attendees who were neither ordained Ministers, or in the employment of the church or para-church agency. This is what has been referred to as the 'lay-lay' and their impact on fresh expressions and church growth is significant. The research findings are at <https://goo.gl/7BC8ft>.

d) Case Studies for Evaluation of Fresh Expressions

Gateway	
Hot Chocolate	https://goo.gl/hWZDra
Netherlorn Churches	
Neither Young Nor Old (NYNO)	https://goo.gl/kunqFm
St Kentigern's	
Sanctuary First	https://goo.gl/wE75mX
The Shed	https://goo.gl/MsJMhc
The Tron	

Membership of JECG

Brian Porteous, Convener (Ministries Council)
Graham Astles (Ministries Council)
Andrea Boyes (Mission and Discipleship Council)
Margaret Habeshaw (Guild Representative, Mission and Discipleship Council)
Martin Fair (Mission and Discipleship Council)
Keith Mack (Panel on Review and Reform)
Andrew Morrice (Ministries Council, NCD Sub-Committee)

Co-opted Members

Albert Bogle

Staff

Lesley Hamilton-Messer, Joint Secretary (Mission and Discipleship Council)
Angus Mathieson, Joint Secretary (Ministries Council)
Liz Crumlish, Path of Renewal Co-ordinator
David McCarthy, Fresh Expressions Development Worker

Appendix V

RESEARCH IN RELATION TO THE FUTURE OF PIONEER MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

This research has been commissioned jointly by the Panel on Review and Reform and Ministries Council, in partnership with Trinity College, University of Glasgow. The research is being conducted by Rev Dr Sandy Forsyth, who teaches Practical Theology at Trinity College, University of Glasgow. His work is being overseen by members of the Panel and Ministries Council, reporting to the Joint Emerging Churches Group. The research began on 1 September 2017 and is funded for one year at 1.5 days per week. A final report will be compiled by 31 August 2018 and presented to the General Assembly of 2019.

The final report will assess the nature, validity and purpose of pioneer ministry and, as appropriate, make recommendations for the future recruitment, training, practical support and oversight of pioneer ministry in the Church of Scotland. This interim report will set out a summary of the key issues that are being considered, and the parameters of the research including its purpose and scope.

1. Key Issues

What is 'pioneer ministry'? These are the words of Dave Male, National Adviser for Pioneer Development in the Church of England:

Pioneers are people called by God who are the first to see and creatively respond to the Holy Spirit's initiatives with those outside the church; gathering others around them as they seek to establish new contextual Christian community. (<https://goo.gl/S1cXQL>)

As one pioneer minister in the Church of Scotland commented recently, his ministry is about 'setting the space for encounter, without setting its parameters; setting a direction in motion for people to travel, without dictating the narrow journey.'

For Male, there are two types: 'fresh start pioneers', who begin from a 'blank canvas' in a community or network, and 'parish-based pioneers', who will develop new forms of church alongside the old structures. Both require the active support of a third group, 'the sustainer enablers', who 'have the vision and the self-confidence to engineer opportunities to resource, release and protect Pioneers within their own context.'

There are people who fall into all three of these groups that are members and ministers of the Church of Scotland. They are either involved in implementing forms of pioneer ministry now, or, as is far more likely, feel the sense of calling from God to do so and are still praying, hoping and waiting for the opportunity and capability to act, and for the support of their Church in doing so. This research and its resulting report will aim to enable and resource their visions.

In that light, the primary issues which will be addressed in the research are: (a) How is 'pioneer ministry' to be defined, and is it a distinctive entity and calling? (b) Does it have intrinsic worth as a model of ministry and mission that will provide a dynamic avenue for the future of the expression of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Scotland? (c) If so, how should investment of human and financial resources be made by the Church of Scotland into pioneer ministry, to encourage the flourishing of new Christian expressions led by both the lay and ordained?

The secondary issues are to assess how such aspects relate to: (a) a forward-looking vision of what ministry and mission may look like nationally in ten to twenty years' time; (b) the existing parish church structure and its ministries, and their regeneration through such as the 'Path of Renewal' programme; recognising the continuing decline since the late 1950s of the Christendom model of church which is now nearing a tipping point, and its intended future management through the creation of 'hub' ministries, alongside linkages, unions and closures; (c) Presbyterian polity which emphasises oversight and accountability, considering also aspects of Church law, the role of Presbyteries and funding streams which might contribute to the development of forms of pioneer ministry, whilst lessening the need for significant legislative enactments and budgetary input; (d) the model presently implemented by the Church of Scotland through five 'pioneer ministry' posts created by the church which are centrally funded, others being funded via Presbytery Plan posts, or use of discretionary funding from Ministries and Mission budgets; and (e) similar models of innovative ministry and mission across the United Kingdom and beyond, such as in Church Planting and the Fresh Expressions movement.

Within that framework, the following avenues of research, assessment and reporting have been pursued since the research began, and will be developed further in the concluding phase:

2. Parameters of Research

- a) A **critical assessment** by research of the **missiological and theological purposes of pioneer ministry** in the context of Fresh Expressions of church and of church planting models; accounting for commonly held objections and resistances to the concept and practice of Pioneer Ministry and potential responses. This section analyses theory and motivations.
- b) An **in-depth survey and consideration** by interview, visits and information gathering with practitioners, office holders in denominations, key figures in training institutions and theological academics, of **present models and future potential** of recruitment, training, support and operation of pioneer ministry and church planting in Scotland, England, the Netherlands and the USA. This area focuses on methods of implementation in context.

- c) The **assessment of missional outcomes in pioneer situations** in relation to the formation of ecclesial communities, their impact in the expression of the Gospel, and their relationship to the provision of human and financial resources. This will consider the methodology to be used in assessment, whether this may be under a 'results-based' method, or within a 'transformational model'. This aspect examines results and long-term progress.
- d) The **overriding purpose** of the research will be addressed in the conclusions. It is to **make recommendations** for the direction and content in Scotland of future selection and training for pioneer ministry in both lay and ordained streams, and of the purpose, structure, support and evaluation of pioneer ministry in practice.

3. Conclusion

In short from the above: What is it? Is it worth it? What are we seeking to achieve? How is it done elsewhere? How might it work best here? How should it be recruited, trained, enabled, and supported? How is it to be evaluated and sustained?

The goal is to set a platform, which if approved by the General Assembly of 2019, might enrich the flourishing of a dynamic missional focus in our nation, enabling the Gospel to be heard and expressed in places and networks where it has fallen silent, and bringing transformation through faith and action by those called by God, both lay and ordained, in ministries and projects which maximise the most positive outcomes and the greatest sustainability.

Rev Dr Forsyth would be glad to engage with any minister or member of the church who would wish to discuss the research, or provide constructive input to its direction. He can be contacted at alexander.forsyth@glasgow.ac.uk.

Rev Dr Sandy Forsyth
Trinity College
University of Glasgow
January 2018

Appendix VI

NEW RESOURCES AND SAINT ANDREWS PRESS

New Resources from Mission and Discipleship Council Online/downloadable resources

- 360 web resource (<https://goo.gl/TFouqA>)
- 52 Weekly Worship contributions (<https://goo.gl/q7EPXx>)
- Life Stories (<https://goo.gl/zDiVwS>)
- Children and Young People pages (<https://goo.gl/6KQw3U>) which includes information on YoYP (<https://goo.gl/tUHZUo>)
- Young Adults pages of website (<https://goo.gl/z6mV3W>)
- Guidelines for employing a children's, family's or youth worker (<https://goo.gl/VYt2Em>)
- Rural: various downloads and web content (<https://goo.gl/R5azb2>)
- Learn Online: various new parts of web content (<https://goo.gl/eKfZ4j>)
- Office Bearers online (<https://goo.gl/uGrkmw>)
- Elders as moderators of their own kirk sessions (<https://goo.gl/fDaLmy>)
- Learning Disabilities Action Pack (<https://goo.gl/zjxxUU>)

Publications/hard copy resources

- Word of Life (Pray Now) (<https://goo.gl/iL4lpA>)
- Stories of Encounter (Pray Now) (<https://goo.gl/wXq2Qh>)
- Learn: Understanding our Faith publication (<https://goo.gl/GmXN2M>)
- Learn: Children and Young People publication (<https://goo.gl/XMSyoa>)
- Year of Young People Toolkit (<https://goo.gl/pC29eL>)
- Diverse Gender Identities and Pastoral Care publication (<https://goo.gl/Npud9F>)

Saint Andrew Press publications

Saint Andrew Press' publishing year runs from October 1 to September 30, and in the year ending September 30 2017, four new titles were published, three fewer than in the previous year:

- Two regular annuals – *Word of Life*, the *Pray Now* volume for 2017, and the *Church of Scotland Year Book*, which again required no subsidy because of strong advertising revenue.
- Finlay Macdonald's lively and informed history of five centuries of the Kirk, *From Reform to Renewal* was published to great acclaim, as was Doug Gay's *Reforming the Kirk*, based on the prestigious Chalmers lectures.

Two Learn volumes, *Understanding Our Faith* and *Children and Young People*, were expected, but these appeared later, making 2016-17 a rather lean year for Saint Andrew Press. Income was down some £35k on the previous year. However, the publishing programme for the current 2017-18 year is looking much stronger with eight scheduled titles and more in the pipeline. Scheduled visits by the Publishing Director to 121 aims to ensure a flow of new proposals and visits by the Marketing Director aims to ensure effective communication and promotion of the Church of Scotland's publications.

Your publishing contacts are:

- Publishing Director: Christine Smith
christine@hymnsam.co.uk
- Senior Academic Commissioning Editor: David Shervington
david.shervington@hymnsam.co.uk
- Marketing Director: Michael Addison
michael@hymnsam.co.uk
- Saint Andrew Press Marketing Co-ordinator: Nicola Prince
nicola@hymnsam.co.uk