

## PANEL ON REVIEW AND REFORM MAY 2018

### Proposed Deliverance

#### The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Encourage Presbyteries to develop training for those participating in different areas of service within the church and to make information about training programmes they develop available to others to assist in learning and development.
3. Welcome the increasing co-operation between some Presbyteries and the work of the Principal Clerk in facilitating this and encourage all Presbyteries to consider areas where working with others would be beneficial.
4. Instruct the Ministries Council to complete further work on the possibility of Ordained Local Ministers and Auxiliary Ministers being paid, consulting with Ordained Local Ministers, Auxiliary Ministers and others in doing so, and report to the General Assembly of 2019.
5. Instruct the Ministries Council to complete further work on the practicalities of allowing some candidates for Ordained Local Ministry to complete training placements in their home congregation where this is appropriate and to report to the General Assembly of 2019.
6. Instruct the Panel on Review & Reform to work with Mission & Discipleship Council, Ministries Council and the National Youth Assembly to consider what might be done to support the involvement and development of leaders under 50 at a congregational level.
7. Instruct the Panel on Review & Reform to complete research on the impact for congregations of participating in Path of Renewal and report to the General Assembly of 2019.

### Report

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1 Vision

The remit of the Panel on Review & Reform is to formulate and bring before successive General Assemblies:

- a) a clear statement of the long-term vision of the Church, and
- b) paths and developments which might be followed by congregations, Presbyteries, Councils and Agencies of the Church to make such a vision a reality.

**1.1.2** In addressing the first of these, the Panel has considered whether the church might consider adopting a new, shorter vision statement. On balance, the Panel believes that there is little to be gained from such a change and that the current vision statement of the Church of Scotland, adopted by the General Assembly of 2006, continues to reflect the desire of the church and provides a “clear statement of the long term vision of the Church”:

*To be a church which seeks to inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.*

**1.1.3** At the heart of the vision statement is an understanding that the primary work and witness of the Church of Scotland is through local congregations – something which was underscored in the Church Without Walls report:

*Local church is the focus of action – the place of initiative, questions and vision. Our vision is of local churches discovering their vision of what God is doing and joining in. The regional church is the focus of support ... central church is the focus of essential servicing and national role<sup>1)</sup>*

**1.1.4** However, spelling out what this means “on the ground” is important and in its reports in 2016 and 2017 the Panel suggested that this involved developing, throughout Scotland and beyond, churches marked by three characteristics:

- a) Working in partnership with others to meet social needs and to bring about change so that justice prevails
- b) Sustaining authentic, engaging Christian community and worship for all generations
- c) Encouraging all to become fully formed disciples of Jesus Christ

The Panel is encouraged that the importance of these three strands is picked up in the Strategic Plan being developed by the Council of Assembly.

## 1.2 Underpinning Principles

Whilst the above may reflect the desire of the church, it does not answer the question “Why?” In seeking to answer this, the Panel recognises that at a deep level our primary calling is to be engaged in the mission of God – to see God’s Kingdom come, God’s will done. In that context we understand that building *enthusiastic worshiping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities [of faith]* is part of the way that God has worked down through the generations and is still working today. As a consequence our belief is that there is something of “joining in” with what God is doing as we build local Christian communities who bear witness to God’s grace and love, model Kingdom living and reach out in love to those around them.

## 1.3 Key things needed to achieve the vision

In order to take this forward the Panel believes that four key things are required:

### 1.3.1 A Missional Mindset created throughout the church

A missional mindset is marked by an openness to change and recognises our deep reliance upon God as we reach out in love to those around us. Without this change of mindset, nothing of substance will change.

### 1.3.2 Enabling leadership to be in place in each Church of Scotland congregation

The key word in this is “enabling” and is built around the vision of Ephesians 4 – God gifting leaders in order that they might prepare all of God’s people for acts of service. The Panel believes that this picture is important and that we need to move away from a flawed and unbiblical expectation that the church will provide what the members need, with the minister the key person in place to meet those needs. Instead

we need to develop an understanding of the church as a movement of God’s people, engaged in the work that God has called us to.

### 1.3.3 Good support structures in place at a regional and national level

The power to bring about the changes required lies mainly with local congregations, elders, ministers and others. In fact without change at that level nothing will be taken forward! However presbyteries and the national church should play a key role in ensuring that support and encouragement is in place to help people make the changes required and to steer a path through the transitions. This support will include a combination of training, accompaniment, encouragement, administrative support and financial resources. The importance of this is recognised in the Strategic Plan being developed by the Council of Assembly.

### 1.3.4 Action – not just words

The Panel is deeply aware, as reported to the GA in 2016, that more reports, no matter how well worded, will achieve little. Neither a change of mission statement, nor the affirmation of the existing statement will, by themselves, bring about the changes required. Instead what is required is concerted action and prayer on the part of all, wherever they are serving.

## 1.4 Creating a Missional mind set

**1.4.1** The importance of this change of mindset noted above cannot be over emphasised – nor, though, can it be imposed! It is something which people need to work through and “own” for themselves. This was recognised in the Church of England report “Setting God’s People Free.”

*What is needed, first and foremost, is not a programme but a change in culture. A culture that communicates the all-encompassing scope of the good news for the whole of life, and pursues the core calling of every church community and every follower of Jesus – to form whole-life maturing disciples<sup>[2]</sup>*

**1.4.2** The Panel is therefore looking for practical ways to engage with people in meaningful ways and to influence the mindsets that exist. In pursuing this, the Panel is organising conferences to engage others in conversation. Following on from a successful joint conference with Trinity College in 2017, addressed by Professor Stefan Paas from the Netherlands, two conferences are planned for 2018. The first is with Tod Bolsinger, author of *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian*

*Leadership in Uncharted Territory*<sup>[3]</sup>. He is Vice President and Chief of the Leadership Formation Platform at Fuller Seminary in the USA and will look at how we develop adaptive leaders to help chart our way through the changes we face. The second is being planned in partnership with Trinity College and will involve Steve Taylor, author of *Built for Change - a practical theology of innovation and collaboration*<sup>[4]</sup>. Steve is Principal of Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership and Senior Lecturer, Flinders University, New Zealand.

**1.4.3** Alongside this the Panel is working with local congregations and ministers through Path of Renewal. The latter is key work with a limited number of congregations which it is hoped will influence other congregations over time. A report on this work is included below.

## **1.5 Enabling Leadership**

**1.5.1** Over the last 60 years there has been a growing understanding of the importance of all God's people being released into active Christian service and of an enabling leadership style being developed to encourage this. In Scotland this can be seen in the work of Tom Allan and George Macleod in the 1950s, both of whom had a vision for investing in local people with the hope that they would become so enthusiastic about their faith that they would take the presence of Jesus into their workplaces and communities. They believed that through them transformation would happen. This was also seen in the Ecumenical movement, which started as a movement to enable the laity. As such it was not an anti-clerical movement but one that sought to reframe an understanding that the task of the minister or priest was not to do it all but to enable and encourage others to live out their faith in daily life and living.

**1.5.2** This understanding can also be seen in the Reformation and is part of the DNA of the Church of Scotland, with ministers seen as teaching-elders rather than priests. They therefore take their place as part of a shared leadership group (Kirk Session) with a specific responsibility within that for helping to form people in faith. However, church history would seem to indicate that the church continuously returns to placing increasing responsibilities and expectations on one person and that it takes a determined effort to prevent this happening or to reverse it when it has taken root.

**1.5.3** Recovering this in the Church of Scotland is crucial at the moment on two fronts. Firstly, in looking at the way we

train and equip both existing and new ministers and the expectations we place on them. Secondly in shifting the mindset of congregations and members so that they want to be enabled for the work God has for them.

## **1.6 Good support structures in place at a regional and national level**

**1.6.1** As noted above, good support structures are essential in helping to facilitate change at a local level and many have noted weaknesses in this over the past years.

**1.6.2** At a presbytery level, restructuring has remained a desire of many and there are strong indications that this is beginning to emerge organically as presbyteries recognise the opportunities and advantages of working together more closely. The Panel is of the view that these developments should be supported and encouraged and that a formal restructuring of presbyteries at this stage would be detrimental to this process continuing in a positive way.

**1.6.3** The Panel's early work on introducing Local Church Reviews has subsequently been developed by others and has helped many presbyteries to give a forward looking emphasis to the regular cycle of visits to congregations. Over the last year, the Principal Clerk's office has been able to provide support to presbyteries in developing the Local Church Review process more fully. The Panel will continue to provide support in this as appropriate.

**1.6.4** A number of presbyteries have initiated training for those involved in leading worship, pastoral care or conducting funerals, with a process for presbytery authorising people to conduct worship. The Panel believes that this kind of initiative is to be encouraged at a presbytery level and that responsibility for this should lie with presbyteries. Capacity exists for resources and approaches to be shared by those developing this work and Mission & Discipleship Council are currently looking at how this might be facilitated.

**1.6.5** At a national level, the Panel is of the opinion that it would be beneficial to have a more integrated approach to providing input for local congregations to help them grow and develop. Please see section 2.7 below on Church Planting and Supporting growth in local churches.

## **1.7 Action – not just words**

**1.7.1** In most areas of work the Panel’s role is to feed ideas or proposals to Councils who have responsibility for specific areas of work. The Panel has continued to play this role over the last year and some of this is reported on below.

**1.7.2** However the desire to be more proactive and to see some practical outcomes was what spurred the Panel to initiate the work being carried out through Path of Renewal, which is providing input to over 50 congregations. The work involved in setting up the Path of Renewal has meant that time has not been available to initiate other practical projects over the last two years. However the Panel is now beginning to look at practical projects or work it can initiate, recognising that its primary role in this will be in the developing of new work which will then be taken on by other Councils or groups. With this in mind, the primary responsibility for the Path of Renewal work will shift from the Panel to Ministries Council during 2018/2019.

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## **2. SPECIFIC AREAS OF WORK**

### **2.1 New local leadership roles**

The Panel is currently looking at different models of leadership developed in other churches, including Commissioned Local Ministers (PCUSA) and Focal Ministers (Diocese of St David’s Church in Wales.) Further work is required on this before a firm recommendation can be brought.

### **2.2 Ordained Local Ministers**

In 2017 the Panel on Review & Reform was instructed, along with Ministries Council, *to bring proposals to the General Assembly of 2018 on payment, training and placement of OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers in the terms set out in the report*<sup>[5]</sup>. Over the last year, the Panel has worked with Ministries Council to explore the possible payment of OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers and to consider whether OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers could both train and serve in their own congregations. The Panel is supportive of all of these developments and has shared with Ministries Council a framework which could allow the payment of OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers to be introduced at least on a restricted basis. The Panel also invited Ministries Council to consider allowing OLMs to train in their home congregations, whilst noting that it is already possible for OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers to serve in their home congregations. Ministries Council has indicated that it would

prefer to take time to consider this further, consulting with OLMs and Auxiliary Ministers as it does so.

### **2.3 Eldership**

A Panel member serves on the Eldership Working Group and some research is being completed by the Panel into Kirk Session/local decision making structures which help to initiate and sustain new developments. The findings of this will be fed into the Eldership Working Group, which will report further on this through the Mission & Discipleship Council.

### **2.4 Leadership for the under 50s**

The Panel is aware that the shaping or reshaping of the roles above will help to make them more attractive for those under 50. However the Panel senses that further changes will be required to create a leadership culture where those under 50 feel entirely comfortable. The Panel believes that the key to this lies at local congregational level and in developing a new culture of shared leadership there. This may then lead to people moving on to leadership outside their congregation either as individuals or as part of a team drawn from their own congregation. Noting that the development of intergenerational church is a key part of the Strategic Plan, the Panel is proposing that the Panel, Mission & Discipleship Council, Ministries Council and the National Youth Assembly should work together to consider what might be done to support the involvement and development of leaders under 50.

### **2.5 Pioneer Ministry**

**2.5.1** The Panel has been seeking to take forward the instruction given by the General Assembly 2017 *to work with Ministries Council, Fresh Expressions and outside agencies to ensure that appropriate training for Pioneer Ministry is developed.*

**2.5.2** Progress in this area has not been significant over the last year but to assist with shaping this well, research has been jointly funded by the Panel, Ministries Council and Trinity College, Glasgow University and an Interim Report is included in the Joint Emerging Church Group report. The terms of this are to:

- research different approaches being taken in Scotland, UK and Western Europe to the planting of new churches and creating Fresh Expressions of church

- alongside this, to research different approaches which are being used to train those involved in Pioneer ministry, ordained and lay, and the impact or effectiveness of these approaches
- in so doing, to assess the impact and outcome of these approaches and any lessons which may be beneficial to the Church of Scotland as this area of work is developed further and shape given to training for those involved in this developing area

## 2.6 Sacraments

Work on whether we should permit a wider group of people to administer the sacraments is ongoing with the intention of reporting on this to the General Assembly of 2019. This work is being carried out through a joint working group with the Theological Forum, the Legal Questions Committee and the Ecumenical Relations Committee, with wider consultations with other groups also taking place.

## 2.7 Church planting and supporting growth in local churches

**2.7.1** The Panel believes that these two connected areas need to be better resourced than at present or, at least, that we need better centralised co-ordination for this work. One model the Panel has explored is that introduced in the Diocese of London in the Church of England through its Centre for Church Planting and Growth. As well as providing input to those seeking to plant new churches, they work with those actively seeking to renew existing churches through their Growth and Learning Communities and give extensive input to what they term “Resource Churches.” This latter group of churches are intentionally resourced so that they can, in turn, help plant and revitalise other churches through releasing specialist resources, sending teams and developing leaders<sup>[6]</sup>. The Panel understands that the Joint Emerging Church Group has shown a willingness to play this co-ordinating role and the Panel is supportive of this proposal.<sup>[7]</sup>

**2.7.2** The Panel believes that the Go For It Fund has a crucial role to play in church planting and supporting growth in local churches. The Go For It Fund continually reviews its guidelines, funding criteria and operating procedures, ensuring that they continue to enable local congregations to respond missionally to their local contexts. The Panel recognises that the pool of experience residing within the Go For It Fund which in part derives from the heritage of the former Emerging Ministries Fund, is one that the National

Church should be drawing into future conversations around church planting and congregational development.

## 3. PATH OF RENEWAL – PART OF THE RENEWAL MOVEMENT

**3.1.1** The Panel has continued to invest heavily in the development of Path of Renewal – work which is focussed on providing an opportunity to a group of churches to intentionally travel towards becoming missional churches. The Panel has been encouraged by the responses of those involved and their commitment to Path of Renewal. All indications are that it has offered a positive and worthwhile contribution to local congregations who wish to look at how they might be renewed. Alongside this the Panel itself has found this work exciting, stimulating and encouraging, giving helpful insights in their work of looking for *paths and developments which might be followed by congregations to make ... vision a reality.*

**3.1.2** In a deliberate attempt to develop something *with* rather than *for* people, Path of Renewal was not fully formed at the outset, but has been shaped round the needs of those involved, encouraging them to ensure that what develops is contextual and relevant. This approach has helped to create a positive ownership for Path of Renewal amongst those involved and has allowed the Panel to view this as a movement for others to join rather than simply a programme.

**3.1.3** In developing the work, the Panel has actively networked with others involved in similar work in Scotland and elsewhere, discovering others who have been travelling similar journeys and making the same discoveries. More recently, strong parallels between the approach taken in Path of Renewal and that promoted by Tom Allan in the 1950s have been highlighted. The Panel believes that such networking and learning from others is crucial and is part of the fruit of recognising that we are part of a worldwide church and that Path of Renewal is part of a wider movement of Renewal.

## 3.2 Path of Renewal – an update

**3.2.1** In 2018, 26 congregations moved into year 3 of Path of Renewal with 25 congregations joining Path of Renewal at year 1. At the end of year 3 it is envisaged that some limited support will continue to be offered to ministers and congregations with facilitated learning communities and

access to a yearly conference. Those starting in 2018 will have the benefit of the experience of those who have gone before them and mentoring support for the new congregations will be provided by those already involved in Path of Renewal. The positive nature of this was evident at shared events in January and a clearer focus of what is required in the early years of work with ministers and congregations is emerging.

**3.2.2** In the early work of Path of Renewal, the focus has been on developing missional thinking, missional leadership and missional spirituality in each of the congregations with significant input for ministers and leadership groups from congregations. This foundational work of changing mindsets and building capacity through investing in local leaders will allow the work of the final year to focus on rooting this in the life and witness of the congregation. Part of this will involve looking at reshaping or developing church life and worship in significant ways.

**3.2.3** For the second group of churches that have recently joined, regional conferences for elders and others from congregations are being introduced from an early stage. This will complement the training given to ministers, with an awareness that this will help to root things in local congregations - an example of learning as the work is developed.

### **3.3 Path of Renewal - outcomes**

One area explored most recently has been the interplay between church growth thinking and the thinking of those involved in the missional church movement and seeing those as two sides of the same coin. In its work, Path of Renewal has focussed on developing missional churches, with the three key characteristics noted in section 1.1.4 above:

- Vibrant, attractive worshipping communities
- who are forming people in faith
- and connected with their wider communities.

In recent thinking, at least some in the church growth movement would speak of seeing:

- growth in numbers
- a deepening commitment to Christ
- and a growing impact on the community.

These can be laid alongside one another, with the three “growth” areas being seen as the fruit of developing churches with the three marks of missional churches.

Ultimately the work of Path of Renewal will be judged by the effectiveness of its work in supporting congregations to develop in the ways outlined above, resulting in the growth noted. Because the kind of change envisaged requires fundamental and deep rooted change it is likely to be 3 to 5 years before this will be fully seen. However early changes noted in the mindset of the minister, growing capacity through investment in key future leaders, and an increasing open-ness in congregations to re-shape church life in appropriate ways are all positive early indicators. These are being tracked by a researcher following the work of Path of Renewal

### **3.4 Path of Renewal – the future**

A review of Path of Renewal was completed by Ministries Council in 2017, which noted the positive nature and outcomes of the work of Path of Renewal:

*It offers a well-resourced, supported and locally directed approach to mission, and provides positive and morale boosting outcomes to beleaguered ministries. It is creating an atmosphere of change, moving from a pastoral to missional model of leadership.*

Ministries Council are supporting further development of Path of Renewal with funding continuing to 2020 at which time a further review will take place<sup>[8]</sup>.

### **3.5 Path of Renewal – a focus on developing local teams**

**3.5.1** An area which ministers and congregations have been encouraged to develop is an understanding of the importance of local teams in congregations with a range of different gifts and “offices”: people who carry different concerns and outlooks which together form a holistic leadership team. Based on Ephesians 4 people offer leadership in five ways as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds and Teachers:

**Apostles** push the boundaries, help us to think in new ways and see new possibilities

**Prophets** encourage us to listen out for what God is saying and to keep a right perspective – that what we are involved in is the work of the Kingdom of God

**Evangelists** carry a deep concern for those who do not own faith in Christ and that we find ways of communicating with them about faith

**Shepherds/Pastors** are concerned for the wellbeing of other people, both those who are church members and others

**Teachers** look for ways of communicating well so that others can learn and grow

**3.5.2** All of the above are required at the moment and no one person is gifted to provide leadership in all five areas. In our current structure ministers attempt all five, but they will naturally excel in some areas and find others more challenging. There is a need to affirm the crucial role that ministers of Word and Sacrament play and to build leadership teams in congregations to include people with the gifts to provide leadership in the above areas. An online resource is available to assist in discerning where one's principal gifts lie: <http://www.fivefoldsurvey.com/>

#### **4. REFORMING THE KIRK – FINANCES**

**4.1** During consultations held by the Panel in 2015 and 2016, concerns were consistently raised about the method of calculating Ministries and Mission contributions, alongside the balance of money being used for national work as against that left with local congregations. Concern has also been expressed in different ways over the long term sustainability of a model where a high proportion of churches do not fully meet the cost of local ministry in their parish.

**4.2** The Panel is also aware of a growing issue of congregations with long term vacancies and congregations in guardianship which, in some cases, make considerable contributions to Ministries and Mission, preventing them from looking at how they might develop local staffing in appropriate ways to meet their needs and to grow the local church. As the number of vacancies increases over the next few years, this is likely to be a growing issue which will result in congregations without ministers subsidising those who do.

**4.3** These issues and others were not fully addressed by the review completed in 2015 – in particular the lack of

incentive that exists for congregations to “step up” and work towards paying full ministry costs for their parish. This and the difficulties it raises was something highlighted by Dr Doug Gay in his book “Reforming the Kirk”:

*Our current highly centralised systems are strong on pooling and sharing, but they look increasingly less well suited to motivating local giving. The acute missional challenges facing the Kirk over the period to 2030 call for a new financial imagination which will maintain a powerful commitment to smart, creative and empowering expressions of national sharing while incentivising a new era of local responsibility and offering greater local and regional flexibility<sup>[9]</sup>*

**4.4** In writing this, Dr Gay sets out an alternative system with five categories of congregations:<sup>[10]</sup>

- a) Investment Congregations – financially poorest congregations would be given generous but reviewable financial support.
- b) Development congregations who would have a set allocation below £50,000 but would be working towards this level.
- c) Self-sustaining congregations who would contribute £50,000 plus 20% of income above this.
- d) Contributor congregations who would contribute £80,000 plus 10% of income above this.
- e) Investor congregations, who would contribute £100,000 plus 2% of income above this.

**4.5** Undoubtedly such a scheme would require further work to ensure that it was workable, but three alternatives seem to exist at the moment:

- a) Retain the current system, but deal with some of the more glaring issues which are evident.
- b) Revert to a system where congregations fund the stipend of their own minister or staff members, except in parishes where the Presbytery and Ministries Council are of the view that financial support to sustain ministry is essential.
- c) Develop a new system – either that suggested by Dr Gay or another which is more suitable.

**4.6** Alongside this, Dr Gay suggests that a system be set up to allow congregations to voluntarily support mission in priority areas and in remote rural areas.

**4.7** In 2015 the Joint Working Group on Strategic Funding and Resource allocation recommended that it should be asked to “start to explore options for alternatives to the current Ministries and Mission Contributions system, with more extensive financial modelling”<sup>[1]</sup>. The Group didn’t find time to complete this task before its final report in 2016 although work has continued in the Finance Group of the Council of Assembly.

**4.8** The Council of Assembly has indicated that, as part of the ongoing implementation of the Strategic Plan, it will complete a review of the means of calculating Ministries and Mission contributions alongside considering the viability or desirability of setting up a voluntary mission fund.

*In the name of the Panel*

GRAHAM DUFFIN, Convener  
JENNY M ADAMS, Vice-Convener

## Addendum

### **Rev Graham Duffin, Convener**

The Panel records its gratitude and appreciation to the Rev Graham Duffin who steps down as Convener of the Panel on Review & Reform at this Assembly. Graham’s involvement with the Panel started in 2012 through his membership of the Panel’s Church Growth group, after which he became a co-opted member. He has served as Convener of the Panel since 2015. In particular, the Panel notes Graham’s vision, energy and commitment in enabling the growth of missional congregations across the Church of Scotland, especially through the ongoing development of the Path of Renewal movement. Graham’s sharing of his extensive and ongoing study and experience of developing leaders and managing effective change in the whole church has been of enormous value to the work of the Panel. Furthermore, his passion that all generations of Christians find the Church as a body in which they can share their gifts and be enabled in discipleship and ministry has inspired us. For all these things, which demonstrate Graham’s great ability and commitment, the Panel expresses its gratitude.

*In the name of the Panel*

JENNY M ADAMS, Vice-Convener



## References

- [1] Church Without Walls report 2001, Section II, p. 16
- [2] Setting God's People Free, A Report from the Archbishops' Council, Feb 2017, Section 1.2, p.5. Presented to General Synod 2018
- [3] Inter-Varsity Press 2015
- [4] MediaCom Education Inc 2016
- [5] Deliverance 3 and sections 5 of report on the Panel on Review & Reform 2017
- [6] **<http://www.centreforchurchplanting.org/city-centre-resource-churches/>**
- [7] See Mission & Discipleship Council GA report 2018, section 5.5.2
- [8] Ministries Council report 2018 section 2.5.7.3
- [9] Reforming the Kirk: the Future of the Church of Scotland, St Andrew's Press 2017 p 81
- [10] Ibid. pp 87-88
- [11] Council of Assembly Report 2015 Section 4.4.3.1