

Young People and the Church of Scotland Working Group Interim Report for GA 2018

At the General Assembly of 2017 our Council was given the task of developing a new way of helping our young people to grow in their faith and to be involved in decision making at all levels of the church. If adopted this would then succeed the National Youth Assembly from 2020 onwards. The wording of the actual deliverance is as follows:

Instruct 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 14 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. (Section 11)

In June 2017 the Council selected 7 people to be part of the working group and Esther Nisbet and Norman Smith were chosen to co-chair it. This initial group had the task of selecting the 7 young people who would join them to carry out the work. Applications were invited from across the church and open to anyone of secondary age and above with a particular interest in those who are under 30.

The application form and references submitted by applicants were used to select people with the following qualities:

- 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
- A willingness to listen to different points of view

The 7 young people were selected in September 2017 and created a working group that reflects the spread of gender, age, geographical and economic lives that young people within the Church of Scotland live.

The full 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.

The working group will to continue to work over the coming months bringing proposals initially to the Council. They will then bring a full report with firm proposals to the General Assembly of 2019 for decision.

Young People in the Church of Scotland Working Group members:

- *Tamsin Dingwall*
- *Emma Dunn*

- *Suzi Farrant (staff)*
- *Stef Fowler*
- *Rev Michael Mair*
- *Iris Maxfield*
- *Lynne McEwen*
- *Matthew McKenzie*
- *Esther Nisbet (co-chair)*
- *Scott Paget*
- *Olivia Paterson*
- *Amy-Louise Scott*
- *Rev Norman Smith (co-chair)*
- *Mhairi Summers*
- *Somer Umeed*