



The Church of Scotland

REPORTS, DECISIONS,
LEGISLATION AND
MINUTES

SEE, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW



General Assembly 2022

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/ga



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**COMMISSION IN FAVOUR OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PATRICK STEWART HODGE, LORD HODGE,
TO BE
HER MAJESTY'S HIGH COMMISSIONER TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories QUEEN, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith, to all whom these presents may concern.

GREETING! WHEREAS We taking into Our Royal consideration that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was appointed to meet on the twenty-first day of May and seeing We by reason of Our other weighty affairs cannot in Person be present in the said Assembly.

AND WE being desirous that Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Counsellor, Patrick Stewart Hodge, Lord Hodge, shall discharge the great trust of Our High Commissioner to the General Assembly:

WE ordain a Commission to be made and passed in due form under the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and made use of in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, nominating, constituting and appointing like as We by these presents do nominate, constitute and appoint the said Patrick Stewart Hodge, Lord Hodge, to be Our High Commissioner to the said General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

GIVING AND GRANTING unto the said Patrick Stewart Hodge, Lord Hodge, power commission and warrant to represent Our Sacred Person and Royal Authority and supply His Presence and hold His Place in the said ensuing General Assembly as Our High Commissioner specially appointed for that effect, and to do all and everything belonging to the power and place of a High Commissioner to a General Assembly as fully and freely in all respects as any other in that High Station hath done or might have done in any time heretofore and as We Ourselves might do if Personally present, We hereby ratifying and approving all and whatsoever things the said Patrick Stewart Hodge, Lord Hodge, shall in the discharge of this Commission lawfully do or cause to be done:

WE HEREBY require and command all the Ministers, the Diaconate and Elders of the said Assembly and Church with all other of Our good subjects in Scotland of whatsoever degree or quality to acknowledge reverence, honour and obey the said Patrick Stewart Hodge, Lord Hodge, as Our High Commissioner to the effect and manner above mentioned, and We declare that this Commission shall commence and be in force from the twentieth day of May and from thenceforward to continue during the ensuing session of the said General Assembly or until this Commission be by Us revoked and discharged:

AND WE ordain the said Commission to be further extended in the most ample and best form with all clauses needful and to pass the Seal aforesaid per saltum without passing any other Seal or Register.

These presents shall be a sufficient Warrant to the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland for writing the said Commission in the Register of the Great Seal, and to the Keeper of the said Seal for causing the same to be appended thereto.

Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace this Seventeenth Day of May in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Two in the seventy-first year of Our Reign.

Per Signaturam Manu Serenissimae Dominae Reginae Supra Scriptam



**HER MAJESTY'S LETTER
TO THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

Right Reverend and Well Beloved, We Greet You Well.

We gladly renew on this Occasion Our pledge to preserve and uphold the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. In doing so, We acknowledge, with Gratitude to Almighty God, the Church's steadfast witness to the Christian faith and its services to our people in Scotland and in many lands overseas.

We are aware that throughout the last year the Covid-19 pandemic has continued to be a burden. It is good to hear how Scotland's churches and people of other faiths have been drawn together as they have faced the shared challenge of sustaining their own communities while continuing to care for their neighbours in need. We welcome too the strengthening of relationships between people of faith and those in local and national government.

We know that the Church of Scotland engaged closely with debate engendered by the meeting of COP26 in Glasgow and We are particularly conscious that the Church is seeking to play its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as a demonstration of your Christian concern for God's creation.

We continue to pray for the leadership of the Church as they consider the future of parish life, and make decisions regarding buildings and congregations. We ask for all those who carry these responsibilities the gifts of wisdom and compassion as they seek to respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit while bearing in mind the concerns of church members.

The tragic loss of life and the scattering of refugees as a result of the war in Ukraine has caused much distress. It is encouraging to know that the Church of Scotland has been able to offer support through raising funds and providing a welcome to the stranger. We all hope that peace will be restored and We continue to uphold in prayer those who are putting into practice the love which is at the heart of the Gospel.

May your faith and courage be strengthened in your deliberations during the week ahead and through the times to come. As We are unable in Our Own Person to be present at your Assembly this year, We have chosen Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Counsellor, The Right Honourable Lord Hodge, to be Our representative being assured that Our choice will meet with your approval.

And so, praying that the blessing of Almighty God may attend your deliberations, We bid you heartily farewell.

Given at our Court at Buckingham Palace this seventeenth day of May 2022 in the seventy-first year of Our Reign.

ELIZABETH R

**ANSWER
TO
HER MAJESTY'S LETTER**

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

May it please Your Majesty

We, Your Majesty's loyal subjects convened in General Assembly, have received with pleasure Your Majesty's gracious letter to us.

We greatly value Your Majesty's continuing pledge to maintain the historic rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. In this year when we mark the 70th anniversary of your accession we give thanks for the example of Christian duty and service which your Majesty has given to the nation.

The appointment of the Rt Hon Lord Hodge as Your Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to our General Assembly has been wholeheartedly welcomed. His Grace brings with him a deep knowledge of the Church of Scotland and indeed the General Assembly so he is well equipped to fulfil the duties to which you have called him.

As your Majesty has acknowledged, in these last two years the Covid-19 pandemic has done much harm in our communities. We appreciate your Majesty's recognition of how people of faith have responded to the unprecedented challenges of recent times. As we have sought together to be good neighbours to people in need we have found in each other friendship and a sense of common cause. It is as friends and partners that we, as faith communities, have been able to develop new relationships with those in government and council who have had to make so many difficult decisions on our behalf.

We are pleased to receive your Majesty's commendation for the Church's engagement with COP26 and our response to the climate emergency which was highlighted in that gathering. We commit ourselves anew to being good stewards of this planet.

We appreciate your Majesty's understanding of the challenges which the Church of Scotland must face in prioritising the use of our limited resources in our continued commitment to be a national church. There are many difficult choices to be made as we plan our participation in Christ's mission yet we remain hopeful that, with God's guidance, we will find ways to renew the life of our Church.

We share your Majesty's concern for the people of Ukraine and we are grateful for your recognition of the Church's work in supporting both refugees and those who remain in that troubled land. We continue to pray with your Majesty for an end to war and a lasting peace.

Finally, we commend Your Majesty to the unfailing grace and protection of Almighty God, and we pray that God will bestow favour upon Your Majesty, as you continue your long reign over us.

Your Majesty's most faithful and loyal servants.

THE MINISTERS, ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CONVENED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Signed in our name, in our presence and at our appointment by the Right Reverend Dr Iain Greenshields, Moderator of the General Assembly on this 25th day of May 2022.



The Church of Scotland

**PART I –
REPORTS**

SEE, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW



General Assembly 2022

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

Reports

- 1/1 Assembly Business Committee
- 2/1 Assembly Trustees
- 3/1 Committee on Overtures and Cases
- 4/1 Legal Questions Committee
- 5/1 Ecumenical Relations Committee
- 6/1 Theological Forum
- 7/1 Church of Scotland Investors Trust
- 8/1 Church of Scotland Pension Trustees
- 9/1 The Church of Scotland Trust
- 10/1 Church Hymnary Trustees
- 11/1 Delegation of the General Assembly
- 12/1 Faith Impact Forum
- 13/1 Faith Nurture Forum
- 14/1 Housing and Loan Fund
- 15/1 Registration of Ministries Committee
- 16/1 Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces
- 17/1 Social Care Council
- 18/1 Church of Scotland Guild
- 19/1 Iona Community Board
- 20/1 General Trustees
- 21/1 Safeguarding Committee
- 22/1 Nomination Committee

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the order of business for the first two days.
3. Appoint Rev Colin Renwick to be Precentor until May 2023.
4. Appoint Mr Roy Pinkerton to index the verbatim record.
5. Invite Commissioners to submit to the Procedure Committee via email: **pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk** by Monday 23 May at 12pm, nominations for consideration to serve on the Selection Committee.
6. Note the expenses levels for those attending at least 12 of the 15 General Assembly sessions in person.
7. Note the proposed timetable of Moderator's visits to Presbyteries.
8. Acknowledge the consultation work undertaken by the Committee in the area of General Assembly Reform as reported in section 8 of the Report and instruct the Committee to bring in-depth proposals to the General Assembly of 2023.
9. Give thanks for the ongoing work of the Scottish Bible Society and:-
 - a) urge the Scottish Bible Society to pursue its ongoing efforts to address the challenge of global Bible translation and distribution;
 - b) support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to improve people's experience of the Bible and its impact on their life;
 - c) endorse the Society in its efforts to encourage confidence in the gospel and in providing Scripture resources for mission purposes; and
 - d) commend the Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members.

Report**1. LORD WALLACE OF TANKERNESS**

1.1 During the past year our Moderator, the Rt Hon Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Jim, has been an outstanding ambassador for the Church and for the eldership in particular. Online and on-site he has participated in many events including the Guild Annual Gathering, the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum, National Parliamentary Prayer Breakfast, the Kirking of the Scottish Parliament, several anniversary services (including one marking the 20th Anniversary of 9/11), COP26, a congregational Songs of Praise service at which he remotely introduced his favourite hymn, Edinburgh Rotary Club, CrossReach Fundraising and Awareness raising events, and television appearances on Reflections at the Quay.

1.2 He has engaged with Church, national and other faith leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chief Rabbi, Chair of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society, First Minister, Prime Minister and many others, where matters discussed have included: Criminal Justice, Social Care Reform, Poverty and Net Zero Carbon, to mention a few.

1.3 Visits during the year have included HMP Perth Visitors' Support and Advice Centre, HM Prisons in Edinburgh and Dumfries, many congregations (some with particular significance in his own faith journey), two days with the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, plus time with the Universities of Edinburgh, St Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh Napier.

1.4 He has visited Edinburgh Presbytery and, at the time of this report being submitted, he is due to visit Irvine & Kilmarlock, Sutherland and Angus Presbyteries.

1.5 Regrettably, planned trips to Lebanon and Malawi had to be cancelled, but he did deliver an online lecture to the Zomba Theological College and had a 'virtual visit' to the Mulanje Mission Hospital.

1.6 Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Jim attended a service of the Divine Liturgy in the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edinburgh and was invited to address the congregation after the service. He also participated in an Ecumenical Prayer meeting at New College and an Edinburgh Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Ukraine.

1.7 During his year, the time came for the St Andrew's Declaration to be signed, marking a commitment to greater shared working together between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church.

1.8 Jim has the distinction of being the first sitting Moderator to make an address to the House of Lords in a debate led by the Archbishop of Canterbury on contemporary challenges to freedom of speech.

1.9 Within the Kirk, Jim has attended many meetings, among them Assembly Business Committee and its Sub Groups. Jim has taken time to engage with staff, and has shared in leading online staff devotions. He has met many ministers, those in training, elders and members around the Church.

1.10 To Jim, we are filled with gratitude for the gracious manner in which he has led the Church this past year. We wish him and his wife Rosie, who has shared so much of the year with him, every blessing.

2. THE PRECENTOR

2.1 The Committee is grateful to Rev Colin Renwick for his willingness over recent years to be Precentor at the General Assembly, and is glad that this year he is able to lead us in praise.

3. PRESBYTERY REPRESENTATION

3.1 The Presbytery returns show that there are in all the Presbyteries 1011 charges, whether vacant or not, and that there are 180 other ministers (excluding retired ministers) who are members of Presbyteries. Representation is calculated for each Presbytery in accordance with Act III 2000 and the Interim Act 2021 and the total number of Commissioners is currently made up as follows: 268 Ministers, 268 Elders and 19 Deacons.

4. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

4.1 Some suggested changes to Standing Orders are set out in Appendix B. These will be proposed in the deliverance of the Legal Questions Committee. As mentioned at section 7.4 below, further changes to Standing Orders will also be required following the decisions of the Commission of Assembly of 23 March regarding the format of the General Assembly of 2022.

5. PROPERTY

5.1 Moderator's Residence

5.1.1 This property has a dual purpose: to provide a high-quality venue on the ground floor for official entertaining and living accommodation on the upper floor for the Moderator and their family. Consultation with those who have stayed there during the past few years has confirmed that it is no longer suitable for the latter purpose, particularly for anyone with a mobility problem, so a business case for the disposal of the property and the acquisition of a replacement is being drawn up.

5.2 Assembly Hall

5.2.1 Last year's General Assembly was again held online, and, because of the pandemic, there was hardly any revenue from external hires to set against property costs of almost £190,000. Building repairs and maintenance accounted for 42% of this expenditure, much of it necessarily reactive rather than planned. Means of reducing the cost of electricity used, and of insurance premiums (at 23% of the budget) are being investigated. A detailed feasibility study looking at the management, operation and maintenance of the Assembly Hall has been carried out by the Estates Department as part of an options appraisal of the long-term future of the building.

6. PRESBYTERY DEVELOPMENT

6.1 New Presbyteries

6.1.1 The General Assembly of 2019 set the ambitious target of reducing the number of Scottish Presbyteries to around twelve by the General Assembly of 2024.

6.1.2 In the intervening years it has been encouraging to see how the leaderships of our Presbyteries got behind this objective and bought into the hopes for what larger Presbyteries might be able to do in support of the local Church.

6.1.3 As can be seen from the table below much has already been achieved and there is the expectation of further unions in the coming months. It seems likely that

by 2024 we will have ten or eleven Presbyteries north of the border. Discussions are on-going with the Presbytery of England and the Presbytery of International Charges about how they will fit in with the new patterns of regional Church life.

6.1.4 The Committee is pleased to note the cooperation between Presbyteries and the national agencies of the Church which has resulted in helpful, practical and financial support for these new structures.

New Presbyteries Already Approved	Date of Commencement
Aberdeen & Shetland	1 June 2020
Fife	1 January 2021
Clyde	1 September 2020
Forth Valley & Clydesdale	1 January 2022
Edinburgh & West Lothian	1 January 2022
The South West	30 September 2022
Presbyteries Currently in Discussion	Proposed Date for Overture to GA and Date of Commencement
Lothians & Borders Lothian, Duns, Jedburgh, Melrose & Peebles	GA 2022 1 January 2023
The North East & the Northern Isles Aberdeen & Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and Moray	GA 2022 1 January 2023
Highlands & Hebrides Argyll, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, Inverness, Abernethy, Lochaber, Lochcarron-Skye, Uist and Lewis	GA 2023 1 January 2024
Perth Angus, Dundee, Perth, Dunkeld & Meigle, Stirling	GA 2022 1 January 2023
Forth Valley & Clydesdale Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk	GA 2022 1 June 2022
The Presbytery of England and the Presbytery of the International Charges are discussing what Presbytery Reform means for them in their unique positions.	

6.2 Communication with Presbyteries

6.2.1 As mentioned in the GA Reform section of this report, developing the connectedness between Assembly and the Presbyteries is crucial, and the Committee will continue to develop ongoing communication, particularly as new patterns of Presbytery life take shape.

6.3 Presbytery Accountability to the General Assembly

6.3.1 Once again, Presbyteries have been invited to make a five-minute presentation video in order that good news stories might be shared at appropriate points during

Assembly. The wider question of accountability will be taken up in the Presbytery Review process being developed by the Legal Questions Committee.

6.4 Proposed Moderator's Presbytery Visits

6.4.1 The Moderator has previously made a formal visit to four Presbyteries as part of their year in office which has meant that each Presbytery can expect a visit on a ten-year rolling cycle. The intention behind these visits is to strengthen the life of the local church by bringing words of encouragement and creating occasions which draw attention to the Church's interest and engagement across community life. The visits have typically been ten days long.

6.4.2 With the expected reduction to around ten Presbyteries it is now suggested that there is a five-year cycle of Presbytery visits on the understanding that each Presbytery can choose to "use" the Moderator to visit either a part or the whole of the Presbytery area. If the choice is to do a part, then perhaps five years later the focus could cover the rest of the ground and that way, we would ensure that every part of each Presbytery receives a Moderatorial visit every ten years.

6.4.3 It has been agreed that the Moderator will visit Clyde and Glasgow Presbyteries in the year 2022/23, and subject to Presbytery restructuring implementation, the following is noted:

2022-2023	Clyde Glasgow
2023-2024	Forth Valley and Clydesdale Fife
2024-2025	South West North East & Northern Isles
2025-2026	Highlands & Hebrides Lothians and Borders
2026-2027	Edinburgh and West Lothian Perth England (in this cycle then every second cycle so next time 2036-2037)

7. ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Feedback from the General Assembly of 2021

7.1.1 The Committee are grateful to the 403 commissioners, delegates, corresponding members and youth representatives who took the time to respond to the post-General Assembly 2021 survey. The feedback received allowed the Committee to scrutinise the experience of an online Assembly, learn from what went well and understand some of the challenges faced by meeting in this way. Many Commissioners expressed benefits in online engagement, including limiting travel and accommodation, being able to refer to multiple devices and documentation in familiar surroundings, and being able to remain with family. However, there are features of the Assembly which are lost as the online environment does not enable networking, a wider sense of belonging, opportunities for celebration, or a platform for the Kirk's national profile, which is created by an in-person gathering of ministers, deacons, elders, youth representatives, and ecumenical and overseas partners. Respondents to the post-General Assembly 2021 survey were split on whether future General Assemblies should be online or in person and the Committee believe that decisions on the format of future meetings are best taken by the General Assembly itself. Our experience of the General Assembly in 2020 and 2021 will enable the

Committee to build on best practice to ensure all whose names appear within the Order of Proceedings are not disenfranchised by the method of their attendance.

7.2 Commission of Assembly

7.2.1 At a meeting of the Committee in March 2022, it was agreed to ask the Legal Questions Committee to call a Commission of Assembly to vary the format of the General Assembly 2022 from fully in-person to a hybrid Assembly where some Commissioners attend online. The Commission met on 23 March and the Committee will make all arrangements for the General Assembly as are required by the decision of this Commission.

7.3 Risk Assessment

7.3.1 A thorough Risk Assessment has been prepared which sets out in detail the risks associated with gathering in the Assembly Hall and the steps taken to reduce these risks to acceptable levels. Some of these apply every year – for example, around technical preparations; while some are specifically related to Covid-19. The Committee will continuously monitor public health guidance as this evolves in the coming months and will keep the Risk Assessment under regular review in consultation with the Church's Health and Safety Manager.

7.4 Standing Orders

7.4.1 Following the Commission of Assembly held on 23 March, the Committee will ensure that the Standing Orders of the Church are appropriate for the General Assembly of 2022 and in particular that no-one is disenfranchised. Amendments will be brought in a Supplementary Report with the section of deliverance proposed by the Legal Questions Committee.

7.5 Commissioner Expenses

7.5.1 Expenses rates for those participating in the Assembly Hall at the 2022 General Assembly will be up to £75 per night for accommodation and up to £15 a day for out-of-pocket expenses. When Commissioners are staying with family or friends a total allowance of up to £80 may be claimed towards a token gift for hosts. Attendance at 12 of the 15 sessions will be required for any expenses to be authorised.

8. GENERAL ASSEMBLY REFORM

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The General Assembly of 2019 instructed the newly formed Assembly Business Committee 'to report on ways in which the composition and format of the General Assembly can more effectively and efficiently serve the work of the Church.'

8.1.2 At the Assembly of 2021, the Committee undertook to consult widely and to bring proposals to this General Assembly in response to the instruction: "Instruct the Committee to continue its work on General Assembly reform, including engagement with the Legal Questions Committee's work on the Church Courts Act, reflection on the report of the Special Commission on the Effectiveness of the Presbyterian Form of Church Governance, and to share proposals with Presbyteries for early consultation, prior to reporting to the General Assembly of 2022."

8.1.3 The Committee has engaged in a wide and diverse consultation process. Conversations with Presbyteries, individual ministers, elders, deacons, a group of 'under 40s', and some working with children and young people have engaged over 500 people. The conversations have looked at the six questions: Why, Where, When, What, Who, and How?

8.1.4 Responses have been analysed and emerging themes highlighted below, along with a statement of the areas where recommendations are expected in 2023 after further consideration. We hope that in what follows Commissioners will hear reflected some of what has been said as we listened to the voice of the wider Church.

8.1.5 The Committee's recommendations can be summarised as being:

- that the Committee continue exploration of the most suitable venue for an in-person General Assembly.
- that the Committee explore the frequency of the Assembly, establishing whether the idea of biennial Assemblies has merit, or whether a long weekend format and a second Assembly or Commission of Assembly in the Autumn may be of practical benefit.
- that, in consultation with others, the Committee investigate which areas of General Assembly decision-making might be better delegated to Forums, Committees or the Presbyteries.
- that the Committee explore options for enhancing opportunities for prayer online and on-site during the Assembly.
- that the Principal Clerk engage in conversations with appropriate persons regarding the ceremonial aspects of the opening and closing sessions.
- that the Committee review the allocation of General Assembly Youth Representatives to ensure that their engagement is not reduced as a result of the restructuring into fewer Presbyteries.
- that the Committee, in liaison with the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Faith Impact Forum, develop opportunities to improve engagement by delegates and visitors via the use of technology.
- that the Committee consider allowing Probationers to be delegates to the General Assembly.
- that the Committee reflect upon and explore further the possibilities of online and hybrid formats for the General Assembly.
- that the Committee consider whether non-voting Assembly participants should be able to cast an indicative vote.
- that all reporting bodies expecting to bring significant business to the General Assembly consider hosting a 'preparatory webinar', open to all, thereby enabling participants to engage in conversation about key issues coming to the Assembly, with a view to making the subsequent debate better informed; the timing of the webinars to be coordinated by the Assembly Trustees Webinar Group.
- that all Presbyteries review their provision of training and preparation of Commissioners prior to each General Assembly.
- that the Committee revise the Remits document to make it visually appealing, perhaps also augmenting it with other media, in order to encourage, support and enthuse the wider church in working through the decisions of General Assembly.
- that the Legal Questions Committee carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Barrier Act as a means of ensuring the necessary scrutiny and broad acceptance of proposed changes to matters of doctrine, worship, discipline and government within the Church.
- that the Committee simplify the language and structure of deliverances wherever possible, while

recognizing that a technical term may capture a nuanced meaning in a concise way.

- that the glossary of terms used by the Assembly be made available to Commissioners and kept under review by the Committee.
- that a podcast team be established, drawing on the experience of the Communications Department and other producers, to create a daily audio podcast reflection hosted by a Delegate, Visitor or other guest, using existing resources in order to minimize costs.
- that all Committees, Forums and other reporting bodies be encouraged to consider how to develop regular communication with the wider Church using all appropriate media formats.
- that the Committee consider how to ensure, once all the larger Presbyteries are established, that time is allocated during the General Assembly for a proportion of them to report each year on their work.

8.2 Why?

8.2.1 Why Reform the General Assembly? Right across the Church there is a recognition of the need to change, although not always the will to implement it. There is a vast jigsaw of pieces which need to come together. We don't have the lid with the final picture, yet we progress through these times of adaptive change in a cycle of experimenting, reflecting and reviewing. Some have suggested that until we have '*sorted out the new larger Presbytery structures*' we should leave the General Assembly alone. Doug Gay in '*Reforming the Kirk: The future of the Church of Scotland*', looks back to the Review and Reform Report to the General Assembly (2011) quoting: "*Large scale reform of a complex organisation must be undertaken as a systematic process. It is because reform of one area has profound implications for other areas that the architecture of the whole system needs to be considered..... It will be a huge step for a future Assembly to ...reform of both the presbytery and the council system, but the two areas are so interdependent that there cannot be coherent reform of one without a simultaneous, joined-up reform of the other*" (p.155-156, 2017).

8.2.2 A further reason is the fact that over the years, the General Assembly has adapted and reformed in response to changing times and must continue to do so. For example, in recent years the Assembly has embraced new technology, introduced breaks to allow more time for fellowship, reduced its size in line with a smaller Church and introduced aspects such as Youth Representatives.

8.3 Where?

8.3.1 The Assembly Hall

8.3.1.1 For several years, consideration has been given to the suitability of the Assembly Hall as a venue for the Assembly. With the current review of all Church buildings, it would seem sensible to explore the options for alternative venues.

8.3.1.2 Consideration could also be given to hiring a meeting space for the Assembly to use. Many of the conversations with Presbyteries reminded us of times when the Scottish Parliament were using the Hall, and we decanted to the Usher Hall and Edinburgh International Conference Centre – but these were paid for by the Scottish Government who were using our Hall. These were pre-live streaming days, and a significant factor is that providing internet facilities for live streaming sufficient for several hundred Commissioners in a venue other than the Assembly Hall would be more expensive.

8.4 When?

8.4.1 There was a wide range of views in the survey about the frequency of General Assemblies. Some suggested only holding a General Assembly in every second year, with the consequent requirement of Moderators to then serve for two years. However, others put forward the option of holding an Assembly annually over a long weekend which might include more conference-type features to enable a focus on the key priorities facing the Church. The General Assembly has not always met for a week beginning on the third Saturday in May. In order to make it easier for those tied to 9 to 5 Monday to Friday studying or work routines, a 'long weekend option' may be beneficial.

8.4.2 On current experience of an event of this duration would not, however, enable all Assembly business to be processed. Consideration could be given to then additionally holding either a Commission of Assembly or a second Assembly online, in order to deal with matters which could not be taken during the Spring Assembly. A great deal of work would be required to establish if this suggestion has any merit.

'Where and When?' Recommendations:

- that the Committee continue exploration of the most suitable venue for an in-person General Assembly.
- that the Committee explore the frequency of the Assembly, establishing whether the idea of biennial Assemblies has merit, or whether a long weekend format and a second Assembly or Commission of Assembly in the Autumn may be of practical benefit.

8.5 What?

8.5.1 At many of the consultations, the place of prayer for and during the Assembly was mentioned. Leading the Assembly in prayer belongs to the Moderator, who may, in addition to the daily opening worship, call the Assembly to prayer at any appropriate time. Many have expressed the view that they would welcome opportunities to gather for prayer online or on-site during the Assembly. The Assembly Business Committee would be open to considering a suitable time and place.

8.5.2 Judicial matters are now mostly remitted to other bodies with delegated authority to act in the name of the General Assembly. Are there other areas in which the Assembly could grant delegated authority to a Forum, Committee, or to Presbyteries?

8.5.3 Many who were consulted, particularly among the eldership, spoke of how their understanding of the wider work of the Church was greatly enhanced by attendance at the General Assembly. While significant, this also highlights the need for improved ongoing communication throughout the year and for Presbyteries to be places of support, inspiration and information.

Opening and Closing Sessions

8.5.4 Opinion is divided on the 'pomp and ceremony' particularly in the opening and closing sessions. There is recognition that it enshrines the Kirk's constitutional position and can create opportunities for media coverage to the wider world, nonetheless there is a case for reviewing the extent of these formalities.

8.5.5 Many in the consultations mentioned the importance for the closing session to end on an inspirational, encouraging note.

'What?' Recommendations

- that, in consultation with others, the Committee investigate which areas of General Assembly decision-

making might be better delegated to Forums, Committees or the Presbyteries.

- that the Committee explore options for enhancing opportunities for prayer online and on-site during the Assembly.
- that the Principal Clerk engage in conversations with appropriate persons regarding the ceremonial aspects of the opening and closing sessions.

8.6 Who?

8.6.1 Presbytery Allocations

8.6.1.1 The General Assembly of 2022 passed to Presbyteries consideration of a reduction in the number of commissions allocated to each Presbytery to '1 in 5', and this year's Assembly will be invited to enact that along with legislation to allow the five most recent former Moderators to be members of Assembly by virtue of their former office.

8.6.2 'Under 40s'

8.6.2.1 Nearly all the Presbytery Consultations mentioned the need better to engage with younger people, and spoke highly of the way in which Youth Representatives to the General Assembly prepare and participate in it. We can learn much from the 'Under 40s' - an age range identified by the Assembly Trustees. It was good to be able to gather online with a group of ministers, elders and others in that age bracket. Many feel disconnected from the Assembly, and we heard much of their frustrations and perception that it has little relevance in their journey of faith and engagement in their local congregations. With the ending of the National Youth Assembly and the reduction in the number of Assembly Youth Representatives due to there being fewer Presbyteries, much concern has been raised both by the 'young people' and by Presbyteries.

8.6.3 Delegates and Visitors

8.6.3.1 Delegates and Visitors from Ecumenical and Overseas partners bring a connectedness with the world church and much blessing to the Assembly. Many have expressed appreciation for the way in which live and pre-recorded videos have enabled us to visit them in their context, something that has made these connections all the more meaningful.

8.6.4 Presbytery Representation

8.6.4.1 As we move towards fewer, larger Presbyteries, there is an opportunity to consider populating Standing Committees by a process of Presbytery representation. In this new world, it might be that Presbytery Moderators and Clerks have a greater part to play in the life of the General Assembly.

'Who' Recommendations

- that the Committee review the allocation of General Assembly Youth Representatives to ensure that their engagement is not reduced as a result of the restructuring into fewer Presbyteries.
- that the Committee, in liaison with the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Faith Impact Forum, develop opportunities to improve engagement by delegates and visitors via the use of technology.
- that the Committee consider allowing Probationers to be delegates to the General Assembly.

8.7 How?

8.7.1 Online/In person

8.7.1.1 The results of the questions about being online, in person or operating a hybrid model for business showed that there are mixed views on what model is best. Comments included:

- Hybrid 'enables' Commissioners unable to attend in Edinburgh in person or those unable to attend for the whole week, such as younger elders with work or family commitments, still to participate.
- Online assemblies are settling down, becoming sharper as technology becomes familiar.
- An online Assembly is more accessible to all and cheaper to run.
- Hybrid should allow a more diverse range of General Assembly participants.
- Hybrid Assembly is preferred due to the in-person costs and travel involved when living further afield.
- There should be virtual attendance from now on. Continue online with Zoom. Remain online.
- I like the idea of hybrid but we do need to be careful that it does not lead to "them and us".
- I found Hybrid format good, easier to speak but unsatisfactory sitting too long at screen.
- It is difficult to 'read the room' online before re-shaping contribution and deciding to speak.
- Online is a lonely experience if home alone: introduce online fellowship possibilities.
- Online and hybrid could risk excluding either those without IT expertise and equipment or those who live in areas where broadband connectivity is slow or non-existent.

8.7.1.2 Other respondents, however, pointed out that much is lost when people do not come together in person, not least diligent scrutiny and the holding to account of Forums and Committees, Christian fellowship and the sense of occasion which an in-person Assembly generates.

8.7.1.3 The introduction of online attendance at the General Assembly and also the option of a hybrid model would represent one of the biggest changes to the format of the Assembly for many years. It is clear that the Committee should continue to consult widely on this matter and carefully consider how it should be taken forward.

8.7.2 Indicative (or Advisory) Voting

8.7.2.1 Indicative or advisory voting would allow the views of youth representatives and other non-voting participants to be expressed. Effectively, this means taking a poll of the non-voting representatives prior to the actual vote. It would be expected that the use of this option would be confined to more significant issues. Technically it would be a relatively simple matter to effect this when requested by the Assembly. This is the practice of the PC USA General Assembly in regard to Advisory Delegates. According to its website: *"Advisory delegates "are persons who are active members in one of the constituent churches or councils of the General Assembly..... who are selected to attend the meeting of the General Assembly in an advisory role so that the Assembly may be assured of hearing and taking cognizance of their special viewpoints..... Though advisory delegates do not have the privilege of voting on business in the assembly business meetings, they have other opportunities to make their views known. They participate in the debates in business sessions and are polled prior to the votes on many issues to determine their advice."*

Recommendations:

- that the Committee reflect upon and explore further the possibilities of online and hybrid formats for the General Assembly.
- that the Committee consider whether non-voting Assembly participants should be able to cast an

indicative vote.

8.7.3 Preparation of Commissioners

8.7.3.1 Prior preparation in reading the Reports and ensuring familiarity with General Assembly practice is crucial for Commissioners to put their best into, and get the best from, their General Assembly engagement. In the past many Presbyteries have facilitated gatherings of Commissioners to review Reports and consider the practicalities of the General Assembly. We encourage this but also recognise that recent years have demonstrated the possibilities afforded by the online webinar. In addition to the technical knowledge to engage in the Assembly, how to request to speak, vote and so on, there is a need, and indeed an expressed desire, to engage in the issues coming to the Assembly in a prior and robust way.

Recommendations:

- that all reporting bodies expecting to bring significant business to the General Assembly consider hosting a 'preparatory webinar', open to all, thereby enabling participants to engage in conversation about key issues coming to the Assembly, with a view to making the subsequent debate better informed; the timing of the webinars to be coordinated by the Assembly Trustees Webinar Group.
- that all Presbyteries review their provision of training and preparation of Commissioners prior to each General Assembly.

8.7.4 Documentation and Media

8.7.4.1 In 2018 the Assembly Arrangements Committee outlined a 5-year plan towards a 'less paper' Assembly; then the Covid-19 pandemic required greater reliance on online documentation. The Committee will always seek to honour requests for Assembly Reports and other documentation in different formats to assist those with particular needs but in future will only provide printed material on specific request.

8.7.4.2 Over recent years we have experimented with various ways to bring Reports to Commissioners. Feedback suggests that the pre-recorded video presentations by Conveners were appreciated by those who watched them but the viewing statistics suggest that relatively few Commissioners made use of this facility.

8.7.5 Remits Document

8.7.5.1 'The Remits Booklet' is available soon after the Assembly and can be a useful tool in shaping the work of Standing Committees & Presbyteries. Over recent years the format has been altered to better categorise the matters to be progressed.

Recommendation:

- that the Committee revise the Remits document to make it visually appealing, perhaps also augmenting it with other media, in order to encourage, support and enthuse the wider church in working through the decisions of the General Assembly.

8.8 Monitoring Implementation of Decisions

8.8.1 The Special Commission on the effectiveness of Presbyterian Governance, noted that the effectiveness 'as manifested in the Church of Scotland has, for many years, been compromised by a lack of connection between local, regional and national that is both robust and responsive. Decisions enthusiastically endorsed by General Assemblies often do not transfer to the other bodies within our structure. Equally, local and regional initiatives infrequently find a national platform. Our lines of communication are at best intermittent. We do not tend to learn from each other, share best practice, or learn from painful mistakes.'

8.8.2 The Assembly Business Committee has within its remit this monitoring role and has kept under review the implementation of instructions to Forums, Committees, Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions. The robustness of this work has been tempered by the acknowledgement of extreme pressures through the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of priority matters. Revision of 'The Remits Booklet' will go some way to ensuring that remits are implemented, and heighten awareness of times when they are not. The Committee continues to encourage all reporting bodies to limit the number of deliverance sections to be debated.

8.9 Act IX 1697 - The Barrier Act

The Special Commission on the effectiveness of Presbyterian Governance noted, *'It is not for nothing that our chief piece of legislation is called the Barrier Act enacted by the 1697 General Assembly. That being said, the purpose of the Barrier Act is not, ironically, to prevent change, but rather to ensure proper consultation across the Church about change.'* Not all changes are covered by the Act, but only those concerned with matters of doctrine, worship, discipline and government. Good consultation and communication about prospective change in any of these matters is essential in order that legislation is not enacted without having broad support within the Church or without full consideration of its impact having been undertaken. In the spirit of a reformed Church which must always be reforming it is important that we from time-to-time review how we achieve the sort of mature reflection which is needed before such changes are made.

Recommendation:

- that the Legal Questions Committee carry out a review of the effectiveness of the Barrier Act as a means of ensuring the necessary scrutiny and broad acceptance of proposed changes to matters of doctrine, worship, discipline and government within the Church.

8.10 Language

8.10.1 The Assembly of 2009 instructed all Councils and Committees *'to ensure that Assembly reports are accessible to commissioners and designed to facilitate informed decision making'*. The 2013 Assembly agreed to rename the Acts of Assembly giving prominence to the purpose rather than date and number, and to depart from the use of the word 'anent'. There is more that could be done to transact business in plain English. Many of those consulted spoke of being lost and confused by the language used at Assembly and urged that plain English be adopted; a few expressed, however, argued that, rather than simplifying the language, there should be more training in the terms used. We recommend a both/and solution.

Recommendations:

- that the Committee simplify the language and structure of deliverances wherever possible, while recognizing that a technical term may capture a nuanced meaning in a concise way.
- that the glossary of terms used by the Assembly be made available to Commissioners and kept under review by the Committee.

8.11 Overture Process

8.11.1 As Presbytery restructuring and reform continues it will be increasingly important that Presbyteries can bring items of business to the General Assembly. The Committee welcomes the proposed revision of the Overture process contained in the Legal Questions Committee's current draft of the Church Courts Act.

8.12 Theological Reflection on GA

8.12.1 In recent times there have been podcast reflections on the day's events sharing General Assembly business with the wider church and world. One suggestion arising from the Presbytery consultations is to have a guest 'theologian in residence' from another denomination and perhaps a different part of the world; this might provide reflection during the Assembly and facilitate reflective conversations by Commissioners and others.

Recommendation:

- that a podcast team be established, drawing on the experience of the Communications Department and other producers, to create a daily audio podcast reflection hosted by a Delegate, Visitor or other guest, using existing resources in order to minimize costs.

8.13 Communication and Connectedness

8.13.1 Many of the issues arising from conversations with Presbyteries are ultimately concerned with internal communication in the Kirk. At the root of General Assembly Reform is a desire for greater connectedness between the Assembly and the Presbyteries, and a commitment to collaborate and communicate between meetings. Early in the life of the new larger Presbyteries we need to create a greater sense of connectedness to the General Assembly, both in terms of ensuring accountability and providing opportunities to share good practice and good news stories.

8.13.2 With skills honed by necessity in recent years, we encourage development of the use of various media formats including video in sharing good news stories and good practice, thus ensuring effective and consistent messaging through all our structures.

8.13.3 Internal communication is an aspect touching upon so many areas of the vast jigsaw that the Church must bring together. The Committee wishes to commit to working alongside others in facilitating strong links in the time between meetings of General Assembly among the Standing Committees and Presbyteries, thereby promoting a sense of shared mission and ministry.

Recommendations:

- that all Committees, Forums and other reporting bodies be encouraged to consider how to develop regular communication with the wider Church using all appropriate media formats.
- that the Committee consider how to ensure, once all the larger Presbyteries are established, that time is allocated during the General Assembly for a proportion of them to report each year on their work.

9. APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL CLERK

9.1 Following Dr Whyte's intimation of his retirement with effect from June 2022, the Steering Group comprising members from the Assembly Business Committee and the Assembly Trustees, along with a Stakeholder Panel, engaged in a rigorous recruitment process. We are grateful to all who applied, and pleased to support the formal nomination to be brought by the Assembly Trustees that Rev Fiona Smith, minister at Ness Bank Church in Inverness, be the next Principal Clerk of the General Assembly.

10. FASTI ECCLESIAE SCOTICANAE

10.1 Volume XII of the Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, the listing of every Church of Scotland minister since the Reformation, has now been published. The new edition was edited by Roy Pinkerton, a retired academic, assisted by Alison Murray, an elder at Linlithgow: St Michaels and a former personal assistant to a succession of Moderators. The hardback book covers the period from 1 October 1999 to 30 September 2020 and costs £30 plus post and packing. It can be purchased by sending your full postal address to **fasti@churchofscotland.org.uk**. Your order will be sent out together with instructions about payment.

11. REVIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE MODERATOR

11.1 This work is ongoing. The majority of former Moderators have been interviewed at length and the process of transcribing interviews should be concluded by June 2022. Themes are emerging from the interviews which will help to shape the questions we intend to put to ecumenical partners, Presbyteries, politicians and the media.

In the name of the Committee

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
SUSAN J PYM, *Vice-Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev Dr George J Whyte

The Committee pays tribute to Rev Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk to the General Assembly and Secretary to the Assembly Business Committee, who retires in June.

George Whyte, who graduated BSc BD from the University of Glasgow after a secondary education at Paisley Grammar, was ordained as an elder at the age of 21. Dr Whyte has an on-going and life-long connection with the Boys' Brigade. Following a year with Strathclyde Police, in 1981 he was ordained and inducted as Parish Minister of Kilchrenan and Dalavich with Muckairn (Argyll). He went on to serve as Parish Minister of Glasgow: Langside before a move to the east as Parish Minister of Edinburgh: Colinton. Dr Whyte served as Convener of the Board of Ministry from 1996, and in 2008 was appointed to the full-time position of Clerk to the Presbytery of Edinburgh. Alongside his work with the Presbytery, in 2011 he was appointed part-time Depute Clerk of the General Assembly. In 2014 Dr Whyte stepped in, at very short notice, to be Acting Principal Clerk when the Very Rev Dr John Chalmers became Moderator of the General Assembly. In 2017 Dr Whyte became Principal Clerk to the General Assembly, as well as being Secretary to the Moderator, to the Assembly Business Committee and to the Legal Questions Committee. He was the creative mind behind Heart and Soul held in Princes Street Gardens. Dr Whyte was appointed Chaplain-in-Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen in 2019.

All Principal Clerks face challenges in their day-to-day work but very few will have had to face the enormity of supporting the Kirk through a global pandemic whilst facilitating and encouraging Presbytery Reform. In these worrying and demanding times, he has held the Church together, helped and encouraged us all with new methods of communication such as Zoom and Teams meetings, culminating with the first ever online General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland. The legalities and technologies of such were bewildering but he pressed on with determination and vigour.

Prior to the pandemic leading to closed doors at 121, Dr Whyte's office was a welcome space to find sound advice, sensitivity and diplomacy with a dash of his excellent sense of humour. His knowledge of the Church, its people and his understanding of the Church's place in Scotland and beyond has served us greatly. We are indebted to George for his years of service to his beloved Church. He has been wonderfully supported by his wife Moira who has made her own significant contributions over the years. We wish George and Moira great joy, health and happiness as they begin this new chapter of their life together.

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
SUSAN J PYM, *Vice-Convener*

Mrs Susan J Pym

Susan Pym completes her term as Vice Convener at this Assembly. Susan has served the Assembly Business Committee and its predecessor the Assembly Arrangements Committee well for six years, and has shared her enthusiasm, encouragement and hard work. The 'in conversation' tent at Heart and Soul was her initiative and proved to be an important part not only of the event, but in opening up discussion in a wide range of often very difficult subjects. As a Presbytery of England elder, Susan has often been able to help Scottish ministers to see a bigger picture. With only three months between her appointment as Interim Vice Convener and the beginning of Covid-19 restrictions, Susan adapted brilliantly to the online world, not least in being the one who has pushed all the right buttons to have votes gathered and counted by the 'Assembly Hub' at online Assemblies. In convening the small team reviewing the role of the Moderator, Susan has contributed so much, often unseen. Family bereavement prevented that work progressing as she would have liked, and we are glad that she will remain as a co-opted member of that working group. In the meantime we say a formal thank you, to a much valued member of the Committee.

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Secretary*

Appendix A**REPORT OF THE SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY**

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' John 8:12 (NIV)

Immediately following the dark days of the Second World War, Bible Societies from about 12 different countries came together to form the United Bible Societies. After so many lives had been turned upside down and broken by the devastating effects of war, they recognised that they could achieve far more by collaborating. This display of unity for the sake of the Gospel has borne much fruit and in May last year we were able to mark the 75th anniversary and be inspired and encouraged to keep going – in a world devastated by the pandemic and, in many places, war.

As I write, Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues with relentless violence. The Bible Society in Ukraine continues its work, providing the churches with the Bibles they need as part of their humanitarian support for those in dire need. The United Bible Societies are coordinating a response to those Bible Societies in neighbouring countries who are requesting more Ukrainian Bibles to serve the needs of refugees. When people must leave their homes quickly and in fear, they are eager to replace their Bible. Others are looking for a source of hope, they long to find light in the darkness and turn to the Scriptures for help. We praise God that in the midst of the trauma stories reach us of light and life.

We are hugely grateful to individuals and congregations who have generously supported our appeals to provide Bibles where they are needed. In addition to supporting the requests for Ukrainian Bibles we have also been able to help other Bible Societies with their work in:

- Malawi (Bible translation and youth engagement resources)
- Middle East (Bible distribution in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria)
- Nigeria (translation of the Bible into the Okun language)
- South Sudan (Bible distribution and core presence funding)
- Algeria and Morocco (encouraging persecuted Christians looking for Bibles)

As we continue to navigate the various stages and waves of the pandemic here in Scotland, we have been able to serve congregations with several different resources to help people of all ages engage with the Bible in a meaningful way.

A variety of inter-generational resources were produced during the year: *Grace Gatherings*, *Christmas Journeys* and *Wonder Walks*. These encouraged and helped families and friendship groups to explore the Bible together, particularly around Christmas and Easter. The resources included podcasts, games to play, questions to think about and most importantly some Bible texts to read and ponder together.

Following on from the popular Dear Theo publication and resources for young people and in partnership with illustrator Jason Ramasami, we have produced *Joseph and the Triumph of Grace*. The first part of the book is the story of Joseph told through illustrations. Then the Genesis text, in the easy-to-read New International Readers Version (NIRV), highlights the golden line of God's grace in the life of Joseph and allows the reader to follow God's grace through all of Bible history.

Earlier this year *10 Must Know Bible Stories*, an educational resource for teachers and schools that helps unpack Bible stories in a classroom setting came into the Scottish Bible Society fold. We are currently exploring how to best take this forward along with the Bibleworld Books resources.

Bible-based Trauma Healing has continued to grow throughout the year. In 2021 all courses were held online but in 2022 we have seen in-person facilitator training residential courses commence again. Many churches are finding this a helpful resource to support people who have experienced any kind of challenge and pain in their life. Having this available during and beyond the pandemic has been a gift appreciated across the globe.

Light and Life is the Gospel of John presented in an attractive magazine style. Beautifully illustrated it helps readers to engage with the life of Jesus in a fresh way. The style allows space for the reader to pause and consider the relevance and significance of this historical text.

We pray that these contemporary 'translations' of the Bible for people here in Scotland, with their rich variety of backgrounds and perspectives on the world, will have a real impact. Alongside this we continue to support the translation of the Bible into those languages that currently do not have any part of the Bible. If people are to discover the light and life that only Jesus Christ can bring, then they must have the Bible in their heart language and be able to engage with it. May there be an ever-growing number of people who follow Jesus and find they have 'the light of life'.

Appendix B

PROPOSED CHANGES TO STANDING ORDERS

Standing Order 5 - Committee on Commissions: Delete the words "(unless a hard copy has been previously requested)".

Standing Order 15 - Order of Business: Delete the second sentence and substitute "The Assembly Business Committee shall prepare and circulate electronically before the commencement of the Assembly, a proposed Order of Business for the Assembly".

Standing Order 20 - Delete the existing wording and substitute "**Materials for Assembly Members:** Requests for permission to distribute material electronically to Assembly Members shall be submitted to the Assembly Business Committee before the commencement of the Assembly, and requests received thereafter shall be submitted to the Procedure Committee. Any other Committee concerned should be informed and supplied with electronic copies, if available, of the material to be distributed."

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Acknowledge with gratitude the continuing work and ministry of the Church at all levels during the enduring Covid-19 pandemic. *(Section 1)*
3. Receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities. *(Section 2)*
4. Affirm the overriding priority in budget planning to support the maintenance and growth of the local Church and note the continuance of the challenging financial situation facing the Church as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. *(Section 5)*
5. Agree to implement the Giving to Grow scheme from 1st January 2023 *(Section 9)* and approve the proposed Regulations. *(Appendix A)*.
6. Repeal the Parish Ministries Fund Regulations (Regs IV 2016). *(Section 9.4)*
7. Approve the amendments to the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016) and the Regulations for Allocations in Local Ecumenical Partnerships (2007) (Appendix C) for use from the 1st January 2023. *(Section 9.3)*
8. Repeal the Pilot Presbytery Staffing Fund Regulations (Regs V 2011). *(Section 9.4)*
9. Encourage Kirk Sessions to engage with the Christian Aid and ecumenical partners' promotion of legacy giving in September 2022. *(Section 12.4)*
10. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to use the National Stewardship Team as a resource to help congregations steward their resources in line with their vision and mission plans. *(Section 12.5)*
11. Instruct the Assembly Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Section 13 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed descriptions and remits and finalised titles for an Active Faith Leadership Team and the following Programme Groups:- *(Section 13)*
 - i. Mission
 - ii. People & Training
 - iii. Public Life & Global Justice
 - iv. Resource & Presence
12. Instruct the Trustees to work with the Nomination Committee and Presbyteries to enable the Nomination Committee to bring names of nominees for the leaders and members of the Active Faith Leadership Team and each of the Programme Groups to the General Assembly of 2023. *(Section 13)*
13. Affirm the faithful and dedicated work of the Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum since their inception in January 2020, the leadership of those Forums and the commitment of their members and commend their continuing involvement in the development of the Faith Action Programme. *(Section 13)*
14. Instruct the Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Appendix E, Section 9 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed proposals for the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum in relation to the structural arrangements for the Faith Action Programme, whilst retaining their direct accountability to the General Assembly. *(Appendix E, Section 9)*.
15. Note the Vision Statement which frames the discussion around the Review of Initial Training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament *(Appendix D)*, agree the principles for ministerial education and training outlined in Section 14 of the Report and authorise the Faith Nurture Forum to engage with academic providers and others as necessary in order to ensure the best possible infrastructure and curriculum for ministry formation. *(Section 14)*
16. Instruct the General Trustees, jointly with the Assembly Trustees, the Legal Questions Committee and the Faith Nurture Forum, to review current law and practice with a view to proposing legislation that would allow greater flexibility in relation to the allocation of the sale proceeds of properties found to be surplus to requirements following the dissolution of a congregation or the union of one or more congregations and provide a transparent process with adequate criteria by which decisions on the use of such funds are made and report to the General Assembly of 2023. *(Section 22)*
17. Approve the amended remit of the Audit Committee. *(Section 23.5)*
18. Approve the amended Constitution and Remit of the Assembly Trustees. *(Section 23.6)*
19. Note the revised Job Description for the post of Principal Clerk as set out in recruitment pack <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/redirects/principal-clerk-recruitment-pack>, ratify the appointment of Rev Fiona Smith as Associate Principal Clerk from the 19th April and appoint her as Principal Clerk to the General Assembly with effect from 1st July 2022. *(Section 24)*
20. Approve the change in membership numbers for the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces. *(Section 25)*

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Let us continue to hold firmly to the hope that we confess without wavering, for the one who made the promise is faithful. And let us continue to consider how to motivate one another to love and good deeds. Hebrews 10: 23 – 24. (ISV)*

1.2 Faithfulness has been the mark of those who have taken forward the ministry and mission of the Church of Scotland over the past year. As the impact of Covid-19 stretched on into its second year, people involved in every part of the life of the Church found themselves having to rise to challenges hitherto unknown. The outworking of the decisions taken at GA19 would have been challenge enough, but add to that the complexity of working through a pandemic and one begins to understand the uncertainty, anxiety and stress felt across our ministries and in our congregations. Nonetheless people have been faithful: faithful to their calling, faithful in their service, faithful in their giving and faithful to God.

1.3 The Assembly Trustees have seen this faithfulness at first-hand as they have worked with the Forums and with the Board of CrossReach, and observed ministers, congregations and Presbyteries face challenges on an unprecedented scale. So, this report begins with the warmest commendation and thanksgiving for those who have continued to participate in the mission of God, learned new skills, walked the second mile and maintained the hope of our faith. In the national offices, within every sphere of operation, people as elsewhere have stretched themselves to the limits in implementing, through the Faith Action Plan, an integrated programme for supporting the Church's vital work across the country and beyond. All of these elements of faithful service, together, make up the continuing story of our Church since the last General Assembly.

1.4 It is hard to remember a time in the recent history of the Church of Scotland when so many far-reaching instructions of the General Assembly have been implemented at the same time. This report will cross the spectrum of areas where, despite the magnitude of the challenge, people involved in the local, regional and national life of the Church are continuing the work of restructuring and reforming. Our belief, which we hope can be shared across the whole Church, is that in the grace of God the work which has begun will lead to renewal and growth.

2. AUDIT OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2021

2.1 It is the responsibility of the Assembly Trustees to prepare, approve and present annually to the General Assembly the audited Annual Report and Accounts of the Unincorporated Entities. The Report and Financial Statements describe, in detail, the Church's objectives, activities and governance arrangements. They are issued as a separate document on the Assembly website and submitted annually to OSCR, the Scottish Charity Regulator, where they are available for all to see the full extent of the Church's work and witness. The Assembly is invited to receive and read the Report and Accounts.

3. FAITHFULNESS AND EMERGING FROM THE PANDEMIC

3.1 The continuance of the pandemic has prolonged the impact on all parts of the Church of unusual working and social connections, loss of income, and, therefore,

national resources – human and financial – to be shared by all. The impact on many fulltime ministries of word and sacrament has been significant. A mix of extreme increases in demand for pastoral care, family concerns and reduced availability of pastoral support within congregations has led to burdens close to, if not in fact, intolerable. We must all offer thanks for the strengths allowed to many, whether in full time ministry, other ministries or support positions to bear not only their own burdens but to aid those who have struggled. The Chief Officer, Dave Kendall, and the Senior Management Team have had first-hand experience of responding to pleas for assistance. It is with this knowledge that the Assembly Trustees continue to seek ways to focus what we all, as the Church of Scotland, want to achieve and to be more realistic about what we can ask of one another.

4. FAITHFULNESS AND THE FINANCIAL PICTURE

4.1 Underlying everything that the Church can and should do are faith, prayer, supporting each other and stewarding our personal and financial resources, each often sacrificially given. Identifying how best to apply the Church's human and economic resources so that they can strengthen local congregations depends on accurate knowledge and we pay tribute to the continuing work of the Chief Officer and his staff, in consultation with the Principal Clerk, to discern a precise picture of the financial impact of the pandemic on the Church, locally and by extension nationally. Much of the work of the Forums is carried out in partnership with the local Church and their reports deal with human resources. The co-ordinating work of the Head of Faith Action Programme with the Faith Action Staff has kept us informed of many issues as they have arisen. In this section of our Report we turn to how we have approached the use of the financial resources.

4.2 General Assembly 2021 reaffirmed the need for budgetary prudence and we have given all possible support to the General Treasurer and her staff in this. Over the past three years the Church has responded to the changes identified by the 2019 Special Commission and the principal building blocks approved by GA19 have been met.

5. NATIONAL FINANCES

5.1 Over the last two years the finances of the Church at a local and national level have been subjected to changes which are unprecedented in recent history, as the plans needed for radical change in the Church coincided with the Pandemic. During the first year of the Pandemic, the local Church suffered a reduction of some 15%, £12.4 million, in its assessable income compared to the year before. This followed on from reductions in income in real terms pre-Pandemic. The General Assembly of 2019 had instructed an end to deficit budgeting and a transfer of resources to grow the local Church. Therefore, at the same time as implementing the instructions of the Assembly, the Assembly Trustees recommended the reduction of the aggregate Mission and Renewal contribution in 2021 by 18%, so as to provide some financial relief to congregations.

5.2 It is against this background that the Assembly Trustees acknowledge the continued faithful commitment of Church members and adherents in maintaining their offerings to the Church during the second year of the pandemic when there was perhaps even more uncertainty

than in 2020. We thank the congregational treasurers and office-bearers who have continued to adapt, looking to introduce new ways of giving and casting the net wider to attract external funding for creative missional projects.

5.3 Faced with all of these financial pressures and continued financial uncertainty, the Assembly Trustees have had to be mindful of maintaining an appropriate level of reserves. During the pandemic, both the National Church and congregations have drawn on reserves. However, the reserves of the National Church are the funds of last resort in terms of financing ministries and activities of the Church which at all costs we must strive to maintain. While the Assembly Trustees have had to draw upon reserves once again to cover operating expenditure, we will endeavour to revert to the planned course of action over the years 2023 to 2027, for which forward outline budgets are now being drafted. Those budgets will, however, propose the establishment of the *Seeds for Change* growth fund which we had to pause due to the uncertainties of the pandemic.

5.4 A cost reduction programme was already in place following the report of the Special Commission of 2019 and this was given priority during the pandemic. Work commenced on the implementation plans for the new *Giving to Grow* scheme replacing the Ministries and Mission scheme, and on a funding strategy for the new Presbyteries. More significant change must come. The Presbytery Mission Plan Act, the new *Giving to Grow* scheme and the new Presbytery structures present financial and mission opportunities which will need to be grasped if there is to be that longed-for growth in the life of the local Church.

5.5 The deficit in the National financial results for 2021 of £3.1 million is much smaller than was budgeted. Nonetheless, it is still a significant deficit in proportion to income and to unrestricted reserves.

5.6 The 2019 Special Commission had asked for the elimination of deficit budgeting, but the challenges we face alongside the Pandemic, means that there will be deficit budgets on ordinary operations for at least the next two to three years until (1) the new Presbyteries become fully operational, (2) the Faith Action Plan is established and (3) Presbytery Mission Plans have been completed. The transition funding for the new *Giving to Grow* scheme will be drawn from National Reserves to allow Presbyteries and congregations time to adapt to the new ways of working. There is also uncertainty as to future levels of congregational income and as to the time which will elapse before there is a realistic prospect of CrossReach achieving financial self-sustainability.

5.7 At a national level, in order to achieve a single overarching framework so that our resources – human and financial – can best be used in meeting the Five Marks of Mission, we will be working with the Forums, the General Trustees and the Presbyteries in order to deliver the Faith Action Plan with properly determined financial priorities.

6. MINISTRIES AND MISSION CONTRIBUTIONS

6.1 Congregational contributions are what keep the Church going. They fund Parish Ministries, the work programmes of the Forums and Committees and the work which supports congregations, Presbyteries and the national and international work of the Church. The Ministries and Mission scheme for congregational

contributions was based entirely on congregational income. However, the current scheme was not considered to encourage 'ownership' or effective stewardship of finances, and the General Assembly of 2020 instructed a review of the system. Separately, the Presbytery Mission Planning Act is changing the landscape of territorial ministry, and must be taken into account here. Section 9 provides more of the background and detail of the new *Giving to Grow* scheme.

6.2 Congregational contribution levels were held at between £46 million and £46.5 million in the five years to 2020. In acknowledgement that some congregations would be using reserves to continue to make their contributions, the General Assembly of 2020 approved the Trustees' recommendation for an 18% reduction in aggregate for 2021 to £38.2 million and, for 2022, to £42 million. This was not a reduction of 18% for every congregation. The purpose of this was to help congregations replenish some of the reserves used during the pandemic. Presbyteries also had at their disposal in 2020 and 2021 the 5% Presbytery discretionary allowance which could be used to assist congregations in making their contributions.

6.3 Congregational financial statistics schedules help gauge the levels of congregational income, the key element upon which the Church's budget is based. Over the last two years this has been even more crucial as we have attempted to measure the financial effects of the pandemic on congregational finances. These financial statistics however can only provide an estimate, and it is the analysis of all congregational accounts later in the year which provides us with an accurate picture. For example, the analysis of statistics for 2020 showed a decrease in the assessable income of congregations of 20%. The later analysis of congregational accounts, carried out by autumn 2021, confirmed that there was a decrease of 15%. Offerings were the most resilient category of income, decreasing by 5%. As well as this relatively stable level of giving, the Donate Button, introduced in 2020 to the Church's main website, has to date collected £0.39 million, the majority of which, £0.34 million, was transferred to specified congregations, with the remainder being contributed to general funds and the Guild. These figures are a tribute to the sacrificial giving and faithful support of so many people in our congregations.

6.4 The initial analysis of 65% of on-line returns for 2021 income indicates a modest increase in income compared to 2020.

6.5 The Stewardship Team increased their activities to assist congregations with other means of giving and held well-attended webinars including one on digital giving. More details of the Team's work is given below.

6.6 By 31 December 2021, congregations had remitted £36 million in Ministries and Mission contributions, which was 98% of the total. In accordance with the Regulations, amounts for 2020 which remain outstanding were deducted from the allowance available to Presbyteries for 2022. In cases where congregations are unable to pay their full allocation the Assembly Trustees encourage Presbyteries to engage with them and offer assistance where appropriate. Feedback from several Presbyteries has indicated that they have had successful discussions with congregations over the payment of contributions. The overall result is an excellent achievement. However, it remains the case that some congregations have reported

experiencing financial distress. Staff in the Stewardship and Finance department, as well as the Chief Officer, have provided support to office bearers and ministers, probably more so than at any other time.

6.7 The Assembly Trustees wish to record their sincere thanks to all congregations for their 2021 Ministries and Mission contributions, with a particular thank you to the congregations which do so by standing order and to all congregations which met their contributions in full by 31 December 2021.

6.8 Comparative amounts to be contributed and returns for recent years are as follows (table 1):

Year	Total to be Contributed £'000	Total received by 31 December £'000	%
2017	43,969	43,300	98.5
2018	43,387	42,825	98.7
2019	43,917	43,187	98.3
2020	43,648	41,445	94.9
2021	36,858	36,003	97.7

6.9 As is customary, due to the timing of printing deadlines, full details of congregational contributions and the budget proposals for 2023 will be presented in the Supplementary Report. The budget will include estimates of the contributions payable by congregations under the new *Giving to Grow* scheme.

7. NATIONAL BUDGETS

7.1 2021 Results

7.1.1 The Trustees' final 2021 budget for the Unincorporated Entities was for a deficit of £11.4 million from National Reserves, resulting from the reduction in aggregate congregational contributions (explained in section 1.2), together with reduced investment income and a very uncertain financial picture for CrossReach as the pandemic continued. There was also a risk that congregational income might fall short even against the reduced requirement. When the results of the Housing and Loan Fund, The Guild, New College Funds and miscellaneous trusts are included the overall deficit was budgeted at £10.8 million.

7.1.2 The actual operating result for the Unincorporated Entities in 2021 was a deficit of £3.1 million and the reasons for the improvement are outlined below. This is unaudited and excludes gains on sale of heritable property and gains in investments, both realised and unrealised. While the result was a very substantial improvement against the budget, this was nonetheless still a significant deficit.

7.1.3 There was an increase in income due to the reinstatement by the General Trustees of £1.36 million of stipend endowment income using the sale of capital over five years to 2025. Legacies to the National Church, both unrestricted and for more specific work including CrossReach, were more than budgeted and the Assembly Trustees gratefully acknowledge the generosity of those who provide for the Church in their wills.

7.1.4 National departmental expenditure was contained by £3.7 million but this included an underspend of £1.9 million on Parish Ministries staff costs as a result of (1) higher numbers of ministers retiring, (2) probationers

not being able to take up appointments due to pandemic restrictions and (3) fewer ministers coming from overseas. Lower levels of recruitment resulted in underspending on training and candidate funding.

7.1.5 Savings of £0.3 million against budget in 2021 arose in respect of staff posts. Work programmes of the Forums and Committees and in the support and services departments were contained. There have also been planned and recurring reductions in departmental expenditure, and all replacement staff posts have been subject to scrutiny, in many cases being filled internally.

7.1.6 CrossReach budgeted for a deficit of £2 million, this included a substantial contingency for costs directly related to Covid-19 measures, which in the event was not required. Pension deficit payments were able to cease during 2021. As a result, CrossReach's unaudited operating deficit for 2021 was a much-reduced amount of £0.3 million. CrossReach has challenges in setting an accurate budget in time for each General Assembly, among other matters because of the cycle of Local Authority Commissioning. The effects of the pandemic on the entire care sector have brought further significant complexities in their budgeting.

7.2 Final 2022 Budget

7.2.1 The indicative budget presented to the General Assembly in May 2021 was for a deficit of £5.1 million excluding Housing and Loan, and Other Funds. The Assembly Trustees approved a final budget for 2022 of £5.9 million to be drawn from National Reserves. The increase in the deficit was to incorporate additional costs associated with the approved 2% stipend and salary increases and the expected net costs of the Scottish Living Wage for CrossReach staff.

7.2.2 Funding of £0.1 million was included in the budget to prime the Pioneer Mission Fund and corresponding reductions were made elsewhere.

7.2.3 The Housing and Loan and Other Funds budget for 2022 is a deficit of £0.52 million, with Housing and Loan planning a significant programme of repairs and upgrades to its properties.

7.3 Forward Budgets

7.3.1 The Trustees' Supplementary Report will contain an outline budget for the years 2023 to 2027 set in the context of potential congregational contributions under the new *Giving to Grow* scheme which replaces Ministries and Mission contributions from 2023. The ongoing effects of the pandemic on congregational income is still one of the biggest risks to the budget.

7.3.2 The reduction in the cost base for the national offices is a product of implementing the recommendations of the Special Commission which were agreed by the General Assembly in 2019. Forums, Committees and departments will need to work within this reduced financial framework on an ongoing basis. The forward budgets now take account of predicted ministries numbers, transition funding under *Giving to Grow*, future cost of living increases, infrastructure investment to realise savings and other benefits, and core funding of the new Presbyteries.

7.3.3 Presbytery Mission Planning and uncertainty around recruitment of ministers, as well as the implementation of *Giving to Grow* will mean that these numbers will be best estimates, based on our increasingly accurate financial modelling and statistical analysis.

7.3.4 Notwithstanding the financial challenges being faced by the whole Church it is the view of the Trustees that this is the right time to make provision for the establishment of the *Seeds for Change* growth fund which was a central part of the Radical Action Plan. The pandemic has made the financial position of the Church all the more precarious, but far from this making us risk averse the situation we now face calls for substantial investment in new forms of church life and in particular finding ways to invest in the creation and planting of new congregations across Scotland. Proposals in relation to the re-establishing of this Fund, which was suspended at the start of the pandemic, will be presented in the Supplementary Report.

8. PRESBYTERY FUNDING

8.1 The funding streams available to Presbyteries are from the National Finances which are funded mainly from congregational contributions, Presbytery Dues and local investment and from fundraising income. Under the new Mission Plan Act much is expected of our Presbyteries, but they too will have to work towards long term sustainability. Just as the National Budget of the Church should achieve break even, Presbyteries should aim to have balanced budgets after five years in operation. An amount of £120,000 for each new Presbytery has been allowed in the National Budget, with some additional contingency which acknowledges the differing needs of Presbyteries across Scotland. This will be made available annually for five years. Presbyteries should aim to grow their income and develop plans alongside Presbytery Mission Plans to reach a position where this core funding is not required after five years. However, the Assembly Trustees will continue to work with Presbyteries as they ensure that financial and other resources are available for their work in the long term.

8.2 From consultations and discussions with the newly forming Presbyteries, it has become clear that no two are likely to be the same, although there are common themes in several. The Assembly Trustees have therefore not been prescriptive as to how the core funding should be used for the efficient running of a Presbytery.

9. GIVING TO GROW

9.1 Background

9.1.1 The 2021 General Assembly approved the change from the existing Ministries and Mission (M&M) Contribution system to *Giving to Grow*. As the regulations for the new scheme have been developed and further consultations and discussions have taken place, some of the key principles are worth noting again:

- **Transparency:** It will be possible for congregational treasurers and Presbyteries to budget more easily for contributions. Many have already used the calculation to estimate future contributions by congregations.
- **Clarity:** The Regulations have been revised to provide more clarity on, for example, assessable income.
- **Sustainability:** Every charge should be able to contribute something towards the cost of their minister and move towards paying the full cost of their minister in order for the Church to become more sustainable.
- **Fairness** – the scheme provides support to those who cannot pay the full cost of their minister but aims to encourage more congregations to be able to do so.

- **Growth:** Charges can grow their income and retain more of it locally without being penalised.
- **Regional flexibility and incentive to mission** – Presbyteries can incentivise the redistribution of any excess income.

9.1.2 The current M&M system was developed over several decades in response to the changing needs for ministries, mission and new ways of working. The main benefit of the system was that it collected what was required to pay for parish ministry – stipends, salaries, recruitment, training and support; the cost of supporting congregations; and mission programmes at home and internationally. The system collects more from those congregations with higher income and less from those with lower income and congregations have been, overall, able to pay their contributions, as shown in table 1.

9.1.3 However, there was a growing view being voiced amongst congregations who were thriving, both in terms of mission and finances, that the system was a disincentive to increase income and grow their mission and outreach. Congregations were also not able to clearly see how the redistribution of income pays for their minister. Congregations with higher incomes and who, because of Presbytery plans, could not appoint a second post, were frustrated at the level of contributions being paid.

9.1.4 One of the key principles of *Giving to Grow*, outlined above, is sustainability. The current position is that 69% of congregations are not paying the cost of a minister, meaning that 31% of congregations are supporting all of the others. The M&M Review Group sought to design a system which would shift that balance towards a more equitable sharing of the cost of ministries.

9.1.5 *Giving to Grow* challenges us all to change our mindset about budgeting. Some of the certainty afforded by the existing system in funding the National Finances has been removed. Instead the vision is that congregations will grow their income and use this to fund mission and outreach, as opposed to the National Church setting expenditure goals and requiring contributions to pay for this. The challenge to the local church is to grasp this opportunity. The challenge to the Assembly Trustees and the Forums is to work within a less certain financial framework but one which seeks to contribute positively to fulfilling the Faith Action Plan.

9.2 Financial Regulations for *Giving to Grow*

The Regulations and Communications Plan are presented at Appendices A & B.

9.3 Financial Regulations for the Presbytery of International Charges and Local Ecumenical Partnerships

9.3.1 The Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016) require to be amended to reflect the new *Giving to Grow* scheme. In line with the Scheme, the allocations will now be based on the income for the previous financial year instead of the three year average. The use of a graduated scale to calculate the assessment will be replaced with the flat rate of 10% also in line with the new scheme. The other aspects of the regulations, such as the items included in the income base, are unchanged.

9.3.2 The Regulations for Allocations to Local Ecumenical Partnerships (2006) require similar amendment to reflect the change from a three year average to the use of the previous financial year's income.

9.3.3 The proposed amendments to the Regulations for both of the above are attached at Appendix C.

9.4 Parish Ministries Fund Regulations

9.4.1 These regulations were embedded in the Pilot Presbytery Staffing Regulations (Regs V 2011). The introduction of the Presbytery 5% discretionary allowance, and now the new *Giving to Grow* Scheme, mean that these regulations are no longer required. The Trustees, therefore, propose the repeal of these regulations.

9.5 Transition Funding

9.5.1 The Transition Fund proposed at the General Assembly of 2021 is intended to mitigate some of the financial impact of the pandemic and allow time for the new system to be established. The Assembly Trustees consider that the application of Transition Funding should be firmly at Presbytery level. The Presbytery 5% Discretionary Allowance (of which any unspent amount can be carried forward until 31 December 2023) has been largely successful in providing targeted support to congregations, informed by local knowledge. In a similar way, Transition Funding will be available to Presbyteries to reduce the contributions of congregations subject to alignment with the implementation of Presbytery Mission Plans. The scope of the Transition Funding, however, will be restricted to providing financial assistance to congregations since core funding for Presbyteries is being provided separately through the National Finances.

9.5.2 In considering the length of the transition period, the projected time periods for the implementation of Presbytery Mission Plans were taken into account.

9.5.3 Under *Giving to Grow*, some charges will pay more and some will pay less. The Transition Funding will smooth these changes until such time as Plans have been implemented. Each Presbytery will be allocated an amount based on a comparison of a congregation's contribution in the base year 2022 to the contribution in 2023 and subsequent years 2024 and 2025, regardless of the congregation's longer-term sustainability which is yet to be determined by Presbyteries. Provision for the cost of the funding is being included in the National budget.

9.5.4 Since most of the National Finances is used in paying for Parish Ministries, it is important that the link with Presbytery and Mission Planning is maintained and that there is opportunity to adjust the system, for example if there was a material change in the aggregate cost of ministries. As the new Presbyteries develop, there could be a need for adjustment to reflect this and, of course, the General Assembly could issue new instructions over time.

9.5.5 As the new scheme is established it will be important to learn from experience at a local, regional and national level and to correct any anomalies or omissions during the first three transition years.

9.5.6 The *Giving to Grow* scheme aims to more closely align income with Presbytery Mission Planning. It will give Presbyteries more opportunities to encourage congregations to increase their income through traditional giving and more entrepreneurial ways, knowing that they will not be penalised for this, but instead can do more mission in the local context.

9.5.7 As the new Presbyteries form, they are already demonstrating, in small steps initially, how they might redistribute finances. For congregations in the position of paying less than under the previous system, there will

be possibilities to contribute to others or to National initiatives.

9.5.8 With all of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the future income of congregations remains very uncertain and for the new scheme to succeed, Presbyteries and the National Office will need to work together on the challenges and opportunities afforded by *Giving to Grow*.

10. FUNDS

10.1 Previously the budget approved by the General Assembly has been allocated among congregations, the Parish Ministries Fund and the Mission and Renewal Fund. The three components of the *Giving to Grow* scheme can be attributed to any area of expenditure. This dispenses with the requirement for both the Parish Ministries Fund and Mission and Renewal Fund.

10.2 As at 31 December 2021, the accounting for individual funds has been made clearer. Funds are now shown as restricted by purpose and not by Agency. All unrestricted funds have been transferred to the General Fund.

11. PENSION SCHEMES

11.1 Defined Benefit Schemes

11.1.2 The triennial valuation of the Schemes took place as of 31 December 2021 with the Pension Trustees and employing agencies agreeing actuarial assumptions for the valuation. The results show that all Schemes are now fully funded with no deficit repair payments required.

11.1.3 An increasingly active interest in Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues is being taken by the Pension Trustees and a policy being developed by them will be shared with the employing agencies in due course.

11.2 Defined Contribution Schemes

11.2.1 The Group Personal Pensions Governance Group monitors the arrangements for both the CrossReach Pension Plan and the Church of Scotland Plan for defined contribution pensions. It meets to review the provider's performance reports, service provision and developments, which currently include ESG and related matters.

11.2.2 Membership of the Church's Plan has now been made available to staff directly employed by Presbyteries.

11.2.3 A review of the investments provided by Legal and General was carried out by the Church's Pension advisors in 2021 and at the time of writing the results were being considered by the employing agencies.

12. STEWARDSHIP

12.1 Outreach

12.1.1 The National Stewardship Team has continued to develop its approach to ensure it is offering congregations the right support and resources in accessible formats, particularly during this continued period of uncertainty and change. Across 2021, a series of webinars was hosted by the team covering digital giving, Gift Aid and Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS), funding and fundraising, personal giving, legacy promotion and broader stewardship resources with an encouraging level of engagement and numerous follow up conversations. Further online events will be offered in 2022, building on the success of the first series and targeting the content to address developing needs.

12.1.2 Key Resources

In line with last year's instruction of the General Assembly, congregations are encouraged to engage with the National Stewardship Programme, using the overarching 'A Narrative of Generosity' resource to embrace a whole life of stewardship. Using twelve themes, the *Narrative* encourages the sharing of stories to prompt a more intentional and joyful approach to stewardship. Many of the Stewardship Team's resources can be downloaded free from the Resourcing Mission website shop: <https://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/shop>.

12.2 Digital Giving

12.2.1 The last two years have seen many of our congregations embracing digital solutions in order to facilitate and maintain giving. Digital providers have flooded the market with a wide variety of devices and packages, a number of which have churches and charities in mind. In building relationships with providers, the Church has been able to secure certain discounts on contactless devices and ensure that the companies concerned understand the differing needs of our congregations with the Stewardship Team now able to support Presbyteries and congregations in their digital journey. Further information and resources can be found at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/covid-19-coronavirus-advice/generosity-in-adversity>

12.3 National Giving Day

12.3.1 The National Giving Day, an initiative running in September/October 2021, was launched as an encouragement for congregations to reflect on God's presence with us through these challenging times and to offer gifts of thanksgiving back to God. The money received through this initiative remained with participating congregations who chose how to use these gifts.

12.3.2 As of February 2022, 318 congregations were understood to have taken part with £1.2m being collected. Participating congregations have used this initiative in a variety of ways, including the promotion and resourcing of specific work, to launch new projects or to offset deficits. In many cases, this income has been used to support projects within communities at home or overseas. In some instances, congregations have chosen to support other congregations who may have been under particular financial pressure. The Assembly Trustees are thankful to everyone who contributed to the National Giving Day initiative, whether through the giving of generous gifts, the preparation of resources, the delivery of special events or the financial work behind the scenes. We ask God's blessing on our gifts of thanksgiving which have been given in the knowledge that God accepts and uses them to do 'immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine' (Ephesians 3: 20).

12.4 Legacy Giving

12.4.1 A legacy gift to the Church is one of the most valuable and lasting ways we can continue to support its mission and its ministry, whether the gift is directed to a local congregation or to the wider work of the Church.

12.4.2 Legacies are an increasingly important source of funding for UK churches and charities. Charities in the UK received around £3.4 billion in legacy income in 2018. Recent research from Christian Aid suggests that whilst 89% of those surveyed gave regularly to the Church, only 15% had planned to leave a gift to the Church in their wills.

12.4.3 At the time of writing, the Stewardship Team is engaged in discussions with Christian Aid and a number of other denominations regarding a joint legacy focal point later in the year. If this comes to fruition, congregations will be encouraged to participate by sharing the promotional material and making time for reflection on the place of legacy gifts within the church context. The Assembly Trustees believe that this approach has merit in terms of helping churches promote legacy giving and providing quality resources and ideas on how to do this in an appropriate way.

12.4.4 As a first step, we would encourage every Kirk Session to put in place and communicate its own legacy policy. This is simply a statement of how a legacy gift to the congregation will be used. The policy needn't be overly specific but the aim is to highlight that gifts left to your church will be put to good use. It might be about agreeing that you will try to ensure that legacies will be used to fund projects that wouldn't otherwise be afforded, or that for the next period of time legacies will be directed to a particular area of work. Members and supporters of the Church may be more inclined to consider leaving an unrestricted gift if they are confident that it will be used for a particular project or new initiative rather than simply to pay the routine bills. More detailed guidance can be found on the legacy page on the Church of Scotland website here: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/stewardship/leaving-a-lasting-legacy-through-your-will>

12.5 Looking Ahead

12.5.1 Over 2022 and 2023, the Stewardship Team is keen to increase its direct engagement with Presbyteries, particularly following the regional restructuring. Kirk Sessions, too, are encouraged to keep stewardship on their agenda and to utilise the services of the National Stewardship Team in relation to all aspects of stewardship including digital giving, legacies, Gift Aid and GASDS, personal giving and broad stewardship teaching resources.

12.5.2 Conversations with a stewardship consultant can be invaluable for a congregation, whatever its situation. The Team can facilitate workshops, day conferences and Kirk Session discussions to help congregations, new unions or parish groupings identify their priorities and steward their resources to ensure that their vision and mission plans are achieved. Regular liaison between Presbyteries/congregations and the key stewardship contact for an area can help ensure that the Team's services are directed to the right places and that its strategy is grounded in the realities of the local and regional church.

12.5.3 The services of the National Stewardship Team are provided free of charge. Contact details can be found on the Church's website: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/stewardship>.

The team can also be followed on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ChurchofScotlandStewardship/>

Recorded online events can be viewed on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqb_rm5hFTSGVK00tBFv6og

13. SPECIAL TASK GROUP (D10)

13.1 At the General Assembly in 2020 Section 10 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees gave rise to what has been an ongoing examination of what might be the most effective and efficient structure for the delivery of work which has to be managed and delivered from

the Church's national base. It is with reference to that deliverance that the group examining this on behalf of the Trustees became known as the D10 Group.

13.2 It is not easy to change but continue to change we must if we are to achieve the General Assembly's declared intention as to what the national work is primarily for: to support local congregations, and also in that process to work with Presbyteries as they too change.

13.3 We are grateful to the D10 Group for the work in which they engaged, from October 2020 to March 2021 and again from September 2021 to now. A comprehensive account of their work can be accessed at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/general-assembly-2022/reports-and-additional-documents>. This details the painstaking consultative work which has led to the conclusions which are detailed in the deliverance and in the D10 Report attached at Appendix E.

13.4 This has not been a quick fix. Guided by the responses of consultees we decided that last year was not the time to recommend further changes. Since then, Presbytery Reform has continued, Presbytery Mission Planning has picked up pace, and the Head of Faith Action Programme has been appointed and taken up post. Under his leadership, staff in Faith Action have been trying new ways of working. We are grateful to the staff for this; it has helped the D10 Group, and we hope others, see that new ways of working, indeed new ways of thinking, are possible.

13.5 We think that – at this juncture, and building on the leadership shown in the Forums – it is right to put an explicit emphasis on 'Leadership', although it was not a feature of the D10 2021 propositions. The challenges arising in the world since have only increased and within the Church we think that there is an ever-greater need for stronger and better connections between the church nationally and Presbyteries. The Trustees were, therefore, pleased to adopt the recommendation in the D10 Report that there be an Active Faith Leadership Team, which will be accountable to the General Assembly, to champion the Faith Action Programme and that half of its members should be suitably skilled people from the Presbyteries.

13.6 We recognise concerns that merging the work of two Forums into one Forum would have resulted in an unwieldy remit. That is why we are recommending the proposal for four Programme Groups recommended in the D10 Report, with the Active Faith Leadership Team having an oversight role, and the leaders of the Programme Groups together with the Convener of the Active Faith Leadership Team being the collective voice for the work of Faith Action.

13.7 Combined with this, we are keen to see greater clarity and adjustments in balance between the work of staff and the Ministers, elders and others who represent the wider Church of Scotland in the collective decision-making of the Church. We are, therefore, pleased to affirm that there should be a synergy between how the Faith Action staff are organised and the Programme Groups. We think that the four Groups suggested, with inbuilt flexibility to make adjustments, are an appropriate way of sharing out the detailed work, and that they offer a fresh sense of expectancy, that can, and will, tackle things in different, good, ways.

13.8 We know that a concern among some in the Church has been how durable any new structures will be. It is anticipated that if these structures are adopted in May 2023 they would be in place for the duration of the

5-year Faith Action Programme, with planning for the future commencing after three years.

13.9 We think that the time plan is sensible and that the Strategic Planning Team, as proposed in the D10 Report, should have the key role in working through the detail of these proposals.

13.10 We therefore propose that the General Assembly accept the recommendations set out in the D10 Report and in the relevant sections of the Deliverance.

14. FAITHFULNESS IN TRAINING ALL THE PEOPLE OF GOD

14.1 Review of Initial Training for Ministry

14.1.2 At inception, the Assembly Trustees formed a Training Task Group whose purpose was to help the formation of an integrated programme of education and training, driven from a single point of contact. This work, covering the provision of support for new members to the development of in-service resources for ministers is now contained within the Faith Action Plan and resourced by the staff of the Faith Action Programme. At the heart of this strategic development lies the hope that people will be able to access learning and support which is appropriate at every stage of the faith journey. An important part of this will be the way in which we encourage people to explore their sense of vocation which for some may mean a journey into one of the several ministries of the Church.

14.1.3 A pivotal part of this work has been to revisit and even reimagine the process of initial training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. This work had been commenced under the former Ministries Council; however, in early 2020 that review process reached an impasse. Much detailed work had been done by the Council, but the process of consultation and proposed tendering by academic providers proved difficult; and, as the first period of lockdown was announced, it was agreed to pause the process while inviting the Training Task Group to take this important matter forward.

14.1.4 The Assembly Trustees and the Faith Nurture Forum have worked closely with one another and, ably assisted by the Education and Training Secretary, have produced both a Vision Statement and a set of Principles, now endorsed by both the Faith Nurture Forum and the Assembly Trustees. The Principles are summarised below, and the Vision Statement is to be found in Appendix D.

14.2 Principles for Developing Initial Education and Training

14.2.1 Formation

14.2.2 At the heart of formation for ministry is an understanding of the call that God has on our lives together with a nurturing of our God-given gifts and passions. In the context of formation for ministry (and indeed in the Church as a school for discipleship) theology must be understood as 'knowledge of God' – it is a spiritual discipline. It is inseparable from faithful and believing discipleship. As a spiritual discipline it must also be something that engages with serious reflection, for part of the discipline is about discernment. The purpose of engagement with theology is that as we grow in our knowledge of God we also grow in maturity of faith, and we are formed to be the part of the body of Christ to which we have been called. The spiritual discipline of theological reflection is a vital platform on which formation for ministry takes place.

14.3 Creating a Community of Learning

14.3.1 In the New Testament, church is characteristically relational. The narrative of the Acts of the Apostles and the themes of the Epistles demonstrate the relational nature of church with all the joys and challenges this brings.

14.3.2 This points towards two important conditions for formational training:

Firstly – ministry should be something that is growing. Formation for ministry is not a ‘once only’ activity, rather it is an ongoing process of being conformed to the pattern of Christ and His ministry. The way training is offered must create a desire to be part of a learning church, not simply during initial ministerial education but throughout ministry.

Secondly – as with all organic, growing things it is relational. It does not and cannot happen in isolation. Formation for ministry (and ultimately ministry itself) must be collaborative. All recognised ministries coming together at key times enables them to see one another as colleagues in ministry, valuing all that the others bring. We need to equip people who will confidently work within teams.

14.4 Academic Provision

14.4.1 We want to place ourselves in the best position to influence the academic provision available for our candidates. We would seek to ensure that the core elements that we see as essential are covered in a consistent way, that we develop our relationship with the chosen academic providers and through our joint working provide a grounding that equips our candidates effectively for their future calling. We would also want to commence an engagement with our current providers, and where necessary other potential solution providers, to explore different models that may suit our needs in the future.

14.5 Academic Curriculum

14.5.1 The work on the academic requirements which was thoroughly researched by Sandy Forsyth should be revisited and amended to strip back the academic content to that which is considered essential to provide candidates with the fundamental grounding that they will require; but which also provides a sufficient grounding for those who want to take their theological training to a higher level. In particular, serious consideration should be given to this foundational academic input being compressed into a two-year course.

14.6 Missional Focus

14.6.1 The theology of God’s Mission in the world should be at the forefront of both the academic requirement and of the work done by the church through the Ministries Training Network and conference programme.

14.6.2 Candidates need to understand the history, contextualisation and practicalities of mission and they need to experience in practical ways how the Five Marks of Mission are being met in the everyday life of the Church.

14.6.3 In this the Church has to be its own expert in understanding how to engage in the mission of God in the variety of contexts in which we find ourselves, so, as a priority we should invest directly in the development of the Ministries Training Network with a particular emphasis being placed on the new Presbyteries being the context in which ministry formation and the practical application of ministry and mission is observed and learned.

14.7 Outcomes

14.7.1 If these broad principles are approved it would then be for the Faith Nurture Forum to engage with the academic providers to improve the effectiveness of the current provision whilst at the same time working towards exploring alternative models of academic delivery to meet the needs outlined in the principles above.

14.7.2 It is anticipated that this would ultimately result in a rationalisation of the academic providers, with fewer of the current providers still in place or with different providers, with the Church of Scotland either working alone or preferably working in partnership with other denominations. We do not presume that everyone will come on this journey with us – it may not be practical for all current academic providers to continue to provide specifically for Initial Ministerial Education. The involvement and buy in from the new Presbyteries will also be important to ensure that there is a training and education programme that ties in with the local needs.

14.8 Flexibility in Academic Requirements

14.8.1 In order to take account of the differing circumstances of potential candidates and to ensure that we can continue to attract high quality candidates we are looking for a more focussed academic commitment whilst ensuring that quality and effectiveness is not compromised. To that end we would look to engage with our current academic providers, and if necessary beyond, on the possibility of a one-year (MTh) or a two-year (BD) degree, which could be undertaken by prospective candidates according to their previous academic achievements or professional leadership experience.

14.8.2 We would also look at pilot schemes or sponsoring individual candidates to explore different pathways before finalising any overall changes to the educational system.

14.9 Competency Framework

To underpin these potential developments there would be a competency framework by which we would assess the effectiveness of the initial education and training in preparing candidates for ministry.

14.10 In Summary

14.10.1 The Assembly Trustees and the Forum have:-

- taken into account the stated aim of the Church of Scotland to use the Five Marks of Mission as the benchmark for its future life and work.
- mapped the development of ministerial education and training over the years and the progress that has been made balanced against the areas where progress has been hampered.
- looked at what needs to change for the future and believe that we need structural change in order to meet the needs of both the Church and our individual ministers.
- considered the needs of the Church at national, regional and local level.

14.10.2 We believe that what is being proposed fits in with the other Ministries and with any specialisms that require to be covered. We recognise that what worked for us in the past is no longer fit for purpose and we need to be more flexible, more outcome focussed, and our educational solutions have to be flexible enough to change as future requirements emerge.

14.10.3 We know too that negotiations will continue to be challenging and painstaking, but they have to be addressed with great urgency. We have learned much from the experience of a number of Diocese in the Church of England which have been successful in both recruitment and in formation and we hope that working with our current providers and in the work we do to develop Initial Ministerial Training we can mirror the success that we have seen in other places.

15. PIONEER MISSION FUND

15.1 The 2021 General Assembly instructed the Assembly Trustees to: (i) establish, as part of the Faith Action Plan, a Pioneer Mission Fund aimed at supporting local church growth, with a particular emphasis on church planting and the establishment of 100 new worshipping communities; (ii) encourage wide-ranging support for contributions to be made to this Fund, including contributions from individuals, businesses and outside bodies, and as soon as circumstances permit allocate central financial resources to this important work; and (iii) make appropriate provision for the efficient management and evaluation of the Fund and the projects it supports.

15.2 This Fund has now been created with an initial £100,000 being found from National Finances. Subject to agreement from the General Assembly, the Fund will be open to applications from April. The full report including the Fund regulations will be set out in the Supplementary Report.

16. THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND SMALL GRANTS FUND FOR 2022

16.1 As instructed by the General Assembly the Assembly Trustees have established the Church of Scotland Small Grants Fund for 2022 which is now open for applications. Congregations and Presbyteries are invited to apply for funds up to £1,000 to meet an identified need within the congregation. Further information can be found at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/small-grants-fund> with applications welcomed in two phases between March to May and September to November.

17. THE SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL: CROSSREACH

17.1 We record here, as elsewhere, our gratitude for the work of the staff in this arm of the Church as it provides social care across Scotland. Staff have courageously and inventively worked to keep people safe and in communication with their relatives, counsellors and support services. The challenges facing CrossReach continue to be acute. Significant financial support continues to be needed from National funds; this is likely to continue for some years and will have further implications for other potential uses of our Reserves.

17.2 CrossReach has reported operational deficits for several years and the pandemic added further uncertainty to the budgeting process as outlined under the National Finances section. Some of the financial effects of the pandemic were mitigated by sustainability payments from Local Authorities, and CrossReach planned for additional contingency costs related to Covid-19, much of which were not required. In addition, the Church must now act as insurer for CrossReach as regards some Covid-19 matters where insurance is no longer available.

17.3 Notwithstanding these pressures, the Assembly Trustees considered with CrossReach the aspiration of the CrossReach Board to become a Scottish Living Wage Employer together with the likely financial impact should that be made a firm target. Following discussions with representatives of CrossReach, the Assembly Trustees agreed that it was proper for CrossReach to address such issues which ought to be considered by a fair employer, and that it should be a general principle that the frontline social care workforce should have parity of pay across the organisation. It was therefore agreed that CrossReach should move to pay the Scottish Living Wage for all frontline care and support staff from 1 December 2021 and to preserve the existing differential from other staff.

17.4 CrossReach, with the support of the Solicitor, has participated in the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and has been in discussion with the Scottish Government regarding participation in the Scottish Redress Scheme, which is designed to be an alternative to civil court action and allows financial reparation to be made to survivors of abuse in care as part of the national collective endeavour to acknowledge the harms of the past. The Scheme provides funding which will be assessed by Redress Scotland, with payments made to successful claimants by the Scottish Government. In order to give organisations the certainty they need to be able to participate in the Scheme, the acceptance of a redress payment is conditional on the applicant agreeing to give up their right to pursue a remedy through the civil courts against organisations which have agreed to make “fair and meaningful” contributions to the Scheme. Following a special meeting with senior representatives of CrossReach, the Assembly Trustees were agreed that it was appropriate to participate in the Scheme. At the time of writing, it is anticipated that agreement will shortly be reached with the Scottish Government on the payment of a capped contribution which meets the “fair and meaningful” criteria set for such contributions.

17.5 In proceeding with this complex and sensitive work the Assembly Trustees wish to record specially the assistance received from the Solicitor and the detailed information exchanged with CrossReach, all of which has enabled properly informed decisions to be reached.

17.6 We continue to work with the Social Care Council to try to find ways of operating which allow greater freedom of decision making for CrossReach whilst retaining an appropriate element of oversight of this major section of the Church’s charitable work. This work includes continuing to address the remit given to the Assembly Trustees by the Assembly in 2019 to consider ways in which the Social Care Council might be able to become a more self-sustaining and financially viable organisation within the Church.

18. SALVESEN FUND

18.1 The Salvesen Trust was set up by the will of Mr Frederick Gulov Salvesen, who died in 1933 leaving bequests to different agencies of the Church as a whole, including 1/10 of the residue of his estate to the Colonial Schemes of the Church of Scotland. In 2019, the Assembly Trustees took new legislation to the General Assembly and a working structure was agreed.

18.2 Today the members of the Faith Impact Forum are the trustees of the Salvesen Trust and they normally meet twice a year, in June and November. They have a Salvesen Expenditure Group which oversees the normal

administration of the Trust, considers applications and brings recommendations to the trustees as to the suitability of applications for consideration for grants.

18.3 As at October 2021 the value of the Fund was some £18m, invested in a spread between the Church of Scotland Investors Trust Growth Units and Income Units. In distributions made in November 2021, following the usual scrutiny of applications, the geographical spread was (table 2):

	£
Europe & Americas	3,500
Middle East	165,000
Africa	132,500
Asia	62,000
Presbytery of International Charges	160,000
Administration	14,000
	£537,000

18.4 The Trustees have continued to discuss with the Forum, as trustees of the Salvesen Trust, the need to review the purposes of the Trust, last reviewed in 1991, and currently restricted to provision of the ordinances of religion to Scots abroad. As such a restriction both leaves too large a fund to be able to be applied for such requirements beyond the United Kingdom and, also, is not aligned with the more diverse viewpoint of the Church today, the Assembly Trustees and the Salvesen trustees are in the process of approaching the Scottish Charity Regulator to discuss the removal of the restriction and to make related revisions.

19. ENTITIES IN ISRAEL

19.1 We continue to support the work in Israel/Palestine at the Tiberias Hotel, the Jerusalem Guesthouse and Tabeetha School. In these much-altered financial circumstances we consider that we must keep under review whether this continues to be the most effective and efficient way of maintaining our lengthy traditions of supporting justice and peace in the Holy Land.

20. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GROUP

20.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are at the heart of the Gospel. The Assembly Trustees are committed to ensuring that policies, strategies, processes and behaviours within the Church and its constituent parts support and promote equality, encourage diversity and contribute to an inclusive environment where all are valued. The Assembly Trustees believe that EDI has its grounding in Christian theology and as such encompasses more than the characteristics protected in law. The EDI's vision for the Church is 'all are welcome' that everyone who is part of the life of the Church, or comes into contact with it, will feel valued and respected and that programmes, services and general ways of working demonstrate this commitment. It is a vision that every individual can participate, contribute, deepen their understanding and experience of God and of each other, and learn to grow together to build communities shaped from each other's experiences.

20.2 The Church of Scotland has a strong record of speaking out on issues of justice yet it has little that

equips it to look inward to ensure that it is attaining, through its theology, behaviour, culture and practices, the standards that it espouses for the world. There is therefore a need to establish a more consistent, strategic and programmatic approach to EDI, that is relevant and adaptable across local and national contexts. In this way the Church can aspire to support a diverse body of worshippers, employees, volunteers, ordained leaders and many others to flourish and be valued within its many local communities and the one community of God.

20.3 In order to achieve this vision, the EDI group has identified three priorities to focus on over the next five years; Racial Justice, Disability Inclusion and Conduct and Culture.

20.4 As reported last year the racial justice group had already been established to address issues of racial prejudice that were being reported. This group has begun to identify how many people from an ethnic minority are connected to the Church, to do this a congregational survey is planned to understand not just this data but also capture other relevant EDI demographics. Throughout 2022 we have started to research what the experiences of ethnic minorities have been and what the attitudes and beliefs of the white majority are in relation to racial justice. We are saddened that racial prejudice continues to be experienced within the Church, the racial justice group will look to work with the wider church on opening up conversations to address our biases and challenge our assumptions.

21. HOUSING AND LOAN FUND

21.1 The Assembly Trustees continue to work with the Housing and Loan Fund Trustees on their Strategic Overview. Working also with the Chief Officer both sets of Trustees seek to identify how, in compliance with the Fund's purposes, assets which currently outstrip the Fund's anticipated obligations can be best applied for the benefit of the Fund's Beneficiaries and the wider benefit of the Church.

22. RELEASE OF FUNDS FROM THE SALE OF REDUNDANT BUILDINGS

22.1 Following the 2019 General Assembly it was agreed that there should be an exploration of whether proceeds from the sale of redundant buildings following adjustment processes might in certain circumstances be applied for the benefit of congregations other than the united or linked congregations concerned.

22.2 Further to that instruction, in the course of the Mission Planning process, there have been repeated requests for advice about the potential for the transfer of funds between the Consolidated Fabric Fund (CFF) and the Consolidated Stipend Fund (CSF). From these enquiries it is clear that as Presbyteries contemplate the creation of new initiatives in church life and new forms of ministry they hope that resources, previously tied up in buildings, might become available to further the mission of the Church in other ways.

22.3 In response to these requests the Trustees have examined the current regulatory framework in terms of both Church and civil law and have noted that, with reference to the original instruction, this provides some limited room for flexibility. In the case of unions and linkages the free proceeds from the disposal of redundant buildings are retained in the CFF on behalf

of the readjusted Charge and are not normally free to be used in any other part of the Presbytery. Having said that, it is possible for such funds to be released for fabric expenditure in relation to the buildings of another congregation within the Presbytery if the Presbytery supports a request (from the congregation whose buildings have been sold) that this should happen.

22.4 In the case of the dissolution of a Charge the free proceeds from the sale of redundant properties, after the payment of any outstanding Ministry and Mission shortfalls, are allocated to the Central Fabric Fund. The Central Fabric Fund is one of the vehicles through which these surplus funds can be used to benefit other congregations, but there is no necessary correlation that results in these funds being used in the Presbytery in which the funds originated.

22.5 There is, however, provision for the possible "interflow" of monies between the CFF and the CSF. In the case of a congregation being over-endowed in one or another of these funds, money can be switched over, and if a congregation is over-endowed in both funds, money can be transferred into the Central Fabric Fund.

22.6 In terms of current Church and civil law the use of congregational monies in the CFF might be summarised as follows:-

- (a) For fabric expenditure of the congregation for which monies are held;
- (b) For fabric expenditure of a linked congregation or in limited circumstances (with Presbytery support) of another congregation within the Presbytery
- (c) For non-fabric purposes which are within the spirit of the 2001 "Church Without Walls" Report if a congregation's holding is greater than £50,000 (but only accrued revenue may be released);
- (d) In cases where the level of endowment in the CFF is in excess of its reasonable requirements for fabric purposes, the whole or part of the surplus may be transferred to its holding in the CSF. If, after such a transfer, there are still surplus fabric endowments, these may be transferred to the Central Fabric Fund, where they will be available to provide financial assistance by way of grants and loans to other congregations for buildings related purposes.

22.7 Beyond these general principles, it is not possible to take a generic approach to the allocation or re-allocation of monies held in the CFF for individual congregations. The only possible approach is on a case by case basis, looking at the holding of each congregation and assessing, in tandem with the congregation, whether the funds held are sufficient to meet its property-related obligations in the foreseeable future. If the answer is "Yes" then, with the consent of the congregation, any surplus funds may be transferred to another congregation in reasonable proximity for purposes relating to the sustaining of the Church of Scotland in that location. This could include the use of funds to support ministry in such a congregation.

22.8 The challenge for all parties is the calculation of what sum represents "reasonable requirements" for a given Charge. Only 6% of congregations with monies in the CFF have capital holdings in excess of £250,000, and it is not difficult to envisage circumstances in which the entirety of such a sum could be expended on property maintenance over a reasonably short period. That said, with the prospect of significant readjustment leading to an increased number of dissolutions, unions and linkages,

a case could be made for further flexibility in the use of these funds, with a particular emphasis on the re-allocation of surplus funds for the support of ministry and the provision of buildings which are in good order and fit for purpose.

22.9 The Assembly Trustees also refreshed their memory of the work done, in response to the 2001 "Church Without Walls" Report, on the question of the use of the properties and funds held by the General Trustees. The work undertaken at that time underscored the complexity involved in altering the way in which funds held on behalf of congregations might be used. In short, it is no easy matter to make the use of such funds as flexible as we might desire whilst keeping in view the long-term interests of the Church. It may involve the promotion of private legislation to amend the Acts of the UK Parliament which govern the trust purposes for which the General Trustees are to hold their assets. The General Trustees also have the responsibility of administering the CFF, the CSF and the Central Fabric Fund. The Assembly Trustees would therefore seek the view of the General Assembly and, if so invited, would work with the General Trustees to establish a process whereby a far-reaching review and recommendations could be brought to a future General Assembly.

23 ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES' CONSTITUTION AND REMIT; AUDIT COMMITTEE REMIT

23.1 The Assembly Trustees' Constitution and Remit was approved by the 2019 General Assembly on the Report of the Special Commission on Structural Reform and has since then provided the structure within which the Trustees have carried out their work. The Audit Committee Remit was approved by the Commission of Assembly which met in November 2019. There are two areas in which experience since then shows that changes are needed to both Remits.

23.2 First, it has become apparent that the remit given to the Audit Committee to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls and risk management arrangements of the Unincorporated Entities would better lie with the Trustees' Governance Group. The focus of the Audit Committee is on financial matters and it has a very full agenda such that matters of risk management, which has become a discipline in its own right, can be given greater attention in the context of the Governance Group.

23.3 Second, in order to allow greater flexibility and to limit the number of operational decisions requiring specific approval by the Trustees, it is proposed to increase the current financial limits in relation to property and contract matters and provide for approval to be required for proposals to lease any property where the annual rent is in excess of £25,000 or the lease term is in excess of one year. This applies to proposals from Agencies but does not apply to the Church of Scotland General Trustees, the Church of Scotland Trust or the Housing & Loan Fund.

23.4 The Assembly Trustees therefore seek the authority of the General Assembly to implement the following changes:

23.5 Audit Committee Remit

- Delete clause 9 and re-number the remaining sections.
- In clause 28, insert the words "and of the Trustees' Governance Group" after the word "Trustees" where it appears in line one.

23.6 Trustees' Constitution and Remit

- Delete the first sentence of clause 66 and substitute the following: "The Trustees shall consider and decide on proposals from Agencies to purchase heritable property or any other asset valued in excess of £75,000 or take on the tenancy of a lease of any heritable property where (a) the annual rental is in excess of £25,000 or (b) the lease term is in excess of one year".
- Delete the first sentence of clause 67 and substitute the following: "The Trustees shall consider and decide on proposals from Agencies, except as permitted in clause 72 below, to sell or otherwise dispose of or grant a lease for a period in excess of five years of any heritable property, or to sell or otherwise dispose of any asset valued above £75,000, held by or on behalf of that Agency".
- Delete the figure "£50,000" where it occurs in line four of clause 68 and substitute the figure £75,000".
- Delete Section D 'Budget Planning, Approval and Financial Control' and substitute with the text set out in Appendix F of this report.

24 APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL CLERK

24.1 Following the announcement by the Rev Dr George J Whyte of his intention to retire from the post of Principal Clerk to the General Assembly, a process was established to bring the nomination of a successor to the General Assembly for confirmation. A Steering Group, led by Donald McCorkindale in his role as Convener of the Assembly Business Committee, was set up to review the job description and person specification and to lead the process to open recruitment. As a result of wider changes in the life of the Church modest changes were approved in the job description and person specification, and these were included in the recruitment pack which can be viewed at <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/redirects/principal-clerk-recruitment-pack>; and the General Assembly is asked to note the contents.

24.2 A rigorous recruitment process consisting of a competency-based interview and a stakeholder panel discussion was established. The interview panel was made up of representatives from the Assembly Business Committee, the Legal Questions Committee, a Presbytery Clerk, the Assembly Trustees, the Chief Officer and the Head of HR. The stakeholder panel membership included representatives from the Assembly Business Committee, the Legal Questions Committee, the Assembly Trustees, the Conveners of the Faith Impact and Faith Nurture Forums, a Presbytery Clerk, the Solicitor of the Church and a youth representative.

24.3 Following due process, the Assembly Trustees brings forward with pleasure the name of the Rev Fiona Smith for appointment by the General Assembly to the post of Principal Clerk. Mrs Smith will be moving into the post from parish ministry in Ness Bank Church in Inverness. She has served in senior roles on a number of the Church's national committees, currently as Vice-Convener of the Registration of Ministries Committee, and previously as Convener of Assembly Business Committee and its predecessor the Assembly Arrangements Committee.

25 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HER MAJESTY'S FORCES

25.1 The Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces currently consists of a Convener, Vice-Convener and sixteen members appointed by the General Assembly. Two non-voting members, each from the Faith Nurture and Faith Impact Forum all sit on the Committee. The Committee had six unfilled vacancies in 2021-2022. As set out in the Nomination Committee Report to the General Assembly in May 2021 the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces has now reviewed its constitution in consultation with the Assembly Trustees and the Nomination Committee for agreement by this year's General Assembly.

25.2 The proposal is that there will be a gradual reduction in membership: Convener, Vice-Convener plus eight members appointed by the General Assembly in 2022-2023; reducing to six members in 2023-2024 and four members from 2024 onwards.

26 THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

26.1 Our trusteeship seeks to maintain the skillsets and approach to diversity which the Constitution and Remit requires. When the *ex officio* trustees are included, there were in 2021-22 seven Ministers of Word and Sacrament (one retired, one Presbytery Clerk, four Parish Ministers and one Professor of Christian Dogmatics), a strategic HR specialist, a leading executive in a professional body, a group finance director, a former executive chairman, one charity and trust lawyer and one with significant parliamentary experience. All are active members of congregations and most are elders. Many have significant third-sector experience. We are also geographically spread with representation from Strontian, Garelochhead, Clyde, Ayrshire, Glasgow (2), Motherwell, East Lothian, Edinburgh (2), Dunfermline, Glenrothes, Stirling and Aberdeen. In March 2022 the then Chair of the General Trustees, Ian Townsend, resigned from that office and the Vice-chair, Rev Fiona Mathieson became chair *pro-tem* pending General Assembly and became a trustee by virtue of that office. In May 2022 we will welcome four new trustees upon the scheduled retirements of three original trustees whose terms of appointment are non-renewable and upon the retirement of one trustee for personal reasons.

26.2 Assembly Trustee information as at 11 March 2022

Trustee	Meetings	Attended
Anikó Schütz Bradwell	8	7
David Cameron	8	8
John Chalmers, <i>Convener</i>	8	8
Jean Couper	8	6
David Harrison, <i>Vice-Convener</i>	8	8
Barry Hughes	8	7
Linda Irvine	8	6
James McNeill, <i>Administrative Trustee</i>	8	7
Peter McEnhill	8	6
Geoff Miller	8	7
Ann Nelson	8	8
Philip Ziegler	8	8
Donald McCorkindale, <i>Convener, Assembly Business Committee (by virtue of office)</i>	8	7
Ian Townsend, <i>Chair of the General Trustees (by virtue of office)</i> Resigned March 2022	8	8

26.3 We were saddened to learn of the resignation of one of our members, Linda Irvine, due to the difficulty of balancing the combined pressures of trusteeship and her professional commitments. We are grateful to her for agreeing to continue to sit as a co-opted member on the Central Services Committee. We also record our appreciation to Ian Townsend who, as Chair of the General Trustees and trustee by virtue of that office, participated very fully and helpfully during his short time with us.

26.4 In order to reduce pressures on Assembly Trustees and Staff we are experimenting with having fewer regular Trustee meetings, arranging special meetings for important matters of urgency and using electronic communication for decisions which do not require discussion. The Governance Group meets on four occasions a year.

26.5 We were delighted that, after discussion among colleagues, David Cameron and Ann Nelson felt able to offer their services as, respectively, our new Convener and new Administrative Trustee.

27 CHIEF OFFICER'S REPORT AND THE WORK OF THE CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

27.1 A report by the Chief Officer in relation to the work of the National Administration can be found at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/general-assembly-2022/reports-and-additional-documents>. In terms of reporting to the General Assembly in relation to outstanding deliverances the following can be noted.

27.2 In line with the recommendation of the Special Commission to review the staff pay grade scheme, a Job Evaluation Process, supported by an external consultant, commenced for all roles within the Central Services Committee in November 2021. As part of this process, all Job Descriptions have been reviewed and where necessary revised in a much-needed realignment of roles against the newly identified requirements of the Church. The scheme has been based on the principles of ensuring that a fair, consistent and transparent pay structure is in place within the CSC which is in line with best practice, legislation and future proofed. Each of the roles is being assessed by a

panel of trained internal assessors. At the time of writing it is intended that the new pay and grading structure will be implemented in the Summer of 2022.

27.3 A report regarding the future of the George Street Offices will be presented to the General Assembly of 2023. In the meantime limited but necessary investment has had to be progressed in infrastructure and fabric to maintain safe working conditions. Emergency remedial work in relation to the building fabric to ensure the building remains wind and watertight and significant electrical work has occurred. The decision was also taken to refurbish one of the floors of the building. This has enabled staff, previously located across four areas in different departments, to be bought together as one in an open plan arrangement akin to the arrangements that we are likely to require in the future with a greatly decreased footprint. Whilst concern could be raised that monies are being spent on a building that the Church might soon decide to relocate from, all purchases in respect of equipment and furnishings have been made on the basis that they can be relocated. Further investment is also required to our IT infrastructure, including the use of portable IT equipment to enable both in person and on-screen hybrid meetings which will help us to maintain the savings that have been made during the pandemic. Testing of this new technology commenced in March 2022.

In the name of the Committee

JOHN CHALMERS, *Convener*
DAVID HARRISON, *Vice-Convener*
JAMES MCNEILL, *Administrative Trustee*

Addendum**The Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, Convener of the Assembly Trustees**

The Church could not have found itself in better hands when the Very Rev Dr John Chalmers was announced as the first Convener of the newly formed Assembly Trustees at the General Assembly of 2019. John is no stranger to finding his name appearing at the end of a report thanking him for his Service. Having been a dedicated servant to the Church for over 40 years, John has served as Parish Minister, Depute Secretary to the Board of Ministry, Principal Clerk, Chaplain to Her Majesty the Queen, Moderator of the General Assembly and latterly as Convener of the World Mission Council. These roles no doubt prepared the ground for his Convenership of the Assembly Trustees during an already difficult time within the Church's history which then reached uncharted waters with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The General Assembly has given the Assembly Trustees a crucial role in coordinating the reform and renewal of the church at all levels. The Assembly Trustees have been fortunate to have John at the helm at a time not merely of crisis but of uncertainty – it is much, much harder to deal with uncertainty than with crisis. The Assembly Trustees have been ably guided by John over the last three years: grace under pressure, encyclopaedic knowledge of the Church, a willingness to devote so many hours of time and a pragmatic style of leadership have been but a few ways to describe John during this time. John's understanding of our Presbyterian heritage, being courageous to embark on a reform agenda sometimes tested in times of trial and challenge, his openness to new ideas and new ways of thinking, along with his skilful chairing and wise counsel have been delivered with wit and compassion. He has been instrumental in laying a strong foundation from which the Church can build as we look to the future with confidence. Words cannot sum up the debt that is owed to John in respect of his work and service to the Church. The Assembly Trustees on behalf of the wider Church wholeheartedly thank John and wish him and Liz a healthy and happy retirement as they move on to their next adventure.

DAVID HARRISON, *Vice-Convener*
JAMES MCNEILL, *Administrative Trustee*

Mr James McNeill, Administrative Trustee

When the formation of the Assembly Trustees was first proposed there was some scepticism that the Trust's administration could be provided by one of the Trustees acting in a voluntary capacity. Most people would be overwhelmed by the amount of work involved in this new role, but James McNeill has been more than equal to the task. He has epitomised that sense of service which is found in the best elders of the Church of Scotland and he has approached this work as his ministry and service to the wider Church. As a member of the Special Commission which gave birth to the Assembly Trustees and as the principal author of the Constitution, James brought his encyclopaedic knowledge of Charity Law and a deep understanding of the background to the issues which had to be addressed as a matter of urgency. In dedicating himself to this work James brought to bear all the skills of his career as a distinguished QC. Most notably his gracious dealings with people, his attention to detail and his great gift for distilling complex discussions into a few apt sentences have been indispensable. These, qualities, however, pale into insignificance when compared to the level of Christian integrity and the depth of faith that he has brought to the life of the Trustees. Against significant pressures, not least the pandemic, which added to the complexity of the task, James has remained optimistic about the future and hopeful that the resources for which the Trustees are responsible can be used for the reform and renewal of the life of the Church of Scotland.

His fellow Trustees will miss his steady hand and wise counsel. He can, however, be confident that he has left the Trustees in a strong position to tackle the challenges that still have to be faced. The whole of the Church of Scotland should be grateful to James for a period of service which has been above and beyond any ordinary expectation. To do this enormous piece of work James put to one side the plans he had for the early years of his retirement; we hope that those plans can now be fulfilled.

JOHN CHALMERS, *Convener*
DAVID HARRISON, *Vice-Convener*

Appendix A**CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS 'GIVING TO GROW' REGULATIONS****General**

1. All Congregations (with registered charity number) within a Charge, with the exception of single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships and Congregations within the Presbytery of International Charges, are required to make a Contribution in terms of these Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships are required to make an equivalent Contribution in terms of Regulations I 2007. Congregations within the Presbytery of International Charges are required to make a Contribution in terms of Regulations V 2016.
2. Each Congregation shall pay its required Contribution in ten or twelve equal monthly instalments during the financial year by bank standing order, unless permission is granted annually by Presbytery to allow payments to be made under some other arrangement. The Presbytery shall advise the Stewardship and Finance Department annually by Extract Minute of any such individual arrangements.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the Financial Board of each Congregation to inform the members of the Congregation of the required Contribution and the ways in which this Contribution enables the worship, mission and service of the Church.
4. Contributions shall be credited to the Church of Scotland General Fund. Any shortfalls in Contributions shall be borne by that Fund.
5. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall inform each Presbytery, on a monthly basis, of shortfalls in Contributions from Congregations within their bounds. They will also inform them of shortfalls, where applicable, in respect of reimbursement by Congregations of locum and ministers' travelling expenses, both for the latest financial year and any accumulated totals for previous years. Each Presbytery shall record all such shortfalls annually in the Minutes of the Presbytery and shall consult with the office-bearers of the Congregations concerned.

Process of determining Contributions

6. To facilitate the process of calculating the required Contribution for each Congregation, Financial Boards shall be required to submit annually by 31 March to the Stewardship and Finance Department a copy of their Congregational Accounts for the previous financial year. Where the accounts of a Congregation have not been received by 30 June the Department shall be entitled to make an estimate of the income.
7. Where accounts are subsequently received this estimate will only be amended if materially different, as determined by the General Treasurer. Only the Contribution for the current year and subsequent years shall be amended.
8. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall provide to each Presbytery by 30 September each year a list of the proposed Contributions for Congregations within a Charge and the Income Base of each Charge within the bounds of that Presbytery for the following financial year.

9. By 15 November each year, each Presbytery shall (1) notify Congregations within their bounds, with the exception of single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships, of their proposed Contributions for the following financial year; and (2) communicate this information by Extract Minute to the Stewardship and Finance Department.
10. Where a Congregation has shortfalls in the current year and previous years, any payment made will be allocated against the oldest debt first.
11. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall issue to Congregational Treasurers by 31 December each year confirmation of the required Contributions for the following financial year.

Income Base Assessment

12. The required Contribution shall be calculated, based on each Charge's Income Base and the total Cost as defined below of all Minister(s) of Word and Sacrament allocated to that Charge. Such Cost is the total of the gross salary, employer's national insurance contribution, employer's pension contribution, death in service benefit cost and cost of income protection. The Income Base is the sum of the assessable income of all of the Congregations within that Charge. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall determine and report annually the Cost of a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
13. In determining Assessable Income for each Congregation, all of the following shall be included:
 - (a) General Fund income;
 - (b) Income specifically received to meet the cost of ministries (including, but not exclusively, glebe rents, Consolidated Stipend Fund income and local endowment income);
 - (c) Fabric Fund and Reserve Fund income (including income in Fabric Funds held by the General Trustees);
 - (d) Half of all gross income in excess of £10,000 received from outside agencies for the use of premises;
 - (e) Income from a Local Mission Church for which the Charge has responsibility;
 - (f) Wedding and funeral income (as disclosed as donations in the annual accounts);
 - (g) Any other income which is available to meet the normal purposes of a parish church (which includes income held in restricted and designated funds);
 - (h) Net income raised through giving online or through other digital means;
 - (i) Net property rental income (including, but not exclusively, locally held manse, shop and garage);
 - (j) Net café and charity shop income (which shall be understood as those funds which are transferred to the General Fund of the congregation);
 - (k) Net income from telephone masts, electric vehicle charging points, renewable energy sources and all other similar commercial income;
 - (l) Net visitor income to the congregations from historic buildings which are open to the public;
 - (m) In respect only of items (h) – (l) inclusive, expenditure incurred wholly in the provision

of the service generating the income may be deducted from gross income calculated from the sources in the preceding section. All expenditure must be disclosed in the annual accounts as relating to the income and be separately identifiable from other similar expenditure.

14. For the avoidance of doubt the following items (which, if applicable, must be disclosed in the accounts and separately identifiable) shall be **excluded** from the Income Base:
 - a) Legacies;
 - b) Proceeds from the sale of property or investments;
 - c) Special collections for other charities;
 - d) Grant income;
 - e) Restricted income which cannot be used for normal purposes of a parish church, including funds raised specifically for building projects that fall out with normal fabric works.
15. Where the Income Base has been incorrectly calculated due to the Congregational Accounts not being fully compliant with the Regulations for Congregational Finance (Regs II 2016), only the income of the current year and previous year will be corrected, if material, as determined by the General Treasurer.

Calculation of the Giving to Grow Components

16. The Contribution calculated for each Charge is the sum of the following three components:
 - (a) Ministry Here: 50% of the Charge's Income Base, but not exceeding the Cost of the Charge's allocated posts of Minister or Ministers of Word and Sacrament post at the maximum of the stipend scale. This allocation shall be based on the number of full-time equivalent posts of Ministry of Word and Sacrament allocated to that Charge as at 31 August in the year of calculation.
 - (b) Ministry Elsewhere: 35% of the Charge's Excess Income. This component shall not exceed 1.5 times the Cost of the Charge's allocated posts of Ministry of Word and Sacrament
 - (c) Shared Activities: 10% of the Charge's Income Base.
17. The total Contribution for the Charge shall be apportioned among each Congregation in the Charge on a pro-rata income basis, that is in proportion to the contribution of income each congregation makes to the total income of the Charge.
18. All income received from the Consolidated Stipend Fund or Glebe Rent Shall be deducted from the Congregation's Contribution.
19. If the Congregation's Contribution is calculated to be less than its stipend endowment income, the required Contribution shall be increased to equal the amount of the stipend endowment income.

Appeals

20. The Governance Group of the Assembly Trustees shall appoint a Panel to adjudicate on any appeals from Congregations relating to the application of paragraphs 13 and 14 above. Appeals on any other grounds shall not be permitted. (Full details of the appeals process are available from the Church of

Scotland website.)

Transition Funding

21. The sum total of increases in Contributions for Congregations within a Presbytery between the last year of the previous Contribution system (2022) and that current year's requirement, will be made available as Transition Funding to Presbytery. This will be communicated when the list of proposed Contributions is issued to Presbytery. This funding will be available annually, for the first three years (i.e. in the years 2023 – 2025) of this Giving to Grow contribution system.
22. This transition funding may be used by the Presbytery to reduce the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations before these are finalised for the following year. This will be charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund.

Giving Agreements

23. Presbyteries may increase the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations where they deem that there is considerable potential for increased giving by completing a 'Giving Agreement' with the trustees of the Congregation which will indicate the agreed Contributions for the following financial year. As per paragraph 9, Presbyteries shall communicate by Extract Minute the required Contributions for Congregations within their bounds subject to application of a Giving Agreement for the following financial year to the Stewardship and Finance Department not later than 15 November each year. Any agreed increase in the proposed Contribution will be used by Presbytery to fund Presbytery or National Initiatives, as determined by the congregation entering into the Agreement.

Miscellaneous

24. Where a Charge has a ministerial vacancy, an allowance within limits determined by the Faith Nurture Forum shall be given towards extra costs incurred for locum provision during the vacancy. This allowance will be deducted from the Charge's Contribution and charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund.
25. Where a Charge is in Guardianship, an allowance, within limits determined by the Faith Nurture Forum, shall be given towards extra costs incurred for locum provision during the Guardianship. This allowance will be deducted from the Charge's Contribution.
26. Where a Congregation undergoes a form of adjustment (e.g. union) the Contribution due will be recalculated from the effective date of the adjustment, ensuring that the newly adjusted Congregation will not pay more in that financial year under the adjusted form compared to the previous form.
27. Where an adjustment results in a significant reduction in Charge income, the General Treasurer may apply a further decrease to the Contribution.
28. These Regulations will be subject to annual review by the General Assembly, in accordance with proposals submitted by the Assembly Trustees.

Transitional provisions

29. These Regulations shall come into force when passed at the General Assembly, with the effect of enabling the collection of Giving to Grow Contributions from 1 January 2023. The Stewardship & Finance shall calculate the first year's Contributions based on congregational accounts received, or estimates for, the year ending 31 December 2021. The Ministries and Mission Contributions Regulations (Regs I 2012) shall remain in force until 31 December 2022 and then shall be repealed, save for section 15 which shall remain in force until 31 December 2023 and then shall be repealed.

Definitions

30. a) A "Financial Board" shall mean shall mean the body responsible for managing the finances of a congregation, e.g. Kirk Session, Congregational Board, Deacons' Court, Committee of Management, etc.;
- b) A "Local Mission Church" shall be a Christian community whose purpose is to worship, witness and serve in a distinct geographical setting, established in terms of the Local Mission Church Regulations (Regs II 2021);
- c) A "Charge" shall have the meaning given to it in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021);
- d) "outside agencies" shall mean those which are an independent body to the congregation and not an extension of the life of the church;
- e) "Excess Income" shall mean that portion of the Income Base which is over and above twice the cost of the Charge's allocated Minister of Word and Sacrament post(s);
- f) "Shortfalls" shall mean unpaid Contributions, including any contributions outstanding under the Ministries and Mission Contributions Regulations (Regs I 2012).

Appendix B

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR GIVING TO GROW

Stage 1

A factual communication was sent to Presbyteries in September 2021 outlining the work being carried out on the implementation of the new *Giving to Grow* system and the transition from Ministries and Mission.

- A more detailed communication was sent out to all treasurers in December 2021 explaining the new system, with sample calculations.

Stage 2

Wider awareness raising on the new *Giving to Grow* system will be through the following means:

- stories and material on the Church's website demonstrating what can be achieved through taking part in initiatives such as Stewardship programmes and webinars; digital giving; raising funds through other means;
- production of a video explaining the new system;
- a webinar held prior to the General Assembly (April) with questions and answers to a panel, communicating the principles of the new system and the vision of enabling local mission;
- a webinar for treasurers post General Assembly hosted by the Stewardship team;
- a communications pack with factual background and information that can be used where there is an opportunity to speak to Presbyteries and office bearers;
- training of staff in the National Office to support office bearers and ministers.
- An article in Life and Work and articles made widely available through social media and digital platforms

Appendix C

REGULATIONS AMENDING THE ALLOCATIONS IN LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS REGULATIONS (REGULATIONS I 2007)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Allocations in Local Ecumenical Partnerships Regulations (Regulations I 2007), shall be amended as follows:

1. *In section 1, delete the first sentence and substitute:*
"The allocation will be based on the income of the Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) in the previous financial year;"

REGULATIONS AMENDING THE REGULATIONS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CONGREGATIONS IN THE PRESBYTERY OF INTERNATIONAL CHARGES (REGULATIONS V 2016)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regulations V 2016), shall be amended as follows:

1. *Delete section 7 and substitute:* "The required Contribution for each congregation shall be calculated by the Stewardship and Finance Department as 10% of the congregation's Income Base."
2. *Delete the first sentence of section 9 and substitute* "The Income Base figures for the latest financial year, calculated as specified above in paragraph 8, shall be the base figure for calculating the required Contributions from congregations."

Appendix D

MINISTERS FOR THE FUTURE

Vision Statement

1. The vision of the Church of Scotland is to seek to inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving communities.
2. The Church of Scotland is going through transformational change at all levels and it needs to ensure that its Ministers are properly equipped to provide effective ministry to both the Church and to the wider communities in which they are placed. The focus has to be missional in alignment with the vision of the Church and with the Faith Action Plan.
3. We require ministers who will be both leaders themselves and inspire leadership in those they are working with and through. Together they will develop and nurture disciples and deliver the mission of the church. A grounding in Biblical Studies, Missiology, Systematic Theology, Pastoral Theology, Leadership Skills and Church History will be vital in this.
4. We require ministers who are authentic, collaborative, reflective and formative and will reach out to the communities in which they serve and of which they are an integral part; Ministers who see beyond the bricks and mortar and will inspire those around them to become involved in the mission of God.
5. They will be authentic pastors, worship leaders, educators and pioneers. They will develop meaningful, relevant forms of worship and outreach, making the best use of the resources and technology available to meet the ever-changing needs of their communities.
6. Ministry of Word and Sacrament is a calling and Ministers who are ordained as such should all be grounded in a common journey of education, training and formation to ensure that they are best placed to fulfil that calling wherever that may lead them. The formation of the individual should be at the centre of the training and development of Ministry of Word and Sacrament. Layered on top of that should be a component of formal education, training and development woven through which will have some elements that are more tailored towards the contextual requirements of the individual and their situation.
7. Finally, ministers will seek opportunities for continuous development of themselves and others and therefore we must provide space, time and an on-going programme of education and training to enable our ministers to grow spiritually and in their ability to better serve their congregations and their communities.

Appendix E

REPORT OF THE D10 GROUP TO THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, MARCH 2022

An extended version is available, showing the Group's work in greater detail, can be found at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/general-assembly-2022/reports-and-additional-documents>

SHAPING THE NATIONAL, ENCOURAGING THE LOCAL

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 In October 2020, the Church agreed a Faith Action Plan to bring focus to taking forward the Church's work. From a national perspective the various related work streams are being brought together in a Faith Action Programme, intended to be a coherent and integrated way of taking forward the Faith Action Plan over a five-year period. The leadership input for the Programme is through two Forums, the Faith Nurture Forum and the Faith Impact Forum, who were newly established in January 2020.

1.2 There is now a Head of Faith Action Programme and the staff of the Forums have become a united Faith Action Staff. The Forums are engaged in increasingly joined-up working. The Faith Action Staff are demonstrating how they could work together and how the work of the Faith Action Programme could become more cohesive.

1.3 Building on the leadership shown in the Forums and the detailed work in which they are engaged, this report recommends that, from May 2023, a single Leadership Team should oversee the Faith Action Programme with four Programme Groups taking forward the detail.

1.4 One half of the members of the Leadership Team would be people with suitable skills and experience from the Church's Presbyteries, one from each of the new Presbyteries. The Team would be around twenty people, depending on the final number of Presbyteries. Four members of the Leadership Team would be appointed by the General Assembly each with suitable skills and experience to lead a specific Programme Group: Mission, People & Training, Public Life & Global Justice, and Resource & Presence (working titles). The Convener of the Team and the leaders of the four Programme Groups would together be the voice of the Team at the General Assembly and between Assemblies. During 2022, a Strategic Planning Team, of Forum members, staff and others, would make the detailed preparations with a view to bringing final proposals to the General Assembly of 2023.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 In this Report the D10 Group^[1] recommends to the Assembly Trustees how, from May 2023, Members, Elders and other members of local congregations should be involved in the development, oversight and delivery of the Kirk's Faith Action Programme and how the details of this should be developed.

2.2 The report is in the context of the Assembly Trustees' responsibility 'to encourage vision among the members and Agencies of the Church so as to enable the emergence of ministries to meet the needs of the people of Scotland'.^[2]

2.3 Two members of the D10 Group are Assembly Trustees, and therefore aware of the Assembly Trustees' ambition and desire on behalf of the General Assembly for the Church of Scotland to move beyond the management of decline: to progress from pruning to investing, from decline to growth. The Church of Scotland is going through huge changes, and this report recommends more. Why? Because the Assembly Trustees and the General Assembly have signalled that the changes cannot be piecemeal, they all need to come together, and soon. 'D10' is only one component, but the Faith Action Programme, on which D10 has focussed, has a big part to play, because it brings together so many aspects of Church life and witness which, in this national Church, have traditionally been led and delivered nationally. The Programme includes such key elements as:

- how the Church recruits and trains Ministers of Word and Sacrament;
- how to support the vision for 100 new churches in 10 years;
- how mission is encouraged and supported, both globally and in this country;
- how the 'voice' of the Church of Scotland is developed and expressed on many key issues.

2.4 The primary why is Jesus: the D10 Group, like the Assembly Trustees, wants to see the Church of Scotland grow, bringing life in all its fullness to individuals and transformation in communities.

The D10 Group was appointed after the General Assembly in 2020^[3] and provided an update in March 2021.^[4]

Following a decision of the General Assembly in May 2021^[5] the Trustees invited the Group to recommence work in that autumn.^[6]

3 WHAT THE D10- GROUP CONSIDERED – THE EVIDENCE BASE

3.1 Our work has been about **the involvement of people from Church of Scotland congregations – Ministers, Elders, other members – in decisions that the Church of Scotland takes in its national work.** It is about how they participate in developing, making and implementing these collective decisions. In our extended report we reflect on why Ministers, Elders and other members – Appointed Members^[7] – are involved and the need to balance their roles and responsibilities with those of staff.

We have come at our task in a number of ways including:

(I) **A succession of reports on this matter** – in particular the report of the Special Commission on Structural Reform to the 2019 General Assembly. The Commission saw their work as both an event, and a continuing process^[8], and it was particularly helpful that the Commission's Convener, Professor David Fergusson, participated in the first phase of D10's work. The key themes of the Special Commission's report included:

- The need for national structures which are "leaner and fitter":
 - to be more responsive in supporting the mission of the local Church,
 - to be proportionate to the size of a smaller Church,
 - to enable the transfer of work from national to regional entities,
 - to be less costly to operate (both from an administrative and financial perspective).

- The importance of trusting and empowering staff.
- The need for clear reporting lines into the Trustee body, and ensuring appropriate collaboration with other Agencies in their reporting to the General Assembly.
- The need for a collaborative approach amongst Trustees, Staff and Agencies; supported by clear schemes of delegation.
- The need to avoid duplication in the Church's work, in particular through collaborative working.

(II) The nature of the challenge the Forums took on.

The Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum came into existence in January 2020 only two months before the Covid-19 pandemic began. They already had a challenging task in succeeding four Councils, with fresh expectations following the Special Commission. Added to this, the Assembly Trustees had only recently been established. In the best of circumstances, it would have taken time to get to know one another, but aspirations for meetings together were hit by lock-down, each (Assembly Trustees/Forums) expected more of the other and was disappointed, and communications were not good.

The Forum arrangement has been made to work through the huge commitment of those concerned, in the context of the continuing pandemic and the changing Church. The Conveners work tirelessly to deliver across the Forums' work programmes and to support more joined-up thinking and working. Vice Conveners and Forum members lead and participate in very significant Groups such as PMPIG and Net Zero.^[9] Many Forum members, and staff, have long-standing, passionate, commitment for example to aspects of the Church's life including within the previous Councils.^[10]

(III) The nature of the Faith Action Plan and the Faith Action Programme.

The Radical Action Plan was about the whole church, so too the Faith Action Plan. The Plan envisages Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries generating robust plans for the future that are integral to delivering the Plan's outcomes.^[11] John Chalmers, convener of the Assembly Trustees, describes the Faith Action Plan as being 'a concerted effort to bring all the work streams of the Church under one Action Plan'.^[12]

The Faith Action Plan incorporates the Church's commitment to the Five Marks of Mission.^[13] However, we do not think the Plan as a whole is well known or understood.^[14] Though the terms Faith Action Plan and Programme seem to be used interchangeably, in our analysis they are different. We suggest that it is helpful to **think of the Assembly Trustees as 'holding' the Faith Action Plan on behalf of the General Assembly for the whole church.**^[15]

As we see it, the **Faith Action Programme is one way in which the Faith Action Plan will come to life.** The Faith Action Programme is the programme, within the Faith Action Plan, which brings together the work streams of the Forums.^[16] The Faith Action Programme is to be **over a five-year period.**

(IV) **Personal Input.** We heard individually from around 50 people who in one way or another had an interest in D10's work. Some of the engagement was in writing, some in conversation, some with staff, some not, and some people were speaking on behalf of a wider group. We also engaged collectively – for example with each of the Forums. In our extended report we note the 'good' and 'not so good' points that stood out for us, expressed as we heard them, concerns that people shared and possible risks around Faith Action.

(V) **Engagement with the Head of Faith Action Programme.** In mid-2021 the Rev Dr Scott Shackleton took up post as the Head of Faith Action Programme. Feedback that D10 received in early 2021 – and one of the reasons for pausing D10's work – was that we must take account of the Programme Head's input. We have had significant engagement with the Programme Head since the autumn, adopting a constructive and challenging approach. The work that he has led with his staff, in which Forum leaders too have been involved, is a key part of the evidence-base for our proposals.

(VI) **Observing at meetings.** Since autumn 2021 when we picked up the D10 work afresh, we have been accorded generous opportunities to sit in on Forum meetings and staff meetings. Listening in to discussion reinforces the breadth and depth of the work.

In September the staff of the two Forums came together as the Faith Action Staff, leading to increasingly integrated working across all staff engaged in the work of the Faith Action Programme. In our extended report we describe various of the further developments. It has been good to see the senior staff's energy, combined with an honesty about challenges, their willingness to learn from one another, and the cross-fertilisation of ideas as team experiences and practices are shared. Work is also being done around culture and values.^[17] Of particular interest to D10's work has been the trialling of experimental staff structures ('laydowns') to inform how the Programme might be organised going forward. Also, two developing aims are to reduce the number of meetings, and to develop a more agile, hybrid, way of working.

4 RATIONALE FOR D10'S PROPOSALS

4.1 Given that the Forums are still quite new, and that there are numerous other changes going on in the Kirk, the consideration for D10 has been: is there a *better* arrangement than what is in place? We believe that there is, that it should be set in place from May 2023, and that the detailed preparations should be made by those more closely involved than D10.

Here, briefly, are our reasons.

1. The Church is part way through a shift in organisational emphasis from the national to the local being supported by Presbyteries. The establishment of a much smaller number of Presbyteries is an opportunity to **restore a structural connection between the national and Presbyteries**, solidifying that connection and allowing for **good reciprocal engagement**. The national has to get to know what Congregations and Presbyteries want from it.

2. The Forums have had a crucial role in taking the work of four Councils and developing and delivering it through two Forums. The pandemic has intervened, remits are large, a Head of Faith Action Programme is in post, joint ways of working are developing, and an option would be to continue as is. **However, D10 thinks that there is a logical next step, combined with a shift of emphasis and a sharing out of the load that will benefit not only those directly involved, but the wider church.**
3. The Faith Action Plan can be described as summarising the gospel mission of the Church. The **Faith Action Programme** is intended to be a coherent and integrated way of taking forward this mission over a **five-year period**. We need a body whose chief purpose is the leadership, oversight and monitoring of this Programme. The proposals are for that period, commencing May 2023, with planning for the period beyond beginning after three years.
4. Staff have a key role in the delivery and implementation of the Faith Action Programme – and in working with Appointed Members in its development. They have been **trialling how the work of the Faith Action Programme might be grouped in fresh, more integrated, ways, more suited to a scaled back national operation**. This has helped form the evidence base for D10. The proposals are the result of careful listening and observation.
5. Throughout, D10 has had a concern for people, not just structures. Good structures enable, poorer structures hinder. D10 has sought to imagine **structures that will enable**, and in so doing has thought about **associated aspects like capacity, accountability, the experience of serving, clarity of roles, balance as between staff and Appointed Members**.
6. D10 has been external to the Forums and staff, and this has allowed for an external perspective. D10 sets out a proposed new arrangement. **Work on the detail** is needed before May 2023. This should be done, not by an external group like D10, but **by those most closely involved with the Faith Action Programme and by others, beyond the Forums**, such as the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum whose roles are particularly relevant to the Faith Action Programme. The **Theological Forum and Ecumenical Relations Committee** have a significant part to play in the development of the Faith Action Programme. The detail to be developed includes names for the bodies that we recommend: those given in our recommendations are working titles.

From rationale to recommendations



5 D10 GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Preliminary: The D10 Group recommends that, with immediate effect, **greater clarity and visibility should be given to the Faith Action Plan**, in particular by the Assembly Trustees. Information about the 5-year Faith Action Programme can follow as it is developed further.

5.2 OUTLINE

5.2.1 From May 2023, the D10 Group recommends changing from two Forums to **one Active Faith Leadership Team** and **four Programme Groups**.

- The **Active Faith Leadership Team** would have an **enabling, overarching leadership role**.
- By Programme Group we mean a group of Appointed Members who meet across a wider policy area than the current Implementation groups, and a narrower policy area than the current Forums. As we heard in 2021, they need to be able to produce manageable, meaningful work.
- It would be **the Programme Groups** who carry the more detailed responsibility within their areas. This is **where strategy and policy are developed and detailed implementation overseen**.
- The Programme Groups would align with the work streams of the Faith Action Programme, taking the work of the Forums and re-imagining it in fresh configurations, with new approaches and prioritisation. The Programme Groups would have a synergy with Staff Support Groups.

5.2.2 There would be three other main changes:

- **Half of the perhaps twenty members of the Active Faith Leadership Team** would be people with **suitable skills and experience** from the Church's Presbyteries, **one from each of the new Presbyteries**. [The numbers would reflect the eventual number of Presbyteries.]
- **Four members of the Active Faith Leadership Team** would be appointed by the General Assembly each with **suitable skills and experience** to **lead a specific Programme Group**.

- **The Convener of the Active Faith Leadership Team and the four Programme Group Leaders** would together be **the voice of the Team** at the **General Assembly** and between Assemblies.

5.3 TIMING

- **A gradual process beginning in May 2022 after the General Assembly, with the new arrangements going live from May 2023**. In so recommending, we are being responsive to what we heard in 2021, that there should be a more gradualist approach, incremental change, a staged approach to a single body. A **Strategic Planning Team** would make the preparations.

6 THE ACTIVE FAITH LEADERSHIP TEAM

6.1 The Active Faith Leadership Team would oversee the development, communication, implementation and assessment of the 5-year Faith Action Programme on behalf of the General Assembly. The work of both of the current Forums would be housed under this umbrella, with streams of work identified and taken forward in detail within the Programme Groups (and their sub-Groups, as appropriate).

- The Active Faith Leadership Team would ensure
 - that the Faith Action Programme is championed across the Church
 - coherence and integration across the Programme
 - good connections with the new Presbyteries
 - within the Programme Groups
 - creativity and excellence in strategic planning
 - consistency with the Faith Action Programme
 - co-ordination of priorities
 - elimination of duplication
- consistency of values across the whole Faith Action Programme
- effective collaboration and communication
- that Programme Groups and Staff are empowered to develop and deliver the Faith Action Programme.

7 STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM: 2022-2023

7.1 We recommend the formation of a Strategic Planning Team to operate from May 2022 to May 2023, and progress the detailed preliminary work, alongside staff, reporting in to the two Forums and on to Assembly Trustees. The core Strategic Planning Team should be the Vice-Conveners of both Forums, the Assembly Trustees' liaison trustees with the Forums, and the Head of the Faith Action Programme, with a representative from the Ecumenical Relations Committee, and additional others involved as appropriate.

7.2 Working collaboratively, the purposes of the Strategic Planning Team will be to

- recommend titles for the Active Faith Leadership Team and the Programme Groups
- define the remits of the new bodies and their subsidiary groups, including identifying, on advice, where to locate the residual World Mission Council and the Ministries Council, either within the AFLT or a Programme Group^[18]
- begin preparatory work on evaluation criteria and processes, and in outlining the culture and values of the new bodies
- alongside Presbyteries and the Nomination Committee, help identify individuals to be nominated onto the new bodies
- prepare training material for those sitting on the new bodies.

8 THE PROGRAMME GROUPS

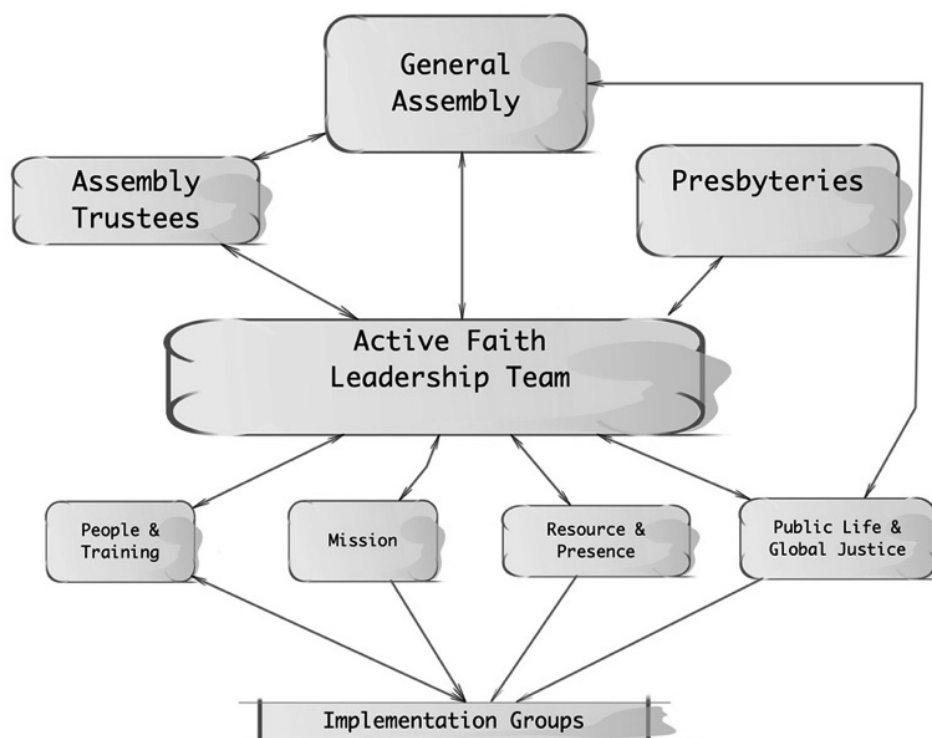
8.1 The AFLT would delegate authority within set parameters to each Programme Group. Within those parameters the Programme Group would not have to take a decision up to the AFLT. Programme Groups would have the principal responsibility for strategic development and implementation of the key workstreams in the Faith Action Programme.

8.2 Four Programme Groups are recommended: **Mission, People & Training, Public Life & Global Justice and Resource & Presence** (working titles and as currently envisaged).

- Mission, national and international, to include:
 - digital ministries, congregational support and engagement, new ways of being Church, priority areas, partnerships (national and international), close connections with The Guild, Ecumenical Relations.
- People & Training to include:
 - ministries recruitment & support
 - leadership and training (ministry of all believers)
 - close connection with Theological Forum.
- Public Life and Global Justice to include
 - those parts of the Faith Action Programme about the Church of Scotland's relationship with world issues of culture and justice
 - responding to issues of the day, on which the Church has already spoken in reports to previous General Assemblies
 - developing the Church's thinking in relation to new issues of public theology, public issues, ethics, regarding which the Group would report direct to the General Assembly.
- Resource & Presence to include
 - the business elements of the Faith Action Programme (e.g. Life & Work, the Storytelling Centre and the entities in Israel/Palestine).

8.3 Each of these groups would be given a clearly defined remit within the Faith Action Programme to develop strategy and policy, and to work alongside staff members as appropriate in its implementation. The Groups would have power to co-opt.

8.4 In keeping with the need for a 'leaner and fitter' structure our recommendation would be that these groups remain small in size. There should also be a strong element of complementary staff leadership.



9. ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE & THEOLOGICAL FORUM

9.1 This report is primarily about the work that is currently with the Forums.^[19]

9.2 When the Forums were established in 2020 the Theological Forum and the Ecumenical Relations Committee were placed within the management structure of the Faith Nurture Forum, while continuing to have their discrete identities and reporting separately to the General Assembly.^[20] During the first phase of its work, the D10 Group heard that this placement had not yet become workable and in 2021 the General Assembly agreed to their temporary move to the management and departmental structure of the Office of the General Assembly. At the time, a strong reason for this was the heightened involvement of Churches with government during the Covid pandemic: this was on an ecumenical basis, and also involved the Principal Clerk.

9.3 The Ecumenical Relations Committee has been engaged in work which offers considerable potential for encouraging and enabling more ecumenical partnerships in ministry and mission locally and regionally. There is a clear importance in ecumenical relations being woven in to the Faith Action Programme and we therefore propose that **the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Strategic Planning Team should confer on the Committee's role, remit and location with, preferably, a representative of the Committee serving on the Strategic Planning Team.**

9.4 It can be said that the underlying purpose of a piece of work from the Theological Forum is to inform and to help equip people exercising ministry responsibilities. From D10's perspective, we think that there is an argument for bringing the Theological Forum within the 'People & Training' sphere, provided the Theological Forum continues to have its discrete identity and reports separately to the General Assembly. However, we make no recommendation other than to propose that **the Theological Forum and the Strategic Planning Team should confer on the Forum's location.**

10 ACCOUNTABILITY – THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES & THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10.1 The Assembly Trustees as charity trustees would exercise general oversight over the work of the AFLT, as successor to the Forums. The AFLT would ensure **reporting from the Programme Groups to the Assembly Trustees, and vice versa.** The **AFLT Convener and the four Programme Group Leaders** would together be **the voice of the Team** at the **General Assembly** and between Assemblies. Although not a matter for D10, we hope that developments in the organisation of the General Assembly will allow for creative approaches to be taken.

11 BENEFITS

11.1 The context is:

- The Church is facing considerable challenges and trying to find its voice in an increasingly secular Scotland.
- The Faith Action Plan is at the heart of the Church's efforts to engage. The Faith Action Plan needs to come alive. The Faith Action Programme, led as proposed, would demonstrate how it can.
- The Forums are already demonstrating the desirability and possibility of joint approaches. Some Groups have members from both Forums. The Church needs to be 'leaner and fitter' and more joined-up still in its work

and outlook. The experimental work among the Faith Action staff shows that this can be taken further, though it is hard work.

- The slimming down of the national organisation is in the context of a strategic decision to devolve power and resource to the regional level...the empowering of the local church, support for its forms of ministry, stimulating mission in parishes and beyond, planting new churches, and a regional reorganisation to facilitate these processes.
- The Church of Scotland is changing the nature of what it offers nationally, and how it does it. In the process the intention is to continue to improve the financial situation of the Church so as to release resources for growth.

11.2 We suggest that the move to a single Active Faith Leadership Team would:-

- help the Church streamline the development and oversight of the Faith Action Programme. It is more difficult to develop and own one Programme with two Forums.
- ensure that the work streams of the Faith Action Programme, whether 'projects' or ongoing, are implemented in a coherent way. One programme, with one integrated team to lead it.
- continue the shift from four separate councils to a place where all the work streams can be considered together.
- open the way for still more unified, coherent thinking and output – blended rather than in parallel.
- improve governance, because the AFLT will as act as a Board in the strategic planning process, working alongside the Head of Faith Action Programme and the staff.
- create a single body for the Programme to oversee a shift in who does what towards Presbyteries and the local church.
- make 'Leadership' explicit. A key element of the Faith Action Plan is its emphasis on 'inspirational leadership'.

11.3 In addition, the four Programme Groups would:-

- involve a relatively small group of Appointed Members engaging in responsive decision making – responsive in the sense of facilitating ready responses to a range of different situations, in ever-changing contexts.
- work in clearer ways with staff, balancing improved governance with entrusting staff to develop ideas and 'to get on'.
- provide focussed oversight, as staff work to reduce duplication, and manage overlap in a coordinated way.
- with their individually appointed Group leaders, share out the leadership load.

11.4 The proposals as a whole:

- help bring the Faith Action Programme together as it picks up momentum.
- tap into the regional reorganisation and reinstate an express link with Presbyteries.
- improve connections with other parts of Church of Scotland, specifically the Theological Forum and the Ecumenical Relations Committee.
- allow for the work of the AFLT and Programme Groups to be themed on the outputs of the Faith Action Programme.

- protect space for developing thinking on emerging Public and Global Issues.
- ensure good reporting to the General Assembly.
- show an enthusiasm to try things and learn, to do more to push forward the new, and build in tolerance of risk.
- aim to improve the experience of serving nationally – spending one's time with focussed purpose, sharing the load with others, more flexibility around the timing and nature of their expected commitment. This may help with the continued challenge of attracting people to serve the Church in national positions.
- play a part in addressing capacity issues, breadth of remit and adjusting the balance with staff:
 - the task is already underway of having to do less better. The prioritisation process will continue in 2022. Detailed choices continue to have to be made about what to focus on, within the Programme.
 - clear, written, delegations to staff through the staff line will be an important complement, to bring clarity to the 'authorising environment' in which staff work.
 - a broader and closer working relationship with staff, enabling stronger involvement and ownership by Appointed Members.
- deliver an appropriate pace of change, taking account of staff and Forum morale and the lived experience of the effort and time it takes to effect significant change.
- have a clear duration: 5 years with review after 3 years to plan for the period beyond.
- on behalf of the General Assembly help enable the holistic mission of local churches.
- With the Active Faith Leadership Team thinking and guiding, inspiring and challenging, encouraging and deciding, speaking up and speaking out, all parts of the Church will feel able to experiment ... doing this with vision and excitement...
- There will be a connectedness between the Faith Action Plan and the life of local congregations and their surrounding communities.
- Encouraged by the leadership of the Faith Action Programme from a national perspective the new Presbyteries will embrace the Faith Action Plan, supporting congregations in locally implementing its aims of the Faith Action Plan and offering back insights and creative suggestions.
- People will look out for one another, acknowledging the pain we go through in letting things go.
- As choices are made about priorities, and agendas lightened, there will be more opportunity to continue serving Christ and the Church in other ways.
- There will be an increasing positivity around the Church of Scotland, a sense of adventure and expectancy, and God will be seen to act.

14 FINALLY

14.1 As has been said elsewhere, our prayer is that through the Faith Action Plan we will set the sails of the Church to catch afresh the wind of God's spirit.

'That our lives together will make You famous,
all for Your glory, honour and praise'
quote from Tommy MacNeil's "Sleeping Giant"

12 NEXT STEPS

12.1 The move to the new arrangements should be at a pace that balances a need to get things resolved quickly and to provide certainty, with progressing steadily and collaboratively.

12.2 We recommend that the General Assembly in May 2022 be asked to agree the key changes with a view to them becoming sufficiently live for the Nomination Committee process beginning later in 2022.

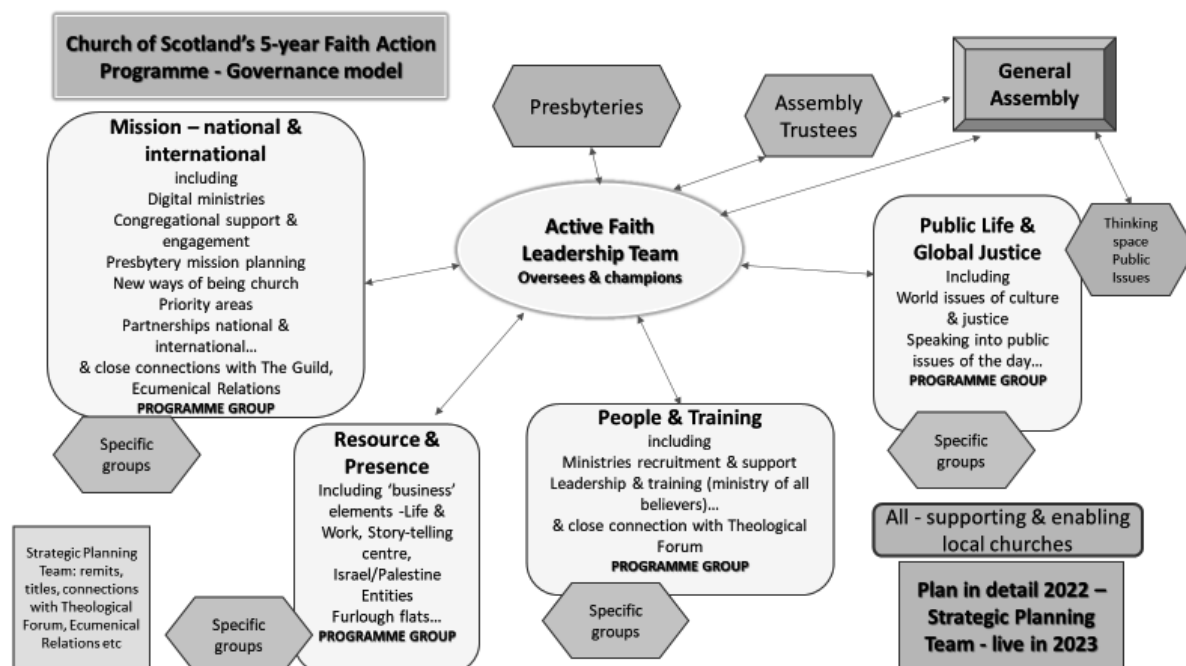
If the General Assembly approves the key changes/ direction of travel the Strategic Planning Team would refine the details, with a view to the changes being confirmed in detail in May 2023 and being enacted thereafter.

13 HOPES

13.1 We have been asked the question 'so what?' 'how we will know that this has been worth doing?' We think that it is important to set out an answer, especially given the challenges of other current changes within the Church. The Active Faith Leadership Team will have responsibility for developing measures for the assessment of the Programme, but these are among our current hopes for the model we propose:

- Those involved in the Church's work will get beyond a sense of being focussed on the internal. "Eyes on Jesus who goes before us, and out to Presbyteries and Congregations."
- There will be vibrant working relationships, bringing everything in concert.

ADDENDUM



D10: Active Faith Leadership Team – Outline remit The Church of Scotland's Active Faith Leadership Team

Purpose: The Active Faith Leadership Team will lead and oversee the development and implementation of the 5-year Faith Action Programme.

Context: The Faith Action Programme is a nationally led programme within the framework of the Church of Scotland's Faith Action Plan.

Structure:

- Active Faith Leadership Team.** The Active Faith Leadership Team will be a Standing Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.
- Assembly Trustees.** With authority from the General Assembly, the Standing Committee known as the Assembly Trustees has legal responsibility for the Church of Scotland charity called the 'Unincorporated Entities' (UE). The Assembly Trustees' responsibilities include ensuring that the charity remains true to its purpose, that the finances are sufficient and that the governance arrangements are sound. In their oversight role, they are to ensure that the focus is on the General Assembly's strategic objectives. Given these responsibilities, the Assembly Trustees, as charity trustees, exercise general oversight over the work of the Active Faith Leadership Team, among others. Being a successor body, the AFLT will be one of the Agencies referred to in the Trustees' Constitution and Remit clause 74.
- Programme and other Groups.** Programme Groups will have written delegated authority from the Active Faith Leadership Team to take forward the Faith Action Programme. Implementation and other Groups will report to the Programme Groups, who in turn will report to the Active Faith Leadership Team.
- Review.** The Assembly Trustees will review the structure in 2026 and report to the General Assembly in 2027 with recommendations from 2028 for the work encompassed within the 5-year Faith Action Programme.

Role

In relation to the Faith Action Programme:

- To lead and oversee its development and implementation.
- To ensure liaison with all appropriate parties including Presbyteries, the General Trustees, the Principal Clerk and the Assembly Business Committee, and good communication with the wider Church and beyond.
- Having regard to the strategic objectives of the General Assembly and the strategic priorities of the Assembly Trustees to:
 - ensure consistency with the Faith Action Plan
 - model and lead a shared culture and values for the Programme
 - ensure that in delivering the General Assembly's emphasis on supporting local congregations, and Presbyteries, the Church of Scotland's commitments to world church/global mission, and the Gospel imperative for the poorest, are maintained
 - lead in, and oversee the development of
 - strategic objectives for the Programme
 - implementation plans
 - specific projects
 - milestones and measures to assess progress
 - ensure
 - that decisions are taken as to work to be laid down, work to be commenced and work to be transferred to others such as Presbyteries
 - co-ordination and oversight of priorities
 - creativity and excellence in Strategic Planning
 - encouragement of talent
 - effective collaboration and communication
 - elimination of duplication
 - reporting from the Programme Groups to the Assembly Trustees, and vice versa
 - that the Programme's objectives, plans, measures etc are being implemented and continually evaluated.

- contribute to reviews and adjustments of the strategic priorities of the General Assembly and the priorities of the Assembly Trustees.

In relation to the life and work of the Church of Scotland and of the wider Church:

- to maintain a broad view and ensure that Team members are continuously aware of the context in which the Faith Action Programme is being undertaken
- to champion the work of the Programme.

Ann Nelson (Chair), Neil Glover on behalf of the D10 Group also comprising Jan Mathieson & Donald McCorkindale, with appreciation to David Fergusson & Sheila Kirk who served as Group members to May 2021.

Appendix F

CONSTITUTION AND REMIT OF THE CHARITY TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Replaces Schedule D, 2019 of Constitution and Remit of the Charity Trustees of the Church of Scotland]

SCHEDULE D

BUDGET PLANNING, APPROVAL AND FINANCIAL CONTROL

- The Trustees shall adopt, maintain and keep under review both a Financial Strategy and Budget Principles.
- For each calendar year the Trustees shall maintain budgetary control by:-
 - requiring each Agency to submit to the Chief Officer and the General Treasurer, (a) budget proposals for the cost of its work in the next but one calendar year and (b) draft budget proposals for such costs in the four ensuing calendar years;
 - requiring representatives from each Agency to meet with the Chief Officer and the General Treasurer, for the purpose of discussing the budget proposals for that Agency,
 - requiring the Chief Officer and the General Treasurer, following such meetings, to present to the Trustees a comprehensive annual and forward budget proposals
 - determining the financial provision to be made available for the work of each Agency in the ensuing calendar year;
 - commenting to each Agency, each year, upon its draft budget proposals for the four succeeding calendar years;
 - making clear to each Agency that the financial provision determined upon for a calendar year will be made available to that Agency only for the work approved for that financial year through the foregoing budgetary process. Any funding not applied for such work will not be made available to the Agency for alternative work and will not be carried over as additional funding available to the Agency in ensuing calendar years unless such an approach is approved by the Trustees upon a special report being made by the Agency to the Trustees, during the calendar year in respect of which special approval to use or carry over is sought, detailing the exceptional circumstances giving rise to the request, seeking appropriate approval and setting out proposals as to how the allowance of such additional funding is to be taken into account in the draft budget proposals for ensuing calendar years;
- In determining the said annual financial provisions the Trustees shall -
 - have regard to the strategic priorities, policies and decisions of the General Assembly;
 - have regard to the anticipated income arising from the Charitable Estate for the year in question as estimated by the General Treasurer;
 - take into account the availability of income and capital from any part of a Special Fund or Unrestricted Fund or from trading and fundraising activities;
 - decide for the year in question whether, and if so to what extent, there should be a use of part of the capital of the Charitable Estate for any special purpose, whether from a Special Fund or otherwise.
- In exercising financial control over the work of Agencies, the Trustees shall -
 - authorise the Chief Officer and the General Treasurer to liaise with the Agencies;
 - ensure that the Chief Officer and the General Treasurer report to the Trustees as to their discussions with Agencies on budget proposals;
 - ensure that there is financial accountability by each Agency by provision to the General Treasurer and Chief Officer of monthly management accounts showing actual income and expenditure as against budget together with the Agency's explanations for any material disparity; and
 - instruct the General Treasurer to report to each meeting of the Trustees with an up to date financial statement showing overall expenditure against budget together with a note of any disparity of actual expenditure as against budget in the management accounts of any Agency

References

- [1] The D10 Group was appointed by the Assembly Trustees: clause 51 of the Trustees' Constitution & Remit states that 'The Trustees shall make recommendations to the General Assembly on matters of reorganisation and structural change ...' The Group's task was to assist the Trustees in responding to section 10 of the Trustees' Deliverance of the General Assembly 2020, held on-line in October because of the Covid-19 pandemic, hence the Group name.
- [2] Constitution & Remit of the Assembly Trustees clause 52.
- [3] The Deliverance section 10 instructed the Trustees *"to examine the implications and changes that would be required to unify the work of the Church under a single Forum and bring a report to the General Assembly in 2021 on what they believe will be the most effective and efficient structure for the delivery of work which has to be managed and delivered from the Church's national base."*
- [4] **Update on 'D10' March 2021 | The Church of Scotland.**
- [5] Which *"acknowledged that much has been learned through the consultations carried out on behalf of the Trustees by the Special Group (D10) which was exploring the most effective and efficient way of delivering the work of the Faith Action Plan and note that the Trustees, building on the lessons learned, will continue this work in a spirit of collaboration, bringing a final report to the General Assembly of 2022."*
- [6] Two of the original Group were unable to continue for this next phase: Professor David Fergusson and Rev Sheila Kirk.
- [7] They are either appointed by the General Assembly, or through co-option are appointed by Forums directly. Co-opted members are usually appointed on the basis of specific expertise and do not normally have voting rights on Forums or their constituent groups.
- [8] The Commission saw itself building on the *Church Without Walls* report of 2001, the *Brodie Commission on Review and Reform of 2008*, the establishment of Councils in 2004 and further back to the Committee of Forty's work which established an Assembly Council in 1978. The Commission also expressed considerable debt to the work of Rev Dr Doug Gay whose Chalmers Lectures and accompanying book had promoted reflection and the generation of new ideas.
- [9] PMPIG is the group which works with Presbyteries in developing their Mission plans, Net Zero is about enabling Churches to support the reduction of their and their communities' carbon emissions. There are many other effective initiatives which we could have named at this point.
- [10] Ministries Council and World Mission Council retain an existence for legal reasons, but the previous Councils ceased in their previous role upon the formation of Forums in January 2020.
- [11] In 2020, the General Assembly endorsed the incorporation of the Radical Action Plan 2019 in the Faith Action Plan.
- [12] writing in the January 2022 edition of *Life & Work*
- [13] To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom – to teach, baptise and nurture new believers – to respond to human need by loving service – to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation – to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.
- [14] The Plan is not easy to find. It exists graphically as an appendix to a report **General Assembly 2020 Reports (churchofscotland.org.uk)**, and is known to involve the Five Marks of Mission. Beyond this, we do not think that it is referred to substantively. In our extended report we examine the Plan textually, drawing out the purpose, intended outcomes and means of achieving them.
- [15] As we set out more fully in our extended report, as charity trustees the Assembly Trustees have a broad sweep of oversight: of CrossReach, the Forums, other agencies, the service departments. Beyond their direct ambit, ensuring good co-ordination is, we suggest, part of the Trustees' responsibility in the interests of the good governance of the UE (unincorporated entities) charity.
- [16] Regarding the nationally organised parts of the church, the Plan is relevant for the work of HR, IT, Finance, Legal, Communications, Estates, who are fully within the responsibilities of the Assembly Trustees, though not part of the Faith Action Programme. Also, some elements of the Plan come within the responsibilities of the General Trustees, a separate church charity with property responsibilities, or of the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly and the Assembly Business Committee.
- [17] As intimated in the Assembly Trustees' report to the General Assembly in October 2020, one of the underpinning requirements of the Faith Action Plan is an expectation about values and behaviours in all interactions both inside and outside the national offices. The national offices are committed to deploying six agreed values and these also inform attitudes to working together and with others across the Church. The values to which the national offices are working are **grace, integrity, respect, professionalism, collaboration and innovation.**
- [18] The Ministries Council and World Mission Council continue to exist for a specific purpose related to the Church's pension schemes. They are currently within the Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum respectively.
- [19] They are two among a number of 'Agencies' whose work the Assembly Trustees oversee. The other Agencies include the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum. Constitution & Remit of the Assembly Trustees clauses 22, 44ff, 74 etc.
- [20] Assembly Trustees' report to Commission of Assembly 2019: **Report-of-the-Assembly-Trustees.pdf (churchofscotland.org.uk)**

REPORT ON RETURNS TO OVERTURES MAY 2022

03

Proposed Deliverance	Report
<p>The General Assembly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive the Report. 2. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Overture Amending the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) as printed in Appendix C. 3. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Solemnisation of Same-Sex Marriage Overture as printed at Appendix D. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. INTRODUCTION <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 As will be seen from the Returns detailed in Appendices A and B, the Overture Amending the Church Courts Act and the Solemnisation of Same-Sex Marriage Overture have both received sufficient support to be presented for enactment. 2. COMMENTS FROM PRESBYTERIES ON THE OVERTURE AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Comments were received from seven Presbyteries. 2.2 One asked about how the parity of numbers of ministers and elders would be affected by the allocation of <i>ex officio</i> membership of the General Assembly to former Moderators. The Committee notes that such parity is already not an exact science as other <i>ex officio</i> members such as the officials of the General Assembly may not have equal numbers of elders and members. It is also true that former Moderators may be elders. The Committee understands that the Assembly Business Committee does not believe that this should be a reason for not approving the Overture as the numbers involved are a small proportion of the whole membership. 2.3 Two Presbyteries expressed a concern that the Mission Plan process would reduce the number of charges and will in time lead to a reduction in the size of the Assembly. Another suggested that a smaller General Assembly would increase the centralization of the Church and diminish local involvement. The Assembly Business Committee is encouraged to keep these issues under review. 2.4 It was suggested by one Presbytery that to improve the effectiveness of the General Assembly the number of Kirk Sessions should be the starting point for the calculation of commissioner numbers rather than it being related to the number of charges. The Assembly Business Committee may wish to consider this point. 2.5 One Presbytery thought that spaces for former Moderators should be further reduced while another suggested that they should be increased from five to ten.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. COMMENTS FROM PRESBYTERIES ON THE SOLEMNISATION OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE OVERTURE <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Comments were received from seventeen Presbyteries. 3.2 Three noted that individuals had asked for their dissent to be recorded to the Presbytery's approval of the Overture. 3.3 Two raised the issue of what protection there was for those church employees such as organists and church officers who might not wish to be part of a same-sex marriage ceremony. We understand that the Legal Questions Committee believe that there is sufficient protection in the Overture and in civil law. They would also point to the Procurator's Supplementary Opinion which was attached to the Committee's Report to the 2021 General Assembly. The Committee is aware that the Legal Questions Committee has been asked to produce Guidance and understands that this will comment further on these issues.

3.4 Concern was expressed around the functioning of the Act's provisions where there are team ministries of the nature envisaged in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. The Committee would encourage the Legal Questions Committee to keep these matters under review.

3.5 One Presbytery said the pastoral care of "same-sex attracted" couples who adhered to the Church's traditional views on marriage and sex should be borne in mind.

3.6 Two Presbyteries who voted against the Overture stated that what is being proposed is contrary to scriptural teaching and would cause further division within the Church of Scotland.

3.7 One Presbytery recorded a feeling that too many changes are being made to important aspects of the Church at present.

3.8 Several Presbyteries made detailed points that should be covered in the Guidance material and the Legal Questions Committee is asked to note these.

3.9 It was noted with concern by one Presbytery that the Overture's arrangements would only apply in Scotland. The Committee suggests that this is a matter which could be raised by a commissioner during the Report of the Legal Questions Committee.

4. ADJUSTMENTS TO TEXT

4.1 No textual amendments are proposed to either Overture.

In the name and by the authority of the Committee

GEORGE J WHYTE, *Convener*

Appendix A

RETURNS TO THE OVERTURE AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT III 2000)

Number of Presbyteries		Members voting for	
Approving	Disapproving	Approving	Disapproving
39	2	1,625	96

Appendix B

RETURNS TO THE SOLEMNISATION OF SAME SEX MARRIAGE OVERTURE

Number of Presbyteries		Members voting for	
Approving	Disapproving	Approving	Disapproving
29	12	1,088	656

Appendix C

THE OVERTURE AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT III 2000)

The General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of Presbyteries, hereby enact and ordain that the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. In section 2, delete the words "one in every four or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".
2. In section 4, delete the words "one in every four, or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".
3. Delete sections 6(c) and (d) and substitute:
 "(c) The five most recent past Moderators who are (i) eligible to receive a Commission, and (ii) not members of the Assembly by virtue of section 6(b) or otherwise members *ex officiis*, shall be members of the General Assembly *ex officiis*. They shall be appointed in addition to their Presbytery's number of Commissions in terms of section 2 but no equalizing minister or elder shall be appointed. Their Presbytery shall remain entitled to give Commissions from amongst their allocation in terms of section 2 above to any other former Moderators eligible to be commissioned."

Appendix D

THE SOLEMNISATION OF SAME SEX MARRIAGE OVERTURE

The General Assembly, with consent of a majority of Presbyteries, hereby enact and ordain as follows:

Definitions and Interpretation

1. (a) "Parish Minister" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018);
 (b) "Minister of Word and Sacrament" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018);
 (b) "same sex marriage" shall mean the process described in the MSA;
 (d) "the MSA" shall mean the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977 as it exists at 24 May 2021;

- (e) "Deacon" shall mean a person holding the office of Deacon in terms of the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010);
- (f) "Authorised Celebrant" for the purposes of this Act means a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon who is empowered to solemnise same sex marriage in terms of the MSA;
- (g) "Principal Clerk" includes a person deputising for the Principal Clerk.

General provisions

- 2. A Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon may apply in terms of this Act to become an Authorised Celebrant for same sex marriage.
- 3. No person shall be required by this Act to participate in the solemnisation of, or be involved in the arrangements for, a same sex marriage.
- 4. In all matters referred to in this Act, including but not limited to making application to become an Authorised Celebrant, permitting or granting consent for use of buildings, arranging for the participation of others in the solemnisation of a same sex marriage, and making practical arrangements for same sex weddings, a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon, as the case may be, shall take account of the peace and unity and pastoral needs of the congregation and of any parish or other grouping of which it is a part.

Becoming an Authorised Celebrant for same sex marriage

- 5. The process for becoming an Authorised Celebrant shall be:
 - (i) Application shall be made initially to the Principal Clerk's Office on a form prescribed by the Principal Clerk.
 - (ii) The Principal Clerk will make application to the Registrar General for Scotland on behalf of the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon, as the case may be, in terms of section 9(1A) of the MSA.
 - (iii) The Principal Clerk will liaise with and advise the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon, as the case may be, of the outcome of the application.
- 6. The Principal Clerk shall maintain an up to date record of Authorised Celebrants.
- 7. Authorised Celebrants shall be responsible for initiating their own three yearly renewal of their status in terms of the MSA, although the actual process will be administered through the Principal Clerk's Office.

Use of buildings

- 8. Only a Parish Minister who has become an Authorised Celebrant in terms of sections 5 to 7 above may, in accordance with and subject to the terms of sections 12 to 15 of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018):
 - (i) permit the use of a Church building in their charge for the solemnisation of same sex marriage, and
 - (ii) grant consent for other Authorised Celebrants to use such a building for the solemnisation of same sex marriage.

For the avoidance of doubt, any specific permission or consent for an individual same sex marriage granted by a Parish Minister in terms of this section 8 shall endure notwithstanding that such Parish Minister subsequently departs from the charge in respect of which such permission or consent was granted.

- 9. An Interim Moderator who is a Minister of Word and Sacrament shall, for the purposes of this Act, have the same rights and obligations as a Parish Minister under section 8 of this Act in relation to use of buildings.

Minister's or Deacon's discretion

- 10. Nothing in this Act shall contravene the general principle of Church law that any Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon has the right to determine at any time whether or not to conduct the marriage of any persons.

Territorial extent

- 11. This Act makes provision for same sex marriage conducted in accordance with the MSA.

Consequential amendments

- 12. The Recognition of Marriage Services Act (Act I 1977) shall be amended as follows:
 - (i) *Section 2 shall be deleted and the following shall be substituted:*
"Solemnisation of marriage in the Church of Scotland is effected by an ordained minister or deacon in a religious ceremony wherein, before God, and in the presence of the minister or deacon and at least two competent witnesses, the parties covenant together to take each other in marriage as long as they both shall live, and the minister or deacon declares the parties to be married."
 - (ii) *In section 3, the words "or deacon" shall be inserted after the word "minister".*
 - (iii) *Section 4 shall be deleted.*
- 13. The Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) shall be amended as follows:
 - Add a new sub-paragraph (5) as follows to section 4:*
 - (5) "where a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is an Authorised Celebrant in terms of the Solemnisation of Same Sex Marriage Act (Act []), enters the bounds of the Charge of an existing Parish Minister who is not such an Authorised Celebrant, to solemnise a same sex marriage."

Guidance

- 14. The Legal Questions Committee shall produce Guidance to accompany this Act, which Guidance shall be reviewed by it from time to time. Such Guidance shall be taken into account by all those using or affected by this Act.

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE MAY 2022**Proposed Deliverance****The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Amend Standing Orders as detailed in (i) section 2 and Appendix A of this Report, (ii) section 4 and Appendix B of the Report of the Assembly Business Committee and (iii) the Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee. (*Section 2 – Amendments to Standing Orders*)
3. Agree to send the draft Church Courts Act as set out in Appendix B to Presbyteries for consultation and direct that comments be sent to the Principal Clerk by 31 December 2022. (*Section 3 – Draft Church Courts Act*)
4. Instruct the Committee, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to undertake a review of the Ministers and Deacons in Same Sex Marriages and Civil Partnerships Act (Act I 2015) and to report to a future General Assembly. (*Section 4 – Same Sex Marriage*)
5. Instruct the Committee to continue with the development of Presbytery Review and to bring a Presbytery Review Act to the General Assembly of 2024. (*Section 5 – Presbytery Review*)
6. Pass an Act amending the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) as set out in Appendix D. (*Section 7 – Aspects of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act*)
7. Pass an Act amending the Appeals Act (Act I 2014) as set out in Appendix E. (*Section 8 – Appeals Act drafting*)
8. Pass an Act amending the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act VI 2004) as set out in Appendix F. (*Section 8 – Appeals Act drafting*)
9. Pass an Act amending the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997) as set out in Appendix G. (*Section 9 – Assembly Online*)
10. Note that the following arrangements have proved useful:-
 - (a) the Vacancy Protocol and the arrangements for Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to meet and vote by video-conferencing or audio-conferencing, agreed by the Commission of Assembly on 7 July 2020,
 - (b) the three Protocols agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020 (the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, the Congregational Meetings for Adopting the Unitary Constitution Protocol and the Congregational Meetings on Sale or Disposal of Church Buildings Protocol),
 - (c) the arrangements for Financial Boards to meet and vote by video-conferencing or audio-conferencing agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020, and
 - (d) the arrangements agreed by the General Assembly of 2021 in relation to appointments and elections to Congregational Boards;
 and, therefore, continue all of these arrangements as required until the General Assembly of 2023, provided that in the case of the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, this shall be read as relating to section 10.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021). (*Section 10 – Covid-19 Protocols*)
11. Pass an Act amending the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) as set out in Appendix H. (*Section 11 – The Discipline Act*)
12. Repeal the Licensing of Probationers Act (Act XI 1932), the Trials for Licence Act (Act VIII 1936) and the Ministerial Staffing in the Presbytery of Shetland Regulations (Regs VI 2007). (*Section 12 – Repeal of legislation*)
13. Instruct Kirk Sessions to take steps to adopt a conflict of interest policy in the form prepared by the Law department (with any future changes which may be made to the style policy to reflect changing guidance or best practice) as soon as may be practicable and in any event by 31 December 2022. (*Section 13 – Conflict of interest policy*)

Report

1. THIS YEAR'S WORK

1.1 General

1.1.1 The Committee's remit is to:-

- advise on legal questions, whether of Church or civil law, referred to it by the General Assembly, by the Principal Clerk or by any agency of the General Assembly;
- assist in formulating responses to consultations opened by the Scottish and UK Governments and other bodies;
- provide the legislative drafting service for agencies of the General Assembly;
- advise on reform to Church law in terms of practice and procedure;
- report to the General Assembly on proposed amendments to Standing Orders;
- inspect annually records of Agencies of the General Assembly; and
- inspect annually records of Presbyteries.

1.1.2 This has been a busy year for the Committee and in particular for the Principal and Depute Clerks along with the Convener.

1.2 Reforming Church Law

1.2.1 In the run up to the 2021 General Assembly considerable effort was put into the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. As well as the detailed provisions of the Act, the Committee believes that this piece of legislation was a significant step in reforming Church law in terms of language and presentation. We hope that in word and in style it is more easily understood by those who will use it most – Presbytery and Kirk Session office bearers.

1.2.2 There is now the consequential task of assisting with the Guidance material which will sit beside the Act.

1.2.3 During the ensuing months we have attempted to take a similar approach in the new Church Courts Act which forms part of this Report.

1.2.4 There are other pieces of legislation which will also need to be revised or replaced and this will continue to be a significant time and energy commitment for staff and volunteers alike.

1.3 Collaborating with other Standing Committees and Agencies

1.3.1 Changing times mean that the agencies of the General Assembly need to adapt their ways of working and often this needs to be expressed in amended or replacement legislation.

1.3.2 There has been close cooperation with the Faith Nurture Forum as they have sought changes to some of the Acts of the General Assembly which provide shape to their work. The fruits of these endeavours may be seen in their Report and deliverance.

1.3.3 Considerable time and energy have also been devoted to working with the Presbytery of International Charges as they look at a future changed at least in part by the impact of Brexit. Some of that can be seen in their Overture.

1.3.4 The Theological Forum are taking forward a major piece of work on how, within the Church's constitutional framework, our shared faith is stated. We have been happy to assist with the type of questions around procedure which are raised by any proposed alterations to the Articles Declaratory.

1.4 Covid-19

1.4.1 The Committee and the Clerks have helped the Church find ways of working during pandemic days when in person meetings were not legally possible. These have ranged from protocols for on-line vacancy procedure to new Standing Orders for virtual meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission of Assembly. Now the challenge is to support the Church as she emerges from Covid restrictions and decides what to keep from the lessons learned and what from our past practice we might usefully resume.

1.5 Consultations by the Scottish and UK Governments

1.5.1 Aside from working with those framing the Scottish Government's Covid-19 legislation and then dealing with its impact on the life of the Church, Committee members are working with representatives of the Faith Impact Forum on the UK consultation on proposed changes to Human Rights legislation.

1.5.2 We have also been asked for comment by the Scottish Government on proposed changes to the Scots laws relating to marriage and civil partnership.

1.6 The Annual Inspection of the Records of Standing Committees of the General Assembly

It has not been possible to carry out these checks in the last two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee hopes to deal with the 2020 and 2021 documents later this year and resume normal service in February 2023.

1.7 The Annual Inspection of Presbytery Records

The Committee had intended to resume this inspection following the adoption by the General Assembly of 2021 of our new remit. Again, Covid has got in the way and the Committee hopes to do as it has been asked in 2023.

2. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

2.1 Some redrafting of SO 122 is proposed to provide for Conveners and Vice-Conveners of legal bodies to serve further terms of four/three years respectively after their first term. These are highly qualified people with specific expertise and once they have been appointed, the Committee is normally keen to reappoint them where they are agreeable to continuing in the role. The amended SO is set out in Appendix A.

2.2 The Report of the Assembly Business Committee also contains various proposals to amend Standing Orders. The details, including the proposed amended text of the amended Orders, are set out in full in there, in section 4 and Appendix B to that Report. In line with Standing Order 127, the section of deliverance to amend Standing Orders is, however, contained in the Report of this Committee.

2.3 Further changes to Standing Orders will also be required following the decisions of the Commission of Assembly which met on 23 March. These will be contained in a Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee.

3. DRAFT CHURCH COURTS ACT

3.1 A draft Church Courts Act is set out in Appendix B. This is more than an updating of earlier legislation and aims to be comprehensive in its treatment of each court and the relations among them.

3.2 The intention has been to draft material which is both clear and understandable, removing archaic words and phrases – including much Latin – and where possible describing certain aspects in greater detail, though at the cost of a longer Act. A consultation process has been undertaken over the past two years with the Assembly Business Committee, some Session Clerks, the Presbytery Clerks' Forum, the Solicitor and the Procurator with the work supervised by the Committee. Insights from these meetings have been invaluable in producing this material.

3.3 The draft Act does not intend to innovate other than in the areas outlined below, but seeks to articulate current practice and describe rights and duties more fully. Neither does it seek to replicate existing Church law but, rather, to point to relevant Acts and Regulations.

3.4 The Act attempts to deal with each court within a similar structure in Parts 2, 3 and 4. Delegation of authority is described more fully, to give greater direction to Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries. The continuing authority of the Assembly is described in greater detail along with those bodies which exercise it. Functions and responsibilities of each court are articulated to reflect current understandings and good practice. Provisions surrounding meetings reflect what is understood to be current good practice and, in addition provide permission to meet online or in a hybrid format.

3.5 It is proposed to retain the minimum age of eldership at eighteen, primarily due to the not inconsiderable obligations imposed upon elders by Church law and trustee responsibilities imposed by state law. Notwithstanding this, there is no minimum age of those who may be made Correspondents, permitting the views of younger people, among others, to be heard.

3.6 A mechanism to permit elders who are unable to relinquish their office of ruling elder due to a lack of capacity is introduced in a process which largely reflects the existing Act. The possibility of accepting a standing apology in advance is offered as a practicable alternative to granting leave of absence.

3.7 The relations among courts and a brief description of provisions relating to appeals are also provided.

3.8 The terminology of Presbytery meetings *in hunc effectum* and *pro re nata* is dispensed with, replaced by Special Purpose meetings which may be distinguished from Ordinary Meetings.

3.9 Provisions regarding membership of Presbytery by elders reflect current legislation, except that it is proposed to add a provision to enable an ordained elder who is not currently a member of any Kirk Session within the boundaries of Presbytery to be a member of that Presbytery provided they are in good standing. This provision may enable some to exercise specific gifts in the context of regional rather than local church and is considered reasonable given Presbytery's responsibility – rather than that of a Kirk Session – for supervising the discipline of elders.

3.10 Provisions have been added to enable the calling of a General Assembly in a different form from that envisaged at the dissolution of the prior Assembly through the decision of the Commission of Assembly (see also further comment about this in section 9 below).

3.11 The draft Act has the potential to include the amendments proposed by the Church Courts Act Overture which is being considered by this General Assembly.

3.12 The Presbytery of International Charges is bound by this Act as amended by other legislation, which variation is necessary given its unique situation and the varying jurisdictions across which it operates.

3.13 The draft Act is presented, not under the Barrier Act, but as a consultative document. The intention is that, following scrutiny at this Assembly, the material will be sent to Presbyteries and other interested groups with an invitation to engage in constructive dialogue. This will enable a further, refined, draft of the Act to be proposed to the Assembly in 2023. Barrier Act process, a more binary matter, is arguably less flexible and provides fewer opportunities for consultation. In the view of the Committee, such innovations as are contained in the draft Act are permissive and not mandatory and consequently Barrier Act process may be regarded as not essential. It is open to this Assembly to adopt a different course, sending the matter down under the Barrier Act. Arrangements have been made to enable the text to be sent down to Presbyteries as an Overture for voting and reporting in the usual way, if this Assembly so determines. The consultation process envisaged nonetheless offers opportunity for scrutiny and requires the approval of two General Assemblies and, further, enables dialogue with Presbyteries and other interested groups. A consultation process is therefore the Committee's preferred option.

4. SAME SEX MARRIAGE

4.1 The Report to the 2021 Assembly advised that, in the event the Same Sex Marriage Overture was approved by a majority of Presbyteries and by this General Assembly, work would continue on a Guidance document. This material is in course of preparation and, should the Overture be approved by this Assembly, shall be issued to Presbytery Clerks and made available online over the summer to assist in the practical operation of the Act's provisions.

4.2 The Committee is also conscious that the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriages Act (Act I 2015) has not been considered since amended in 2016 to incorporate changes to civil law and proposes, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to undertake a review of this Act in light of experience and informed by the outcome regarding the Same Sex Marriage Overture at this Assembly.

5. PRESBYTERY REVIEW

5.1 The concept of Presbytery Review was introduced at the General Assembly of 2016 when, on the initiative of a commissioner, this section was added to the Legal Questions Committee's deliverance: –

“Regret the absence of any review or appraisal process which pertains to the work of Presbyteries and instruct the Committee, jointly with the Council of Assembly and in consultation with Presbyteries, to explore the possibility of establishing a Presbytery Review procedure which complements the process of Local Church Review and report to the General Assembly in 2017.”

5.2 Progress was reported to the General Assembly in 2017 with some initial thoughts on how this might work and what it might achieve.

5.3 In the year following, a pilot of Presbytery Review was carried through with nine Presbyteries on a voluntary basis. The 2018 General Assembly received a description of that process and the Report noted:

"Each of the nine Presbyteries was reviewed and acted as a reviewer. Representatives of the Presbyteries met in February 2018 to reflect on their experiences. The consensus was that Presbytery Review was not only helpful but also essential. There were comments about how the material could be improved and the desirability of being given sufficient notice of a Review to allow planning and preparation. It was noted that at present there was no clear line of accountability for Presbyteries and there was discussion about how the General Assembly might be given some insights into the life of reviewed Presbyteries."

5.4 Having learned some lessons and with rewritten resources a second cycle was followed through this time with ten Presbyteries. The General Assembly was told that the review had been in three parts:-

1. THE PRESBYTERY TODAY
2. FUTURE PLANS
3. FACTS AND FIGURES

5.5 The experience had been generally seen as positive and helpful which encouraged the Committee to present a section of deliverance which was then approved:-

"Instruct the Committee, in consultation with others, to prepare legislation to ensure that Presbytery Review engages all Presbyteries on a regular basis and to report to the General Assembly of 2020."

5.6 The General Assembly did not meet in May 2020 due to the pandemic and when commissioners gathered online in October of that year it was to deal with urgent and mainly non-controversial issues to see us through the Covid times.

5.7 In 2021 the virus was still with us but the General Assembly met online for a week and the Committee reported that the 2019 General Assembly had said that the number of Presbyteries should be reduced to around twelve by 2024 and set ambitious targets for these "new" Presbyteries in the context of the Radical Action Plan and the Report of the Special Commission on Structural Reform. The Committee suggested, therefore, that there would be little point in developing a Presbytery Review process for the current pattern of forty two Presbyteries when, in a fairly short period of time, the shape, nature and purpose of Presbytery life would be greatly changed.

5.8 The Committee asked permission to bring forward a scheme of Presbytery Review which would work "in the setting the Church is seeking to create."

5.9 This section of deliverance was passed:-

"Instruct the Committee, in consultation with others, to continue to develop a process of Presbytery Review and report to the General Assembly of 2024."

5.10 The Presbytery Reform process has continued apace and we are now moving rapidly towards these new structures. They will have considerable responsibilities and, in time, will need to have the human and financial resources to carry these through.

5.11 The Committee believes that with such responsibility comes accountability and that the General Assembly's superintending of Presbyteries needs to find expression in a regular and compulsory Presbytery Review process. We believe that this will enhance the life of Presbyteries and be good for the Church.

5.12 The five-yearly reviews will allow a Presbytery to:

- take stock and celebrate what has been achieved
- look forward purposefully to the future, and
- be assured that it is fully compliant with Church and civil law.

5.13 Our outline of the process which we now present in Appendix C gives more details of how this could work in practice.

5.14 It would be our intention to consult more widely on the basis of this outline and to bring a Presbytery Review Act to next year's General Assembly so that it might be considered alongside the Church Courts Act which is also being proposed.

6. LEGAL COSTS IN DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS

6.1 The Committee last year undertook to review the financial impact of the Legal Aid in Disciplinary Proceedings Regulations (Regs I 2018) on respondents involved in proceedings under the Discipline Act (Act I 2019). In terms of the Act, a respondent is entitled to apply for financial assistance towards the cost of legal representation (a) where a Censure with consent is being accepted and (b) in the conduct of Disciplinary Proceedings under Part 8 of the Act and any subsequent appeal. This assistance is not restricted to ministers. It is available for all categories of respondents i.e. all those subject to discipline in terms of that Act.

6.2 Since Act I 2019 came into force, and at the time of writing, three respondents have accepted a Censure with consent. Of these three individuals, only one applied for financial assistance with legal costs, and was awarded a contribution of 50% of these costs. One case, in which the respondent was an elder, went to a Discipline Tribunal hearing. The respondent did not engage with the process, did not appoint a lawyer and therefore made no application for assistance with costs. Three cases have been sisted at the investigatory stage because of their interaction with civil or criminal court procedures. Six cases are still at the investigatory stage, at which assistance with legal costs is not available.

6.3 In the light of these statistics, it will be seen that the Legal Aid Regulations have not yet been fully tested in practice and the Committee therefore proposes to keep their operation under review and to report again to a future General Assembly once more cases have reached the stage of disciplinary proceedings and further applications for assistance have been determined.

7. ASPECTS OF THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT

7.1 The Committee has provided input to Guidance issued by the Faith Nurture Forum on the process for preparing Presbytery Mission Plans. Work has also been undertaken to find appropriate people to populate the Mission Plan Review Group, which will implement requests for assistance or review under the Act. Finally, there has been preparatory work to create Guidance on process for those making a request for assistance or review under the Act.

7.2 A short amending Act to the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) is contained in Appendix D, to clarify (i) that the Clerks of Assembly act as Clerks to Mission Plan Review Panels and shall select the members for each Panel and (ii) the term of office for appointees to the Mission Plan Review Group.

8. APPEALS ACT DRAFTING

8.1 At the General Assembly of 2021, the General Assembly instructed the Committee *“to consider bringing proposed amendments to the Appeals Act (Act I 2014) to allow early consideration of the competency and relevancy of any Grounds of Appeal and to bring any proposals to the General Assembly of 2022”*.

8.2 There is no clear mechanism in the Appeals Act for “filtering” the Grounds of Appeal before the Appeal Hearing takes place, no matter how incompetent or irrelevant the Grounds may appear. This means that all Grounds need to be heard and decided upon by the full Appeals Committee/Judicial Commission at the actual Appeal Hearing.

8.3 The Committee has reviewed the appeal process and proposes an amendment to the Rules of Procedure in Schedule 2 to the Act: that the Convener and Vice-Convener at an Appeal Management Hearing, held before the actual Appeal Hearing, may determine that one or more Grounds of Appeal is/are irrelevant and/or incompetent and, where no competent and relevant Grounds of Appeal have been identified, may dismiss the appeal at an Appeal Management Hearing on that basis.

8.4 The existing quorum of the Appeals Committee is fifteen persons and that of the Judicial Commission is three persons. The Committee proposes exceptions to this in the Act to allow the Convener and Vice Convener, a quorum of two, to have the power to dismiss the appeal in its entirety at an Appeal Management Hearing, should no competent and relevant Grounds of Appeal be identified. In the case of the Appeals Committee, a quorum of fifteen out of twenty three can be difficult to achieve in practice, so it is proposed to reduce this to eleven.

8.5 The draft amending Act can be found at Appendix E.

8.6 The opportunity has also been taken to tidy up some other drafting issues in the Rules of Procedure, such as updating references from Presbyterian Commission to Discipline Tribunal, and making clearer provision as to the Respondent’s Answers to the Grounds of Appeal. These amendments appear in Appendix E.

8.7 Additionally, an amendment is proposed and appears in Appendix E regarding the composition of the Judicial Panel. This Panel, which is referred to in section 14 of the Appeals Act, supplies persons to serve on the Discipline Tribunal and the Judicial Commission and members to carry out procedural reviews (i.e. serve as Reviewers) under the Discipline Act (Act I 2019). It is currently stated that those on the Panel should be “ministers, elders and deacons” nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly. The Committee proposes that members of the Church should also be eligible to join the Judicial Panel. This would enable some persons to be added to the Panel who are willing and able to provide their expertise and experience to the Church. Such persons will still require to satisfy the qualification required by the Appeals Act that *“All members of the Judicial Panel shall be qualified to practise as lawyers or shall be experienced in the law and practice of the Church”*.

8.8 A final set of amendments are proposed both to the Appeals Act (found in Appendix E) and to the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act V 2004), the latter in Appendix F. These are intended to clarify that the Appeals Act concerns appeals from Presbytery level to General Assembly level, and the Intimation of Appeals Act

concerns appeals from Kirk Session/Financial Board level to Presbytery level. There has also been standardisation of the period of fourteen days to intimate an appeal and some tidying up of the provisions covering jurisdiction in the Appeals Act.

9. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ONLINE

9.1 The General Assembly of 2021 invited the Legal Questions Committee:-

“.....to prepare legislation enabling all or part of future General Assembly business to be conducted online, and report to a subsequent General Assembly”.

9.2 The General Assembly has already met online twice, through force of necessity in the emergency situation caused by the global Covid-19 pandemic. The Church was supportive of the decisions taken in such an emergency situation. Going forward, the Committee is of the view that it would be wise to have a formal process for taking such a decision should the same or another emergency situation arise again.

9.3 Accordingly, the Committee proposes amendments to the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997), to allow a Commission of Assembly to be called where circumstances require a change to be made to the arrangements for the date, meeting place or format of a General Assembly that were enacted at the close of the previous General Assembly. In such a case, the Committee would call the Commission of Assembly, and the Assembly Business Committee would prepare a Report for the Commission of Assembly to assist its decision making. The amendments to the Commission of Assembly Act would also allow the Commission of Assembly itself to meet in person, online or in a hybrid format. The proposed amendments to the Commission of Assembly Act can be found in Appendix G.

9.4 As part of its drafting of a revised Church Courts Act (*see section 3 and Appendix B of this Report*), the Committee has included provisions which will allow meetings of the Church courts (including the General Assembly) to be held in person, online or in hybrid form. It is envisaged that at each Assembly, the Assembly Business Committee would make recommendations in their Report to assist the General Assembly to make decisions regarding the format, duration and location of the next General Assembly. If approved, these details would become part of the Act appointing the next General Assembly.

9.5 Although the online format of the General Assemblies of 2020 and 2021 was new to commissioners, the Committee believes that this format worked sufficiently well in the circumstances. By the very nature of these online General Assemblies, however, there was a loss of the fellowship that normally accompanies an in person General Assembly. The question of whether the business of the General Assembly received as much scrutiny as it would otherwise have done is one that is hard to answer. The online General Assemblies also required that all commissioners had a certain level of technical expertise. On the other hand, online General Assemblies were the only practicable option in the circumstances, and the Committee is aware that some commissioners appreciated the online format for debate and decision making. The Committee accordingly notes that the factors that would have to be weighed up by the Assembly Business Committee in recommending the format of a General Assembly (outside of an emergency

situation where there is little choice in the format) are many and complex, especially when the possibilities include a hybrid as well as a wholly in person or online General Assembly. These include the need to ensure that the format allows physical and/or technical access for all commissioners whether present in person or online and the need to ensure so far as possible that all commissioners can participate equally in debate and decision making.

10. COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

10.1 At the Commission of Assembly of July 2020 and the General Assemblies of October 2020 and May 2021, various protocols and arrangements were agreed to facilitate meetings and Church business to continue despite the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, the future remains uncertain, so the Committee suggests that these Protocols and arrangements be continued on an “as needed” basis, in the sincere hope that they may be used as needed but may increasingly become unnecessary.

10.2 In the case of the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, this should be read as relating to section 10.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021), rather than section 13(2) of the Appraisal and Adjustment Act (Act VII 2003).

11. THE DISCIPLINE ACT (ACT I 2019)

11.1 A short amending Act is contained in Appendix H, setting out a technical amendment to section 23 of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019).

12. REPEAL OF LEGISLATION

12.1 Probationers are no longer licensed and so some Acts of Assembly which are no longer relevant can be repealed. Similarly, the Ministerial Staffing in the Presbytery of Shetland Regulations (Regs VI 2007) have been superseded by the union of the Presbyteries of Aberdeen and Shetland.

13. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

13.1 Conflicts of interest affect all types and sizes of organisation. In the charity context, charity trustees must not put themselves in a position where their interests (or those of someone connected to them) may conflict with their duties as a charity trustee. For congregations, a conflict of interest can inhibit free discussion and can lead to decisions which may not be in the best interests of the congregation and which may be open to challenge. It is therefore important that such conflicts are recognised and that provision is made for how they are to be handled. This is best achieved through having a suitable conflict of interest policy in place. The Law Department has prepared a style policy, which can be found on the Church website under Resources/Law department circulars and Kirk Sessions should take steps to adopt this policy (with any future changes which may be made to the style policy to reflect changing guidance or best practice) as soon as may be practicable and in any event by the end of 2022.

In the name of the Committee

S GRANT BARCLAY, *Convener*
VICTORIA LINFORD, *Vice-Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Secretary*

Addendum

The Rev Dr George J Whyte

Church life at all levels had good reason to be glad that, when restrictions on meeting for worship, fellowship and decision-making such as had never before been experienced were imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Rev Dr George Whyte was Principal Clerk.

George brought the knowledge and experience gained through a lifetime of service and willingly placed it at the service of the Kirk. He brought insights from parish ministry, having served in rural and city charges in Argyll, Glasgow and Edinburgh. He was well-versed in regional church life having served for nearly a decade as Clerk of Edinburgh Presbytery, and he was familiar with national responsibilities having served as Convener of the Board of Ministry, as Acting Principal Clerk and as Deputy Clerk.

In the press release issued on his appointment, George made reference to the ‘challenges of our day.’ The extent of these could hardly have been anticipated in 2017. George’s swift, assured and knowledgeable response through this period has enabled the Church to continue to function securely and effectively in worship, service and mission.

Bringing not only a sharp mind but an equally acute sense of humour and realism to his work, George has led the Church through a dizzying array of state legislative changes as he has engaged with government at all levels. He oversaw the calling, and holding, of the first online General Assemblies in the Kirk’s history. In his earlier years as Principal Clerk, George supported the development of substantial pieces of Church law including a significant Act on discipline; in recent years he has been closely involved with provisions around same sex marriage, the Presbytery Mission Plan Act and a wholesale revision of Church Courts legislation. He has also facilitated and encouraged the Presbytery Reform process.

Moderators, Presbytery Clerks, ministers and elders, have been guided, supported – and persuaded – through George’s direct, clear-sighted advice. As Secretary to the Legal Questions Committee, the depth of knowledge of Church law and practice which George has brought to the Committee’s discussions has been invaluable. He has enabled the Church of Scotland to add to the richness of public life in demanding days. His own contribution to public life was further enhanced when in 2019 he was appointed as a Chaplain-in-Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

The Church in expressing its gratitude to George for his expert and willing support of its law and practices over these years of office wishes him, and Moira, joy and enrichment in this next phase of their lives.

S GRANT BARCLAY, *Convener*
VICTORIA LINFORD, *Vice-Convener*

Appendix A

Amendment to Standing Orders – redraft of SO 122

122. Appointment.

(i) Conveners and Vice-Conveners of Councils and Committees shall be appointed by the Assembly.

(ii) Conveners **of Standing Committees other than the legal bodies** shall hold office for not more than four consecutive years (in the case of the Nomination Committee, Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum, three consecutive years) and Vice-Conveners **of Standing Committees other than the legal bodies** shall hold office for not more than three consecutive years, unless the Assembly are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which make the reappointment of Conveners and Vice-Conveners desirable. The period of reappointment shall be for one year only. If at the time of their appointment they are already members of the Council or Committee another Member shall be appointed in their **stead** for the remainder of the period of their original appointment.

(iii) **Conveners of the legal bodies (meaning the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly, the Discipline Tribunal, the Judicial Commission, the Judicial Panel, the Ministries Appeal Panel, the Mission Plan Review Group, the Personnel Appeal Group and the Safeguarding Appeal Group) shall initially be appointed for a term of four years and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years. Vice-Conveners of the legal bodies shall initially be appointed for a term of three years and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of three years.**

Appendix B

Draft Church Courts Act

CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT [] 2023)

Edinburgh, [] May 2023, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain as follows:

PART 1 – CHURCH COURTS

1. Broad Principle

1.1 The government of the Church of Scotland is Presbyterian and is exercised through courts, being Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries and General Assemblies, as set out in the Articles Declaratory.

1.2 This Church as part of the Universal Church wherein the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed a government in the hands of Church office-bearers, receives from Him, its Divine King and Head, and From Him alone, the right and power subject to no civil authority to legislate, and to adjudicate finally, in all matters of doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in the Church, including the right to determine all questions concerning membership and office in the Church, the constitution and membership of its Courts, and the mode of election of its office-bearers, and to define the boundaries of the spheres of labour of its Ministers and other office-bearers.

PART 2 – KIRK SESSION

2. Broad Principle

2.1 The Kirk Session is the court which is responsible for the life and witness of the Church of Scotland in a parish.

2.2 The Kirk Session shall exercise supervision and leadership over the congregation's participation in Mission

within the parish and the congregation's sharing in the wider work of the Church. To that end the Kirk Session shall attend to these facets of church life ensuring that they are held in balance and expressed in ways appropriate to the context:

**Worship
Service
Fellowship
Discipleship
Evangelism^[1]**

3. Functions and Responsibilities

3.1 In achieving the broad principle above, the Kirk Session shall fulfill the following functions and responsibilities:-

Witness

- (1) **Mission:** Develop the congregation's engagement in the ministry of Jesus Christ so that its life exhibits the Five Marks of Mission.
- (2) **Public Worship and Communion:** Determine the hours of public worship and the times of dispensing the Lord's Supper, the latter in terms of the Sacraments Act (Act V 2000), always subject to determination by Presbytery for purposes of parish adjustment.
- (3) **Pastoral and spiritual care:** Exercise supervision over the pastoral and spiritual care of the whole congregation, throughout the whole of life.

Congregational Life

- (4) **Office bearers:** Appoint a Clerk and a Safeguarding Coordinator, and where there is no Congregational Board or Deacons' Court, a Treasurer. The Kirk Session may make other appointments as required. The oath *de fidei* shall be administered to a Clerk or Interim Clerk.^[2] The Clerk need not be a member of the Kirk Session but while in post shall be a charity trustee.
- (5) **Congregational membership and adherence:** Determine issues of membership and adherence in the congregation and be responsible for keeping a Roll of the congregation which is up to date and retained in accordance with data protection law.
- (6) **Session membership:** Arrange for adding to its number and receive resignations of its members.
- (7) **Discipline:** Maintain good order in the life of the congregation and respond to the misconduct of members and adherents.
- (8) **Baptisms:** Determine in collaboration with the Minister those to whom the sacrament of baptism may be administered and be responsible for the keeping of a Roll of Baptisms, all in terms of the Sacraments Act (Act V 2000).
- (9) **Finance and Property:** Be responsible for the financial arrangements and the care of the property belonging to the congregation, including maintenance of a Property Register, unless there is a Congregational Board or Deacons' Court^[3].
- (10) **Church buildings and land:** Exercise rights and responsibilities over Church buildings as set out in section 12 of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) and, where buildings or land are vested in the Church of Scotland General Trustees, in accordance with any directions given by them in matters of health and safety.

- (11) **Stewardship:** Bring the resourcing needs and commitments of the congregation and wider Church to the attention of members and adherents on a regular basis and encourage generosity in giving of time, talents and money.
- (12) **Oversight of congregational organisations:** Oversee all Sunday Schools, congregational organisations and mission work of the congregation.
- (13) **Appointments:** Appoint appropriate persons to work in the congregation to support the Mission of the congregation; fulfil all responsibilities consequentially arising in terms of the civil law on employment; and unless the congregation has a Congregational Board or Deacons' Court, be responsible for the payment of salaries.
- (14) **Communications:** Be responsible for all publications and communications, including social media, issued in the name of the congregation.

Church Law

- (15) **Compliance:** Carry out the functions and comply with the responsibilities specified in Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly, and comply with instructions of Presbytery and the General Assembly.^[4]
- (16) **Rolls and records:** Submit annually to Presbytery for examination the rolls, registers, and records of the congregation and submit for attestation by Presbytery the annual congregational accounts.
- (17) **Conflicts of interest:** Adopt and operate a suitable policy which demonstrates conflicts of interest are recognised and managed effectively.

Civil Law

- (18) **Charity law:** discharge the duties of charity trustees in terms of the civil law on charities, in particular those contained in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended).
- (19) **Safeguarding:** fulfil all responsibilities placed upon it in terms of civil law and the Safeguarding Act (Act XVI 2018).
- (20) **Data protection:** be responsible for fulfilling the provisions of civil law on data protection, in accordance with advice and assistance provided by the national Church offices and Church website.
- (21) **Health and safety law, employment law and other civil law:** comply as required.

Co-operation with Presbytery

- (22) **Presbytery Elder:** appoint one of their number to serve as a member of the relevant Presbytery.
- (23) **Mission Planning:** take due part in the creation and annual updating of the Presbytery Mission Plan as set out in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021).
- (24) **Vacancy Procedure:** fulfil the various responsibilities set out in the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003).
- (25) **Superintendence:** co-operate with Presbytery as it exercises its general powers of superintendence and in particular participate in the processes of the Local Church Review Act (Act I 2011).

3.2 Where a Kirk Session is a Services Kirk Session in terms of the H.M. Forces (Kirk Sessions) Act (Act VIII 1952), the terms of this Act shall be interpreted and applied with all necessary adaptations.

4. Delegation of Authority

4.1 The Kirk Session may delegate its authority to make decisions in certain areas of responsibility to individuals or committees on such terms as the Kirk Session may determine. The Kirk Session may include in the delegation a mechanism by which Kirk Session members beyond the group can, before a final decision is made by the delegated group, request that the matter come back to a full meeting of the Kirk Session.

4.2 In delegating, the Kirk Session shall ensure that:

- (a) all the members of the Kirk Session are aware that as charity trustees they retain responsibility for the decisions made by the delegated group and decisions made by a delegated group will be open to Dissent and Complaint or Appeal in terms of the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act V 2004).
- (b) it identifies at a full meeting of the Kirk Session the individual or the membership of the group to which the powers are to be delegated including lines of accountability.
- (c) it sets out in an agreed minute the extent of the delegated powers including if appropriate reference to the relevant Act(s) and/or Regulations of the General Assembly regarding the decisions the group is charged with making, the budget limits within which they must work, and the point at which the group must refer decision-making back to a full meeting of the Kirk Session.
- (d) it minutes its acceptance that decisions made by the group are final and cannot be recalled or rescinded by the Kirk Session save where the mechanism permitted by section 4.1 has been included in the scheme of delegation.
- (e) no further delegation is possible by the delegated group without the consent of the Kirk Session.

5. Meetings

5.0 Kirk Session meetings shall normally be held in public but may be held in private for the whole or part of a meeting where the Session so determines for items of business which are personal or of a pastoral or commercially sensitive nature.

5.1 Calling Meetings

5.1.1 The Moderator is responsible for calling meetings of the Kirk Session. Normally public notice of at least ten days (and including two Sundays) of a meeting shall be given. Elders may also be notified by hard copy letter, or by electronic means, or by telephone call, or by a combination of these methods.

5.1.2 In addition, the Moderator must call a Session meeting to be held within ten days where he or she is requested in writing to do so by either of the following groups: (1) a majority of the ruling Elders, or (2) where the ruling Elders exceed nine in number, at least one-third with a minimum of five.

5.1.3 In each year, in addition to such meetings as may be arranged for the regular conduct of business, the Session must meet for the following purposes:

- (a) To review and approve the Communion Roll and Supplementary Roll,
 - (b) To approve the accounts of the congregation for the preceding financial year,
 - (c) To review and approve the Safeguarding Register, and
 - (d) To appoint the Presbytery Elder,
- all in accordance with Church law.

5.2 Procedure at Meetings

5.2.1 Meetings shall be constituted and closed with prayer.

5.2.2 All meetings shall be minuted, with the minute of each meeting being circulated in draft to all present promptly following the meeting and being subject to approval at the start of the following meeting. The minute shall record the date, time, and (if in person) place of the meeting, the name of the Moderator, attendees (including apologies) and decisions made and actions taken. Minutes shall be retained as set out in the Guidance.

5.2.3 The minute of a meeting (or part of it) held in private shall be in held in a Record Apart.

5.2.4 Meetings may take place in person, or online, or by a combination of these methods. Where the meeting is online to any extent, the Moderator shall ensure that those attending can participate, debate and vote and that this can be done in private where required.

5.2.5 A person who is not a member of the Kirk Session, whether or not a member of the congregation, may attend a Session meeting (except to the extent that it is being held in private) but shall require permission of the Kirk Session to speak on a particular item (or items) of business. A request to speak shall be made by submitting it in writing to the Session Clerk, normally at least seven days in advance of the date of the meeting. The request shall then be considered at the meeting of the Kirk Session in question.

5.2.6 The Standing Orders of the General Assembly shall apply as matter of default to Kirk Session meetings, but a Kirk Session may adopt Standing Orders of its own provided these are not incompatible with Church law.

5.3 Moderator and Interim Moderator

5.3.1 Moderator

5.3.1.1 The Minister of the charge shall be the Moderator of the Kirk Session, save where other arrangements are specified in a Basis of Team Ministry. Otherwise the Kirk Session may be moderated by an Interim Moderator as set out below or as set out in the Kirk Session Meetings Act (Act VI 2004).

5.3.1.2 The Moderator of the Kirk Session while in the chair has a casting vote but no deliberative vote. He or she may introduce items of business and may speak to them.

5.3.2 Interim Moderator

5.3.2.1 The Presbytery may appoint an Interim Moderator of the Kirk Session. This shall normally be done when the charge is vacant, or when the Minister is on sick leave or has been granted leave of absence. It may also be done in anticipation of an impending vacancy, while the Minister is still in office, to deal with adjustment and vacancy business.

5.3.2.2 Where the relevant Presbytery appoints an Interim Moderator, the Interim Moderator shall be either a ministerial member of the Presbytery in terms of this Act or the Presbytery Assessors Act (Act V 2001) or a member of the Presbytery selected from the Presbytery's list of those who have received such preparation for the task as the Faith Nurture Forum shall from time to time recommend or provide.

5.4 Quorum

5.4.1 The quorum of a Kirk Session shall be three, being the Moderator, Interim Moderator or appointee in terms of the Kirk Session Meetings Act (Act VI 2004), plus two ruling Elders.

5.4.2 If there be not a sufficient number of ruling Elders available to make a quorum, or in cases of difficulty at the discretion of the Presbytery, Assessor Elders may be appointed by the Presbytery. When appointing Assessor Elders, Presbytery shall state whether or not the Assessor Elders have a vote in Session business; they shall be charity trustees from the date of their appointment until they are discharged.

6. Membership of the Kirk Session

6.1 The Kirk Session shall consist of the Minister(s) of the parish, any associate Minister or parish Deacon if qualified as set out below, and the ruling Elders of the congregation. All members of the Session shall have the right to vote.

6.2 An associate Minister or parish Deacon introduced in terms of section 32(4) of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003), shall be a member of the Kirk Session. Any other Minister or Deacon may be associated in the practical work of the Kirk Session of the congregation on the invitation of the Kirk Session, with the right to attend meetings and to speak, but not to vote, and shall not be a member of the Kirk Session.

6.3 Where there is no Congregational Board or Deacons' Court, the Kirk Session shall also appoint a Treasurer who need not be an Elder nor member of the congregation, but who shall assume the duties and obligations of charity trusteeship.

6.4 Members of the Kirk Session along with members of the Congregational Board or Deacons' Court shall be charity trustees of the congregation for the purposes of civil charity law. Other persons may be charity trustees for the purposes of civil charity law according to that congregation's constitution.

6.5 The Kirk Session may appoint Correspondents, who need not be members of the congregation. Correspondents shall have the following rights in respect of meetings: to receive papers, to attend and to speak but not to vote. A Correspondent shall not be present when business is taken in private.

6.6 A locum in a vacancy shall not be a member of a Kirk Session but if the Kirk Session so decides may be invited to attend Kirk Session meetings and allowed to speak.

6.7 Elders shall be elected, ordained and admitted to the Kirk Session in terms of the Election and Admission of Elders and Deacons Act (Act X 1932). Such Act includes provision for Elders to be admitted to the Kirk Session on the basis of fixed term membership. The minimum age for an Elder is eighteen years. The Kirk Session shall keep the number of ruling Elders under review, for efficient operation.

6.8 An Elder who ceases to be a member of a Kirk Session does not, if he or she transfers to another congregation, thereby become a member of its Kirk Session but may do so upon invitation.

6.9 A Kirk Session may agree to accept a standing apology from a ruling Elder for all meetings occurring between specified dates on cause shown. If agreed to, such an Elder remains a charity trustee and shall continue to be supplied with documents for all Session meetings.

6.10 Where (i) a ruling Elder fails to attend Kirk Session meetings for a period of twelve months without submitting apologies for their absence, or (ii) a Session determines that a ruling Elder is not, whether through

infirmity, illness or otherwise, participating sufficiently in Kirk Session business, the Session may, having first invited the person to offer reasons for their absence or lack of participation and assurances regarding their future involvement, remove that person from the membership of the Session. The Session Clerk will write to that person to confirm that they have been removed from the membership of the Session. From the date of their removal they will no longer be a charity trustee^[5].

7. Relationship with other Church Courts

7.1 A Kirk Session, as the inferior court, is answerable to the Presbytery and, as such, must obey the instructions of the Presbytery and the General Assembly. As such, appeals against decisions of Kirk Sessions shall be heard and disposed of by the Presbytery or those to whom the Presbytery delegates such authority.

7.2 Relationships with other Kirk Sessions may be governed by Bases, such as a Basis of linking or parish grouping, approved by Presbytery in terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021). Where decisions are required to be made, two or more Kirk Sessions may meet in conference but they require to meet separately (and this may be in the same place at the same time) to make their own decisions^[6].

7.3 Where a Kirk Session becomes aware of difficulties in the congregation or Session which it cannot itself resolve, it shall make the Presbytery aware of the situation or where Presbytery itself becomes aware of such circumstances, the Presbytery shall proceed to take appropriate action.

7.4 Whenever a Kirk Session meeting is called by the authority of the Presbytery in terms of the Local Church Review Act (Act I 2011) or the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) or for any other purpose relating to the superintendence of the congregation by the Presbytery, the representative of Presbytery appointed to moderate the meeting shall determine whether on any occasion the Kirk Session shall meet without the presence of the Minister.

8. Appeals

8.1 Decisions of the Kirk Session are subject to appeal, and any such appeal shall be heard by the relevant Presbytery, or those to whom the Presbytery delegates authority. An appeal against a decision of the Kirk Session can be made only by a person described in the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act V 2004) and an appeal must be intimated in accordance with the provisions of that Act.

PART 3 – PRESBYTERY

9. Broad Principle

9.1 Presbytery is the court which is responsible for the gathered life of the Church of Scotland. This responsibility is both corporate and individual, and rests on members and office-bearers alike. The collective task is the support and oversight of the local church as well as participating in the life of the Church at General Assembly level.

9.2 Each area of Scotland shall be covered by such a Presbytery and each local expression of church belonging to the Church of Scotland shall be subject to the oversight of the relevant Presbytery.

9.3 In addition, there shall be Presbyteries which oversee Church of Scotland congregations furth of Scotland.

10. Functions and Responsibilities

10.1 The Presbytery shall exercise supervision and leadership over the local church's participation in Mission and promote sharing in the wider work of the Church. To that end the Presbytery shall fulfil the following functions and take such other initiatives as the Presbytery sees fit (subject always to Church law):-

Support and Oversight of the Local Church

- (1) create, implement and maintain the Presbytery Mission Plan as specified in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021).
- (2) oversee Vacancy Procedure as set out in the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003).
- (3) carry through the process of Local Church Review as set out in the Local Church Review Act (Act I 2011).
- (4) provide pastoral care to parish Ministers and parish Deacons^[7].
- (5) annually examine and attest rolls, records, minutes, registers, expense claims, and accounts.

Superintendence

- (6) exercise general powers of superintendence.
- (7) exercise discipline over Ministers, Deacons, Elders and local office bearers in terms of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) and provide pastoral care to those involved in the discipline process.
- (8) operate the Complaints Procedure as approved by the General Assembly.
- (9) hear and dispose of appeals against the decision of a Kirk Session.

Resourcing Congregations

- (10) provide resources or identify access to resources for congregations and other expressions of local church life as set out in Church law or as the Presbytery may determine.
- (11) fulfil its responsibilities in relation to Readers in terms of the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992), to Ordained Local Ministers in terms of the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011) and to Auxiliary Ministers in terms of the Auxiliary Ministers Act (Act XIII 2003).
- (12) select, train and maintain lists of worship leaders in terms of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018).

Beyond the Church

- (13) order itself in such a way that the local church can gain a collective voice to speak with those representing civil authority, other denominations, other faith groups, the Third Sector, business interests, and cultural life.

General Assembly Processes

- (14) participate in any Presbytery Review process [one is under development].
- (15) cooperate with agencies and officials of the General Assembly as they fulfil their remits.
- (16) nominate and supervise Candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and the Diaconate.
- (17) provide such information regarding statistics, office bearers, and finance as required by Church law.
- (18) respond timeously to General Assembly remits and ensure compliance with the requirements of the Barrier Act.

Good Order

- (19) ensure good order in the conduct of its shared life.
- (20) Carry out the functions and comply with the responsibilities specified in Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly, and comply with instructions of Presbytery and the General Assembly.
- (21) elect a Moderator from amongst its number. Such an appointment shall be in terms of the Presbytery's Standing Orders but, for the avoidance of doubt, may be for a period of time of the Presbytery's choosing.
- (22) appoint a Clerk and in the absence of the Clerk from any meeting, appoint an Interim Clerk. The Clerk need not be a member of the Court. The oath *de fidei* shall be administered to a Clerk or Interim Clerk.^[8]
- (23) ensure that the Roll of Presbytery is kept up to date and retained in accordance with Data Protection law.
- (24) appoint appropriate persons to work in the Presbytery to support the mission of the Presbytery; fulfil all responsibilities consequentially arising in terms of the civil law on employment; and be responsible for the payment of salaries.

Civil Law

- (25) ensure that the Presbytery is registered as a Charity and follows civil charity law and good practice, including the timeous submission of Presbytery accounts to OSCR.
- (26) attest congregational annual accounts prior to their submission to OSCR.
- (27) cooperate with the Assembly Trustees on matters of charity governance.
- (28) adopt and operate a suitable policy to recognise and manage conflicts of interest effectively and demonstrably.
- (29) fulfil all responsibilities placed upon the Presbytery in terms of civil law and the Safeguarding Act (Act XVI 2018), including the provision of Safeguarding training and maintenance of records of such training, and the completion of the Safeguarding Audit Checklist.
- (30) act as the data controller, in terms of the Data Protection Act 2018, for congregations within its bounds and be responsible for registering as such with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- (31) fulfil the provisions of civil law on data protection, in accordance with advice and assistance provided by the national Church offices and Church website.
- (32) comply as required with health and safety law, employment law and other civil law.

11. Delegation of Authority

11.1 The Presbytery may delegate their authority to make decisions in certain areas of responsibility to individuals or committees on such terms as the Presbytery may determine. The Presbytery may include in the delegation a mechanism by which Presbytery members beyond the group can, before a final decision is made by the delegated group, request that the matter come back to an Ordinary Meeting of the Presbytery.

11.2 In delegating, the Presbytery shall ensure that:

- (a) all the members of the Presbytery are aware that as charity trustees they retain responsibility for the decisions made by the delegated group and decisions

made by a delegated group will be open to Dissent and Complaint or Appeal in terms of the Appeals Act (Act I 2014).

- (b) they identify at an Ordinary Meeting the individual or the membership of the group to which the powers are to be delegated including lines of accountability.
- (c) they set out in an agreed minute the extent of the delegated powers including if appropriate reference to the relevant Act(s) and/or Regulations of the General Assembly regarding the decisions the group is charged with making, the budget limits within which they must work, and the point at which the group must refer decision-making back to an Ordinary Meeting of the Presbytery.
- (d) they minute their acceptance that decisions made by the group are final and cannot be recalled or rescinded by the Presbytery save where the mechanism permitted by section 11.1 has been included in the scheme of delegation.
- (e) No further delegation is possible by the delegated group without the consent of the Presbytery.

12. Meetings

12.0.1 Meetings of Presbytery shall be Ordinary Meetings (where any appropriate business may be discussed) or Specific Purpose Meetings (where only previously intimated business may be discussed).

12.0.2 All meetings of Presbytery shall be open to the public except when the Presbytery decides to meet in private for the whole or part of a meeting for items of business which are personal or of a pastoral or commercially sensitive nature.

12.0.3 Papers for meetings shall normally be circulated in advance.

12.1 Calling Meetings

12.1.1 Ordinary Meetings shall be called by the Presbytery at an Ordinary Meeting. The Presbytery may call one or more such meetings at a time.

12.1.2 A Specific Purpose Meeting shall be called either at an Ordinary Meeting or, where the need arises between Ordinary Meetings, it may be called by the Moderator on the advice of the Clerk. The first item of business at a Specific Purpose Meeting called by the Moderator shall be the approval of the Moderator's decision to call the meeting. No other business beyond the specific purpose previously intimated shall be discussed at such a meeting.

12.1.3 The calling of a Specific Purpose Meeting shall be in writing with a period of notice of at least fourteen days, provided that in exceptional circumstances a shorter period of notice may be given, and in this event the first item of business shall be approval of the shorter period of notice.

12.2 Procedure at Meetings

12.2.1 Meetings shall be constituted and closed with prayer.

12.2.2 All meetings shall be minuted, with the minute of each meeting being circulated in draft to all present promptly following the meeting and being subject to approval at the start of the following meeting. The minute shall record the date, time, and (if in person) place of the meeting, the name of the Moderator, attendees (including apologies) and decisions made and actions taken. Minutes shall be retained as set out in the Guidance.

12.2.3 The minute of a meeting (or part of it) held in private shall be in held in a Record Apart.

12.2.4 Meetings may take place in person, or online, or by a combination of these methods. Where the meeting is online to any extent, the Moderator shall ensure that those attending can participate, debate and vote and that this can be done in private where required.

12.2.5 The agenda for an Ordinary Meeting shall include the updating of the Roll of Presbytery and the calling of the next Ordinary Meeting.

12.2.6 A person who is not a member of the Presbytery, whether or not a member of a congregation within the relevant Presbytery, may attend a Presbytery meeting (except to the extent that it is being held in private) but shall require permission of the Presbytery to speak on a particular item (or items) of business. A request to speak shall be made by submitting it in writing to the Presbytery Clerk, normally at least seven days in advance of the date of the meeting. The request shall then be considered at the meeting of the Presbytery in question.

12.2.7 Meetings shall be conducted in line with the Presbytery's Standing Orders and where there is no such provision the Standing Orders of the General Assembly shall apply as appropriate.

12.3 Moderator

12.3.1 The Moderator of the Presbytery shall be chosen from among the members of the court by free election, on the recommendation of the Business or other Committee of Presbytery, and shall hold office for a year at least and be eligible for re-election.

12.3.2 The Moderator while in the chair has a casting vote but no deliberative vote.

12.4 Quorum

12.4.1 The quorum for a Presbytery meeting shall be three members of the Court, at least one of whom shall be a Minister and one an Elder.

13. Membership of Presbytery

13.0 Ministers, Elders, and Deacons, and no others, shall be entitled to be members of Presbytery.

13.1 Ministers

13.1.1 A Minister shall be a member of the Presbytery where there is situated: -

- (a) the charge to which a Minister has been inducted or within which the Minister serves as associate, assistant, or auxiliary, failing which
- (b) the office, institution or other place from which a Minister works, failing which
- (c) wholly or mainly the area of a Minister's responsibility, provided that, if the area extends over the boundaries of more than one Presbytery, the Presbytery containing the larger or largest part of that area shall be the relevant Presbytery.

13.1.2 A Minister in any of the following categories shall be a member of the relevant Presbytery:

- (a) Minister inducted to a charge,
- (b) an associate Minister,
- (c) a pioneer Minister,
- (d) an interim or transition Minister,
- (e) an assistant Minister,
- (f) an Ordained Local Minister or an auxiliary Minister in a designated appointment,
- (g) a healthcare chaplain,
- (h) a prison chaplain,
- (i) a workplace chaplain,

(j) a university chaplain, and

(k) a professor or lecturer in an accredited institution as defined in Act X 2004.

13.1.3 A Minister in any of the following categories shall be a member of the relevant Presbytery or, if there is no such Presbytery, of the Presbytery to which he or she belonged at the time of appointment or by which he or she was ordained for the appointment:

- (a) a Minister appointed by a Committee of the Church to an overseas post,
- (b) a Minister appointed to a Commission as a chaplain to H.M. Forces.

13.1.4 Minister appointed to a post, other than those in sections 13.1.2 and 13.1.3 above and other than that of locum for a parish Minister, within the jurisdiction of the Church and under the direction and control of one of its courts or Committees, shall be a member of the relevant Presbytery or of the Presbytery within which is situated the congregation of which he or she is a member or of the Presbytery within the boundaries of which he or she resides, as he or she may choose.

13.1.5 Any individual who has the status of Minister of the Church of Scotland, and who does not fall into any of the categories listed in sections 13.1.2 to 13.1.4 above, shall be entitled to apply for membership of Presbytery on the basis of being registered in the Register of Ministry (as defined in the Registration of Ministries Act (Act II 2017)) in category O, E or R. Such Minister should be registered with the Presbytery within the boundaries of which is situated the congregation of which the Minister is a member, or the Presbytery within the boundaries of which he or she lives, or (only in the case of any appointment for which the status of ordained Minister is a requirement) the Presbytery within the boundaries of which the appointment is based, as he or she may choose.

13.2 Deacons

13.2.1 A Deacon shall be a member of Presbytery if he or she occupies a parish appointment, or any other post that would entitle a Minister to membership of Presbytery in terms of sections 13.1.2 to 13.1.4 of this Act, and the provisions of those sections shall determine which is the relevant Presbytery. A Deacon who does not occupy such a parish appointment, or other qualifying post, but who is registered on the Register of Ministry in Category E or R, shall be entitled to apply for membership of Presbytery on the same basis as a Minister holding Category E or R registration, being in terms of section 13.1.4) of this Act and the Presbytery shall have power to decide whether or not to register such individual.

13.3 Elders

13.3.1 Each Kirk Session within the boundaries of a Presbytery shall, not later than 30th June in each year, meet, and, with the exception undernoted, elect one of its own members (or, with permission of the Presbytery, a member of another Kirk Session within the relevant Presbytery) to represent it in the Presbytery during the ensuing year.

13.3.2 Commissions in favour of representative Elders shall run from 1st July to 30th June and may be presented to any meeting of Presbytery held after the close of the General Assembly, providing a quorum is present apart from the Elder whose commission is presented. On the commission being declared in order the Elder concerned shall be entitled to take his or her seat.

13.3.3 In the event that a representative Elder becomes unable to serve during the year, the Kirk Session shall elect a replacement Elder and shall notify the Presbytery. The replacement Elder's commission shall run until the following 30th June.

13.3.4 A Presbytery shall elect one Elder (a "balancing Elder") in respect of each Minister who serves in an extra-parochial appointment or who is a member of Presbytery by virtue of section 13.1.5, and may further elect a number of additional Elders not in excess of one-third of the number of congregations within its boundaries. Such Elders shall be:

- (a) a member of a Kirk Session within the boundaries of the Presbytery and before taking their seats they shall produce certificates of bona fide eldership from the Kirk Sessions to which they belong, or
- (b) an ordained Elder who is not currently a member of a Kirk Session but who is a member of a congregation within the boundaries of the Presbytery and can exhibit certification that he/she is in good standing and has not been deprived of the status of Elder in a disciplinary process.

The Presbytery shall determine the process for identifying and selecting such Elders.

14. Correspondents

14.1 A Presbytery may elect Correspondents, who shall have the following rights in respect of meetings: to receive papers, to attend and to speak but not to vote. A Correspondent need not be a Minister, Elder or Deacon of the Church of Scotland. A Correspondent shall not be present when business is taken in private.

15. Relationship with other Church Courts

15.1 The Presbytery, as the superior court, has oversight of the Kirk Session and has the power to instruct Kirk Sessions and Financial Boards to act or to refrain from acting always in accordance with the Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly and the common law of the Church.

15.2 The Presbytery shall hear and dispose of appeals against decisions taken by Kirk Sessions.

15.3 The Presbytery, as the inferior court, is answerable to the General Assembly and, as such, must obey the instructions of the General Assembly. Appeals against decisions of Presbytery shall be heard and disposed of by the General Assembly or those to whom the General Assembly delegates such authority.

15.4 The Presbytery shall send Commissioners to the General Assembly. These shall be elected by the Presbytery in accordance with the Standing Orders and Acts of the General Assembly.

15.5 The Presbytery shall cooperate with the General Assembly as they exercise general powers of superintendence and conduct the process of Presbytery Review.

16. Appeals and Reviews

16.1 Decisions of the Presbytery are subject to appeal or review, and such an appeal or review shall be heard by the appropriate appellate body of the General Assembly. Appeals shall be in terms of the Appeals Act (Act I 2014). Presbytery Mission Plan decisions shall be subject to review in terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021).

PART 4 – GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17. Broad Principle

17.1 The General Assembly is the supreme court of the Church in matters of Church law, doctrine and practice. It sets a strategy for national agencies of the Church. Its decisions (or those of its delegated bodies) in appeals are final. Its decisions in matters spiritual are not subject to review by any civil court.

18. Functions and Responsibilities

18.1 The General Assembly has legislative, judicial and administrative functions and responsibilities. Amongst other things, the General Assembly shall:

- (1) Meet and debate and decide upon a range of issues brought to it by commissioners, Standing Committees, Presbyteries and other component elements of the Church.
- (2) Appoint and direct its Standing Committees and hold them to account.
- (3) Pass, amend and repeal Acts and Regulations and agree sections of deliverance.
- (4) Exercise oversight of Presbyteries.
- (5) Be the final court of appeal in certain matters, save where that function has been delegated as set out in more detail in section XX below.
- (6) Welcome and converse with delegates from other denominations in the UK and from churches in other countries.

18.2 Through exercising these functions and responsibilities, the General Assembly shall aim to:

- (1) Provide general order to the life of the whole Church of Scotland.
- (2) Create a sense of belonging and occasion for commissioners from across the Church and in doing so provide support, inspiration and information to members.
- (3) Celebrate being a national Church and a part of the Universal Church.
- (4) Provide a platform from which to increase the public profile of the work of the Church.

19. Meetings of the General Assembly

19.0.1 Meetings of the General Assembly may be held in-person, online or in hybrid form, ie with some members present in-person and others simultaneously present online. Each of in-person, online or in hybrid form is referred to as a "format" in this section 19.0.

19.0.2 The Assembly Business Committee shall in its Report propose the date for, meeting place and format of the next General Assembly. The General Assembly shall in its closing session pass an Act appointing the next General Assembly, in terms of the decision made under the Report of the Assembly Business Committee.

19.0.3 Where it subsequently becomes apparent that the date, meeting place and/or format specified by one Assembly for the next Assembly should be reconsidered, the Legal Questions Committee shall call a Commission of Assembly in terms of the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997) and the Assembly Business Committee shall bring forward alternative proposals regarding date, meeting place and/or format for consideration by the Commission.

19.0.4 The Assembly Business Committee shall be responsible for making the practical arrangements for the holding of a General Assembly, in line with the decisions of the previous Assembly or a subsequent Commission of Assembly.

19.0.5 Where a meeting of the General Assembly is online to any extent, the Moderator shall ensure that those attending can participate, debate and vote as set out in the Standing Orders.

19.0.6 At its closing session, that General Assembly shall be dissolved.

19.1 Procedure at Meetings

19.1.1 The Standing Orders shall make provision for procedure at sessions of the General Assembly.

19.1.2 An Order of Proceedings, containing amongst other things a proposed Order of Business, the Roll of Commissioners and the text of the Standing Orders, shall be sent to Commissioners in advance of the General Assembly, in terms of the Standing Orders.

19.1.3 The Standing Orders shall be published on the Church of Scotland website.

19.1.4 Only the General Assembly may amend the Standing Orders.

19.1.5 The Standing Orders shall apply to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions, in a form incorporating changes necessary to their circumstances, where such courts have not agreed standing orders of their own. Alternatively, Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions may agree and put in place their own standing orders provided these are not incompatible with Church law.

19.2 Moderator

19.2.1 The Moderator shall be appointed in terms of the Nomination of the Moderator of the General Assembly Regulations (Regs I 2013).

19.2.2 The Moderator of the General Assembly shall hold office from the time of his or her election by the General Assembly until he or she demits office upon the election of his or her successor. In the event of the death or supervening incapacity of the Moderator during his or her year of office, one or more former Moderators shall be invited by the Assembly Business Committee to fulfil the duties of the office until the opening day of the next General Assembly.

19.2.3 The Moderator may appoint Chaplains to provide advice and support throughout his or her term of office.

19.2.4 The Moderator shall be responsible for moderating sessions of the General Assembly and for all acts of worship at the Assembly. The Moderator shall fulfil other duties as set out in the Office of the Moderator of the General Assembly Regulations (Regs II 2013).

19.2.5 The Moderator while in the chair has a casting vote but no deliberative vote.

19.3 Quorum

19.3.1 The quorum of the General Assembly shall be thirty-one, of whom not fewer than sixteen shall be Ministers. Further provision as to quorum shall be set out in the Standing Orders.

20. Continuing Authority of the General Assembly, Delegation of Authority and Method of Accountability

20.1 Notwithstanding the dissolution of a particular gathering of the General Assembly at its closing session,

the General Assembly's authority continues, in terms of the Acts, Regulations, decisions and instructions made, and the powers delegated which may include the following:

- (a) To certain judicial bodies established by the General Assembly to act as the final arbiter in certain types of appeal^[9] The decisions of these judicial bodies shall be reported to the next General Assembly by the provision of minutes to the General Assembly.
- (b) To certain Standing Committees to continue work and make decisions in its name. Activities undertaken and decisions so made shall be reported back to the General Assembly.
- (c) To appoint and instruct others such as Special Commissions or Special Committees to carry out work on its behalf. Such delegates shall report back to the General Assembly on their work.
- (d) To the Legal Questions Committee, through its Secretary, the Principal Clerk, to ensure compliance with Church law in the periods between meetings of the General Assembly.
- (e) Between General Assemblies, to the Commission of Assembly in terms of the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997). The decisions of the Commission shall be reported to the next General Assembly.

20.2 The Standing Committees of the General Assembly^[10] shall be determined from time to time by the General Assembly and listed in the Standing Orders. The delegated authority of Standing Committees may only be amended with the approval of the General Assembly or of a Commission of Assembly.

21. Membership of the General Assembly

21.0.1 The General Assembly shall be composed of Ministers, Elders and Deacons commissioned by Presbyteries to that role, together with other members by virtue of office (*ex officio*). The Standing Orders shall make provision for other attendees at the Assembly, such as delegates, visitors, corresponding members [Correspondents] and youth representatives.

21.0.2 The Commissioners from Presbyteries shall be appointed as follows:

21.1 Ministers

21.1.1 The number of Ministers to be appointed as commissioners by each Presbytery shall be one in every five or part of five of the sum of (a) the total number of charges, whether vacant or not, in the Presbytery and (b) the total number of other Ministers who are members of Presbytery by virtue of being in appointments qualifying them for such membership in terms of this Act, provided that, for the avoidance of doubt, Ministers who are members of Presbytery by virtue of being in category R shall not be included in the above total for the purposes of calculating the number of commissioners, but shall be eligible to be appointed as commissioners. Only Ministers who are members of the appointing Presbytery shall be eligible to hold commissions as Ministers.

21.2 Elders

21.2.1 The number of Elders to be appointed as commissioners by each Presbytery shall be equal to the number of Ministers in terms of section X above. Only Elders who are members of Kirk Sessions or New Charge Core Groups within the boundaries of the appointing Presbytery, [or who are elected members of Presbytery,] shall be eligible to hold commissions as Elders.

21.3 Deacons

21.3.1 The number of Deacons who may be appointed as commissioners by each Presbytery shall be one in every five, or part of five, of those who are members of Presbytery by virtue of being in appointments qualifying them for such membership in terms of this Act, provided that, for the avoidance of doubt, Deacons who are members of Presbytery by virtue of being in category R shall not be included in the above total for the purposes of calculating the number of commissioners, but shall be eligible to be appointed as commissioners. Only Deacons who are members of the appointing Presbytery shall be eligible to hold commissions as Deacons.

21.4 Failure to Appoint

21.4.1 Each Presbytery shall normally be expected to appoint its full number of commissioners each year; but in the event of failure to do so the Presbytery concerned shall submit to the Clerks of Assembly upon request a statement of the reason for such failure, and the Committee on Commissions may, if not satisfied with the reason given, report accordingly to the General Assembly.

21.5 Office-Holder Members

21.5.1 The General Assembly shall appoint a Principal Clerk, a Depute Clerk (together the Clerks of Assembly), a Procurator and a Law Agent, who upon appointment shall each take the oath de fidelit^[1]. In the event of a vacancy in office during a General Assembly, an interim appointment may be made by the General Assembly.

21.5.2 The Clerks of Assembly, Procurator, and Law Agent, together with the Convener and Vice-Convener of the Procedure Committee upon their election, shall be members of the General Assembly by virtue of office (ex officiis).

21.5.3 The Moderator of the General Assembly shall, upon election, be by virtue of office a member of the General Assembly, and shall also, by virtue of having held that office, be a member of the General Assembly during which his or her demission from office takes place.

21.5.4 *[The next provision's terms are dependent on whether or not the General Assembly of 2022 approves the Church Courts Overture: if approved: The five most recent past Moderators who are (i) eligible to receive a Commission, and (ii) not members of the Assembly by virtue of section X or otherwise members by virtue of office (ex officiis), shall be members of the General Assembly by virtue of office. They shall be appointed in addition to their Presbytery's number of Commissions in terms of section X but no equalizing Minister or Elder shall be appointed. Their Presbytery shall remain entitled to give Commissions from amongst their allocation in terms of section X above to any other former Moderators eligible to be commissioned. Alternative provision if the Overture is not approved would be: Each Presbytery is authorised to elect as commissioners to the General Assembly former Moderators of the General Assembly who are members of that Presbytery or of a Kirk Session within the bounds. Such Commissioners shall be in addition to the quota of commissioners to which the Presbytery is entitled, and an equalising Elder or Minister shall be elected in respect of any such commissioner as appropriate to maintain overall equality of numbers of Ministers and Elders.]*

21.6 Vacancies between General Assemblies

21.6.1 In the event of the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Principal Clerk, Depute Clerk, Law Agent or Procurator between General Assemblies, an interim

appointment shall be made until the General Assembly next meets.

21.6.2 In the event of the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Procurator of the Church between General Assemblies and until an interim appointment may be made, the following provisions shall take effect:

- (a) All communications which are appropriate to the duties of the Procurator shall be addressed to the Clerks of the General Assembly.
- (b) Where by an Act of Assembly, or by custom, any duty falls to be discharged by the Procurator, the Law Agent shall have power to discharge such duty.

22. Relationship with other Church Courts

22.1 The General Assembly:

- (a) shall be populated mainly by commissioners sent by Presbyteries in terms of the provisions set out above;
- (b) has the power to instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions through its legislation and deliverances; and
- (c) shall be the final court of appeal from decisions of Presbyteries (save as provided above).

22.2 The General Assembly shall exercise powers of oversight of Presbyteries and these may be exercised generally, or as specified in legislation.

22.3 Reciprocally, the General Assembly shall hear from Presbyteries on matters of concern to them. A Presbytery which wishes to raise a matter of concern with the General Assembly may do so in the form of the style Overture to be found in Guidance. An Overture from a Presbytery must be submitted to the Clerks of Assembly in accordance with the procedure and timing set out in the Standing Orders.

22.4 At the General Assembly, an Overture may be presented by a member of the Overturing Presbytery, whether or not he or she is a Commissioner. If an Overture is presented by a member of the Presbytery who is not a Commissioner, he or she shall have the right to speak to and to answer questions upon the Overture, in addition to a Commissioner from that Presbytery, but he or she shall not have the right to speak on any other matter or to vote.

PART 5 – DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

23. Definitions

23.1 For the purposes of this Act:

- (1) the “boundaries” of a Presbytery shall mean the territorial extent of a Presbytery in Scotland, in terms of its constituent parishes.
- (2) “Church law” shall mean Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly and instructions of the General Assembly.
- (3) “Deacon” shall mean an individual who has been ordained to ministry as defined in the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010).
- (4) “Elder” shall mean a person who has been ordained to the office of elder, who is in good standing and who is currently a member of a Kirk Session.^[12]
- (5) “Financial Board” shall mean the body responsible for managing the finances of a congregation, and may include a Congregational Board, Deacons’ Court, Committee of Management and/or Kirk Session.
- (6) “format” when referring to a meeting, shall mean in-person, online or in hybrid form, hybrid meaning some people present in-person and some simultaneously online.

- (7) "Minister" shall mean a Minister of Word and Sacrament as defined in section 1(2) of the Parish Ministry Act.
- (8) "Mission" shall mean the mission of Jesus Christ as expressed in the Five Marks of Mission, namely:
 - (a) To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom,
 - (b) To teach, baptise and nurture new believers,
 - (c) To respond to human need by loving service,
 - (d) To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation, and
 - (e) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.
- (9) "New Charge Core Group" has the meaning given to it in New Charge Development Act (Act XIII 2000).
- (10) "parish" shall mean a geographical area defined by boundaries set by the Presbytery.
- (11) "the relevant Presbytery" shall mean the Presbytery whose authority extends across all parishes sitting within the boundaries of that Presbytery.
- (12) "Standing Committee(s)" shall mean those set out in the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.
- (13) "Standing Orders" shall mean the framework of decision-making adopted by a court.
- (14) "writing" shall mean in hard copy or electronic form.

24. Interpretation

24.1 A Minister shall be eligible for membership of the courts of the Church only as a Minister.

24.2 A Deacon shall be eligible for membership of the courts of the Church only as a Deacon.

24.3 Being present at a meeting means being physically present, being on a telephone line or having an online connection, whether audio only or audio and video.

24.4 In line with the Appeals Act (Act I 2014), the term "appeals" includes Dissent and Complaint.

24.5 A "court" refers to a gathering, being a Kirk Session, Presbytery or General Assembly, where there is authority to make collective decisions.

24.6 "Moderator" includes an Interim Moderator.

24.7 For the purposes of this Act, the term, "civil law" includes state law derived from sources such as the UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament and common law, and includes criminal law.

PART 6 – GENERAL

25. Provisions Applicable to all Courts

25.1 Minutes of courts shall be signed by the Moderator who occupies the Chair at the time when the Minutes are submitted for approval. They shall also be authenticated by the signature of the Clerk of the court.

25.2 In the case of Committees, the Minutes shall be signed by the Convener and Clerk of the meeting at which they are approved.

25.3 Petitions shall in all cases be presented to the court of first instance—that is to say, to the lowest court which has power to grant the prayer of the Petition.

26. Miscellaneous Provisions

26.1 Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries and Standing Committees shall put in place a conflict of interest policy and a "bribery and procurement" policy, both in terms of those recommended by the Law Dept.

26.2 This Act does not apply to New Charges which shall continue to be subject to the provisions of the New Charge Development Act (Act XIII 2000).

26.3 Lower courts shall not meet at the same time that meetings of higher courts are taking place. A Kirk Session may meet while the General Assembly is in session, provided that none of its members are commissioners.

26.4 The Presbytery of International Charges shall be bound by the terms of this Act, subject always to the terms of Schedule 5 to the International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016).

26.5 The Legal Questions Committee shall issue Guidance on the implementation and operation of this Act, which shall be reviewed by it, from time to time.

27. Commencement date, repeal and transitional provisions

27.1 This Act shall come into force on []. The existing Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) shall be repealed as at that date.

27.2 The following Acts of Assembly shall also be repealed as at the date this Act comes into force:

- (a) Virtual Attendance at Meetings Act (Act VI 2018).

Note: Guidance to accompany the new Act is to be drafted, with sample minutes etc.

References

- [1] These are expanded on in Guidance.
- [2] The text concerns the faithful administration of the office: "I swear that I will be faithful to the duties of.....", naming the office concerned.
- [3] Reference should be made in particular to the Church Finance Act (Act V 1989), the Congregational Finance Regulations (Regulations II 2016), the Care of Ecclesiastical Properties Act (Act VII 2007) and the Work at Ecclesiastical Buildings Regulations (Regulations I 1998).
- [4] Guidance will highlight particular Acts and Regulations of Assembly of which a Session Clerk should be aware.
- [5] Although such a person would retain the status of Elder.
- [6] ie there should be separately minuted decisions and two or more Kirk Sessions may not make joint decisions.
- [7] The expectation is that those who have their own Minister receive pastoral care from them.
- [8] The text concerns the faithful administration of the office: "I swear that I will be faithful to the duties of.....", naming the office concerned.
- [9] Currently these are (i) the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly and the Judicial Commission in terms of the Appeals Act (Act I 2014), (ii) the Ministries Appeal Panel in terms of the Ministries Appeal Panel Act (Act VII 2007) and (iii) reviews held under the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021).
- [10] These include in practice bodies of different names and functions, such as Forums, Councils, Committees, Panels, Commissions and Trusts.
- [11] The text concerns the faithful administration of the office: "I swear that I will be faithful to the duties of.....", naming the office concerned.
- [12] Such a person may in daily practice be described as a ruling elder.

Appendix C

THE PRESBYTERY REVIEW PROCESS

BROAD PRINCIPLE

"The General Assembly exercises powers of oversight of Presbyteries and these may be exercised generally, or as specified in legislation." (*from the draft Church Courts Act*)

As part of this oversight there should be a process of Presbytery Review.

THE AIMS OF PRESBYTERY REVIEW

For the Presbytery being reviewed the aims are to:-

- encourage and enable a review of the Presbytery's life and work in terms of the Functions and Responsibilities set out in the Church Courts Act (2023).
- assist the Presbytery in planning how in future it will continue to support and oversee the local church as well as participating in the life of the Church at General Assembly level.

For the General Assembly and the wider Church the aims are to:-

- hear of good practice by Presbyteries and to share such across the Church of Scotland.
- coordinate central resourcing with the needs of the Presbyteries and their constituent congregations and initiatives.
- enable action to be taken when in the life of a Presbytery there is conflict or issues of non-compliance.

THE CONDUCT OF PRESBYTERY REVIEW

The responsibility for the practical conduct of the Presbytery Review Process would lie with the Presbytery Review Committee of the General Assembly ("the PRC") appointed in terms of Standing Orders.

Presbytery Reviews would normally be conducted every five years according to a schedule agreed by the General Assembly but a Review may be delayed or brought forward as the PRC sees fit.

This would be a peer-resourced review process where the Presbytery is provided with the material and guidance which would allow it to review all that it does in fulfilling those Functions and Responsibilities set out in the Church Courts Act.

The PRC would appoint three persons to act on its behalf when a Presbytery is embarking on their review. These should be persons with considerable experience of Presbytery life.

The role of this group would be to ensure that:-

- the Review is thorough and forward looking.
- key points of the Review Report are shared with the General Assembly.
- good practice is highlighted and shared across the Church of Scotland.
- problems are faced and tackled with appropriate support and input.

The normal Review Report to be compiled by the Presbytery with the support of the PRC would cover:-

- The activities of Presbytery at the time of the Review, giving an indication of priorities, why these were chosen, methodologies followed and an indication of why these were followed.
- The identification of good practice and areas of work in need of development.

- Future plans for altering the patterns of Presbytery life and why these changes are envisaged.
- The Presbytery's compliance with church and civil law.

The Review Report would be accompanied by a statement from the members of the Presbytery Review Committee who had supported the Review process. This statement would detail their engagement with the Presbytery and their approval or otherwise of the final Report.

The Report and accompanying statement would then be submitted for publication in the General Assembly's Volume of Reports.

A Presbytery Review Committee would consist of:

- a Convener, appointed through the Nomination Process
- one member appointed by each Scottish Presbytery and
- *ex officio* the Principal Clerk (as Secretary) and the Depute Clerk.

Appendix D

[] ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) shall be amended as follows:

1. *In the Schedule, section A, paragraph 1 (Composition), in the second paragraph, delete "drawn" and substitute "selected by the Clerks of Assembly" and add a final sentence at the end of section A: "The Clerks of Assembly shall act as Clerks to Mission Plan Review Panels". Also add a final sentence at the end of the first paragraph: "The members of the Panel shall initially be appointed for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years."*

Appendix E

[] ACT AMENDING THE APPEALS ACT (ACT I 2014) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Appeals Act (Act I 2014), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing definition of "Court" and substitute: "'Court" means a Presbytery or the Discipline Tribunal."*
2. *Amend section 2(4) to read "The right of appeal conferred in section 2(1) does not apply where the Acts and Regulations, or a decision, of the General Assembly specifically provide another appeal procedure and in particular this Act does not apply to appeals delegated to the Ministries Appeal Panel in accordance with Act VI 2007, to the Mission Plan Review Group in terms of Act VIII 2021, to the Safeguarding Appeal Panel in terms of Act XVI 2018 or to the Personnel Appeal Group in terms of decisions of the General Assembly."*
3. *Amend section 4(2)(i) to read "all appeals in terms of section 2(1), apart from those delegated to the Judicial Commission in accordance with section 4(3) below;"*

4. *Delete sections 4(2)(ii) and 4(2)(iv).*
5. *Amend section 4(2)(iii) by deleting "or to the Ministries Appeal Panel in accordance with Act VI 2007".*
6. *Amend section 4(3)(i) to read "Appeals under the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), being appeals against the decisions of Discipline Tribunals in discipline cases, except in matters of doctrine;"*
7. *Delete the sentence at the end of section 4(3) beginning "For the avoidance of doubt..."*
8. *Delete the existing section 10 (Quorum) and substitute:*
"With the exception of decisions that one or more Grounds of Appeal is incompetent or irrelevant, which decisions may be taken by the Convener and Vice Convener as provided for in Rule 5.8 of Schedule 2, the quorum of the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly shall be eleven persons."
9. *In section 14(2) delete "ministers, elders and deacons" and substitute "ministers, elders, deacons and Church members".*
10. *Delete the existing section 17 (Quorum) and substitute:*
"With the exception of decisions that one or more Grounds of Appeal is incompetent or irrelevant, which decisions may be taken by the Convener and Vice Convener as provided for in Rule 5.8 of Schedule 2, the quorum of the Judicial Commission shall be three persons."
11. *In Schedule 2 (Rules of Procedure),*
 - (i) *In Rule 2.1, delete "or the Secretary of the Presbyterian Commission, as the case may be".*
 - (ii) *Delete the existing Rule 3 and substitute:*

3. Lodging of Answers by Respondent

3.1 Within four weeks of being requested to do so by the Principal Clerk, the Respondent shall lodge Answers to the Grounds of Appeal with the Principal Clerk, and intimate a copy of those Answers to (i) the Clerk of the Court against whose decision the appeal is being taken, and (ii) the Appellant in the Appeal.

3.2 The Answers shall consist of brief responses to the Appellant's numbered Grounds of Appeal. The basis of any challenge to the competency or relevancy of any of the Grounds of Appeal shall be explained in the Answers.

3.3 If the Respondent does not lodge Answers, the appeal shall not be dismissed but shall continue to an Appeal Management Hearing."

- (iii) *In Rule 4.1, delete "or the Secretary of the Presbyterian Commission, as the case may be" and after "decision" add "the appeal".*
- (iv) *Delete the existing Rule 5 and substitute the following:*

5. Appeal Management Hearings

5.1 In any appeal, once the Appellant's Grounds of Appeal have been lodged and the Respondent has been given an opportunity to lodge Answers, and save where the Convener and the Vice-Convener with the agreement of the Parties decide to dispense with an Appeal Management Hearing, the Principal Clerk shall fix a date for a first Appeal Management Hearing.

5.2 The date of the first Appeal Management Hearing shall be at least 28 days after the date upon which the Respondent's Answers are lodged (or, where

none are lodged, at least 14 days after the date by which the Respondent was requested to lodge Answers). The Principal Clerk shall intimate the date of the first Appeal Management Hearing to both Parties, giving at least 14 days' prior written notice of the date.

5.3 More than one Appeal Management Hearing may be held, as determined by the Convener and Vice-Convener.

5.4 The purpose of the Appeal Management Hearing(s) shall be to determine whether the Parties are ready to proceed to a hearing of the appeal, and to consider other legal, procedural and practical matters in respect of the appeal.

5.5 The Appeal Management Hearing(s) shall be conducted by the Convener and the Vice-Convener of the Commission which is to hear the appeal. The Clerks of Assembly shall act as clerks to the Appeal Management Hearing(s).

5.6 The following matters shall be considered at Appeal Management Hearing(s):-

- a) any issue(s) of competency and/or relevancy of the Grounds of Appeal;
- b) the Parties' state of preparation for the Appeal Hearing;
- c) setting of a date and duration for the Appeal Hearing;
- d) productions required, with the presumption that the productions at the Appeal Hearing shall be those which were before the Court against whose decision the appeal is being taken, unless a Party is allowed to lodge additional material on cause shown;
- e) whether the Parties may agree certain productions and evidence, and whether a Joint Minute agreeing any facts may be lodged;
- f) whether the timetable for the lodging of the Written Arguments (as defined below) is apt, or requires to be varied in any way, for example to provide that Parties will exchange drafts of their Written Arguments by a certain date;
- g) whether or not the Appeal Hearing should be held in private;
- h) whether or not a factual investigation of any points is necessary or appropriate, in which case a committee or reporter may be appointed by the Principal Clerk for this purpose;
- i) whether there should be evidence led at the Appeal Hearing, the presumption being that this will not occur;
- j) whether the Procurator should attend the Appeal Hearing;
- k) whether any Party has any objection to any person in the pool for the Commission sitting when the appeal is being heard, which objection may only be made on cause shown and, if sustained, shall disqualify the person or persons objected to from sitting in that appeal; and
- l) any other matter concerning the Appeal Hearing, the decision of the Convener and the Vice-Convener as to what should be considered being final.

5.7 The Parties or their representatives shall wherever possible attend an Appeal Management Hearing in person, provided that if the Convener and the Vice-Convener so agree, an Appeal Management Hearing may take place by video conference or other appropriate medium.

5.8 At any Appeal Management Hearing the Convener and the Vice-Convener may determine that one or more Grounds of Appeal is/are irrelevant and/or incompetent and, where no competent and relevant Grounds of Appeal have been identified, may dismiss the appeal on that basis. The Convener and Vice-Convener shall also have power at an Appeal Management Hearing to make any order or determination relating to the appeal which is just and reasonable. All orders or determinations made under this Rule 5.8 shall be final."

Appendix F

[] ACT AMENDING THE INTIMATION OF APPEALS ACT (ACT V 2004) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act V 2004), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *In section 1:*
 - (a) *in the second line, delete the word "court" and substitute "Kirk Session or Financial Board";*
 - (b) *in the third line delete "seven" and substitute "fourteen"; and*
 - (c) *add at the end "and the Presbytery Clerk".*
2. *In section 6 delete the existing wording and substitute:*
 "'Financial Board'" means the body responsible for managing the finances of a congregation, including a Congregational Board, Deacons' Court, Committee of Management or Kirk Session."

Appendix G

[] ACT AMENDING THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY ACT (ACT VI 1997)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Amend section 4 by numbering the existing wording sub-section (1) and adding the following:*
 - (2) Meetings of the Commission may be held in-person, online or in hybrid form, i.e. with some members present in-person and others simultaneously present online. Each of in-person, online or in hybrid form is hereinafter referred to as a "format". The Legal Questions Committee shall in calling a meeting of the Commission decide in which format the Commission shall meet.
2. *Amend section 5(1) by adding a new sub-paragraph (h) as follows:*
 - (h) having received the Report of the Assembly Business Committee, to decide on the date, meeting place and format of the next General Assembly, in circumstances where it subsequently becomes apparent that the date, meeting place and/or format specified by one Assembly for the next Assembly should be reconsidered.
3. *In section 9, before "to legislate", add ", save as specified in section 5(1)(h),".*
4. *Amend section 11 by adding at the start: "Subject to section 5(1)(h),".*

Appendix H

[] ACT AMENDING THE DISCIPLINE ACT (ACT I 2019) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *In section 23, at the end of the first sentence add ", in which case the Assessor shall continue to investigate the Disciplinary Complaint in terms of section 22(1)(c)".*

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, the report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue, to the wider Church and, in particular, to the *Columba Declaration* Contact Group and the *Saint Andrew Declaration* Working Group (Section 2).
3. Approve the *Declaration of Friendship* between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland (Section 3, 3.5.2).
4. Welcome the participation of an increasing number of churches in the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum and other ecumenical bodies in Scotland, and encourage the further development of an effective and coherent ecumenical network (Section 6).
5. Thank Mr Bob Fyffe, former General Secretary of CTBI, and Rev Dr Paul Goodliff, former General Secretary of CTE for their service, and welcome Dr Nicola Brady and Bishop Mike Royal as their respective successors (Sections 8 and 9).
6. Approve the delegates to Assemblies, Synods and Conferences of other Churches, and the appointment of representatives to Ecumenical Bodies, as detailed in Appendix 2.

Report**Executive Summary**

The Ecumenical Relations Committee report builds on work done by the Committee over a number of years and, in particular, reports on progress made since the last General Assembly. Additionally, it gives an indication of future activity. It contains two principal elements and a number of shorter reports.

Principal elements:

1. A response to *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, the report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue. This report sets out the theological concept of *koinonia* (encompassing fellowship, communion and partnership) as a foundation upon which to comprehend more fully what binds us together, and is particularly helpful to the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church as, together, we explore the opportunities opened up by the *Saint Andrew Declaration*;
2. The offering for approval by the General Assembly of the *Declaration of Friendship* between the Catholic Church in Scotland and the Church of Scotland. This *Declaration*, inspired by the *Saint Andrew Declaration* but distinct from it, has been prepared by senior representatives of both Churches and is offered in the belief that it marks a decisive and irrevocable statement by both Churches of our friendship with one another, based on our shared faith in Christ.

Shorter reports:

3. A report on the signing of the *Saint Andrew Declaration* and an indication of the initial work of the *Saint Andrew Declaration* Working Group on shared liturgical resources; the concept of joint membership of both Churches; exploring how ministry and other resources could better be shared; and learning from the Cumbrian Covenant Partnership model;
4. A report on continued co-operation with the Church of England;
5. A report on the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum and the emergence of an effective and coherent network of active, broadly-based ecumenical bodies in Scotland;
6. A report on Action of Churches Together in Scotland;
7. Updates on changes taking place within Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, Churches Together in England and the Conference of European Churches;
8. A report on the World Council of Churches, including the involvement of Lord Wallace of Tankerness in COP26, facilitated by the WCC.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The work of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations is shaped by the Ecumenical Policy of the Church of Scotland agreed at the 2018 General Assembly. The Policy speaks of the:

Universal Church of which the Church of Scotland is a part and which is expressed in each Local Church. God calls the Church of Scotland to share in the mission of God and in the light of this to remove any obstacles that hinder our cooperation with our sisters and brothers in Christ.

Underlying the work of the Committee is:

[T]he principle that, at local, regional, national and international levels, churches ought to act together except where deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately.^[i]

1.2 In 2021, the Committee placed before the General Assembly the terms of a bilateral agreement between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, expressed in the *Saint Andrew Declaration*. In 2016, the terms of the bilateral agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, expressed in the *Columba Declaration*, were similarly placed before the Assembly. In presenting these bilateral declarations, both of which are between churches of the Anglican Communion and a Reformed Church, the Committee sought to make good the vocation of the Church of Scotland 'to remove any obstacles that hinder our cooperation with our sisters and brothers in Christ'. The Committee does so 'believing it to be the will of Christ that His disciples should be all one in the Father and in Him, that the world may believe that the Father has sent Him'.^[ii]

1.3 In 2022, the Report of the Committee contains two principal elements. In the first instance, it is founded on the reception of a theological dialogue: *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, published by the Anglican Consultative Council and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.^[iii] As we shall see, the biblical and theological concept of *koinonia* offers a foundation upon which to comprehend more fully that which binds us together as communions who share in the life of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and who are called to act together as one. In the second instance, the Committee seeks further 'to remove any obstacles that hinder our cooperation with our sisters and brothers in Christ' through the publication of a *Declaration of Friendship* between the Catholic Church in Scotland and the Church of Scotland. In the former, the relationship between two communions is given theological expression. In the latter, the relationship between two Scottish churches is given a simple and practical expression. In the former, the primary focus is on the universal dimension of the identity of the Church. In the latter, the primary focus is on the local and national dimensions of the identity of the Church. In both cases, that which underlies is a shared concern to live out our response to the prayer of Jesus 'that they may all be one...that the world may believe'. (John 17: 21)

2. KOINONIA: GOD'S GIFT AND CALLING: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL REFORMED-ANGELICAN DIALOGUE

2.1 Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling: Biblical and Theological

2.1.1 The *Saint Andrew Declaration* offers the prospect of continuing theological discussions in order to enable a 'fuller communion' between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the practical outworking of that in local contexts. In similar fashion, the *Columba Declaration* states that: 'We commit ourselves to grow together in communion and to strengthen our partnership in mission'.^[iv]

2.1.2 The theme of 'communion', in its various expressions, is one that has informed the ongoing dialogue between the Church of Scotland and churches within the Anglican Communion in recent years. So, for example, it features as the cornerstone of *Our Fellowship in the Gospel* (2010), the report of the Church of England

(Council for Christian Unity) and the Church of Scotland. The report took its 'cue from St Paul's words in Philippians 1.5, "your fellowship in the gospel", where Paul refers to the practical expression of the fellowship, communion or partnership (*koinonia*) that the Philippian Christians had given him in his work of spreading the gospel of Christ', and affirmed that:

[T]here is a real, God-given degree of communion between our two churches, one grounded in our confession of the apostolic faith, in a mutually recognised common baptism and in the long-standing practice of inviting each other's communicants to receive Holy Communion at our own eucharistic services.^[v]

2.1.3 We see that the scriptural term *koinonia* carries a variety of related connotations, including 'fellowship, communion or partnership'. Additionally, the developed theological use of the biblical concept of *koinonia* has been a feature of ecumenical dialogues, particularly from the latter part of the Twentieth Century onwards.^[vi] Within the context of such dialogues, it may be said to have acquired a "normative" status since 1993.^[vii]

2.2 Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling: Anglican and Reformed

2.2.1 The publication of *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, the Hiroshima Report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue (IRAD) in 2020, sees the first joint Anglican-Reformed theological dialogue published since *God's Reign and our Unity* in 1984.^[viii] In light of the signing by the Church of Scotland of the *Columba Declaration* with the Church of England (2016) and the *Saint Andrew Declaration* with the Scottish Episcopal Church (2021), the IRAD report provides a potentially fruitful resource for further reflection on the significance of our relationships with partner churches representative of the Anglican Communion.

2.2.2 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* is set out in four principal sections:

- I. The Foundations of *Koinonia*
- II. *Koinonia* in the Church
- III. *Koinonia* in Mission
- IV. Summary of Our Findings for Use in Our Two Communions,

and seeks to build on *God's Reign and Our Unity*, 'particularly the implications of the claim that in our baptism we are already made one body in Christ'.^[ix]

2.3 The Foundations of Koinonia

2.3.1 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* opens by affirming that:

Koinonia finds its origin in the dynamism of the life of the Triune God. It comes to us as a gift. It overflows to us from the beautiful and holy truth of God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—love and grace in relationship.

2.3.2 That is to say, *koinonia* is, in the first instance, to be understood as the gift of God and as an expression of the love and grace of God. Equally, it is to be understood as the calling of God and as 'disciples of Jesus, we continually grow into God's loving *koinonia*, bearing witness together as part of something larger than ourselves'.^[x] Further, *koinonia* is inherently relational in character and, in the action and self-revelation of God, we see the divine intention to establish a dynamic and living relationship with creation:

All creation is therefore in relationship with the divine life which brought it into being. Made in the image and likeness of God, humankind shares in this dynamic relationship [and this] pattern of receiving and sharing in God's own dynamic life is fundamental to the narrative of salvation history: it is the story of creation and redemption, of salvation and sanctification.^[xi]

2.3.3 Within the context of the act of creation, the Old Testament narrative of covenant and election shapes our understanding of divine and human interaction, and we see within this a God who is faithful to the divinely initiated covenant.^[xii]

2.3.4 In the New Testament, *koinonia* is expressed in a three-fold manner as 'a divine gift, given to the Church by the grace of the Holy Spirit; [as] a challenge that the Church is called to meet day by day; and [as] an eschatological reality that will be fulfilled completely in the world to come'.^[xiii] Alongside this, Scripture acknowledges the brokenness of our communion with God and the inadequacy of our reception of the gift of *koinonia*. Nevertheless, Scripture affirms that:

God's gift of *koinonia*, fundamentally given in creation and renewed uniquely in Christ, is a gift which is irreversible and unbreakable...[t] his communion is the irreversible achievement of Jesus's cross and resurrection, confirming the permanence of God's reign into which all are invited.^[xiv]

2.4 *Koinonia in the Church*

2.4.1 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* reaffirms, with *God's Reign and our Unity*, that 'our common baptism draws us into *koinonia* relationships with one another'. Baptism is 'the foundation of our *koinonia* in the Church' such that:

"The one baptism is therefore our common incorporation into Christ, into this common life of shared worship and mission in him. It is the visible and effective sign and seal of that gracious work of the Spirit by which the Church is constituted."^[xv]

2.4.2 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* then recalls *God's Reign and our Unity* once more, and highlights the striking claim made in 1984, namely, that:

"If we are as realistic about baptism as the apostolic writers are, then we are already by our baptism one body, and the continued separation of our two communions is a public denial of what we are already in Christ."^[xvi]

2.4.3 In so doing, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* takes us to the heart of the matter addressed by the Report as a whole, namely: that our continued division and separation are, in truth, a denial of the *koinonia* that we share in Christ through baptism, and a public denial at that. The living out of our response to the prayer of Jesus that we 'may all be one' is not for the sake of ecclesiastical tidiness. Rather, it is 'so that the world may believe' and is missional in its intent. (John 17: 21)

2.4.4 In similar vein, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* affirms that *koinonia* is a 'primary gift of God' and that 'it has the power to transform conflict'. It states:

We have considered in this dialogue whether *koinonia* can contain conflict so that conflict loses its power to divide. We are learning that

difference and disagreement are not in opposition to the unity and catholicity of the Church. Even extremely demanding difference and conflict have the potential to teach us more fully about *koinonia* precisely because they demand empathy, deep listening, patience, and humility, which are also necessary for relationships that deepen and grow rather than fracture.^[xvii]

2.4.5 At this point, we come to what may be regarded as one of the principal insights of *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*. *Koinonia*, rooted in the life of the Triune God and gifted to the Church as the baptised community of God's people, has the capacity to contain the conflict and division that mar the face of the Church. The Church receives the gift of *koinonia* and is called to live out its response to that gift in anticipation of the eschatological reconciliation of all things in Christ. The gift that we receive establishes the basis of our unity, and thereafter we are called to realise that unity in the living out of our witness to the reconciling love of God. To the extent that we do so, we shall more fully realise the life of God within the Church. To the extent that we fail to do so, we impair the realisation of our mutual communion.^[xviii]

2.4.6 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* states:

We fail to receive the gift of *koinonia* when we do not rejoice in the fundamental and unbreakable unity we have with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Though we affirm that God has created and willed diversity, we often see variety and difference as sources of disagreement and conflict, and thus as a hindrance to *koinonia*.^[xix]

2.4.7 The challenge of this insight is one that Anglican and Reformed churches, who intend to grow in communion and partner in mission, require to address. The addressing of the challenge has the potential to produce a gain that will be of immeasurable mutual benefit and will profoundly enhance our fellowship in the Gospel.

2.5 *Koinonia in Mission*

2.5.1 The significance of this understanding of *koinonia* with respect to the challenge of mission is considerable. *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* states:

In baptism Christians are grafted into the *koinonia* of the Body of Christ ... and as a result, Christians are called to lives shaped by the invitation to and challenge of mission (Mt 28.16-20). The implications of *koinonia* are life-changing and profound; in *koinonia*, it is impossible to ignore responsibility to and for one other.^[xx]

2.5.2 The understanding of mission within *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* is informed by a concern for 'justice and peace' expressed in the 'proclamation in life and words of the love, hospitality, reconciliation, and justice that characterize the Triune God'. The Church is called to be a 'sign and servant of missional *koinonia*' and to seek 'the transformation of the world by proclaiming God's loving presence, witnessing to God's justice and reconciliation, and bringing new and abundant life'.^[xxi]

2.5.3 In terms of living out a missional *koinonia*, we are called to the practice of a 'radical hospitality' and, in so doing, to pattern our lives on 'the life and teaching of Christ himself':

Following the example of Jesus, missional communities will be characterized by openness to receiving the neighbour, the stranger, and those

who are frequently excluded by church and wider society. In seeing the world from the perspective of the margins and acting in solidarity with them, the missional community has a chance to become a witness to the *koinonia* that surpasses the divisions of a world torn apart by division, conflict, and exploitation.^[xxii]

2.5.4 In practising this 'radical hospitality', the Church is called to embody and live out 'the justice and righteousness of God' and to be particularly conscious of those who are on the 'margins' of society. Insofar as 'any person or community would be relegated to [the] margins is itself an indication that *koinonia* is distorted and has yet to be fully received'.^[xxiii] This having been said, it is affirmed that:

[K]oinonia is not an expression of charity from the powerful to the powerless. It is a manifestation of communion with God, humanity, and all of creation. In contrast to prevailing social patterns, in life together in *koinonia* the experiences and perspectives of people on the margins are valued, lifted up, and considered transformational for the whole. This is a profoundly important theological insight; it is not simply an incorporation of marginalized persons into existing systems and structures. Those at the margins become witnessing agents of life-transforming *koinonia*.^[xxiv]

2.5.5 Woven throughout the theme of *koinonia* in mission is the affirmation of life whereby: 'Missional *koinonia* transcends false and life-restricting barriers and emphasizes the oneness of God's gift, which is a foretaste of the abundant life promised for all creation'.^[xxv]

2.5.6 The understanding of *koinonia* in mission at this point is shaped by recourse to the concept of the '*missio Dei*' in which the primacy of the "mission of God" shapes the mission of the Church. In this understanding, the mission of the Church is 'subservient' to the mission of God.^[xxvi]

2.6 Summary of Findings: Implications for Reformed-Anglican Relationships

2.6.1 In summarising the findings, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* affirms that 'Anglicans and Reformed assert strongly that *koinonia* is a gift of God for the whole of creation...a participation in the divine life [and] God's gift uniquely renewed in Jesus Christ'.^[xxvii]

2.6.2 In relation to our shared life within the Church, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* recognises 'the real pain of historical separation and manifold disagreement', and suggests that such is 'the nature of *koinonia*' as the gift of God that it 'was never ours to possess alone nor to deny to one another'. In the light of this:

There are profound implications for how we speak of one another, and of our Churches' sharing in the same *koinonia*. Thanks to the abundance of God's gift, it is inappropriate and inaccurate to speak of having been 'in or out' of communion with one other.^[xxviii]

2.6.3 In our reception of the gift of God, the Church is called 'to share the gift of *koinonia* in our mission to the world'. In so doing, we need to acknowledge 'the current incompleteness of the Church's life'. As churches who share together in the life of the body of Christ and who are 'united in the fundamentals of the Gospel', we 'need to be open to insights which emerge from the other for the integrity of the whole Body of Christ'.^[xxix]

2.6.4 *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* invites Anglican and Reformed churches to renew their commitment to the Lund Principle that:

'Churches ... should ... act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately'.^[xxx]

2.6.5 In conclusion, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* recalls that which we have already affirmed together in *God's Reign and Our Unity*:

If we are as realistic about baptism as the apostolic writers, then we are already by our baptism one body, and the continued separation of our two Communion is a public denial of what we are already in Christ. Moreover, there are consequences beyond these ecclesiastical ones. In the one man Jesus we see our common humanity taken up, redeemed and given back to us so that we can share it together—Jew and Gentile, man and woman, slave and free, rich and poor, white and black. Fidelity to our baptism commits us to affirm in word and practice the full, equal and God-given humanity of every person, to embody that affirmation in our public and political life, and to oppose and resist all that denies this shared humanity.^[xxxi]

2.6.6 The recollection of that which was affirmed in 1984 challenges us to resolve, once more, to live out more faithfully the implications of our shared baptismal identity. We commend *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* to the Church and highlight its principal insights as follows:

- 1) *Koinonia* is rooted in the life of the Triune God and is a primary gift of God to the Church as the community of God's people;
- 2) We are fully incorporated into the one body of Christ through the one baptism, and are called to 'grow into God's loving *koinonia*';
- 3) *Koinonia* has the capacity to contain and reconfigure conflict and division, and our continued separation 'is a public denial of what we are already in Christ';
- 4) The mission of God is primary and informs the mission of the Church which is fulfilled through working for the transformation of the world by proclaiming God's loving presence; baptising, teaching and nurturing new believers; practising radical hospitality; witnessing to God's justice and reconciliation; caring for creation, and bringing new and abundant life;
- 5) The reception of the gift of *koinonia* has profound implications for how we understand the nature of the communion we share as churches within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

2.7 The Challenge of Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling

2.7.1 The challenge posed by *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling* is as much to local congregations as it is to national churches and international communions. It has been said, echoing the words of Jesus, that wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, there an ecumenical relationship is formed. All Christians, between denominations, within denominations and even within individual congregations, have different experiences of the divine and are therefore not necessarily in perfect agreement. This, indeed, is the nature of the Church and something to be cherished and celebrated, because God is so much greater than may be comprehended by any individual, community, church or communion.

2.7.2 When we start from the point of reception of *koinonia* as God's gift and calling, then we will find ourselves led into deeper and more fulfilling relationships with each other as fellow Christians, and recognise that, in a sense, unity is the starting point from which we have diverged, rather than the destination towards which we are trying to travel.

2.7.3 This is a different way of thinking from that with which we may be more familiar, namely seeing ourselves as truly one in Christ, and not just paying lip service to that idea. If we can embed this thinking in our lives and the lives of our congregations, the questions become not, what can we do together, but more: why are we doing things apart? This has the potential for profound benefits to our life of faith.

2.7.4 These are challenges for the whole Church of Scotland, for its members and congregations as well as for its national structures and presbyteries. It is the Committee's prayer that all congregations begin to acknowledge the 'incompleteness of our church life' caused by our divisions and that we increasingly become dissatisfied with that incompleteness; that all congregations intentionally practise 'radical hospitality', recognising all followers of Christ as fellow Christians and all people, no matter their faith and circumstances, as loved by Christ; that all congregations intentionally look on one another 'as sharing together in the life and body of Christ'; that all church members and congregations 'should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately'; and that all Christians should embrace what we are already in Christ through our baptism. Faithfulness to our baptism requires nothing less.

2.7.5 *Koinonia* already is. It is not something to be worked towards, to be created, or to be developed. Rather, it is to be received and not resisted. Upon receiving it, it changes our perception of the painful parts of our history, moving us to repentance and reconciliation. It moves us to 'empathy, deep listening, patience, and humility' and to the growth and deepening of relationships.^[xxxiii] None of how this is expressed practically can be prescribed. Rather a deeper understanding and appreciation of *koinonia* moves our primary focus from ourselves to God, enabling us more fully to understand the true nature of the body of Christ, in which all are incorporated.

3. A DECLARATION OF FRIENDSHIP: THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

3.1 A Declaration of Friendship: A Gospel Commandment

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. (John 15: 12-14)

3.1.1 This passage of Scripture from the Gospel of John is familiar and often recalled. Within the passage, we see the interweaving of two themes; the commandment to love and that of friendship. Jesus calls upon his disciples to imitate the love that he has shown towards them and affirms that there is no 'greater love' than 'to lay down one's life for one's friends'. In turn, the disciples are called upon to fulfil the commandment to love and, in so doing, to demonstrate that they have understood what it is to be a friend of Jesus.

3.1.2 The simplicity that lies at the heart of this Gospel passage should not lead us to underestimate the profundity of the truth that is spoken. In a world of unremitting complexity, here is truth, simple and profound: We are made friends of Jesus by his laying down his life for us in love, and we respond in love and so demonstrate that we are his friends.

3.1.3 It is within the context of everyday life and in the unremitting complexity of the society that we inhabit that we are called to live out our response to the Gospel. In particular, we are called upon to fulfil the command to love and, in so doing, to demonstrate that we have understood what it is to be a friend of Jesus.

3.2 A Declaration of Friendship: That Which We Hold in Common

3.2.1 The immediate context within which the churches of our nation live out their response to the Gospel is a Scotland that has been much scarred by the trauma of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resultant impact upon our society. The full extent of that impact will only be fully comprehended in years to come. In the response of the Church in Scotland to the pandemic, especially in terms of interaction with the Scottish Government, one of the features was the realisation that we could best engage on a collective basis. Indeed, it is fair to say that it is only on a collective and ecumenical basis that we will be heard in certain contexts. In other words, the churches in Scotland recovered something that has not always been fully realised, namely a collective friendship, grounded in our fellowship with the One who laid down his life for his friends.

3.2.2 As previously noted, the General Assembly of 2021 saw the approval of the *Saint Andrew Declaration* between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The approval of the terms of the *Declaration* was, of course, of particular significance to the churches who were immediately party to it. However, the *Declaration* also had a resonance within the life of the Church in Scotland and may be said to have inspired a wider recognition of the value of such a style of *Declaration*. Thus, after the approval of the *Declaration*, conversations took place between the Moderator, Principal Clerk, Convener and Secretary of the Ecumenical Relations Committee and Archbishop Leo Cushley, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference's Ecumenical Commission, with a view to exploring the possibility of a *Declaration of Friendship* between the Catholic Church in Scotland and the Church of Scotland. In due course, the text of the *Declaration* was examined in detail by both the Committee on Ecumenical Relations and the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

3.2.3 In the course of the conversations, it was recognised that the form and substance of any proposed *Declaration of Friendship* ought to reflect the specific relationship between the Catholic Church in Scotland and the Church of Scotland. Thus, the terms of the *Declaration of Friendship* would be different in character from the *Saint Andrew Declaration*, albeit motivated by the same desire to express that which we hold in common. Alongside this, it was agreed that the focus of the *Declaration of Friendship* ought to be on that which we share, notwithstanding an honest recognition of matters awaiting fuller reconciliation. Equally, the shared sense was that the *Declaration of Friendship* ought to reflect that which binds us together in our desire to live out the Gospel in the context of the Scottish society that we mutually inhabit.

3.3 **A Declaration of Friendship: A Shared Faith and a Common Home**

3.3.1 The public 'recognition of each other as Christians, and as daughters and sons in the Son' with which the *Declaration* opens is to say that which has already been stated in formal and universal terms.^[xxxiii] Nevertheless, formal and universal statements require to acquire local context before they achieve the intended traction that will translate them into practice.^[xxxiv]

3.3.2 The primary context in which that translation takes place is the contemporary Scotland in which we seek to live out our calling to proclaim 'the kingdom of God in our land'.

3.3.3 That which we hold in common is that which binds us together in living out our calling, and to focus on that is to remind one another and ourselves that the substance of our faith is a common treasure:

We believe in one God, the Creator; we believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, true God and true man, fully divine and fully human, who died in the flesh and rose to save us from sin and death; and we believe in the Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Trinity, one God in three persons.

3.3.4 Our shared affirmation that 'the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic', and our acknowledgment of 'one baptism, for the forgiveness of sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', grounds that which we hold in common in the divine initiative that brings the Church into being.

3.3.5 Our faith is 'rooted in that of the Apostles' and we receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 'as God's revelation of His love for all humanity'. We recognise and hold in common the ecumenical councils, the Councils of Nicaea (325), Constantinople (381), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451), that principally shape our understanding of the substance of the faith.

3.3.6 The reception of the faith in Scotland has created a 'common heritage' that recalls 'the earliest missionaries, ... our mothers and fathers in the faith, who lived and preached the Christian faith to our land...including St Ninian, St Columba and St Margaret'. Together we acknowledge those who shaped our understanding of the practice of the faith in ancient times and in the common home that we call Scotland.

3.4 **Past Divisions and Challenges which Remain**

3.4.1 In offering the *Declaration of Friendship*, we are mindful of the extent to which the relationship between the Catholic Church in Scotland and the Church of Scotland has historically been perceived in negative terms. We are conscious of the past but are resolved not to be bound by it. We say that:

We recognise the hurt and the harm that our forebears did to each other in times past, and we repent and ask forgiveness of one other. We also recognise that, even in more recent times, much could have been said between us more kindly, written more magnanimously, and done more charitably, to promote pardon and healing and friendship among Christians in our land.

3.4.2 The challenges that remain to be addressed are not ones that we anticipate will be resolved in short order. Nevertheless, 'we reaffirm that what we hold in common is often greater than what divides us' and 'we commit

ourselves to continuing our pilgrimage towards greater unity, as we believe that it is the Lord's will that we be one'. (John 17: 21). As time goes by, we trust that those matters not yet resolved will be seen in a different light as the journey draws us closer together.

3.5 **Looking Towards the Future**

3.5.1 The future that lies before us is a common future and is one shaped in the context of the Scottish society that we mutually inhabit. The Christian faith that we share, and which binds us together, is a faith that shall be better understood within our society when it is articulated in harmony. The text of the *Declaration of Friendship* reads:

3.5.2

A DECLARATION OF FRIENDSHIP

between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland

We, the undersigned, representing the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland, wish publicly to express our recognition of each other as Christians, and as children of God in Christ (Galatians 3: 25-28). We recognise each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, and we wish to express our friendship and respect for one another as fellow Christians, citizens and partners in announcing the kingdom of God in our land.

Since the World Missionary Conference (Edinburgh, 1910), and the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) much has been done ecumenically to repair what was broken and to restore mutual respect and friendship.

A great deal has been achieved spiritually, practically and affectively, through joint prayer among our parishes, various joint commissions, and the growing knowledge and appreciation of each other as Christian friends and fellow pilgrims.

A SHARED FAITH

Progress has been made on that which we hold in common.

We believe in one God, the Creator; we believe in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, true God and true man, fully divine and fully human, who died in the flesh and rose to save us from sin and death; and we believe in the Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Trinity, one God in three persons. We believe that the Church is one, holy, catholic and apostolic; and we acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We believe our faith to be rooted in that of the Apostles, Christ's first disciples, those who knew and followed our Lord in this life. We recognise and treasure the Sacred Scriptures, as God's revelation of His love for all humanity. We recognise and hold in common the great ecumenical councils of the first five Christian centuries.

OUR COMMON HOME

We recognise, as our common heritage, the Gospel first brought to our shores so very long ago. We recall with gratitude to God the earliest missionaries, our forebears in the faith, who lived and preached the Christian faith to our land. We recall those from that time who led and formed the Church, nurturing a society inspired by Christian values, including St Ninian, St Columba and St Margaret.

PAST DIVISIONS

We recognise the hurt and the harm that our forebears did to each other in times past, and we repent and ask forgiveness of one other. We also recognise that, even in more recent times, much could have been said between us more kindly, written more magnanimously, and done more charitably, to promote pardon and healing and friendship among Christians in our land.

CHALLENGES WHICH REMAIN

There remain points at which we have not yet found a meeting place, and it is true that some questions still divide us.

Acknowledging what separates us still, we reaffirm that what we hold in common is often greater than what divides us. While recognising that unity does not mean uniformity, we commit ourselves to continuing our pilgrimage towards greater unity, as we believe that it is the Lord's will that we be one (John 17: 21). We trust that such developing unity in Christ is the Lord's work and the Spirit's doing.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

We therefore pledge ourselves to live as sisters and brothers in Christ, in public and in private, in life and in mission; to pray with each other and for each other; to be good neighbours, both to each other and to all people among whom we live, of all faiths and none; and to work together for the common good of the nation, as it is given to us to see it.

May there be an ever more united Christian voice in the land, informed always by the charity and love of Christ and our call to participate in the mission of God. May we contribute to the good of society, while humbly learning from others and from our own mistakes. May our theological reflections and initiatives together thrive; and may our pilgrimage together in our dear land of Scotland bear much fruit to the good of all, and to the greater glory of God.

3.5.3 In commending the *Declaration of Friendship* to the General Assembly, we do so in order that we may better journey together towards the future God holds for us and in order that we might live out our response to the prayer of Jesus that we 'may all be one...so that the world may believe'. (John 17: 21)

4. BILATERAL RELATIONS: SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

4.1 As previously described, on 24th May the 2021 General Assembly approved the Saint Andrew Declaration, consisting of mutual Acknowledgements and Commitments between the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church. The Saint Andrew Declaration then passed to the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church which, on 10th June 2021 also voted to approve it. This paved the way for the formal signing to take place, which happened during a special service held on St Andrew's Day, 30th November 2021, in St Mary's Scottish Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh. The Committee wishes to put on record its appreciation of the hospitality extended by the Provost, Vice-Provost, organists, choir and all the staff of the Cathedral. The service was led by Rev Canon Professor Charlotte Methuen, Convener of the Scottish Episcopal Church's Inter-Church Relations Committee, and Rev Alexander Horsburgh, Convener

of the Church of Scotland's Ecumenical Relations Committee, with Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, signing the Declaration on behalf of our two Churches.

4.2 The service of signing was preceded by an online day conference attended by over fifty people from the Scottish Episcopal Church, the Church of Scotland and other Churches. It was recognised that the *Saint Andrew Declaration* is a significant milestone in the relationship between our two Churches, celebrating and building on the already warm relationship we enjoy. Further, the *Declaration* challenges us to develop and deepen our relationship in practical ways that, together, we may better serve the people of Scotland in Christ's name.

4.3 Rev Canon Professor Charlotte Methuen led the conference in exploring some of our shared history, looking at some of the, perhaps surprising, points of historical convergence between the two churches as well as at some of the better-known times of conflict. The conference then heard about some emerging opportunities, particularly around ecumenical education and training, led by Rev Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson, Principal of the Scottish Episcopal Institute, and Rev Dr Scott Shackleton, Head of the Church of Scotland's Faith Action Programme. The day concluded by hearing from two case studies where congregations of our two denominations are working together, one from Edinburgh: the tripartite partnership between St John's Scottish Episcopal Church and St Cuthbert's and St Andrew's & St George's West from the Church of Scotland; and one from the Scottish Episcopal Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness.

4.4 The Committee is aware that there is always a danger that events such as this can be seen as the conclusion of a process, but what comes after, as a result of agreements reached and declarations made, is much more important. Work has therefore begun in recent months to give practical expression to the commitments made to one another in the *Saint Andrew Declaration*.

4.5 The Ecumenical Relations Committee (Church of Scotland) and the Inter-Church Relations Committee (Scottish Episcopal Church) are now setting up the *Saint Andrew Declaration* Working Group, which takes over from the *Our Common Calling* Working Group. It is intended that the Working Group will, among other things, look at developing the *Declaration* as a liturgical text for use in local congregations where the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church are working closely together or intentionally developing closer links following on the success of using the text of the *Declaration* in the Signing Service in November 2021. In fulfilment of our commitment to welcome one another's members to worship and to participate in the congregational life of each other's churches, the Working Group will look at the possibility for recognising joint membership of both the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland. It is also beginning to explore how ministry can be more fully shared between the two Churches, building on some of the innovative arrangements already in use in parts of the United Diocese of Moray, Ross and Caithness and the Presbyteries which serve that area. The Working Group recognises that it has much to learn from the example of Covenant Partnership in Cumbria and the Mission Community model supported within it, and will

be looking at how elements of that could be developed locally in Scotland. Further, it will study the IRAD report, *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, and seek to be guided by its insights.

5. BILATERAL RELATIONS: CHURCH OF ENGLAND

5.1 In October 2021, the *Columba Declaration* Contact Group arranged the biennial meeting between senior representatives of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland. Representation from the Church of England was provided by:

- the Most Rev and Rt Hon Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York;
- Mr William Nye, Secretary General, Archbishops' Council;
- Rev Dr Malcom Brown, Director of Mission and Public Affairs;
- Rev Canon Dr Jamie Hawkey, Canon Theologian at Westminster Abbey;
- Rev Canon Dave Male, Director of Evangelism and Discipleship, Church of England;
- Rev Dr Gavin Wakefield, Director of Training, Mission and Ministry, Diocese of York;
- Very Rev Catherine Pickford, Archdeacon of Northolt
- Ven John Day, Adviser in Mission Strategy and Church Revitalisation and Assistant Chaplain to the Archbishop of York
- and Rev Prebendary Dr Isabelle Hamley,
- with the Rt Rev James Newcome, Bishop of Carlisle, Co-Chair, *Columba Declaration* Contact Group
- and Rev Dr Matthias Grebe, Co-Secretary, *Columba Declaration* Contact Group.

Representation from the Church of Scotland was provided by:

- Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Moderator of the General Assembly;
- Rev Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk;
- Mr Dave Kendall, Chief Officer;
- Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, Convener, Assembly Trustees;
- Rev Dr Scott Shackleton, Head of Faith Action Programme;
- Rev Dr Liam Fraser, Convener, Theological Forum;
- Rev Dr Peter Donald;
- Rev Eileen Miller, Vice Convener, Ecumenical Relations;
- Mr David Bradwell, Associate Secretary, Faith Action Programme, and Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer
- with Very Rev Dr Russell Barr, Co-Chair, *Columba Declaration* Contact Group
- and Rev Dr John L McPake, Co-Secretary, *Columba Declaration* Contact Group.

The Right Reverend Dr John Armes, Bishop of Edinburgh, and Miriam Weibye, Church Relations Officer, attended as observers on behalf of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

5.2 Presentations were made with respect to:

- 1) The Strategic Visions of our Churches;
- 2) The Five Marks of Mission and the Emerging Church;
- 3) *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, the report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue referred to above; and

- 4) Review of *Columba Declaration* and future working together.

5.3 The *Columba Declaration* Contact Group was tasked with discerning future areas of shared cooperative working and good progress has been made in relation to that.

5.4 Lord Wallace of Tankerness, as Moderator of the General Assembly, met with the Most Rev and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and other senior Church of England officials, in November 2021 and there was a continuation of the general discussion initiated at the Biennial.

5.5 The Church of Scotland is represented on the General Synod of the Church of England by Rev Dr David Coulter and we note the mutual benefit of this reciprocal representation.

6. SCOTTISH CHURCH LEADERS' FORUM

6.1 The Scottish Church Leaders' Forum (SCLF) was created in March 2020 in the context of the initial response of the churches to the Covid-19 pandemic and is composed of senior representatives of the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Church in Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church, the United Free Church of Scotland, the United Reformed Church, the Methodist Church, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Salvation Army, the Congregational Federation, the Baptist Union of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland and the Redeemed Christian Church of God. Participation within the SCLF has increased from ten to twelve churches and bodies in the past year. An agreed statement on the "Nature and Purpose" of the SCLF gives an indication of the scope and range of the work of the SCLF. (Appendix 1)

6.2 Although originally shaped by the context of the response to the pandemic, the SCLF has developed into an effective forum for engagement between participating churches, and as an effective collective forum for engaging with, *inter alia*, Scottish Government agencies and other churches and senior church leaders. So, for example, the SCLF has engaged with the recently established Faith and Belief team within the Scottish Government and was addressed by the Rt Rev James Newcome, Church of England Bishop of the Diocese of Carlisle, on the Covenant Partnership in Cumbria and the Mission Community model. [xxxxv] [xxxxvi]

6.3 The SCLF is part of an emerging network of ecumenically-configured bodies that share the space beyond the formal boundaries of the churches that inhabit the ecclesial landscape within Scotland, and who seek to establish and sustain the connections between the churches. Further, the network seeks to establish and sustain connections between the churches and those agencies which inhabit the wider public sphere. In establishing and sustaining those connections, the network offers the potential to create an effective and mutually beneficial synergy.

6.4 In particular, the SCLF, through its Secretary, has established a creative working relationship and synergy with the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (SCPO), and this has enhanced the work of the SCLF and the SCPO. We are indebted to Mr David Bradwell, Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer.

6.5 Further, the development of an expanding Ecumenical Officers' Forum contributes to the emerging network, with Church of Scotland, Catholic Church in Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, United Free Church of Scotland, United Reformed Church, Methodist Church, Salvation Army, The Redeemed Christian Church of God and Congregational Federation representation on the Forum.

7. ACTION OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SCOTLAND (ACTS)

7.1 The SCLF has successfully brought together senior representatives of a growing number of Scottish churches and is now part of an emerging interconnected and cooperative ecumenical network with identity, coherence and direction. The Committee reported in 2021 that it expected ACTS to transition to a new ecumenical body, the Scottish Christian Forum (SCF) but this has not, in fact, taken place. Arguably, the moment for that has now passed and a lighter touch network would be more in tune with the needs of our time. Furthermore, the growth of bilateral declarations and agreements as described elsewhere in this Report is an indication that these ways of promoting ecumenism are being embraced with more enthusiasm.

7.2 As of the end of June 2021, ACTS has had no staff and no physical office. The Committee wishes to put on record its profound thanks to all who worked for ACTS over the years, and in particular on this occasion to pay tribute to Shona Paterson, who served for more than thirty years as a Programme Officer and to Rev Ian Boa, who served as Assistant General Secretary for over ten years. Both of them continued to give selfless service to ACTS and ecumenism in Scotland, even in very difficult circumstances, and the General Assembly will wish to join the Committee in commending them for their service.

7.3 ACTS consists now solely of funds, administered by a board of Trustees, and, other than dealing with administrative matters, is effectively inactive. The Committee is working actively with other Member Churches to address this matter.

8. CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND (CTBI)

8.1 During the past year, CTBI has seen the retirement of Mr Bob Fyffe as General Secretary and the Committee would wish to place on record its thanks to him for his service to the churches over the past fifteen years. In particular, we note his valued contribution in relation to the coordination of the response of British and Irish churches to the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020.

8.2 In January 2022, Dr Nicola Brady took up her post as successor, having previously served as General Secretary of the Irish Council of Churches since 2016. Prior to this, Dr Brady had served as Research Coordinator for the Council for Justice and Peace of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Northern Ireland Catholic Council on Social Affairs, and was a member of the Management Committee of the Irish Churches' Peace Project, 2013–2015. Since March 2020, Dr Brady has played a significant role in the liaison between British and Irish churches and her appointment as General Secretary of CTBI is especially welcome in the light of this. In January 2022, the Committee met with Dr Brady and we look

forward to working further with CTBI, and with the other Scottish churches which are members, in order to strengthen the Scottish dimension of its work.

9. CHURCHES TOGETHER IN ENGLAND (CTE)

9.1 CTE has also seen the retirement of its General Secretary in the past year and the Committee would wish to place on record its thanks to Rev Dr Paul Goodliff for his service to the churches since his appointment in 2018. Once more, we note his valued contribution in relation to the coordination of the response of British and Irish churches to the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020. In particular, his calling together and hosting of the Ecumenical Officers' Roundtable offered a valuable meeting place for the sharing of information and for reflection on the collective challenge faced by the churches.

9.2 In March 2022, Bishop Mike Royal, a bishop in the Apostolic Pastoral Congress, took up his post as successor. He is the Co-Chief Executive of The Cinnamon Network, a charity enabling British and Irish churches to engage in community and social action projects.

10. CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN CHURCHES (CEC)

10.1 In November 2021, the Governing Board of CEC agreed to make a number of significant changes to the shape of its future work and advised its member churches accordingly. In January 2022, the Committee met with Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen, General Secretary of CEC, who outlined the proposed changes and the rationale underlying them.

10.2 CEC was established in 1959 with the primary purpose of building bridges between the churches of eastern and western Europe. In recognition of the continuing need for such work, bridge-building is understood by CEC as a guiding principle. Alongside this, CEC articulated the need to express that principle in terms attuned to the reality of contemporary Europe. In offering a shared platform to member churches, CEC seeks to claim and safeguard a space for faith and to make visible the contribution of the churches in Europe. As a consequence, CEC is now seeking to effect a transition towards becoming a body with twin principal work streams, expressed as:

- 1) Theology and Studies Unit, and
- 2) Dialogue and Advocacy Unit.

10.3 The focus on theological reflection will inform, and be informed by, the focus on advocacy on behalf of the churches in Europe. In the light of this, CEC is reassessing its organisational profile in order to align it with these foci, and is concentrating its work in Brussels and closing its physical office in Strasbourg, though the work previously done from that office will be transferred to Brussels.^[xxvii]

10.4 As a consequence of these changes and of reductions in its own funding, CEC will cease to finance a number of autonomous bodies that it previously supported in financial and administrative terms. Amongst others, this will impact on the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) and the European Christian Environmental Network (ECEN). The Committee has received expressions of concern in relation to this decision. In noting these concerns, the Committee notes the corollary between the reduction in funding offered

by the churches to sustain the work of CEC and the consequent need to focus the work of CEC on sustainable work streams. It is anticipated that further discussions will take place in this regard.

11. COMMUNION OF PROTESTANT CHURCHES IN EUROPE (CPCE)

11.1 The CPCE is a small but important part of the Church of Scotland's ecumenical engagement and shares that engagement in partnership with the United Reformed Church. The current work of CPCE is expressed in *Being Church Together*, and the aims expressed there have been shaped by the Council of the CPCE on the basis of the resolutions of the CPCE General Assembly at Basel in 2018.^[xxxviii]

11.2 The CPCE has recently initiated a European Ecumenical Officers' Forum and this has provided the opportunity for fruitful engagement and the enhancing of mutual ties between the Reformed and Lutheran Churches of Europe.

12. WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)

12.1 The contribution of the WCC to the work of the Church in Scotland was particularly evident during the period of COP26 (31st October-12th November 2021). We especially recognise the contribution of Rev Henrik Grape, Senior Adviser on Care for Creation, Sustainability, and Climate Justice for the WCC and are grateful to him for his insight and his skill in facilitating conversations between the delegations representative of particular traditions of the Christian faith.

12.2 Lord Wallace of Tankerness, as Moderator of the General Assembly, was a member of the WCC delegation and his participation in the formal and informal discussions which shaped COP26 ensured that a distinctively Scottish Christian voice, along with others, was heard in those discussions.^[xxxix]

12.3 In their "Statement on the outcome of COP26" in November 2021, the WCC Executive Committee noted that, whilst not all goals had been achieved, we should 'acknowledge the important new developments during COP26'. These include:

The increased global mobilization of young people...A commitment by over 120 countries, representing about 90% of the world's forests, to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030...A pledge by more than 100 countries, led by the United States and the European Union, to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030...An agreement by more than 40 countries – including major coal-users such as Poland, Vietnam and Chile – to shift away from coal, one of the biggest generators of CO₂ emissions...The inclusion of references – if not yet clear commitments or effective mechanisms – on loss and damage, fossil fuel subsidies, Indigenous Peoples, and a just transition; and, perhaps of greatest geo-political significance...The bilateral US-China agreement to work together on cutting greenhouse gas emissions in the next decade.^[xli]

12.4 The opportunity provided through our partnership with the WCC to engage in international discussions on matters of direct relevance to the people of Scotland is

an important reminder of the need to retain our outward-facing engagement with agencies beyond our immediate circle.

12.5 Following a delay of one year because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches will meet in Karlsruhe, Germany from 31st August to 8th September 2022 under the theme 'Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity'. The Church of Scotland will be represented by Rev Alexander Horsburgh, Ms Miriam Weibye, who will be jointly representing the Scottish Episcopal Church, and Rev Dr John L McPake. More than 4000 people are expected to participate.

12.6 The assembly will gather amidst perplexities, anxieties, and fundamental questions about the way we inhabit the earth, make sense of our lives, live in society, and accept responsibility for future generations. These questions have been amplified by the global Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences, the climate emergency, and manifestations of racism, structural economic inequality, gender discrimination, and other forms of injustice in our societies and in our world. The outbreak of war in Europe will give a particular urgency to the work of the General Assembly.

13. CONCLUSION

13.1 The war in Ukraine, started on 24th February 2022, demonstrates that the need for unity, and especially Christian Unity, could not be clearer.

13.2 Within the Orthodox tradition in Eastern Europe, the baptism of the Kyivan Rus in 988AD is of especial significance. The event is marked on 28th July and celebrates the occasion when Volodymyr of the Rus summoned the people of the city to be baptised *en masse* in the Dnipro River (Дніпро (Ukrainian), Днепр (Russian)) at Kyiv. The event is understood as integral to the spread of Christianity, and in various countries in that region it is a fundamental part of the narrative of national identity, albeit that these narratives may differ.

13.3 The confession that there is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism' is integral to the faith we hold in common and the baptism through which we are made 'one in Christ Jesus' is a fundamental part of our shared Christian identity. The recollection of the 'one baptism' is the recollection of the Triune God in whose name we are baptised and of the One who breaks down the 'dividing wall' of hostility between peoples. (Ephesians 4: 5, Galatians 3: 28; Matthew 28: 18-19; Ephesians 2: 14) We appeal to all those who are baptised and who are made 'one in Christ Jesus' to walk in the way of peace.

13.4 On Ash Wednesday (2nd March 2022), Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca, Acting General Secretary of the World Council of Churches and himself an Orthodox priest, wrote to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow to ask the patriarch to 'raise up [his] voice and speak on behalf of the suffering brothers and sisters' of Ukraine.^[xlii] Christians of all traditions are called to unite to condemn the misuse of faith for violent ends, and witness to the truth that we are made 'one in Christ Jesus'.

13.5 On that same day, Christians from 80 countries around the globe joined in a prayer service of lament and solidarity with all those suffering from the effects of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The online ecumenical service included participation by Ukrainian pastors and parishioners living in towns and cities that had been under

attack by Russian warplanes, tanks, and troops since 24th February. The service was jointly organized by the World Communion of Reformed Churches and the Lutheran World Federation, with participation from the World Methodist Council, the Mennonite World Conference, the Conference of European Churches, the Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe, the Baptist World Alliance, and the Anglican Communion.^[xliii] In that service, the various traditions of the Christian faith united in their prayer for peace.

13.6 The foundation of our common prayer is the *koinonia* - the fellowship, communion and partnership - which we are given in Christ. We receive it in the knowledge that, on the night before he suffered and died, Jesus prayed that his people might be one, that the world might believe (John 17: 20-21). The idea of belief, of course, goes well beyond simply intellectual assent. It is to do with entering into a trusting relationship, and not merely on an individual basis between the believer and Jesus. It is about trusting in Christ's vision of a world in which God reigns, a world of justice, peace and love, in which the poor hear good news, captives are liberated, the blind see, and the oppressed go free. (Luke 4: 18) It is about doing all we can, as individuals, congregations, churches and communions of Churches, working together, to further the reign of God.

13.7 Ecumenism is, at its core, a concern for the whole inhabited earth. It is not simply a matter of occasional shared prayer, or of borrowing ideas from other churches, or of debating points of doctrine. A pandemic which is not yet over, and a war the course of which no one can predict, remind us how dangerous our world can be, and impel Christians to rediscover our essential calling to be salt and light, to be ambassadors of peace in a world of violence, to be agents of healing in a world diseased. To be effective, we need to know ourselves, our own histories and identities, and be confident in what we believe. We also need to learn to know one another well, to celebrate what we share, and understand and respect where we differ. We are called to affirm our deep friendship with and Christian love for one another, perhaps especially with those with whom we share difficult history, but also with those with whom we rarely have contact, for in truth, we are all 'one in Christ Jesus'.

13.8 It is the prayer of the Committee that our Report, and all our work, may contribute, in some small way, to the peace and unity of the world Christ so loves, and in which he became incarnate that we might be in God and God might be in us.

In the name of the Committee

ALEXANDER G HORSBURGH, *Convener*

EILEEN MILLER, *Vice Convener*

JOHN L MCPAKE, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev Alexander G Horsburgh

Rev Sandy Horsburgh became Convener of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations at the General Assembly in May 2018 and the Committee is indebted to him for his service throughout the years since. This is especially so in the period since March 2020, and the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and his astute leadership, gentle humour and unifying vision have sustained the integrity of the Committee in the era of online meetings and virtual engagement. The Ecumenical Strategy, at local, national and international levels, agreed at the General Assembly of 2019, set out the anticipated pattern of the period of his Convener-ship, alongside a focus on the continuing bilateral engagement with the Scottish Episcopal Church through the "Our Common Calling" process first begun in 2016. It is to his immense credit that the Ecumenical Strategy continued to guide the work of the Committee throughout this time and that the bilateral process was brought to fruition in the terms of the *Saint Andrew Declaration* as agreed by the General Assembly and the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church in 2021. The culmination of the "Our Common Calling" process in the signing of the *Saint Andrew Declaration* on 30th November 2021 is, we are sure, the highlight of his time as Convener. As will be seen in this year's Report, the call to engage with the wider Church in Scotland continues to yield new fruit and we trust that this will be a fitting tribute to Sandy's faithful articulation of the ecumenical vision for the Church of Scotland and of the wider Church in Scotland.

EILEEN MILLER, *Vice Convener*

JOHN L MCPAKE, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

Scottish Church Leaders' Forum Nature and Purpose:

The Scottish Church Leaders' Forum is a forum in which designated senior leaders within particular Scottish Churches gather together for the purpose of sharing fellowship, information and insight. At present, the Forum offers a meeting place to the following churches and communities:

1. Church of Scotland
2. Catholic Church in Scotland
3. Scottish Episcopal Church
4. United Free Church of Scotland
5. United Reformed Church
6. Methodist Church
7. Quakers
8. Salvation Army
9. Congregational Federation
10. Baptist Union of Scotland
11. Free Church of Scotland
12. Redeemed Christian Church of God

The Scottish Church Leaders' Forum is a participatory body and is, in nature, a voluntary association with no separate legal personality and its purpose, as stated, provides the basis on which the Forum is established.

The Scottish Church Leaders' Forum was initiated in March 2020 and the catalyst for its initiation and subsequent development was the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for a shared response to the challenges of the pandemic.

Aims:

The Forum seeks to:

1. Encourage the mission of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ in the light of the mission of God;
2. Encourage the Church to share in the Call to Prayer;
3. Encourage a broad spectrum of churches to participate in its life;
4. Encourage the commissioning of research into areas of mutual interest;
5. Encourage the living out of our shared response to the prayer of Jesus that we may 'all be one' (John 17: 21);
6. Provide a platform for working cooperatively with other church and ecumenical bodies within Scotland, and within Britain and Ireland;
7. Provide a platform for liaising and engaging with the Scottish Government;
8. Provide a platform for liaising and engaging with the United Kingdom Government.

Cooperation:

As stated, the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum will work cooperatively with other church and ecumenical bodies, as appropriate, including:

1. Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office
2. Scottish Churches Committee
3. Ecumenical Officers Forum
4. Ecumenical representative bodies within particular churches
5. Evangelical Alliance (Scotland)
6. Churches Together in Britain & Ireland
7. Churches Together in England
8. Irish Council of Churches and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting
9. Churches Together in Wales (Cytûn).

Convener:

The Convener of the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum shall be appointed from amongst the members of the Forum and shall serve at the pleasure of the Forum.

Annual Review:

The Scottish Church Leaders' Forum shall conduct an annual review towards the end of each calendar year and set goals for the calendar year following.

JOHN L MCPAKE
Secretary

Appendix 2

Delegates to other Churches

The following have been appointed as delegates to the Assemblies, Synods and Conferences of other Churches:

Presbyterian Church of Wales – Moderator
United Reformed Church – Moderator
Church of England – Rev Dr David Coulter
United Reformed Church National Synod of Scotland – Rev Alexander Horsburgh
Methodist Church Conference –
Scottish Episcopal Church – Rev Ross Blackman
United Free Church of Scotland – Rev Dr John L McPake

Ecumenical Bodies

The following serve on Assemblies and Committees of the ecumenical bodies of which the Church is a member:

World Council of Churches

General Assembly (September 2022)

Rev Alexander Horsburgh, Ms Miriam Weibye (Delegates),
 Rev Dr John L McPake (Adviser)

World Communion of Reformed Churches

General Council (June-July 2017)

Rev Ian A Alexander, Rev Alison P McDonald, Mr Andrew MacPherson, Rev Anikó Schuetz Bradwell

Conference of European Churches

General Assembly (May-June 2018)

Rev Dr Richard Frazer, Rev Alison P McDonald

Governing Board

Rev Alison P McDonald

Communion of Protestant Churches in Europe (Leuenberg Church Fellowship)

General Assembly (September 2018)

Rev Andrea Price

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Board of Trustees

Rev Kevin Mackenzie

Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Members' Meeting

Voting Member: Convener of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations

Non-Voting Member: Ecumenical Officer

Trustee

Miss Carole Hope

Columba Declaration Contact Group

Co-Convener: Rev Dr Russell Barr

Co-Secretary: Rev Dr John L McPake

Members: Rev Eileen Miller

Saint Andrew Declaration Working Group

Co-Convener: Convener of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations

Co-Secretary: Ecumenical Officer

Scottish Church Leaders' Forum

Moderator, Principal Clerk, Ecumenical Officer

Ecumenical Officers' Forum

Ecumenical Officer

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- [i] https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/70361/2018-reports-decisions-legislation-and-minutes.pdf, ss.12ff.
- [ii] <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/church-law/church-constitution#articlevii>
- [iii] <http://wcrch.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/IRAD-Koinonia-Gods-Gift-and-Calling.pdf>
- [iv] <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/work-other-christian-churches/working-together-nationally#na>; https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/31675/Report_of_the_CofS-CofE_Joint_study_group.pdf, 18.
- [v] <https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/gs1792-our%20fellowship%20in%20the%20gospel%3A%20summary%20report%20of%20joint%20study%20group.pdf>, 3.
- [vi] By way of contrast, we may note the virtual absence of any such usage in earlier dialogues between the Church of Scotland and churches within the Anglican Communion. See, for example: *Relations between Anglican and Presbyterian Churches* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1957) and: *The Anglican-Presbyterian Conversations* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press/London: SPCK, 1966).
- [vii] Such a status may be said to be linked to the publication of: World Council of Churches, *On the Way to Fuller Koinonia* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1993):
Message from the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, 1993 | World Council of Churches (oikoumene.org)
As noted, the theological use of the biblical concept of *koinonia* has been a significant feature of ecumenical dialogues since the latter part of the Twentieth Century. The value of the theological usage of any biblical concept is best maintained insofar as that usage observes the boundaries within which the original biblical concept is used. We require to ask of any such usage as to whether, or not, it is asking the original biblical concept to bear a load that exceeds those boundaries.
- [viii] https://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/104250/1984_aco_warc_gods_reign_our_unity.pdf
- [ix] <http://wcrch.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/IRAD-Koinonia-Gods-Gift-and-Calling.pdf>, Introduction, referencing: *God's Reign and Our Unity*, para.47-61.
- [x] <http://wcrch.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/IRAD-Koinonia-Gods-Gift-and-Calling.pdf>, para.1.
- [xi] *Ibid.*, para.4.
- [xii] *Ibid.*, paras 5-6.
- [xiii] *Ibid.*, para. 7.
- [xiv] *Ibid.*, para.11.
- [xv] *Ibid.*, para.21.
- [xvi] *Ibid.*, para.22, citing: *God's Reign and Our Unity*, para.61.
- [xvii] *Ibid.*, para.32.
- [xviii] *Ibid.*, para's 33-39.
- [xix] *Ibid.*, para.35.
- [xx] *Ibid.*, para.40.
- [xxi] *Ibid.*, para's 41-42.
- [xxii] *Ibid.*, 43.
- [xxiii] *Ibid.*, 45-47.
- [xxiv] *Ibid.*, 47.
- [xxv] *Ibid.*, 53.
- [xxvi] *Ibid.*, para.52 and fn.25.
- [xxvii] *Ibid.*, para's 57-58.
- [xxviii] *Ibid.*, para.60.
- [xxix] *Ibid.*, para.61.
- [xxx] *Ibid.*, para.63, citing: *Report of the Third World Conference on Faith and Order* (Faith and Order Commission, 1952), p. 6.
- [xxxi] *Ibid.*, para.64, citing: *God's Reign and Our Unity*, para.61.
- [xxxii] *Ibid.*, para.32.
- [xxxiii] See, for example:
Unitatis Redintegratio (Vatican Council II (1964)):
https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_unitatis-redintegratio_en.html
The Ecumenical Directory (1993)
<http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/documenti/testo-in-inglese.html>
Ut Unum Sint (1995)
https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html
See also the fruit of International Catholic-Reformed Dialogues (1977, 1990, 2005, 2015):
<http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/alleanza-mondiale-delle-chiese-riformate/dialogo-internazionale-cattolico-riformato.html>
- [xxxiv] For an example of such a translation, and the fruit of Catholic-Reformed Dialogue in Scotland, see:
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/3115/baptism_document.pdf
https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/3116/baptism_liturgy.pdf
- [xxxv] **Participation Faith and belief engagement - Participation (blogs.gov.scot)**
- [xxxvi] https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/80299/06-Ecumenical-Relations-Committee.pdf, Section 4.

- [xxxvii] <https://www.ceceurope.org/cec-to-enhance-church-voices-in-european-institutions-through-advocacy/>
- [xxxviii] <https://www.leuenberg.eu/documents/>
- [xxxix] <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/church-of-scotland-marks-cop26-weekend-with-special-services-and-activism>
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- [xli] <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/wcc-acting-general-secretary-to-patriarch-kirill-of-moscow-raise-up-your-voice-so-that-the-war-can-be-stopped>
- [xlii] <http://wcrc.ch/news/a-pall-of-ashes-covers-ukraine-christians-join-prayer-for-peace>

THEOLOGICAL FORUM MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Report "The Earth is the Lord's: A Theological Account of Creation Care" to congregations for study and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to provide opportunities and resources to aid reflection, conversation and response. (*Section 3; Appendix 2*)
3. Receive the Report "The Confessional Position of the Church of Scotland: Proposals for Reform" as a response to the instruction given by the General Assembly of 2021. (*Section 2; Appendix 1*)
4. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum to introduce teaching on the confessional position of the Church and the vows of office holders for those entering into recognised ministries and eldership. (*Appendix 1, Section 4.3*)
5. Approve in principle the proposals for creating a Book of Confessions and corresponding changes to the vows and subscription of office holders, and instruct the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee to bring an Overture effecting these changes to the General Assembly of 2023. (*Appendix 1, Sections 4.4 & 4.6*)

Report**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Theological Forum was established by the General Assembly to 'resource, express and challenge the theology that informs the life and work of the Church'. Its remit is to:

- (a) articulate and develop the doctrinal understanding of the Church in accordance with Holy Scripture and with reference to the confessional standards of the Church of Scotland;
- (b) express the theological vision of the Church in its worship, fellowship, witness and mission in and beyond contemporary Scotland;
- (c) respond to particular theological requests as and when these arise from the General Assembly, the Council of Assembly and the ecumenical partners of the Church;
- (d) draw to the attention of the General Assembly theological matters which the Theological Forum considers to be of pressing contemporary relevance;
- (e) stimulate wider theological reflection throughout the Church on key doctrinal, ethical and apologetic matters through the provision of appropriate materials and other activities.

1.2 The Forum has continued to serve this wide-ranging remit and over the last year has concentrated on those issues assigned to it by the General Assembly of 2021. Its work has been carried out through substantial reading, discussion, reflection and prayer in its meetings, and through consultation with the other Councils, Committees and Fora of the Church. The Forum has also advised upon a spectrum of issues that have arisen out of enquiries received from the wider Church. The following Report and Appendices are offered as an update on work carried out throughout 2021.

2 WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH

2.1 The General Assembly of 2018 passed an Overture from the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles, instructing the Theological Forum:

- (1) *to review the reports and debates on the role of the Westminster Confession of Faith in the Church's life arising from the General Assembly of 1968 and the years following;*
- (2) *to give fresh consideration to the issues raised therein in light of developments within Reformed and ecumenical theology since 1646 in which the Church of Scotland has been actively involved;*
- (3) *to advise the General Assembly on the continuing role of a 'Subordinate Standard';*
- (4) *to look afresh at the wording and terms of reference of the Formula of subscription used in services of ordination;*
- (5) *to explore the possibility of producing a Book of Confessions, in print and/or on-line as a teaching resource for office-bearers, members and enquirers;*
- (6) *to report to the General Assembly of 2020.*

2.2 As part of its work on this issue, the Forum commissioned four papers and organised a conference titled *Westminster, Confessions and the Church*, which was held at New College on Wednesday 8 May 2019.^[1]

2.3 The Forum's interim report, 'Westminster, Confessions and the Church'^[2], was due to be presented to the General Assembly of 2020, but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead, the report was brought to the General Assembly of 2021, and, as this was an online event, the Forum organised a webinar called *Westminster, Confessions and the Church: An Open Discussion* on Wednesday 12th May 2021. The Forum is grateful to the 104 people who attended and for the high level of discussion on the day.

2.4 The Forum's 2021 interim report requested that the General Assembly:

5. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to discuss the questions laid out in Section 23 of "Westminster, Confessions and the Church" (Appendix), along with any further or additional comments, and respond to the Theological Forum by 31 December 2021."

2.5 This deadline was extended into January, in order to give more time for reflection. To assist with this consultation process, the Forum was also asked by the General Assembly of 2021 to produce a video resource on the Westminster Confession of Faith, as follows:

4. Invite the Theological Forum to facilitate knowledge of the Westminster Confession by producing video resources on the Confession to allow Church leaders and members to study the Confession if they so wished; such material to assist the Church in gaining an understanding of its subordinate standard and thus allow engagement with the consultation which the Forum seeks.

2.6 The video can be accessed via the Church of Scotland's YouTube channel at the following web address: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Cmq_tG_mWw&t=496s.

2.7 The Forum is grateful for the time that Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and individuals set aside to discuss matters relating to the Westminster Confession of Faith and for the responses it received. Having taken them into consideration, and in response to Deliverance 6 of the 2021 interim report, to "bring firm proposals regarding the confessional standards of the Church to the General Assembly of 2022", the Forum now presents its report "The Confessional Position of the Church of Scotland: Proposals for Reform" in Appendix 1 of this Report.

2.8 Lastly, the Forum would like to thank the Legal Questions Committee for providing guidance and support on a number of complex legal matters and also our colleagues in the Presbyterian Church (USA), who took the time to speak with us about their Book of Confessions and its use in theological education and worship.

3. ECOTHEOLOGY

3.1 Part of the Forum's remit is:

(d) to draw to the attention of the General Assembly theological matters which the Theological Forum considers to be of pressing contemporary relevance.

3.2 The Forum is convinced that theological reflection on climate change and the present ecological crisis more generally, clearly falls within this section of the remit, indeed also as part of our commitment to the fifth Mark

of Mission, "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth."

3.3 The Forum is aware of the commitment already being made by Scottish churches to address climate change and there are now over 450 congregations registered with Eco-Congregation Scotland.^[3] Efforts are also being made at a national level by the Church of Scotland; the General Assembly of 2021 saw the Investors Trust disinvest from oil and gas companies and the Assembly also adopted the Faith Impact Forum's "Net Zero by 2030" framework for transitioning locally and nationally to net zero carbon emissions by the end of the decade. All of this is set against the backdrop of COP26 during which countries from all over the world brought forward plans to reduce their emissions and to update the Paris Agreement of 2015. The Forum welcomes these initiatives and all future efforts that seek to reduce human impact upon the environment.

3.4 The Forum has also identified the need, however, to ground this praxis in a robust theological account of the relationship between human beings and the natural world. This is done, in the report "The Earth is the Lord's: A Theological Account of Creation Care" (Appendix 2), by locating the fifth Mark of Mission within the wider, overarching theological narrative of creation, redemption and eschatology. When the Church's environmental mission is grounded in this theological framework, it can be understood not merely as an optional extra but as an integral part of the Church's creaturely identity in Christ.

3.5 What is offered in Appendix 2 is the culmination of work over a two-year period, during which time the Forum read widely across a broad range of biblical, systematic, historical, scientific and applied theological perspectives. The Forum also consulted with representatives from the Faith Impact Forum and Eco-Congregation Scotland and is grateful for their time and expertise.

4. RETROSPECTIVE APOLOGY

4.1 The Forum was asked on the floor of the 2021 General Assembly to consider theologically the issue of retrospective apology in relation to the historic persecution of those accused of witchcraft in Scotland between the 16th and 18th centuries. This request came from a spokesperson on behalf of an action group in Fife which is seeking pardon from the Scottish Government and an apology from the Church of Scotland for its involvement in the so-called 'witch-hunts'.

4.2 The Forum spent time exploring the various factors that might be taken into consideration when thinking about what makes particular apologies fitting and now offers the paper 'Apologising for Historic Wrongs', which can be found on the Theological Forum's webpage at <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/councils-committees-and-departments/committees/theological-forum>, as a resource for the Church in its continuing deliberations on this issue.

5. JEWISH-CHRISTIAN GLOSSARY PROJECT

5.1 A representative of the Theological Forum sat on a Working Group comprised of three members from the Church of Scotland and three Orthodox Rabbis from the Jewish community. This project was in partnership with the Chief Rabbi's Office and aimed to create a theological

glossary of terms shared but understood differently by both communities. The Glossary itself is pending publication at the time of writing this report but more information about its construction can be found in the Faith Impact Forum's General Assembly report (*Deliverance 10; Section 5; Appendix 1*).

6. FUTURE WORK

6.1 The Forum anticipates further work on confessional reform and has also received requests to explore questions relating to ordination, call and orders of ministry, in light of widespread changes currently taking place. The Forum stands ready to assist the General Assembly and its Councils, Committees and Fora in any matter of theology and doctrine and would welcome consultation at an early stage in any significant pieces of work.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7.1 The Forum values the hard work, commitment and contribution of each of its members and is grateful to all those who have sought its views and listened so graciously to its comments. It would also like to express its thanks to those who attended the webinar and to those who contributed to the consultation on the Westminster Confession of Faith.

In the name of the Theological Forum

LIAM JERROLD FRASER, *Convener*
NATHALIE MARES MacCALLUM, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore

Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore resigned as Vice-Convener of the Theological Forum in January 2022. During her time in this role, she brought her expertise in the intersection of the disciplines of theology and history to the Forum's conversations, reflection and writing, particularly in contributing to our report on Ecotheology. We wish her well in her continued service in the academy and the church.

LIAM JERROLD FRASER, *Convener*
NATHALIE MARES MacCALLUM, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

1. The Confessional Position of the Church of Scotland: Proposals for Reform (2022)

1.1 The General Assembly of 2018 instructed the Theological Forum to undertake a full review of the role of the Westminster Confession of Faith in our Church, including the vows and subscription that office holders make in relation to it. Upon presenting our interim findings, the General Assembly of 2021 instructed the Theological Forum to return to the General Assembly of 2022 with firm proposals on the confessional standards of the Church. In this Report, we present the final conclusions of our review, and our proposals for the confessional reform of the Church.

1.2 While much of the content of this Report is detailed and complex, its intentions are simple: to help the Church reform itself by the Word of God as it responds to the changed context of 21st century Scotland, to locate the basic beliefs we hold in common, and to resolve centuries-old disagreement over the Westminster Confession, allowing us to move into the future with hope.

1.3 Our proposals are:

- To give ministers and other recognised ministries greater knowledge and confidence in their faith through teaching on the confessional position of the Church and the vows and subscription of office holders.
- To create a Book of Confessions that will contain the Westminster Confession of Faith and other statements of faith that express the range and depth of Reformed thought.
- To clarify the location of the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith that we hold in common.
- To amend the vows and subscription that office holders make in light of these changes.

1.4 In presenting these proposals, we believe that they meet the primary concerns of all sections of the Church. For those who do not agree with the Westminster Confession and want a contemporary faith that is fit for purpose, office holders will no longer have to make vows or subscribe to the Confession at all, and will have the opportunity to propose *new* confessions for inclusion in a Book of Confessions. For those who worry that a change in the status of the Westminster Confession will lead to doctrinal confusion, by retaining the status of the Westminster Confession as a subordinate standard, clarifying the location of the fundamental doctrines of the faith, and creating teaching on the Church's confessional position, we believe that the Reformed nature of the Church will be strengthened. Finally, for those who think

confessional reform is irrelevant and a distraction from ministry and mission, our proposed reforms will aid the internal unity of the Church, provide tools for teaching and discipleship, and facilitate greater partnership with other denominations.

1.5 We begin this Report by describing the current status and role of the Westminster Confession in our Church. We then explore some of the difficulties with the Church's existing confessional position, problems that – importantly – have implications for all sections of the Church. We conclude by explaining our proposals to remedy these difficulties: how by emphasising the beliefs we have in common, while recognising a greater range of Reformed and ecumenical voices, we can hold fast to the foundations of our faith, while being open to the leading of the Spirit in this day and age.

2. The Current Status and Role of the Westminster Confession in our Church

2.1 The question of whether the Westminster Confession should remain the sole subordinate standard of the Church of Scotland is a different question from whether we agree with the teaching of the Westminster Confession. The latter question is a purely theological and biblical one, while the former involves consideration of a wider range of factors. Among these are the shape and contents of the constitution of the Church, the vows office holders make, and the formula of subscription that they sign. The meaning of the Westminster Confession in our church is not only determined by the words of its text, or whether we agree with it or not, then, but how it is *used, situated and interpreted* within the constitution of our Church. As we will see, the use and function of the Confession in our Church gives rise to some surprising outcomes.

2.2 According to the First Article Declaratory,^[4] the Word of God contained in Scripture is the 'supreme rule of faith and life' for the Church. Yet the Second Article Declaratory declares that the Westminster Confession of Faith is the 'principal subordinate standard' of the Church. This means that while Scripture has ultimate authority, the Church of Scotland currently acknowledges the Westminster Confession as the best human guide to Scripture's teaching. It is 'subordinate' to Scripture, but is nevertheless the 'standard' to which all belief and theology should be held.

2.3 The Westminster Confession's status as principal subordinate standard thereby accords it, on one level, a great deal of status and honour. Of all the creeds and confessions of the Christian Church, the constitution of the Church of Scotland considers it the most reliable and truthful. Nevertheless, while the Confession is given a position of high status and honour, its authority over office holders and the Church as a whole is intentionally limited by a number of other measures. The first of these is the vows that office holders make and the formula of subscription that they sign. At ordination and induction, ministers do not declare their belief in the Westminster Confession and subscribe to it but vow and subscribe to the 'fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Confession of Faith'. Second, ministers and other office holders sign a short statement that summarises their vows and provides a written record of them. These measures mean that office holders declare their belief in the basic Christian doctrines *contained* in the Confession but not the entire Confession itself.

3. Difficulties with the Current Status and Role of the Westminster Confession

3.1 The Church of Scotland's practice in relation to vows and subscription is a consequence of the first difficulty with the role of the Westminster Confession in our Church: significant numbers of office holders reject its distinctive doctrines.

3.2 As we described in our 2021 report 'Westminster, Confessions and the Church', the Confession has been the subject of controversy for many centuries. In the 18th century, it played a role in the First and Second Secessions from our Church, secessions that resulted in the creation of multiple Presbyterian churches. This controversy reached unworkable levels in the 19th century, however, due to a number of factors. Chapter 4 of the Westminster Confession states that the world was created in six days.^[5] Without any indication to suggest that 'days' is intended in a non-literal way, many ministers and elders came to the conclusion that the Confession was at odds with contemporary science, and posed a threat to the public credibility of the faith. The greatest difficulty, however, was with the Confession's account of God's eternal decree, election and predestination. The majority of the Church's office holders came to the conclusion that the Westminster Confession was not biblical in claiming that 'some men and angels are predestined [by God] to everlasting life; while others are foreordained [by God] to everlasting death.'^[6] They considered it unbiblical to teach, as the Confession does, that all human beings are deserving of damnation and that salvation only occurs when God – for reasons that are completely unknowable – chooses to save a select few, while condemning the rest to perish eternally in hell. They were also unsettled by the implications for the Person and Work of Christ that this teaching entailed. For if the Father only intends to save *some* people, then Christ lived, and died, and rose again not with the hope of saving all people, but with the *deliberate intention* of saving only some. The rejection of the Confession continued as the 20th century moved on, with the Church of Scotland largely ceasing to teach its office holders about the Westminster Confession, and not requiring them to follow it.^[7] If one of the core functions of a confession is to present what a church believes and to guide the doctrine and teaching of office holders, then due to the rejection of its teachings, and its lack of use within the Church, it is questionable whether the Westminster Confession fulfils the function of a confession.

3.3 This issue – that the Church of Scotland has a subordinate standard which many of its office holders reject – gives rise to another difficulty: whether it is desirable for the Church to make its office holders vow and subscribe to a statement of faith that does not express the beliefs of the majority of its members or office holders.

3.4 One argument we have encountered with regard to this issue is that, while it is unsatisfactory to make office holders vow and subscribe to something that few believe or even read, to remedy it would not be a good use of the Church's time. How do vows or confessions make a difference to what the Church actually cares about, such as worship, and working in mission to the people of Scotland?

3.5 In a time of great pressures on the Church, this argument has certain attractions. Yet it understates the significance of vow-making, and the importance of office holders understanding what they are vowing and

subscribing to. When we reach a new agreement with a bank, service provider or business partner, we carefully read and consider what we are agreeing to. When those of us who are married stood before our partner to make our vows, we understood and embraced the promises we were making. If that is true of everyday life, then it is also true of the vows we make as office holders, and it is important that those who serve the Church both understand and agree with what they are vowing and subscribing to.

3.6 While the focus of confessional reform in the Church has centred on the Westminster Confession, the Forum has also paid close attention to the relationship between the Westminster Confession, the vows of office holders and the Articles Declaratory. As we noted earlier, the vows and subscription that office holders make refer to 'the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith' contained in the Westminster Confession. It is these doctrines, said to be present within the Confession, that office holders promise to be bound by. Yet what are the 'fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith?' Are the 'fundamentals' a matter of individual choice and conscience, something for each person to decide for themselves, or does the Church teach what doctrines are fundamental?

3.7 As a matter of fact, Cox, Herron and Weatherhead – amongst other authorities – are unanimous in stating that the basic doctrines of the Christian faith are contained in the First Article Declaratory.^[8] The First Article reads:

I. The Church of Scotland is part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church; worshipping one God, Almighty, all-wise, and all-loving, in the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; adoring the Father, infinite in Majesty, of whom are all things; confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son, made very man for our salvation; glorying in His Cross and Resurrection, and owning obedience to Him as the Head over all things to His Church; trusting in the promised renewal and guidance of the Holy Spirit; proclaiming the forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God through faith in Christ, and the gift of Eternal Life; and labouring for the advancement of the Kingdom of God throughout the world. The Church of Scotland adhere to the Scottish Reformation; receives the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as its supreme rule of faith and life; and avows the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith founded thereupon.

3.8 It is clear from the First Article itself, taken with the Eighth Article Declaratory,^[9] that the Church is bound by the content of the First Article. Yet this has not always been apparent to office holders. This is due, in part, to the condensed and quasi-legal form of the First Article, yet also because teaching on the Church's constitution forms little or no part in the training offered for eldership or the recognised ministries of the Church. The result of this ambiguity is that it is not always clear what beliefs office holders of the Church of Scotland have in common, and the Church sometimes struggles to articulate a clear and consistent message to our neighbours about our purpose as a Church, and the Good News of Jesus Christ.

4. The Proposals of the Theological Forum

4.1 In discerning the way forward, the Forum has consulted widely, and has heard from all sections of the Church. We have held two public conferences on the

subject of confessional reform, the first in person in 2019 and the other online in 2021. At the General Assembly of 2021, we also invited Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to send us their views concerning confessional reform, and produced a video to help them in their deliberations. As of early March 2022, we have received 57 submissions on the issue of confessional reform from Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and individual members, more than any other issue the Theological Forum has considered. In addition, our video on the Westminster Confession is one of the most watched on the Church of Scotland YouTube channel, having had 2,346 views as of early March 2022. As such, while individual commissioners may feel that they do not have much interest in the issues presented in this report, the notion that *no one* is interested in confessional reform is clearly not the case.

4.2 We have listened carefully to all the views expressed to us. They are held with integrity, and there is truth in all of them. After considering the submissions made to us, and after much discussion and consideration, the Theological Forum believes it has found a way forward that will satisfy the majority of office holders and members. We believe that the following proposals will clarify our faith, allow for a greater range of Reformed identities in our Church, and give us a confessional position that is fit for purpose in the challenging context of 21st century Scotland.

4.3 Training for Recognised Ministries

4.3.1 Our first proposal is a simple yet crucial one: that those entering into the recognised ministries of the Church should be taught about the confessional position of the Church and be instructed in the meaning of their vows.

4.3.2 Currently, provision for both of these is fragmentary. Some in training may be instructed in the confessional position of the Church and some not. Some may be told about the meaning of their vows and others not. We think it is reasonable that those in recognised ministries – especially parish ministers – should understand the confessional position of the Church, and understand what they are vowing and subscribing to. This basic element of training could be delivered either by the Church itself or by academic providers working in unison with the Church.

4.3.3 In addition to training for recognised ministries, if the General Assembly accepts our deliverance this year, we will return in a future Assembly with the proposal to produce a short, accessible guide to the vows and subscription that elders – as opposed to other office holders – have to make in collaboration with Faith Nurture. This will allow elders to better understand the vows they are making and enable them to enter into eldership with greater confidence and integrity.

4.4 A Book of Confessions

4.4.1 Because the Westminster Confession no longer performs the functions of a confession in our Church, we propose the creation of a new Book of Confessions to contain the subordinate standards of the Church. The Westminster Confession would retain its status as a subordinate standard of the Church but would be joined by other historic and contemporary statements of faith.

4.4.2 The Book of Confessions would have two functions. The first would be to preserve the status of the Church of Scotland as a confessional Reformed Church. Since its Reformation, the Church of Scotland has been a confessional Church. This means that it has not declared

its faith through a supreme human leader, nor through a fixed liturgy, but through statements of faith: statements, couched in human words, that declare its understanding of the Word of God contained in Scripture. The Book of Confessions would continue this practice. The Book would not only identify and present a range of individual doctrines but the *whole faith* of the Church of Scotland, covering crucial matters such as baptism, the Lord's Supper, and our understanding of ministry and mission.

4.4.3 The fact that the Book of Confessions would contain a number of documents is a recognition of two realities. The first is that the same Word of God contained in Scripture, and received by the Church of Scotland, can be articulated in different ways at different times. If this were not the case, then Scripture might remain a collection of ancient texts rather than the 'lively oracles of God', able to speak into and transform every lived context. The second, however, is that there are *multiple Reformed identities* present within our Church. Some of our brothers and sisters believe and follow the Westminster Confession of Faith in its entirety, while others look to the Scots Confession, the 1992 Statement of Faith, or other Reformed confessions. This is not a weakness of our Church, but allows for a range of Reformed perspectives to be heard and considered. If the only Reformed identity was one centred on the Westminster Confession, then – somewhat ironically – John Calvin and John Knox, who lived before the advent of the Confession, could not be considered truly Reformed. Recognising multiple Reformed documents in a Book of Confessions allows these texts to speak to each other, to Scripture, and to us, allowing a dynamic engagement with the Bible, our present context and our tradition. Out of this dialogue, new light on God's Word can be revealed.

4.4.4 The second function of the Book of Confessions would be to act as an aid for office holders as they teach and disciple in 21st century Scotland. Ministers and other recognised ministries will have a single point of reference for seeking to understand the teaching of the Church, and explaining it to members and enquirers. They will have rich theological resources from across the history of our Church to draw upon, and to bring into conversation with contemporary issues. The Book will form the map and compass of the Church, providing it with landmarks by which to navigate the shifting terrain we find ourselves in.

4.4.5 We are proposing that the initial documents to be included in the Book of Confessions are:

The Scots Confession

The Westminster Confession

The 1992 Statement of Faith

4.4.6 The choice of these documents has been determined by their historic recognition by the Church and their likely acceptance by current office holders. Many other documents were considered, but failed to meet at least one of these criteria. The documents chosen also possess a number of other merits. The Scots Confession has been chosen because it was the first confession of the Reformed Church of Scotland and its emphasis on the Trinity, the continuity of the Church of Scotland with the medieval Church and its account of election and predestination are worthy of close study. The Westminster Confession has been included because it has played a prominent role in the life of the Church of Scotland for centuries, and because it still has much to

teach us regarding the sacraments, the threefold office of Christ and other areas of Reformed doctrine. Lastly, the 1992 Statement of Faith has the merit of being the most accessible of the proposed documents. It also contains the crucial statement 'God is love'.

4.4.7 The selection of these documents makes it clear that the Theological Forum has no desire to dilute or discard the Reformed identity of the Church of Scotland. As the First Article Declaratory makes clear, the Church of Scotland is a product of the Reformation. Further, by recognising the different ways in which it is possible to be Reformed, the Church of Scotland is not placing itself in a minority position among the worldwide Reformed Church, but within the majority. Only a minority of global Reformed Christians recognise the Westminster Confession as their sole subordinate standard. The majority recognise it as one authoritative confession amongst others or recognise *other* Reformed confessions in its place.

4.4.8 While we have selected the documents above to form the initial contents of the Book of Confessions, we are also proposing that there should be a mechanism for *adding* documents to the Book. These may be existing statements of faith such as the Barmen Declaration or the Belhar Confession, or – if the General Assembly instructs it – a new confession of faith. This is important, as the Church must be able to reform itself in light of the Word of God contained in Scripture. Identifying a mechanism for adding confessions would therefore allow the Church to confess its belief that God is still speaking today into our particular context and is passionately concerned with issues such as equality, ecology, and social justice that historic confessions do not address or do so in ways that are different from our current understanding of the Word.

4.4.9 It must be stressed, however, that the constitution and legal framework of the Church of Scotland sets *limits* as to what can be included in the Book of Confessions. The legal status of the First Article Declaratory means that, for example, it would not be possible to include a statement of faith that denied the supremacy of the Word of God, or which denied other fundamental Christian doctrines such as the Trinity, or the Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection of Christ. According to the Eighth Article Declaratory, everything the Church does must be done in light of the First Article Declaratory. In addition, legislation of the General Assembly dealing with baptism, the Lord's Supper, and other ordinances set additional limits on what could be included in any Book of Confessions.

4.4.10 The biblical and Reformed character of the Church of Scotland, along with a correct interpretation of the historic meaning of its subordinate standards, would also be preserved by the new requirement, discussed above, for teaching on the confessional position of the Church. If the General Assembly were to create a new Book of Confessions, teaching on the Book would become a part of training for Ministers of Word and Sacrament and other recognised ministries. This is the practice in the Presbyterian Church (USA), where ministers are tested on their knowledge of their own Book of Confessions, and how they would use the Book in parish life. As such, if the Church chooses to create a Book of Confessions, the Westminster Confession and other historic Reformed confessions are likely to be read and used *more* than they currently are.

4.4.11 Use of the Book of Confessions would also be aided by two forms of guidance that would accompany it. The first would be short introductions prefacing the statements of faith contained in the Book of Confessions. These would explain how the statements of faith came to be written, what is distinctive about them, and what role they have played in the life of the Church of Scotland. The second would be accessible resources giving further information about the contents of the Book of Confessions, along with study questions and ideas for its use in parish life. These additional forms of guidance will allow as many office holders and Church members as possible to read, understand, and use the Book of Confessions.

4.5 Identifying the Location of the Fundamental Doctrines

4.5.1 A number of respondents to our consultation expressed a fear that an increase in the number of subordinate standards could result in an erosion of the place of doctrine in the Church. In particular, some respondents felt a Book of Confessions could result in the Church of Scotland losing sight of even the most basic Christian doctrines, endangering belief in the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement and Resurrection of Christ.

4.5.2 For this reason, the Forum is proposing that the location of the fundamental doctrines be identified in the vows and subscription of office holders as 'expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds'. This would provide clarity as to the location of the fundamental doctrines, and address the fear that the creation of a Book of Confessions might endanger these beliefs.

4.5.3 We propose that the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds be identified as the location of the fundamental doctrines in our Church for the following reasons:

First, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds already enjoy a level of status and authority within the Church of Scotland. They are printed in the front cover of *The Book of Common Order*, feature in its liturgies, and are often used at ordinations. As such, they are already part of the life of the Church of Scotland.

Second, the short and relatively accessible form of the Creeds is useful for teaching and discipleship. Due to personnel shortages, more and more elders and members are being asked to preach and lead services. By locating the fundamental doctrines of the faith in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, those leading worship would have short summaries of the faith to help them in their tasks. The Creeds have already been used as the basis for a number of *Learn* publications, and so accessible guides to them already exist. Having short summaries of the faith, supported by *Learn* resources, would also help ministers, elders and other office holders to disciple enquirers, and work with those interested in the Christian faith.

Third, emphasis on the Creeds is useful for strengthening the unity of the Church of Scotland. Shared statements of faith such as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds remind us that we have more in common than what separates us, and that though we may disagree over secondary issues, we are a single Church with a common faith. It is by the action of the Trinity in Christ's Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that we have been made one people out of many, and it is these saving and unifying actions that the fundamental doctrines express.

Fourth, emphasising our shared belief in Christ would not only contribute to the unity of the Church of Scotland but would help our partnerships with other churches. The Creeds are recognised by almost every other Christian denomination in Scotland, whether this be the Scottish Episcopal Church, the United Reformed Church, the Roman Catholic Church or the Free Church, amongst many others. Currently, however, the First Article Declaratory – which is thought to contain the fundamental doctrines – is only recognised by the Church of Scotland. The increased visibility of the Creeds in the vows and subscription of office holders would make it clearer that the Church of Scotland is part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, and that while we are members of different denominations, all Christians are united in the one, single, and indivisible Body of Jesus Christ. This not only has implications for our consciousness of unity, but also increases the possibility of concrete missional partnerships on the ground. Clarifying the beliefs that we share with the majority of Scottish and world Christians makes it clear that – while we continue to have differences and distinct emphases – we share the same fundamental faith, and can therefore cooperate in at least some areas of mission.

4.6 Changes to Vows, Subscription and Other Documents

4.6.1 Having provided an overview of our proposed changes and the rationale behind them, we turn now to the concrete changes themselves. While the changes listed below are substantially those that will feature in any enacting legislation, they should be understood as *indicative* only. If the General Assembly approves our proposals in principle, the final wording of the Overture may differ slightly from that discussed below. Nevertheless, the *intention* behind the final wording and its *effect* will be identical to that outlined. The intention is to achieve a sustainable balance of unity and diversity within the Church, and the effect will be that office holders declare their belief in the fundamental doctrines of the faith, and promise to be guided by the Book of Confessions.

4.6.2 The way in which the Church has historically orientated office holders to its official confessional position is through vows and subscription. The Forum is proposing that the Church continue with this practice in relation to the proposed Book of Confessions, and the historic Creeds of the Church. Our proposals will, therefore, be effected through an amendment to the third vow that ministers and a number of other office holders make, the addition of a new vow and a corresponding change in the formula of subscription signed by all office holders.

4.6.3 The third vow currently reads:

Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Confession of Faith of this Church?

In light of the changes proposed above, this would be amended to read:

Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds?

This vow assures the Church that the office holder believes the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, and that the office holders of the Church of Scotland share the same basic beliefs.

4.6.4 In professing a belief that the fundamental doctrines are expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, it is important to understand what *is* being said and what *is not* being said. It is being said that if we wish to know where the fundamental doctrines are found, we should look to the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Yet it is not being said that office holders would now vow or subscribe to the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as opposed to the Westminster Confession. Rather, office holders would be asked to declare their belief in the *fundamental doctrines* expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. In addition, it *is not* being claimed that these texts say *everything* that can be said about the fundamental doctrines. The majesty of God is so infinite that it is impossible for human words to fully describe it, and the work of God so high and deep that if every creed, confession and hymn of praise were piled up, they would still fall infinitely short of doing justice to it. However, it *is* being said that these texts are truthful summaries of Scripture's teaching, and that they express God's majesty and work *in part*, if not fully.

4.6.5 This also forms part of a response to those who worry that more emphasis on the Creeds of the Church might be stifling or unduly constraining for faith and worship. It is sometimes claimed that doctrine is the enemy of faith and worship, a preoccupation with the head when we should be focussing on the heart, and the spontaneous action of the Spirit. Yet this is to misconstrue the relationship between doctrine, faith and worship. The Creeds are not akin to the growing plant itself, but to the trellis that supports it, or the skeleton that gives structure to flesh and blood. They are not the life of the plant or body, but help make that life possible by structuring and supporting it. As such, rather than being the enemy of faith and worship, the fundamental doctrines of the faith expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are great aids to them, providing a firm foundation upon which worship and discipleship can stand.

4.6.6 In addition to this amended vow, a new vow would be added:

Do you confess the Catholic and Reformed Faith of the Church as expressed in its Book of Confessions, and promise to be guided by the said Book in your life and doctrine?

This vow would clarify what the nature of our faith is: it is Catholic and Reformed. We will consider these two words in turn.

4.6.7 'Catholic' is a Greek-derived word meaning 'Universal'. Its use here expresses the fact that the Church of Scotland is founded on the fundamental doctrines embraced by the early Church and shared with all other Christians. Because there is only one Lord, one basic faith, and one baptism, there is only one Church, and when we ordain women and men to the offices in our Church we do not only ordain them to office in the Church of Scotland alone, but to office in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. 'Catholic' also makes it clear that the Church of Scotland is in full continuity with the medieval Church of Scotland. The Scottish Reformers did not create a new Church, but reformed the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church existing in Scotland at the time. The use of the word 'Catholic' also has two other benefits. It refers back to the use of the word 'Catholic' in the Preamble to ordinations and inductions and to the First Article Declaratory, ensuring that the Forum's proposed reforms use a terminology that is in harmony with our

existing constitution. The use of the word 'Catholic' also expresses the fact that, while the Church of Scotland is a separate denomination from the Roman Catholic Church, we recognise and respect all that is true in Roman Catholic tradition. This is important for our Roman Catholic neighbours - and Scotland as a whole - to hear. By owning our Catholicity, the Church of Scotland rejects any artificial separation between ourselves and our Roman Catholic neighbours, and affirms that we have more in common than what separates us.

4.6.8 Nevertheless, while the Church of Scotland is Catholic, it is also *Reformed*. It was decisively shaped by the Scottish Reformation, and in its worship, understanding of ministry, and sacramental theology (i.e. its belief and practice in relation to Baptism and Holy Communion) it stands with John Knox, John Calvin, and other members of the worldwide Reformed Church. It is also closely related to - but not to be conflated with - our Presbyterian polity. Reformed churches such as our own generally affirm representative government, the accountability of Ministers, and the exercise of oversight (or *episkope*) by Church courts rather than by individuals. Nothing in the proposed Book of Confessions conflicts with these Reformed distinctives. Indeed, our selection of documents for inclusion in the proposed Book of Confessions affirms them, and shows the continuity of these statements of faith with each other and with the current theology and ecclesiology of the Church of Scotland.

4.6.9 Having discussed the first part of the new vow, we turn to its last clause, the promise of office holders 'to be guided by the said Book in your life and doctrine'. By promising to be 'guided' by the Book of Confessions, office holders are promising that their beliefs, teaching and life will be informed and shaped by the Book of Confessions. The form that this guiding takes will differ, of course, depending on the type of ministry or service the office holder is undertaking.

4.6.10 It is important to note what is *not* being intended by the use of the word 'guided'. The word 'guided' does not mean 'dictated to' or 'fully controlled by' but *informed* and *shaped* by. Office holders are *not* vowing or subscribing to every word of every statement of faith in the Book of Confessions. That would be both repressive and futile. Neither is liberty of opinion being endangered. The liberty of opinion clause will remain in the Preamble to ordinations and inductions, ensuring that office holders are not constrained by anything in the Book of Confessions save those matters that touch upon the fundamentals of the faith. Liberty of opinion is one of the ways in which the Church discerns the true meaning of Scripture and God's will for the present day, and nothing in our proposals jeopardizes this. Yet the use of the word 'guided' *does* ensure that ministers in particular will *read, understand, and take seriously* the Book of Confessions. To use an analogy, if we go on a walking tour of a city while on holiday, we are usually happy to follow our guide. Yet if we come to believe that our guide is guiding us into some danger, then we are at liberty to depart from our guide and go our own way.

4.6.11 In addition to these additions and amendments, it would also be necessary to amend several other documents and texts such as the Formula of Subscription, and the Preamble to ordinations and inductions.

4.6.12 The Formula of Subscription currently reads:

I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Confession of Faith of this Church. I acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God, and promise that I will submit thereto and concur therewith. I promise to observe the order of worship and administration of all public ordinances as the same are or may be allowed in this Church.

4.6.13 This would be amended to read:

I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. I promise to be guided in my life and doctrine by the Book of Confessions of this Church. I acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God, and promise that I will submit thereto and concur therewith. I promise to observe the order of worship and administration of all public ordinances as the same are or may be allowed in this Church.

4.6.14 The Preamble currently reads:

The Church of Scotland holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, recognising liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine as do not enter into the substance of the Faith, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret or modify its subordinate standards: always in agreement with the Word of God and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith contained in the said Confession – of which agreement the Church itself shall be sole judge.

4.6.15 This would be amended to read:

The subordinate standards of the Church of Scotland are contained in its Book of Confessions, recognising liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine as do not enter into the fundamental doctrines of the Faith, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret or modify its subordinate standards: always in agreement with the Word of God, and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Faith expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds – of which agreement the Church itself shall be sole judge.

4.6.16 Lastly, the Second Article Declaratory currently reads:

II. The principal subordinate standard of the Church of Scotland is the Westminster Confession of Faith approved by the General Assembly of 1647, containing the sum and substance of the Faith of the Reformed Church. Its government is Presbyterian, and is exercised through Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, and General Assemblies. Its system and principles of worship, orders, and discipline are in accordance with "The Directory for the Public Worship of God," "The Form of Presbyterial Church Government" and "The Form of Process," as these have been or may hereafter be interpreted or modified by Acts of the General Assembly or by consuetude.

4.6.17 In order to effect the creation of a Book of Confessions, the first sentence of the Second Article Declaratory would be changed to remove reference to the Westminster Confession as the *principal* subordinate standard, and will include reference to the Book of Confessions instead.

5. Timeline

5.1 In this report, we have presented all of our proposals to the Church. We have done this so that there is clarity and transparency about the proposed changes, and that commissioners are in a position to make fully informed decisions.

5.2 Yet while we have presented all of our proposals this year, the timeline for deciding upon them will be different. This year, the substantial reform the Forum is bringing for the decision of the General Assembly is that concerning teaching on the confessional position of the Church. This only requires the consent of the General Assembly, and does not need to be sent down under the Barrier Act.

5.3 The second deliverance is to agree, in principle, the reforms outlined in this report, and instruct the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee to draft the legislation needed to effect these changes and bring it to the General Assembly of 2023. This gives the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee time to ensure that every legal aspect of this complex issue is considered, while affording office holders who worry that the Church is moving too fast with confessional reform greater opportunity to consider the issues outlined in this report. If the General Assembly of 2023 passes the Overture then it will be sent down to Presbyteries under double Barrier Act Procedure. This requires two subsequent General Assemblies to pass the Overture, and for two thirds of Presbyteries to pass it in two successive years. This procedure is laid down by the Eighth Article Declaratory of the Church, and cannot be expedited.

6. Conclusion

6.1 These are the proposals of the Theological Forum on the Westminster Confession of Faith and the future confessional position of the Church of Scotland. In presenting them, we believe that they achieve the right balance of unity and difference within our Church, not allowing unity to harden into uniformity, or difference to lapse into disorder. In addition, we believe that our proposals respect and preserve the primary interests of the overwhelming majority of office holders and members, while also offering a number of advantages over our current confessional position.

6.2 For those who disagree with the Westminster Confession's teaching on God's character and the nature of salvation, and who resent that they must make vows and subscribe to it, our proposals release them from this obligation, while also giving them the ability to propose new statements of faith suitable for this day and age. For those who are concerned that the adoption of a Book of Confessions will erode the biblical and doctrinal basis of the Church, the clarification of the fundamental doctrines of the faith, teaching on the Book of Confessions, constitutional safeguards on its future contents, and the continued status of the Westminster Confession as a subordinate standard will ensure that the Reformed character of the Church continues. Finally, for those who question the usefulness of this process, our proposals will bring greater unity to the Church by clarifying the location of its fundamental beliefs, make cooperation with other churches easier, and produce a range of new teaching and discipleship materials. In addition, successfully resolving the question of the Westminster Confession will conclude an issue that our Church has wrestled with for centuries, and allow us to move on to other areas of pressing concern.

6.3 The Theological Forum invites the Assembly to enact the confessional reforms contained in this report, that we might strengthen our shared faith, be open to the leading of the Spirit, and reform our Church by the Word of God as we seek to serve and witness to the Scotland of today.

Appendix 2

1. The Earth is the Lord's: A Theological Account of Creation Care (2022)

1.1 In our worship as a Church, we focus a great deal on our relationship with God and our relationship to our neighbours. Yet the Church does not only hope for union with God in Christ, or reconciliation with our neighbours, but for a *new creation*: for a world in which suffering, and decay, and death are banished, and human beings are at one with God, themselves, and the world. In short, the scope of salvation in Scripture is not only personal or corporate but *cosmic*, encompassing God, human beings, other animals, and nature itself.

1.2 The cosmic scale of salvation means that we must hold theologies that properly address the importance of creation to God and to the Church, and counterbalance theological traditions that focus attention on human beings alone. Yet in our present context, a greater understanding of humanity's responsibilities and calling toward creation takes on added importance. We are in the midst of a climate emergency. Global temperatures are rising, giving rise to freak weather patterns, rising sea levels, the destruction of ecosystems, and the risk of ever-greater famines and population movements. In short, there has never been a more important time to understand what God requires of the Church and of all humankind in relation to creation, and the role He has given us within it.

1.3 The appropriateness of *the Church* addressing this crisis is more problematic, however. On the one hand, some within the Church are hesitant that, in a context marked by massive numerical decline and rising unbelief, creation should be a priority for the Church.^[10] On the other hand, some academic commentators blame the Church for *creating* the ecological crisis, and are therefore sceptical about the capacity of Christian theology to provide solutions.^[11]

1.4 We must state clearly at the outset of this report that Scripture does not directly deal with the ecological crisis as we know it today. When the books of the Bible were written, humanity did not possess the ability to cause irreparable damage to the climate. Nevertheless, Scripture offers us a number of key principles concerning creation and humanity's place within it, principles that enable us to produce a biblical and theological response to the climate crisis.

1.5 In the following report, we offer a theological account of creation and our place within it, an *ecotheology*. We begin by examining what Scripture says about creation, noting that we can only understand creation and humanity's role within it by looking to Christ. We then chart the way in which humanity has responded – or failed to respond – to Scripture's teaching, and conclude with what God is saying to our Church today through the Word. We argue that we must fundamentally change our relationship to creation, and that the Church of Scotland, as a territorial church, must use its congregations, buildings, and resources as catalysts to galvanise wider Scottish society in its care for creation.

2. Foundational Principles for Ecotheology

In this section, we will explore the principles that animate Scripture's teaching on creation, and humanity's place within it. We then conclude with a synthesis of this teaching.

2.1 Christ: the Origin and End of Creation

2.1.1 Scripture begins with this statement:

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while the Spirit of God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. (Genesis 1-3)

2.1.2 As a Church, we worship God as Lord not only because God saves us from sin and death but because God is the *creator* of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. No matter its complexity and sophistication, everything in creation – including humanity – has its existence from God, and from God alone.

2.1.3 God, then, is the Creator of the universe. Yet while the Book of Genesis begins Scripture, it is *not* the only account of creation given within it. In order to understand *why* the world exists, and what humanity's role within it is, we must look not only to Genesis but to *Christ*.

2.1.4 In the Gospel of John we read:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1: 1-5).

2.1.5 Here, John takes the familiar Genesis passage of God bringing light and life from darkness and chaos, and reveals that it was through *Christ*, God's Word, that the world was created. Creation does not come first, then Jesus and his salvation a great time later, but rather, Christ and creation belong together.

2.1.6 This is elaborated further by Paul in his Letter to the Colossians:

He [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell (Colossians 1: 15-19)

2.1.7 This is a rich passage with many nuances. For now, however, we will focus on what Paul means by creation being created 'through', 'in' and 'for' Christ. When Paul says that all things were created 'through' Christ, he means that Father, Son and Spirit were intimately connected with every aspect of the creative act. By the action of the Holy Spirit moving across the waters of chaos, God brought order and regularity to the universe and the earth. Through the Son, the Father created all things to manifest his glory, and predestined them toward their ordained ends and purposes. Through the regularities of nature and his providential will, God the Father rules

the universe in love, revealing his wisdom and power through the things he has made (cf. Romans 1: 20). In this way, Scripture rejects a so-called 'deist' view of creation, in which God creates the universe at a distance and then leaves it to its own devices. Rather, God worked – and is working – closely in all of its operations.

2.1.8 When Paul teaches that creation was created 'in' Christ, and that he is the 'head' of the Church, he means that the universe in its totality, and human beings in particular, were created to bear Christ's likeness. It was created to be good, and righteous, and to glorify the Father just as the Son glorifies him, rather than follow its own conception of good, or glorifying itself.

2.1.9 Lastly, Paul's belief that creation was created 'for' Christ, in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, means that one day Christ will return to claim creation and restore it to his will. He will then reign in it forever as its Lord and King. In short, creation was not created for human beings, or even for the Church, but for Christ alone.

2.1.10 Through passages like John 1: 1-15 and Colossians 1:15-19, we see that creation and salvation are not separate from each other, but are two aspects of God's relationship to our world. Salvation is not redemption *from* our humanity or *from* our world, but the re-creation and perfection of our humanity and *of* our world, so that it better resembles the glory of Christ. We also see that human beings and creation were not created by God and then left to their own devices. Rather, being made 'in' and 'for' Christ means that human beings and creation as a whole were created to manifest God's glory in ways appropriate to them. We will explore what these ways are later in this report.

2.2 God is the Sustainer and Perfector of All Things

2.2.1 Through the action of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God is intimately present to every point of space-time, creating, sustaining and perfecting all things. God is not only concerned with creation as a whole, however, but has a particular concern for animal life. As we read in Psalm 104:

These all look to you [human beings and animals]
to give them their food in due season;
when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works. (Psalm 104: 27-31)

2.2.2 The Psalmist here provides a vivid description of God as the carer and sustainer of all things, deeply concerned with the wellbeing of all animals – not only humans – and in whose beauty and goodness God rejoices as a loving Father. Passages such as this are important, for they make it clear that God is not only interested in the welfare of human beings, but of *all* life.

2.2.3 God is not only concerned with *sustaining* life, however, but with *perfecting* animal life, and creation as a whole. While God declares creation to be 'very good' (Genesis 1: 31), as John 1 and Colossians 1 make clear, material creation is incomplete without the presence of its creator. Without God, creation is corruptible, decaying,

and born to die. Yet with God, creation is transformed into *new creation*, and becomes what it should be. Isaiah describes the new creation in this way:

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the
adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord
as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11: 6-9)

2.2.4 God and humanity, human beings and animals will live together in harmony, and death and suffering will be ended. This new creation will not be brought about by human beings alone, however, but by the action of God, who through the saving presence of Christ and the Spirit will perfect human beings, other animals, and nature itself.

2.3 God – and not humanity – is the Ruler of the Earth

2.3.1 Because God is creator, sustainer and perfecter, in whom all things live, and move, and have their being, God is the *ruler* of the earth. Psalm 24 declares that:

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it

2.3.2 The Psalmist is clear that all who live in the world belong to God. This is not – as Psalm 104 makes clear – ownership as *tyranny*, but ownership in the sense of stewarding, protecting, and safeguarding. Because it is *God* who owns the world, this means that neither human beings nor any other creature can lay claim to it. It exists for God's purposes alone, and not for anyone else's.

2.4 Human Beings Were Created to Steward the Earth

2.4.1 The first account of the creation of human beings is given in Genesis 1. Two passages of this account are relevant to our study:

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' (Genesis 1: 26)

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1: 28)

2.4.2 These verses link being made in God's image with the exercise of dominion over other animals and the earth as a whole. Historically, some in the Church and the West more generally have understood this dominion to mean that human beings are permitted by God to dominate, use, and dispose of other animals and the natural world in any way they see fit. This – according to one line of interpretation originating with White – is what is meant by being made 'in God's image',^[12] and has played a decisive role in bringing us to the point of ecological disaster.

2.4.3 While this view has been historically prevalent at times, because God – as we have seen – rules the world for the *benefit* of all creatures, it cannot be authoritative or final. Corroboration for this is found in the second account of creation given in Genesis 2. We read that:

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. (Genesis 2: 4-8)

And at verse 15:

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. (Genesis 2: 15)

2.4.4 Genesis 2 makes it clear that human beings are not fundamentally different from other animals, but are formed from the ‘dust of the ground’ as much as they are (cf. Genesis 2: 19).^[13] This chapter also gives us more information about what God put human beings on earth to do, the ‘first commandment’ addressed to us.^[14] God did not place human beings in creation to abuse it. Rather, as verse 15 makes clear, the purpose of human beings is ‘to till and to keep’ the earth. That – along with glorifying God – is why human beings were put on the earth. The Hebrew words we translate as *till* and *keep* are important. They have the connotation of both *stewarding* and *protecting* the earth, as well as *working* to improve it. None of this should be surprising. If God rules the earth by sustaining and perfecting it, then ‘being made in God’s image’ means that human beings are created and called to do the same. Insofar as we do this, we manifest God’s desire to protect and perfect creation, thereby acting as God’s ‘image’ to each other and to the rest of animal life.

2.5 Our Relations with People and Animals Must Be Just

2.5.1 God’s intentions for human beings were revealed further in the Law of Israel and the Prophets. Here, God is revealed more clearly as a God of righteousness and justice. As it says in Deuteronomy:

*his work is perfect,
and all his ways are just.
A faithful God, without deceit,
just and upright is he* (Deuteronomy 32: 4)

God’s nature and character mean that we, who are made in God’s image and called to God’s service, must also be just:

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?* (Micah 6: 8)

2.5.2 In the Law of Israel, this demand for justice was institutionalised in a variety of ways. Slavery, indenture, and hoarding of land were governed in a way different from other ancient cultures, and reversed every 50 years through the Jubilee (Leviticus 25: 8-13). When harvesting, parts of the field had to be left unharvested, and any dropped grain left behind so that the poor would have enough food (Leviticus 19: 9-10).

This teaching would be reaffirmed during the ministry of Christ and the apostles. Jesus strongly links future salvation and judgment to our treatment of the poor (Matthew 25: 31-46), and – despite disagreeing on some other matters – Peter and Paul are agreed that the Church must care for those who have least (Galatians 2: 10).

2.5.3 This demand for justice does not extend only to human beings, however, but – perhaps surprisingly – to other animals. We read in Exodus:

For six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may have relief (Exodus 23: 12)

And in Proverbs:

*The righteous know the needs of their animals,
but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.* (Proverbs 12: 10)

2.5.4 Here, God commands Israel to treat non-human animals with kindness and consideration, and allow them to enjoy the same Sabbath rest as human beings. While God may have ordained animals to be of use to human beings in their work of stewarding and working the earth, there are *limits* to what can be done with them, limits that do not come from human conscience or self-forged ethical frameworks, but from the righteous command of the Lord.^[15]

2.5.5 This principle of justice – along with the other principles we have discovered so far – reflect the fundamental relationships and structures that God has formed within creation, something we might call the *spiritual* or *integral ecology* of creation, a theme brought out strongly in Pope Francis’ recent Encyclical *Laudato Si’*.^[16] Human beings stand in relation to both God, their neighbours and to the rest of creation. Being made in God’s image, we exercise an analogous rule over creation as he does. Yet, being born of the earth and created to maintain and work it, we are as much a part of creation as anything else, and our rights here are limited. So long as we maintain these relationships in the way God intended, God, human beings, and creation remain in harmony with each other, and living things flourish. Yet if we do not maintain these relationships in a just way but misuse or abuse them, we reject both our own natures and that of nature itself, a situation from which dangerous consequences can arise.

2.6 Through Our Sin, Human Beings Harm Creation and Ourselves

2.6.1 If human beings had accepted the sovereignty of God and their allotted role as keepers and workers of the earth, then the spiritual ecology between humanity, God and creation would have been preserved. Sadly, from our first ancestors onward, human beings have been unwilling to accept their place in the universe, resulting in devastating consequences for both us and for creation. Genesis 3 picks up the story:

The woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.”’ But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband,

who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked... (Genesis 3: 2-7)

2.6.2 By refusing to listen to God, and by thinking that our idea of right and wrong was superior to God's, the relationship of human beings to God and creation was changed forever. Rather than experiencing ourselves as being part of nature, in harmony with animals, plants and wider creation, human beings began to view themselves as being different from other animals, and alienated from nature. The result is that nature began to be approached as something to be endured and conquered rather than loved and maintained:

*cursed is the ground because of you;
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread
until you return to the ground,*

2.6.3 Because of our disobedience, the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve are no longer fed from the hand of a loving God, but must eke out a precarious existence filled with anxiety and violence (cf. Genesis 4: 1-16).

2.6.4 The corrupted relationship between humanity, God and creation culminates in Genesis 6 with the near destruction of the world:

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. (Genesis 6: 11-13)

2.6.5 We see here the principle first explored in Genesis 3, that the spiritual and moral decay of human beings can negatively affect the natural world. This principle is explored further by the Prophets. Hosea prophesies:

*Hear the word of the Lord, O people of Israel;
for the Lord has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land.
There is no faithfulness or loyalty,
and no knowledge of God in the land.
Swearing, lying, and murder,
and stealing and adultery break out;
bloodshed follows bloodshed.
Therefore the land mourns,
and all who live in it languish;
together with the wild animals
and the birds of the air,
even the fish of the sea are perishing. (Hosea 4: 1-3)*

2.6.6 Hosea's prophecy presents a three-part movement of spiritual and ecological corruption. First, like Adam and Eve, Israel refuses to accept God's sovereignty and revealed law. This unbelief and ignorance gives rise, second, to moral decay, with lies, theft, and violence all escalating. The result of this moral decay is that the earth and all its animals mourn, not only for the spiritual death of human beings, but for the consequences this has for creation itself. Rather than progression or evolution toward ever-greater perfection, the tape of creation begins to wind backwards, with the six days of creation playing out in reverse:

*'For my people are foolish,
they do not know me;
they are stupid children,
they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil,
but do not know how to do good.'
I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void;
and to the heavens, and they had no light. (Jeremiah 4: 22-23)*

We are back again at the first day of creation, human evil having completely unmade God's beloved creation, making it waste and void once more.

2.6.7 We must be careful, of course, not to overexpand the scope of the prophets' warning. Not everything in nature that is destructive is the direct result of human action, with many natural calamities being part and parcel of what it means to live in a world that is not yet fully redeemed. Yet, on the other hand, we must not unduly limit the prophets' warning, and in a time of ecological crisis we should take seriously their vision of the close integration of moral and ecological decline.

2.7 Christ Restores and Perfects Nature

2.7.1 Human beings, then, were created to steward God's creation, and improve it through meaningful and productive labour. Yet because they refused to accept God's sovereignty and God's revealed purposes for themselves and creation, their relationship to God and creation became distorted, giving rise to serious problems for both humanity and nature.

2.7.2 This situation was never the Father's intention, however, and in his mercy, grace, and love, he had predestined an alternative. In his own beloved Son, he would reveal what perfect, loving, and obedient humanity should be, and through the Son's Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension, would raise all of creation to *new creation*.

2.7.3 For those with eyes to see, there were hints of this in the particular circumstances of the Resurrection itself. In John's account of the Resurrection, the empty tomb is located in a *garden*. This is a reflection of the first garden of Eden, suggesting that a new act of creation (or recreation) has taken place. Second, when Mary comes to the empty tomb, she at first believes that Jesus is a *gardener*, and that it is he who has moved Christ's body (John 20: 1-18). Just as Adam and Eve were created to maintain the garden of Eden, so too does the second Adam, the perfected human being, resemble a gardener, someone who will fulfil humanity's purpose by restoring our right relation to the earth, and bring about a new creation. The Book of Genesis, the Gospels' account of the Resurrection, and the new creation recounted in Revelation thus form three movements in the one overarching drama of creation and redemption.

2.7.4 If these subtleties were lost on those who first witnessed the Resurrection, Paul makes them explicit. In this complex – but crucial – passage from his Letter to the Romans, he says: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the

creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

2.7.5 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Romans 8: 18-30)

2.7.6 Following the witness of the prophets, Paul closely links the moral and spiritual decay of human beings with the corruption of the world. Just like us, Paul looked out at a world filled with pain, hunger, sickness and death, and longed not only for a *better* creation, but a *new* creation: one in which these evils are erased forever, and material creation is perfected. Paul believes that this new creation has been revealed in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, when God the Father, in the power of the Spirit, freed Jesus from the constraints of sin, death, and suffering. With the Holy Spirit within us as the first indication (or 'first fruits') of this new reality, Paul looks forward to the day when human beings will enjoy the same total victory as Christ does, and will be fully recreated in him.

2.7.7 Paul makes it clear, however, that this will not only be humanity's victory, but *creation's* victory. As we saw earlier, one of the roles of human beings is to act as stewards of the earth, and safeguard the wellbeing of other animals. Yet this role has been obscured or marginalised due to false understandings of human dominion. As our humanity is perfected in Christ, however, a just relationship to the earth will be restored. We will treat animals with respect and nature with care, and creation itself will share in the incorruptibility and perfection won for it by Christ, he who is the Great High Priest not only of humankind but of creation itself.

2.7.8 It is this image of the new creation with which Scripture concludes. In Revelation 22 we read: Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever. (Revelation 22: 1-5)

2.7.9 According to Revelation, salvation is not salvation from creation, but the salvation of creation, with human beings as one part of it.^[17] This salvation began with the creation of all things through, in and for Christ. It then went awry with our first ancestors, was fulfilled in the garden of the Resurrection, and concludes in the new creation, beside tree and river. In the recreated earth, humanity and creation are reconciled and restored through the saving presence of God in Christ: no longer at odds, no longer alienated from each other, but living for and with each other in a spiritual ecology of love and eternal Sabbath rest.

3. Historical Developments

3.1 It is clear from the foregoing that biblical teaching on creation has much to teach us. God is the creator, sustainer and perfecter of the world, who ordained creation to be conformed to the glory of the Son. Human beings help manifest God's image and glory through stewarding and working the earth. To this end, he allowed them to employ the labour of animals, but only insofar as they respect them and treat them with kindness. Sadly, human beings refused to accept the sovereignty of God and their allotted place within creation. Stepping over the boundaries God erected, human beings corrupted themselves, endangering their fellow beings and creation as a whole. Yet through the Resurrection of Christ, God wishes to restore human beings and creation to their proper place, bringing a new creation out of the old.

3.2 As we will now see, recent history has closely followed the spiritual ecology revealed in Christ and recorded in Scripture: that a false view of God and ourselves corrupts our relationship to creation and imperils the planet itself. While space precludes a full treatment of the history of ecological disaster wrought on the earth by human beings, we will now trace the contours of our recent – distorted – relationship with creation, before turning to what God wants us to do about it.

3.3 Across history, human cultures have related to nature in myriad ways. Some of these have been harmonious and benign, and others have been rapacious and damaging. While instrumentalist and abusive attitudes towards nature have long existed in European culture, prior to the early modern period, our ancestors existed in an intellectual and technological world that *limited* the impact of human activity upon the earth. Intellectually, Europeans viewed themselves as being more integrated with nature than many of us would today. In an economy based largely on agriculture and farming, it was clearer that human beings had to work with the cycles and rhythms of nature rather than imposing artificial patterns upon it. It also meant that human beings and animals lived close together, often sharing the same housing. While there were gradations of being ranging from inanimate matter up to God, human beings were therefore part of a great *chain of being* that integrated them into wider creation.

3.4 This integration was also manifested in the *meanings* that people attached to animals and nature, and how they related these to Scripture. God had not only written one book – the Bible – but two: Scripture and nature, and God used both to teach us. This meant that animals and nature were spiritually significant, and were part not only of a chain of being but a chain of meaning, one which human beings did not stand over and against but were part of themselves.^[18]

3.5 Looking beyond the intellectual culture of Europe, we discover other ways of thinking about the relationship between humans and creation, such as in native American, Australian aboriginal, and Māori communities. For example, while there is a tendency in Europe to think about this relationship in temporal or historical terms, other cultures have focused much more on the nature of this relationship in spatial terms that are tied to the land. Speaking generally, these other communities often focus more on the places rather than the times in which they live. They tend to have a greater

recognition of the way in which they are a part of the natural world and are therefore defined by the natural environments that they inhabit. Consequently, they often have a stronger commitment to trying to learn about *who* they are in reference to *where* they are, every bit as much as they do so in reference to *when* they are. This inspires a much deeper concern for caring for and sustaining their surrounding geography.

3.6 While other cultures maintained healthier relationships with creation, intellectual and technological changes in Europe gradually altered our relationship with nature, exacerbating instrumentalist and abusive tendencies that were already present. In a process described by Peter Harrison, British Protestant thinkers such as Francis Bacon came to believe that the Fall had alienated humanity from creation. Creation did not – to borrow images from St Francis' *Canticle* – greet us as our sister and brother, but as a distant other, one that we could no longer understand or control. This alienation could only be overcome – so it was thought – through natural philosophy (later science) and technology. Knowledge and control over nature would then restore humanity to the position enjoyed by Adam and Eve before the Fall, ushering in a new Eden.^[19]

3.7 These intellectual changes were matched by technological ones. Advances in seafaring and navigation led to the European discovery of the Americas and other new lands. Rival powers felled thousands of acres of forest to build warships, and erected furnaces and smelters to equip ever-larger armies to conquer the world. This unprecedented use of natural resources was matched by a domineering and unethical approach towards non-Europeans. Men, women and children in the Americas, Africa and elsewhere were indentured or enslaved as economic commodities, Europeans treating those made in the image of God as if they were chattel.^[20]

3.8 In a Scottish context, the desire to maximise profit with little regard for the poor or for sustainable economic and ecological models contributed to the mass eviction of Scots from the Highlands and Islands. Crofters and other small tenants were evicted from their homes and livelihoods to make way for sheep or deer, and forced to emigrate or move to overcrowded cities. This not only devastated traditional communities and cultures, but added to deforestation, monocultures, intensive mining, and other practices that harm the wildlife and landscape of Scotland to this day.^[21]

3.9 With industrialisation, this instrumentalist attitude toward nature began to imperil animal and human life itself. The burning of coal in massive quantities ensured Britain's – and later other European nations' – dominance of the world, its factories producing consumer goods to flood foreign markets, and sophisticated armaments to quell them into submission. Yet the pollution caused by industrialisation would have massive implications for human and animal life, and the life of the world itself. Factories and mines produced poisonous gases and liquids that suffocated the poor and poisoned the rivers. CO₂ emissions began to change the atmosphere of the planet as a whole, with global warming beginning to incrementally increase from the middle of the 19th century onward.

3.10 With imperialism and globalisation, industry was planted in almost every part of the globe, spreading pollution and dangerous emissions beyond the shores of Europe and North America. With the advent of the

internal combustion engine, air travel, and industrial logging operations in the Amazon and other places, the scene was set for what we face today: a climate crisis of unprecedented danger.

4. What Is the Church to Do?

4.1 When confronted with the enormity of the crisis facing us, the Church encounters two temptations. The first is *defeatism*. Given that scientists think aspects of climate change are irreversible, and that greater damage will only be averted by massive changes to our personal and social behaviour, it is easy to feel demoralised and disempowered. What can I or my church do to avert a global catastrophe? The second temptation, however, is *misplaced confidence* that God will step in and sort the situation on our behalf. Is God not the author of creation and new creation? Has the Father not shown his mighty hand in history when he parted the Red Sea, raised Christ from the dead, and converted the Roman Empire to the faith?

4.2 While both of these temptations are understandable, due to the biblical principles we have discussed in this report, the Church must stand firm against both of them. Against defeatism, we must affirm that the sovereign Lord is with us and our world through Christ. He loves creation, and has given us the skill, and wisdom and technology to change our behaviour and renew a healthy spiritual ecology with nature. Against misplaced confidence in divine intervention, we must remind ourselves that God has given us the task of protecting and living peacefully with creation. God could have breathed life into human beings that lacked the capacity for personal agency and action, and kept and tilled the earth alone. Yet this God did not do. Being made in God's image means that we must work *with* God to preserve the earth, helping it to be conformed to the full glory of creation revealed in Christ.

4.3 In contrast to doing nothing, or sinking into defeatism or misplaced confidence in divine intervention, the first action of the Church in this time of climate crisis should be this: to repent. We must name the situation for what it is: a grievous sin against God, our neighbours, and our fellow creatures. We must accept that the majority of environmental damage to this point in time has been caused by Western nations, and accept that we have obligations not only to the planet but to developing nations, who will be most affected by climate change. We must accept our responsibility for this situation, and resolve to do better in the future.

4.4 Yet repentance, if not accompanied by other measures, is likely to be inconsistent or fleeting. For that reason, we must radically change how we think about ourselves, our relationship to creation, and our relationship to God.

4.5 Paul tells us that the Church should not be conformed to this world – this world of individualism, consumerism, and environmental rapacity – but be *transformed* through the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2). That begins with learning new principles and rules with which to structure our thinking, feeling, and relating to the world, such as have been presented in this report. It means no longer thinking of ourselves as standing over and against nature, of dominating animals and the planet for our own needs, but that we are part of an integral – or spiritual – ecology, connecting God, creation, animals, other people and ourselves. It means realising that the biblical vision of an integrated and inter-connected world is not only a spiritual truth but a scientific fact, one which we ignore at our peril.

4.6 Yet when our minds are transformed in this way, so also must our hearts and our actions. This is where the theology of the Church meets its worship and mission. As the family and household of the living God, who have the Holy Spirit as the first fruits of the new creation, we are called to be the sign, instrument, and foretaste of the new world God is creating. This means, first, that we must witness to God's future intentions for creation through our *worship*. In praise, prayer, Word and Sacrament, God's Church embodies something of the new creation, making it visible in the here and now. We raise the concerns and cries of our world to the throne above, remember God's nature and goodness, and – through God's Spirit – reimagine and enact a different kind of world. In this, the Sacraments are of great importance. God takes the material things of our world – water, bread, and wine – and through them reveals the future, in which material creation will be perfected through the presence of God in Christ.

4.7 When we reimagine our world in this way, however, we not only see God's new creation but are motivated to work for it in *mission*, a truth reflected in the Fifth Mark of the Five Marks of Mission.^[22] We are led out of our Sanctuaries to adopt new behaviours and habits, using our personal and congregational resources to safeguard creation and bring justice to the world's poor, who will suffer most from our inaction. In doing so, we not only – or even primarily – act as responsible citizens, but as *Christians*, as those who, in Christ and the Spirit, are called to manifest the Father's intentions for humanity and the world.

4.8 This missional ecology takes a number of forms. The first is public witness and activism. The COP26 Conference in Glasgow was an historic gathering of governments and nations from every part of the world. Yet the conference was not only attended by world leaders but thousands of people from organisations, businesses and churches. The Church of Scotland has an established role in the public life of Scotland, providing opportunities for the Church to campaign for climate justice and ecological care. This is not an abdication of our call to witness to the Gospel, but an opportunity to campaign for climate justice in Christ's name, and demonstrate that God cares about our shared home.

4.9 Missional ecology should not only take place in the public square and the corridors of power, however, but in every town and village across the country. The Faith Impact Forum, Eco-Congregations Scotland, Tearfund and other parts of the Scottish Church have produced resources and activities to inspire and guide congregations, and to embody God's call for climate justice in lived communities of faith. As a territorial church, serving and witnessing to the people of Scotland, the Church of Scotland must renew the vision of our Celtic forebears, and form its parishes into *colonies of heaven*, outposts of the new creation. Through our worship, our buildings, our glebe land, and our congregational life, we have to demonstrate that it is possible to live and flourish in a *different* way, one that touches the Earth lightly, and provides counter-cultural leadership to a dying world.^[23]

4.10 This report can help provide the biblical and theological truths to provoke and inspire that leadership, but it is only you – by God's Grace – who can make it happen. Let us pray that change comes before it is too late.

References

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- [21] See Alastair McIntosh, *Soil and Soul* (London: Aurum Press, 2004).
- [22] Anglican Communion, *Five Marks of Mission*
<https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>
- [23] Cf. Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, para. 222.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND INVESTORS TRUST MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mr R D Burgon as Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
3. Reappoint Ms E Crichton as a member and as Vice-Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
4. Approve the reappointment of Mr M G S Yuille and Mr J G Wilson as members of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
5. Approve the appointment of Mr I Blair and Mr A Richmond as members from 1 June 2022.
6. Receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Investors Trust for 2021.

Report

The Church of Scotland Investors Trust, which was established by the Church of Scotland (Properties and Investments) Order Confirmation Act 1994, submits its twenty-seventh Report to the General Assembly.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The function of the Investors Trust is to provide investment services to the Church of Scotland and to bodies and trusts within or connected with the Church. The Investors Trust offers simple and economical facilities for investment in its three Funds: Growth Fund; Income Fund; Deposit Fund. Investors receive the benefits of professional investment management, regular portfolio supervision, spread of investment risk, and economies of scale through the pooling of monies in collective investment vehicles.

1.2 The bulk of the Church of Scotland's investments are held on a long-term basis, for the purpose of generating recurring income and growth in capital to support the work of the Church. An increase or decrease in the capital value of investments does not necessarily have a corresponding effect on income distributed to investors.

1.3 Ethical considerations form an integral part of the investment management process and the Trustees have given instructions to the investment managers, taking full account of views expressed by the General Assembly. At their own meetings, the Trustees regularly review and consider matters arising in respect of ethical investment. Investment is avoided in any company which engages in management practices which are judged by the Trustees to be unacceptable. In particular, investment is avoided in any company substantially involved (generating more than 15% of turnover) in gambling, tobacco products, alcohol, armaments, thermal coal and tar sands. Furthermore, the screening service used alerts us to any turnover above 10% from unacceptable activities so that we can be confident that the 15% limit is observed in dynamic circumstances. In general, investment is sought in companies which demonstrate responsible employment, good corporate governance practices, have proper regard to environmental performance (particularly Climate Change), recognise human rights and act with sensitivity to the communities in which they operate.

1.4 The Trust is a member of the Church Investors Group (CIG), an ecumenical grouping of investment bodies charged with investing funds for UK churches and other church-linked organisations, and with links to a growing number of international churches. CIG lobbies companies and investment managers to encourage them to pursue policies aligned with our Christian faith, as well as conducting research on companies' behaviour and collating such research from several agencies. Through its co-operation with other organisations, and on its own, CIG exerts significant influence on corporate behaviour. For example, CIG has actively assisted the implementation of The Modern Slavery Act by monitoring the reporting published by companies and drawing shortcomings to their attention, while also ensuring that the relevant UK Parliamentary Committee is kept informed. The Investors Trust Chairman is a member of the CIG Board.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 In 2021 the General Assembly established a Special Committee to consider the best framework for future recommendations about the ethics of investment practice. This Committee is charged with reporting to the General Assembly in 2023, and in its first year of operation Investors Trust has assisted it in its work. The fund management industry has paid increasing attention to Environmental, Social and Governance issues (ESG) in recent years and greater reporting on these aspects is required by investors, governments and regulators. However, many of the issues are not capable of precise measurement, there are conflicting priorities and most reporting is made by the companies themselves without independent verification. Consequently, this field will continue to develop even though there is general support for many of the principles involved, such as the need to control Climate Change by globally coordinated transformations of energy use and other greenhouse gas emissions. Most investors want to use their capital to build sustainable businesses which will produce good long-term returns. Investors Trust shares these beliefs on behalf of the churches, trusts and central committees placing funds with us.

3. INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE AND OUTLOOK

3.1 The net total value of funds due to investors increased from £468.9 million at 31 December 2020 to £519.4 million at 31 December 2021. As in the previous year, the Covid pandemic was the most significant factor in 2021, but this time with positive results. As confidence grew that vaccines were effective in controlling the impact of Covid on public health, particularly in developed economies, equity markets recovered significantly. The US markets rose by 28.1%, with technology-related companies leading the way. In the final months of the year concerns grew that high inflation was returning and central banks warned that they would reverse the policy of supporting economies by keeping interest rates low and would raise interest rates instead. Unsurprisingly, investors responded by selling longer duration bonds.

3.2 Growth Fund (£ 329.9 million (2020 - £298.9 million)) Following discussions with the Managers and with significant investors, a new strategy for the Growth Fund was implemented on 25 February 2021. The main changes were to manage equities on a global basis (having been previously split between UK and International), to remove an allocation to UK Government Bonds and to introduce allocations to Global Bonds and to Alternative assets including Infrastructure.

3.3 To allow objective assessments to be made of investment performance, an internal benchmark reflecting the ethical constraints described in Section 1 has been agreed with the Managers. The Fund's performance (which includes the change of strategy in February) to end 2021 was +14.9% (2020: -0.62%) compared to the new benchmark total return of +16.2% (2020: +3.06%). Income received was 10.10p per unit (2020 - 12.91p per unit).

3.4 The income paid to investors in respect of Financial Year 2021 was 11.0p per unit, reduced from the income paid in 2020, 12.0p per unit, and significantly reduced from the income paid in earlier years. The reduction in income received by the fund was directly linked to a widespread reduction of dividends from

companies from mid-2020, following a collapse of economic activity due to the Covid pandemic. This continued to have an impact on the income received in 2021 and investors were advised in both June and November that the income expected to be paid for the Financial Year 2021 would be 11.0p per unit.

3.5 The change in investment strategy which came into effect in February 2021 was expected to further reduce income received by the Fund, but to a very small extent. But the new strategy is expected to lead to higher rates of income growth in the years to come.

3.6 Income Fund (£88.7 million (2020 - £78.8 million)) An internal benchmark has been agreed and regularly reviewed with the Managers to allow objective assessment to be made of the investment performance. In 2021 the fund's total return was 0.88% (2020: 6.90%) against the composite benchmark of -3.55% (2020: 7.2%). This is a remarkable level of outperformance in one year and follows a good record of outperformance by our managers.

3.7 On 29 September 2021 a new investment strategy was implemented in the Income Fund, in which the main change was to remove the previous allocation to UK Government Bonds and to introduce an allocation to Global Bonds. This is expected to produce higher levels of income in future years although it should be noted that the Income Fund carries an increased credit risk from the switch.

3.8 Income Fund distributions for Financial Year 2021 continued to reduce due to low bond yields. For several years, as existing bonds matured, it has not been possible to replace the income they were paying. Total income earned during the year was 40.87p per unit (2020 - 43.0p per unit). Investors were advised in June and November 2021 that the income distributions were expected to fall to 40.0p per unit; this is the total distribution from revenue earned in 2021 (2020: 42.5p per unit).

3.9 Deposit Fund (£ 100.8 million (2020 - £91.2million)) The Fund is invested in short-term deposits with Banks and Building Societies. The average annual rate of interest paid for 2021 was 0.08% (2020 - 0.54%).

3.10 In the early months of 2022 financial markets produced a rise in long term bond yields but falls in highly rated equity shares, notably tech stocks in the US. This was followed by the shock of an invasion by Russia of its neighbour, Ukraine. The response of western governments, particularly the imposition of sanctions against Russia, prompted sharp rises in energy and raw material prices. Our funds were not directly affected by these sanctions as they had no direct exposure to Russia.

3.11 The devastation of cities in Ukraine and the human suffering involved introduce new perspectives which may bring long-term changes for financial markets as well as for other aspects of our lives. We have greater uncertainty than normal to deal with and forecasts of economic activity are likely to be lower as a result. As trustees, we will continue to monitor the risks and opportunities with our advisers and fund managers.

4. OFFICE BEARERS

4.1 Under the terms of the constitution of the Investors Trust, Mr B J Duffin is due to retire as Chairman. It is recommended that the Vice-Chairman, Mr R D Burgon, be appointed Chairman and Ms E Crichton be appointed Vice-Chairman.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 In accordance with the terms of the Constitution, the following two members are due to retire by rotation at 31 May 2022: Mr M G S Yuille and Mr J G Wilson.

5.2 Mr Yuille and Mr Wilson have indicated that they wish to seek re-election. It is recommended to the General Assembly that Mr Yuille and Mr Wilson should be reappointed as from 1 June 2022.

5.3 Following 17 years of service Mr T M Walker has indicate his wish to retire. Mr Walker has contributed a lot to our deliberations as an experienced fund manager and his wise guidance will be missed.

6. ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2021

6.1 Copies of the 2021 Annual Review and the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31 December 2021 are available to download from The Church of Scotland website or can be obtained from the Investment Executive.

In the name and by the authority of The Church of Scotland Investors Trust

B J DUFFIN, *Chairman*
R D BURGON, *Vice-Chairman*
J LEE, *Executive Officer*

Addendum

Mr B J Duffin, Chairman

Brian Duffin has used his wide-ranging investment knowledge and experience to lead the Investors Trust during what has been a challenging 3-year period for investors. He has also played a valuable role in representing COSIT on the Church Investors Group, on the Board of which he has been a Director.

We are delighted that Brian will continue as a member of the Investors Trust and look forward to continuing to receive his support.

R D BURGON, *Vice-Chairman*
J LEE, *Executive Officer*

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PENSION TRUSTEES MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the appointment of Gillian Graham and Gordon Taylor as Employer Nominated Trustees of all three Schemes.

Report**1. BACKGROUND & STATISTICS**

As at 31 December 2021, The Church of Scotland Pension Scheme for Ministers and Overseas Missionaries (the **"Ministers Scheme"**), The Church of Scotland Pension Scheme for Staff (the **"Staff Scheme"**) and The Church of Scotland Pension Scheme for Ministries Development Staff (the **"MDS Scheme"**) (together referred to as the **"Schemes"**) collectively covered nearly 4,600 members. This Report is made by the Trustees of each of those Schemes (the **"Trustees"**). As at 31 December 2021 the Trustees held, in aggregate, total assets of approximately £514 million for the purposes of the Schemes.

1.1 Scheme funding

A summary of the respective funding positions of the Schemes at 31 December 2021 following completion of the triennial valuations and the change since the last triennial valuations as at 31 December 2018 is set out below:-

Scheme	Funding level at 31/12/2018	Funding level at 31/12/2021
Ministers Scheme, Main Pension Fund	119%	106%
Ministers Scheme, Widows & Orphans Fund	106%	111%
Ministers Scheme, Contributors Fund	107%	110%
Staff Scheme (CSC Section)	102%	101%
Staff Scheme (SCC Section)	92%	101%
MDS Scheme	101%	101%

The Trustees are delighted to advise that each Scheme/Section is more than 100% funded. This means the Schemes

are self sufficient, with all the money needed to pay benefits and expenses already held within the Schemes. There is no requirement for funding from the Employing Agencies of the Church.

The triennial actuarial valuations were completed in a matter of weeks, a testament to the operations, systems and processes in place and the strong working relationships of all the parties involved.

The table shows that funding levels have been stable to improving.

The Ministers' Main Pension Fund shows a reduction in funding level as a result of the strengthening of its valuation basis to include allowance for annual inflationary increases to members' pensions accrued in respect of service before 1997. Any such increases remain at the discretion of the Trustees and will be assessed on an annual basis.

The Social Care Council Section of the Staff Scheme had a larger improvement due to having a higher weighting in risk seeking assets and receiving deficit repair contributions. With funding now in excess of 100% these cash contributions have ceased.

COVID19 – impact on the valuation

The Scheme Actuary excluded data relating to the period of the pandemic, in line with industry practice. The Trustees accepted a recommendation to review mortality assumptions at the next triennial valuation, when more information would be available about the lasting impact of the pandemic and its associated restrictions.

The Trustees record thanks to the Assembly Trustees and each Employing Agency for their past and continued support for the Schemes.

1.2 Increases to Pensions in Payment

1.2.1 Statutory increases

The statutory increases applied to pensions in payment across all of the Schemes, from 1 January 2022, were 3.1% in respect of benefits accrued between 6 April 1997 and 5 April 2005 and 2.5% in respect of benefits accrued after 6 April 2005.

The MDS Scheme had increases applied in respect of benefits accrued prior to 6 April 1997 and these were awarded at the statutory rate of 3.1%.

1.2.2 Discretionary increases in the Ministers Scheme

Within the Ministers Scheme the Trustees have the unilateral power to award discretionary increases to benefits.

2022 pension increases

The Trustees of the Ministers' Scheme decided to implement increases as follows

- Ministers Main Fund: 3.1% increase on pre-1997 pensionable service for all pensions in payment as at 1 January 2022
- Widows and Orphans Fund: 4.9% increase on benefits as at 1 January 2022 for all deferred and pensioner members' benefits
- Contributors Fund: 4.9% increase on benefits as at 1 January 2022 for all deferred and pensioner members' benefits.

1.3 Investment Strategy

The Trustees investment strategy for each Scheme is to target a return from assets of 0.3% per annum above the matching gilt yield.

Matching assets, typically fixed income securities, gilts and inflation linked gilts, are held to ensure that funding levels remain stable and there is a high level of security that assets are sufficient to pay members' benefits.

In addition, risk seeking assets are held with the aim to deliver, on average, an excess return of 0.3% per year above the matching rate.

Overall the Trustees investment strategy may be considered as low risk, which means the volatility of the funding position of the Schemes is low. This provides the Trustees with security that members' benefits will be met and provides certainty for the Employing Agencies of the Church that future contributions will not be required.

1.3.1 Structure of investment holdings

The Schemes' assets are held in pooled investment funds which are offered by regulated investment managers. The Trustees decision to invest is based on the rating of the Investment Manager and the mandate of the pooled fund. The day-to-day management and choice of specific assets is the responsibility of the Investment Manager, operating within the specified mandate.

1.3.2 Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)

The Trustees have reviewed and updated their position on ESG factors, determining their policy is for the Schemes' assets to have the highest ESG rating available. The Trustees consider ESG factors by receiving regular reports from their investment managers on the action they are taking concerning ESG matters and taking advice from their investment consultant.

1.3.3 Impact of Russian invasion of Ukraine

Markets have been very volatile in the aftermath of the invasion of Ukraine. The Schemes' low risk investment strategy means that their funding positions have been mostly immunised from these moves.

The Trustees continue to monitor events with the support of the Schemes' Investment Advisers.

1.4 Changes in Staff and Trustees

1.4.1 Staff

Simon Bree resigned as the pension fund accountant to the Schemes to take up a new position within the Church and Jenny Law was appointed in his place. The Trustees would like to thank Simon for his services.

1.4.2 Trustees

Hugh McKee sadly passed away on 12 December 2021. The Trustees were greatly saddened by Hugh's death and would like to express thanks for his dedicated service and contribution to the work of the Trustees.

Robert Coulter retires as an Employer Nominated Trustee of all three schemes in May 2022 after 14 years' service and the Trustees are grateful for his dedicated service to the Pension Schemes.

We are pleased to propose the appointment of Gillian Graham and Gordon Taylor as Employer Nominated Trustees of all three schemes with effect from May 2022.

Following Gillian and Gordon's appointment, we are delighted to again record a full complement of 15 Trustees. We are fortunate to be served by so many skilled and experienced people, willing to serve in this way. With regular Trustee retirements we are always looking for new Trustees, so please consider serving yourself or nominating someone who would make a good Trustee.

2. SCHEME ADMINISTRATION

2.1 The Trustees carried out a review of the policies, practices and procedures used by the in-house administration team.

The review concluded that the existing administration was effectively managed and staff were well motivated.

The structure, which includes support from different Church teams such as payroll, treasury and accounting, works well and the pensions administration system used by the team was deemed fit for purpose into the next decade.

The Trustees monitor the administration team's performance by receiving quarterly reports on service achieved and welcoming feedback from Scheme members on the service they have received from the team.

3 GOVERNANCE

3.1 The Trustees completed a formal review of the roles of Actuary and Investment Adviser for the Schemes. They decided to seek firms who could act as both Actuary and Investment Adviser, as this would lead to synergies.

Following an open tender exercise, the professional services firm XPS were appointed, effective 1 June 2021.

3.2 The Trustees continue their focus on training and development. Each new Trustee completes the Pensions Regulator's Trustee Toolkit. On-going training this year included a day of training from the Schemes' advisers prior to the November Trustee meeting and shorter topical sessions as part of quarterly meetings.

In the name of the Pension Trustees

GRAEME R. CAUGHEY, *Chair*
LIN MACMILLAN, *Vice-Chair*

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and thank the members of the Trust for their diligence.
2. Appoint Mr Leon Marshall as Chairman from 1 June 2022.
3. Appoint Mrs Morag Angus as Vice-Chairman from 1 June 2022.
4. Re-appoint Mr Angus Bethune and the Very Rev Dr John P Chalmers as members of the Trust from 1 June 2022.
5. Thank Mr W F Stuart Lynch for his 26 years' service to the Trust and Rev Iain Cunningham for his 6 years' service to the Trust.
6. Appoint Mrs Valerie Macniven as a member of the Trust from 1 June 2022.

Report

The Church of Scotland Trust, which was established by Act of Parliament in 1932, submits its Ninetieth Report to the General Assembly.

1. THE WORK OF THE TRUST

1.1 General

1.1.1 The function of the Church of Scotland Trust is to hold properties outwith Scotland and to act as a trustee in a number of third party trusts. During the year it has dealt with various matters which have arisen regarding these properties and trusts. Matters of particular significance are noted hereafter.

1.2 Third Party Trusts

1.2.1 The Trust is currently trustee of fifty third party trusts which benefit different areas of the Church's work. In 2007 the Trust instigated a Rolling Review Programme for these trusts. The Trust's Secretary and Clerk undertakes a review of the trusts annually, producing reports on half the third party trust portfolio to each of the February and September/October Trust meetings.

1.3 Pakistan

1.3.1 The Trust must again report that there has been little progress in the registration of the new Succession Trust which it is intended will take title to the Church's property interests in Pakistan and which was signed on behalf of the Trust, Faith Impact Forum and local trustees in Pakistan in 2019. At the time of writing urgent action is being taken to progress this and it is hoped that by May the Chairman will be able to report further on this matter.

1.3.2 The Trust continue to seek an alternative institution to take over Murray Christian College in Sialkot in order to ensure its future use as a Christian College. Any transfer would be subject to the Government in Pakistan processing the denationalisation of the College.

1.3.3 The Trust and Faith Impact Forum continue to meet regularly with their attorney for Pakistan, Dr Peter David, to monitor developments and agree future strategy. The Trust continues, with the help of Dr David and his many contacts, in its endeavour to transfer its property interests to an appropriate body in terms of the Church of Scotland Trust Order Confirmation Act 1958.

1.3.4 As reported for a number of years, the Trust continues to be a party to a number of court cases involving its property interests in Pakistan. The Trust is legally represented in all these cases but, due to the nature of the Pakistan legal system, it is anticipated that the cases will be ongoing for some time.

1.4 Israel

1.4.1 The Trust continues to be consulted by Faith Impact Forum regarding ongoing and future developments relating to property in Israel.

1.5 Act II 2016 – The International Presbytery Act

1.5.1 Since the General Assembly of 2016 all congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges require the approval of both Presbytery and the Church of Scotland Trust for (a) any extensive alterations to their building/s; (b) any property purchase and (c) the lease of any property in excess of one year. The Trust continues to work with the International Presbytery to fulfil these responsibilities. The Trust has given approval for a number of property related matters in the last year.

1.5.2 Every congregation in the Presbytery is required to produce a Property Report to Presbytery each year with details of the management, maintenance and insurance of congregational buildings which is copied to the Trust.

1.5.3 The Trust note the changes which will be required in the Presbytery due to the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) and will work with the Presbytery to assist with the implementation of the Act.

2. ACCOUNTS FOR 2021

2.1 The Trust's Accounts for the year 2021 have been audited and copies thereof are available on request from the Secretary and Clerk.

3. CHAIRMAN

3.1 The term of office of the Chairman of the Trust, Mr Thomas C Watson, will be completed on 31 May 2022. It is recommended that the General Assembly appoint Mr Leon Marshall as Chairman from 1 June 2022.

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

4.1 The term of office of the Vice-Chairman of the Trust, Mr W F Stuart Lynch, will be completed on 31 May 2022. It is recommended that the General Assembly appoint Mrs Morag Angus as Vice-Chairman from 1 June 2022.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 In accordance with the constitution of the Trust, the following two members retire by rotation on 31 May 2022 but are eligible for re-appointment: Mr Angus Bethune and the Very Rev Dr John P Chalmers. It is suggested to the General Assembly that Mr Bethune and Dr Chalmers be re-appointed as members of the Trust from 1 June 2022.

5.2 Mr W F Stuart Lynch has intimated his resignation from the Trust with effect from 31 May 2022 and, as the longest serving member of the Trust, members would like to record their sincere gratitude for his dedicated contribution to the work of the Trust since his appointment in 1996. Stuart has served as Vice-Chairman of the Trust since 2018 and his in-depth knowledge of the work of the Trust will be greatly missed.

5.3 Rev Iain Cunningham intimated his resignation from the Trust in February 2022 and members would like to record their appreciation for his contribution to the work of the Trust since 2014.

5.4 It is suggested that Mrs Valerie Macniven be appointed a member of the Trust from 1 June 2022.

In the name and by the authority of The Church of Scotland Trust

THOMAS C WATSON, Chairman
W F STUART LYNCH, Vice-Chairman
MADELAINE SPROULE, Secretary & Clerk

Addendum

Mr Thomas C Watson, Chairman

Thomas C Watson was appointed Chairman of the Church of Scotland Trust by the General Assembly of 2018 after serving as Vice-chairman. We take this opportunity on behalf of the Trust to record our thanks to Tom for his leadership during this time. The Trust has benefited from his attention to detail and financial expertise in particular. On behalf of the Church, we would like to record our appreciation to Tom for giving so generously of his time and abilities and we are delighted that he has agreed to continue to serve the Trust as a member.

W F STUART LYNCH, *Vice-Chairman*
MADELAINE SPROULE, *Secretary & Clerk*

REPORT OF THE CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

A REGISTERED SCOTTISH CHARITY (SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SC002769) TO

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

IN RESPECT OF THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

Report

1. CHURCH HYMNARY 4TH EDITION

1.1 In the year to 30 September 2021 the sales of the various editions were as follows: -

Words:	178 copies compared with 285 (2020)
Full Music Edition:	156 copies compared with 308 (2020)
Melody Edition:	111 copies compared with 113 (2020)
Large Print Edition:	46 copies compared with 251 (2020)
CD-Rom:	43 copies compared with 24 (2020)

1.2 The commission due to the trust calculated in respect of the year to 30 September 2021 in respect of CH4 was £944.99 compared to with £1,614.90 in the previous year. From this, royalties were payable to the authors of £784.59, the first £2,000 of which is met by the publishers, with the net commission due to the Trust £1,614.90.

1.3 In addition, sales of the Hymnary under the title Hymns of Glory, Songs of Praise amounted to 17 copies in all. The net commission payable to the trust was £130.66.

2. CURRENT GRANTS

2.1 Although not reflected in the accounts to year end 31 December 2021, the Trustees are glad to report that by virtue of decisions made at their annual meeting on 4 March 2022, the Trust is committed to the support of three very different but equally worthwhile projects: (1) to provide funding to the Minister of Assynt and Stoer for online training in musical composition and performance; (2) to contribute to the funding of the St Giles' 900 Choirbook, a series of new settings of texts in a range of styles designed to represent the best of contemporary Scottish choral composition and associated with the celebration of the 900th anniversary of the foundation of St Giles Cathedral; and (3) to provide funding to the Church Service Society to further develop an online resource by which organists, pianists, and keyboard players at an earlier stage of experience can freely download simpler hymn accompaniments, and a beginners course in improvisation.

3. FUNDING FOR PROJECTS

3.1 The trustees affirm their wish to encourage more applications for grants to be made from trust funds, particularly where the applications for local training projects. The trust purposes include:

"the advancement of the Christian faith through the promotion and development of hymnody in Scotland with particular reference to the Church of Scotland by assisting in the development, promotion, provision and understanding of hymns, psalms and paraphrases suitable for use in public worship to enable the Church, and in particular the Church of Scotland, to worship in ways which are relevant to individual congregations or groups of congregations".

In the name of the Trustees

PHILIP H BRODIE, *Chairman*
HUGH ANGUS, *Secretary and Treasurer*

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and thank the Delegation for its work.
2. Continue the appointment of the Delegation with the same powers as hitherto - the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly to be Chair, the Depute Clerk of the General Assembly to be Vice-Chair and the Solicitor of the Church to act as Secretary.

Report

1.1 The General Assembly of 2016 instructed that from 1 January 2017 the only form of constitution which congregations may adopt and which may be granted by the Delegation should be the Unitary Constitution, and urged those congregations constituted in terms of the Model Deed and other forms of constitution to adopt the Unitary Constitution. Twenty four congregations adopted the Unitary Constitution in 2021 compared to thirty four in 2020. Since 2004, the Unitary Constitution has been issued to 804 congregations.

1.2 The Delegation once again expresses the hope that those congregations who have not yet reviewed their constitution will do so in the course of this year.

In the name and on behalf of the Delegation

GEORGE J WHYTE, *Chairman*
MARY E MACLEOD, *Secretary*

FAITH IMPACT FORUM MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

Safeguarding the Integrity of Creation

2. Instruct the Forum, in partnership with the Assembly Trustees, General Trustees, Social Care Council and Eco-Congregation Scotland, to continue to develop plans and activities towards meeting a 'Net Zero by 2030 Strategy' and to report to the General Assembly in 2023. (Section 3)

Global Justice and International Partnerships

3. Give thanks for the life and witness of Mission Partners who have died, acknowledge with gratitude those who have completed their period of service overseas, and uphold in prayer all who continue to serve. (Section 4)
4. Urge the UK Government to do more to ensure Covid-19 vaccines are available throughout the world, particularly in resource poor countries, and instruct the Forum to make representations and to promote this campaign with church members. (Section 4.1)
5. Instruct the Forum to share with congregations and Presbyteries the work of Mediterranean Hope and other international partners providing humanitarian and integration support to displaced people, and promote opportunities for local churches to respond with prayer, action and giving. (Section 4.2)
6. Instruct the Forum to continue to support work with asylum seekers and refugees, alongside Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, and encourage congregations to participate in the 'Faithful Welcome' project and to explore Community Sponsorship so that they may be directly involved in refugee resettlement. (Section 4.6)
7. Commend the Korea Peace Appeal and instruct the Forum to promote the appeal to church members and congregations for them to sign as part of the effort to bring an end to the Korean War. (Section 4.8)
8. Note the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Pakistani Minorities: Abductions, Forced Conversions, and Forced Marriages of Religious Minority Women and Girls in Pakistan; instruct the Forum to continue to engage with ecumenical and international partners on the issue and to provide resources to encourage church members to write to MPs urging the UK Government to implement the Report's recommendations. (Section 4.9)
9. Commend to congregations this year's Stamp Appeal which will support the Church in Lebanon in its ministry. (Section 4.10)

Interfaith Relations

10. Commend the Jewish-Christian glossary produced this year for study and action particularly by ministers, OLMs, readers and worship leaders, to shed light on divergent uses and understandings of theological and political terms that relate to the Holy Land. (Section 5.1)

11. Note with concern that Islamophobia remains widespread in the UK, and in line with other faith-based, social, political and governmental organisations, adopt for internal use the All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) definition of Islamophobia, and its guidelines, to aid the Church of Scotland in challenging Islamophobia. (Section 5.2)

Societal and Political Issues

12. Acknowledge that the practice of Conversion Therapy is harmful and endorse the definition of Conversion Therapy as outlined in the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK', noting that the Methodist Conference have supported and adopted this definition and the Church of England General Synod have endorsed a similar statement; urge the Scottish Government to ban Conversion Therapy and instruct the Forum to make representations to the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament. (Section 7.3)
13. Instruct the Forum, in consultation with CrossReach and others, to report to the General Assembly of 2023 on issues relating to drugs and substance use. (Section 7.4)
14. Instruct the Forum to convene a cross-Church group to explore the benefits and opportunities afforded to the Church of Scotland by digital technologies and to support congregations in their utilisation of these. (Section 7.8)

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 With the 5 marks of mission and emphasising leadership development and the encouragement of the under 40's, the staff and Forum have sought to fulfil the deliverances set out by prior General Assemblies and to ensure the Church's witness in society. Updates follow in the Report.

1.2 As we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Society, Religion and Technology project, which first raised climate concerns for the church decades ago, Net Zero and the climate emergency were key areas as minds and attention turned to the countdown to the COP 26 in Glasgow in November 2021. It was important for us not just to focus on activities in Glasgow, but also to encourage people throughout Scotland to be part of COP26, and many took part in the International Day for Climate Action in their own areas, despite the howling gales and rain. We will seek to share with our partner in Egypt, The Synod of the Nile, learnings from this experience as COP27 will be held in Egypt in November 2022. We welcome the ongoing work across the church on the Church's Net Zero goals. There is much to be done, so it is good to see that the momentum and appetite across the church is also great.

1.3 There is also much to be done with regard to the legacy of slavery. Again, there is cross Church working, tying in with the work of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion group looking at racial justice. This works continues. Looking back, we are faced with past cultural contexts which, we acknowledge now, caused grievous harm for particular sectors of society and demeaned them. The Forum appreciates the First Minister's statement, on International Women's Day, apologising for the way in which, predominantly women, were accused and condemned of witchcraft, and acknowledges that, often, the Church played a part in feeding the fury, and deeply regrets that to be the case. We are grateful for the work of Integrity which seeks to mitigate against such things in the present, and urge the church to make use of the training sessions which are offered.

1.4 The Forum, alongside the whole Church and many around the world, is deeply concerned at the invasion of Ukraine. The Moderator has visited the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Edinburgh and written to the Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholic leadership in the UK in sympathy and solidarity with those who suffer. Many congregations and members offered generous support to our partners in the Reformed Church in Hungary Aid, which has directly helped those fleeing to the border areas of Ukraine – into Hungary, Slovakia, Romania as well as Poland and Moldova. The Forum and Moderator have also encouraged the government to offer a generous welcome to refugees.

1.5 We do not forget others facing similar challenges and displacement in Myanmar, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, and Palestine. The work of Mediterranean Hope with refugees and migrant people in Italy and beyond is inspirational and we are glad to have renewed Fiona Kendall's contract, in cooperation with the Waldensian Church, Global Ministries in USA and the Methodist Church in the Britain and Ireland, as we together offer solidarity in the work Mediterranean Hope is undertaking as a witness to God's love for all people.

1.6 The Forum aims to find ways of enabling the Church, on every level, to recognise the need for a vibrant, full bodied faith involving every fibre of our being so that,

as individuals and as communities of God's people, we think, act, listen, pray and 'do' our faith in such a way that it becomes the selfless, liberating, healing, tour de force, that Jesus embodied: transforming individuals, society, communities, nations and the world, so that those with the least find they have what they need, the broken are made whole, those imprisoned in whatever way are set free, and the planet is cherished.

2. UPDATE ON 2021 DELIVERANCE

2.1 *The General Assembly of 2021:*

9. (i) *Appoint a Special Committee of five persons to consult with the Faith Impact Forum, the Church of Scotland Investors Trust and the Assembly Trustees to consider the best framework for future recommendations about the ethics of investment practice being brought before the General Assembly, and report to the General Assembly in 2023.*

(ii) *Instruct the Selection Committee to consider carefully the range of skills and diversity of backgrounds required for this task and present the names for this Special Committee on ethical investment practice to a later session of this General Assembly.*

The Special Committee has been hearing from many different parties on the key issues involved in the ethics of investment practice and how different churches and organisations interpret and engage with ethical approaches and will report to the 2023 General Assembly.

2.2 10. *Urge the UK Government to do all that it can to ensure Covid-19 vaccines are available throughout the world, particularly in resource-poor countries, on the basis of clinical need to preserve human life.*

The Faith Impact Forum has supported interventions led by Christian Aid and the ACT Alliance of Christian-based international development organisations and will continue to press the UK Government to do to all it can to improve vaccine distribution and take-up around the world.

2.3 12. *Instruct the Forum to call for the development of safe and legal routes for people desperately seeking sanctuary so that they can travel, live, work and contribute to our society with respect and dignity.*

In spring 2021 the UK Government consulted on its 'New Plan for Immigration' to which the Forum responded on behalf of the Church. Subsequently the UK Government introduced the Nationality and Borders Bill, which (at the time of writing) is being considered in Parliament. The Church has joined the Together With Refugees coalition and the Forum and Faith Action staff have worked with UK ecumenical partners to raise these points with Parliamentarians and in the media during the Bill's passage. More information is included below at section 4.4

2.4 14. *Deplore the decision of the UK Government to cut overseas aid programmes and call on the UK Government and Parliament to continue to provide a minimum of 0.7% of Gross National Income as Overseas Development Assistance in line with the International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015 and all main parties' 2019 manifesto commitments.*

Faith Action staff worked with ecumenical partners to produce a briefing urging Church members to write to their MPs asking them to reverse the cut. However, a vote in the House of Commons in July 2021 agreed a smaller budget, in a move described by the Moderator as a "moral

failure": <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/church-brands-decision-to-cut-international-aid-budget-a-moral-failure>

2.5 15. Welcome the cross-Church work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and of engaging with the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people within the Church of Scotland; and instruct the Faith Impact Forum, the Faith Nurture Forum and the Assembly Trustees to consider how best to ensure the necessary resources are available to act on the outcomes.

Faith Impact Forum has welcomed the progress and acknowledges the cross-cutting nature of strategy and activity contained in the Assembly Trustees' Report

2.6 16. Urge Kirk Sessions to take part in the basic training provided by Integrity – the Church of Scotland's Violence Against Women Task Group.

Faith Impact Forum now has a budget for three open training sessions and up to five bespoke training sessions for any Kirk Session or church leader to attend training. See Integrity report. (Section 7)

2.7 17. Instruct the Forum, in consultation with the Ecumenical Relations Committee, to renew and strengthen ecumenical dialogue, partnership and collaboration on public affairs with: (1) the Church of England; (2) through the new Scottish Christian Forum; and (3) within the Joint Public Issues Team.

The Faith Impact Forum and Faith Action staff have continued to work closely on opportunities for collaboration. In light of the Columba Declaration and St Andrew Declaration, plans with the Church of England and the Scottish Episcopal Church on various projects are now developing. Although the Scottish Christian Forum has not come into being as anticipated at the time of writing the 2021 Report, ecumenical dialogue and action on public affairs among Scottish Churches has been strengthened by the evolving roles of the Scottish Churches Leaders' Forum and the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office. The Church of Scotland remains an associate partner of the UK Methodist-Baptist-URC Joint Public Issues Team and shares in a number of projects and goals.

2.8 18. Urge congregations to support the Reset the Debt campaign; instruct the Forum to promote the campaign, and to call on the UK Government to establish a Jubilee Fund to provide grants to pay off and cancel unavoidable debt accrued by households because of the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions.

The Faith Impact Forum supported and promoted this campaign with local congregations and with secular anti-poverty partners. Further information about the campaign and future plans to address issues of household debt are on the website <https://resetthedebt.uk/>

2.9 19. Instruct the Forum to promote "Meet Your MSP" resources and encourage congregations to approach their MSPs, especially those newly elected to the Scottish Parliament, in order to establish and strengthen relations with elected representatives.

Following the Scottish Parliamentary elections, the Meet Your MSP resources from the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office have been revised and represented with a new web presence. Congregations seeking advice on engagement with politicians are encouraged to find out more and contact the Faith Action staff team www.scpo.scot

2.10 20. Commend the report on Artificial Intelligence; urge the Church to engage with the issues raised, especially in relation to pastoral care, worship and mission; and instruct the Forum to provide resources to support this engagement.

The Faith Impact Forum, through the work of the Society, Religion and Technology Project, is at the time of writing producing resources which will be shared and published in due course. More on the Society, Religion and Technology Project can be found below at section 8.

3. SAFEGUARDING THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION Climate Justice and Net Zero by 2030

3.1 The Faith Impact Forum has responsibility for convening the Net Zero Strategy Group to enable the delivery of the carbon emissions monitoring, reduction and offsetting targets in order to reach net zero by the year 2030. The Group includes representatives from different parts of the Church including the Faith Impact Forum, the General Trustees, the Assembly Trustees, CrossReach, Eco-Congregation Scotland, and Faith Action Programme staff.

3.2 Congregations were urged to join Eco-Congregations Scotland in the General Assembly Deliverance of 2021, and since then there has been an 18% rise in full membership and a 7% rise in registered congregations.

3.3 The Group aims to set directions for a "Net Zero by 2030 Strategy", with sub groups involving staff and volunteers in developing and implementing specific projects. The initial goal for a Strategy is to understand the baseline of existing carbon emissions, from which to plan and implement reductions. To this end an 'Environmental Footprint Tool' is being developed in partnership with the Church of England, and will be introduced in the second half of 2022. The tool will enable congregations to measure energy use and carbon emissions on an annual basis, to monitor progress.

3.4 A Net Zero Pathway is being developed for launch later in 2022. This will be an online resource aiming to facilitate change by informing and encouraging congregations to identify practical actions to reduce emissions, ranging from the simple and free to more complex investments that require planning and resources.

3.5 Two projects that are currently being explored include resources on tree planting (as a way to support carbon offsetting as well as improving biodiversity), and investing in electric vehicle charging infrastructure. At the time of writing the Group is working to deliver 'Project Eve', a pilot scheme exploring the installation of electric vehicle charging points in church grounds. Initial installations are expected in the first half of 2022. Subject to review, this pilot is the first step in a broader initiative to explore low emission transport options for churches.

3.6 Through the work of the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, Faith Action staff have been in discussion with ecumenical partners to discuss strategies for reaching net zero across Scottish churches (where a number of other denominations have now also set 2030 targets), including taking forward direct approaches to the Scottish Government about access to advice and financial support.

3.7 The effects of climate change are being brought to the front and centre of our attention regularly by partner churches and as this report is being finalised, Mozambique

is being battered by Cyclone Gombe, only weeks after the devastation caused there and in Malawi by Tropical Storm Ana. These, and other weather-related incidents cause havoc in the lives of our Partner Churches, the effects of which are both immediate and longer term. It is the stories from them that encourage us to fight for Climate Justice and seek to become a Net Zero Church.

4. GLOBAL JUSTICE AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

4.1 Covid Vaccine Equity

4.1.1 At the General Assembly of 2021, the Moderator called on members of the church to give a donation to Christian Aid as a thanksgiving gift when receiving their Covid-19 vaccine. This would be used in work to support people across the world who did not have access to the vaccine. As well as advocating for a just vaccine rollout, Christian Aid's work with vulnerable communities helps to limit the impact of the virus on health, livelihoods and personal safety. Lord Wallace urged everyone to join him in supporting the appeal and helping vulnerable people stay safe as they waited for the vaccine. Nearly £12,000 was donated in the name of the Church of Scotland and these donations saved lives.

4.1.2 We have witnessed spectacular collaboration across the world in order to develop and roll out a vaccine, which science tells us can save lives. However, in Africa, Asia and many low- and middle-income areas across the world this vaccine is not getting into the arms of the many, but the privileged few. There are reports of vaccine hesitancy as the cause for such a low take up; this is untrue.^[i] The All Africa Conferences of Churches has made a plea to 'Fast Track Vaccines for All, Now!'. Whilst many in the UK and Europe are in the privileged position of having both vaccinations and a booster and for some three doses and a booster there are millions across the world who have not been afforded the same privilege.

4.1.3 Gordon Simango, the AACC Director of African Union Office & Advocacy said "Vaccine equity is a fundamental right, and any spokes put in its way must be vehemently denied. The world must rally behind the call for a waiver on patenting rights, as well as robustly fight corruption both on the local and global fronts. It is a pity that human lives are being thrown on to the line, while human and corporate greed is meant to flourish. Profits before human life is unethical." The recent Omicron variant saw an immediate 'red listing' of six Southern African countries, whilst there was evidence to suggest Omicron had been circulating in Europe long before it was discovered in South Africa,^[ii] yet no European countries were red listed. These actions suggest policies motivated by racism rather than facts.

4.1.4 Similarly, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) stated at an online seminar in June 2021, "As faith communities, we must support and amplify the need for equitable sharing of vaccines and enforceable frameworks for vaccine development and distribution; countries must be bound by agreements rather than arbitrary limits which maximise profits for a few. Short-term thinking of caring only for the rich and the privileged few should not be the aim, but the health and wellbeing of all God's people, in the long run, should be the goal."

4.1.5 Dr Mathews George Chunakara, the General Secretary of the CCA, in his opening remarks, stated, "the prevailing inequitable distribution of vaccines is leaving

millions of people vulnerable to the COVID-19 disease. In responding to such a crisis, national governments normally tend to follow their own interests rather than a globally coordinated approach to share the vaccines with less privileged ones. We now face a situation where countries are pushing for first access and are holding on to key components of some aspects of production, as well as stockpiling vaccines, which we consider 'vaccine nationalism'. This has negative consequences for how well the global pandemic is managed and contained; not only in the long term but with immediate effect." "There is a lack of effort towards the goals of global solidarity and equity for access to vaccines, and this continues to persist. It undermines every effort towards disease control and derails the project of achieving a pandemic-free world. Everyone in our regions must have the knowledge, access, and resources for advanced research and development to make the vaccines locally." If we are to be the voice for the voiceless and speak out against injustice then we must call on our government to not only fulfil the Covid-19 vaccine pledges that they made, but for them to go further and ensure equity for all.

4.2 Mediterranean Hope and SOS Rosarno

4.2.1 Our Mission Partner Fiona Kendall works with partners in Italy – the Waldensian Church and the Federation of Protestant Churches' Mediterranean Hope project. The project has grown exponentially in recent times, with new pieces of work in different areas, including support for exploited workers in Calabria. Many of these people are fruit pickers and, through SOS Rosarno, a Fair-Trade cooperative, Mediterranean Hope has developed a brand called Etika which ensures a fair price for farmers and, subsequently, a decent wage for the workers, many of whom are migrants. 10% of the price is also allocated to local social projects, including those of Mediterranean Hope. To support Etika, and to highlight the work of Mediterranean Hope, Fiona shared the story with her partner congregations in Scotland, and from that 'Operation Orange' was conceived. It was hoped to have oranges freshly picked from the Calabrian trees in time for Christmas but due to red tape at UK customs this was delayed until February 2022. This small hiccup is nothing in comparison to the difficulties with official papers, permissions and passes which those who have migrated have to deal with as they seek to find a safe and secure place to live, work, and build connections and relationships. Sharing the story of the migrants and the support of Mediterranean Hope is an important element of 'Operation Orange', supporting congregations to engage with the issues and speak out and act in support of justice for migrants.

Mediterranean Hope is also active in "managed migration" programmes and advocacy work at a European and global level. The award-winning humanitarian corridors pioneered by Mediterranean Hope in 2015 are going from strength to strength, with a number of corridors now running from the Middle East and North Africa into Europe. In the course of last year, a new corridor was opened from Libya and a protocol has been signed to enable Mediterranean Hope to welcome Afghans. Fiona and her colleagues are currently working directly with the Italian government to develop a new community sponsorship framework for Italians to host people on the move. All of this is helping to involve Italians directly in welcoming refugees and, ultimately, to disrupt the toxic narrative concerning migration.

4.3 Ukraine

4.3.1 Just as the report was being finalised, Russia invaded Ukraine. We immediately sent out a letter of solidarity to Bishop Zán Fabian in the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia. Contact was also made with the world and European church bodies to help coordinate responses, and offer support. The Rev. Balázs Ódor, Ecumenical Officer for the Reformed Church in Hungary, was in direct contact with us and with the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia and highlighted the presence on the ground of Reformed Church in Hungary Aid, in western Ukraine, as well as in the border areas in Slovakia, Hungary and Romania where they were able to access buildings belonging to the Reformed Churches in each place. The Convener spoke out and highlighted the work of the Reformed Church in Hungary Aid as a way for people in Scotland to be able to channel support quickly and effectively as they were already present on the ground and had established relationships and work. The generosity of congregations and individuals was deeply welcomed as an act of love and faith, of solidarity and kindness. Information is available on the Reformed Church of Hungary (English) website: <https://reformatus.hu/english/news/emergency-response-for-ukraine>

4.3.2 The Moderator wrote to the Ukrainian and Russian consulates urging a peaceful resolution to the conflict and to the Home Secretary to urge a smoother and easier visa process for people coming to the UK, and urged the government to be generous in its approach.

4.3.3 On Ash Wednesday, 3000 people from 80 countries gathered virtually for a Prayer for Peace organised by some of the major world communions, and including people in Ukraine, and from the different churches. A video recording of the service is available: <http://wcr.ch/news/a-pall-of-ashes-covers-ukraine-christians-join-prayer-for-peace>

4.3.4 Krisztina Bado, from the office of Bishop Zán Fabian in the Reformed Church in Transcarpathia, wrote to partners after the visit of the Reformed Church of Hungary Bishops to Western Ukraine in early March to offer solidarity and share in worship together:

"In the city of Beregszász, 71 reformed pastors participated from our side... We are very thankful that these Hungarian bishops were with us and they strengthened our pastors and us as well with the words of God. It was really uplifting. Our pastors could feel that they are not alone and they have brothers and sisters in the Homeland. It is a miracle that our pastors are still in their places and trying to strengthen our congregational members and those families who remain without husbands and those old people who stayed behind. It is not easy. We pray together for peace, for wisdom, for hope, faith and for strength."

It is, though, a time of great challenge for the small Reformed Church in the border area of western Ukraine. The 71 pastors try to give psychological support to those who are left behind (poor families, old people, large families, ill people) and try to find ways to help those displaced from the war zone. Those who cannot move to other countries will stay there, and the church also wants to offer care for their spiritual life too. The churches have been busy as people pray for an end to war and for a proper peace.

In other neighbouring countries, small Reformed Churches are also being supportive, the Reformed Church in Poland is very small, but is doing what it can to support those arriving in Poland. Some Parishes are hosting

refugees. One is trying to create a retreat and recovery centre for traumatised people. Rev Semko Koroza in the congregation in Łódź, where there were already 250,000 Ukrainians living before the war, is cooperating with a Roman Catholic foundation, and seeking to support children and students living and studying there.

4.3.5 St Columba's Church in Budapest opened the church and mission centre to give sanctuary and a place of rest to refugees as they journeyed through. On one night in early March, there were 15 Nigerian students who had travelled solidly for three days to get to safety, as well as women and children. Rev Aaron Stevens and the congregation offered a service of love and care to those in need.

There is also an unpleasant side. The All Africa Conference of Churches condemned the invasion and offered solidarity to the people of Ukraine and "the majority of the people of Russia" but also had to condemn the actions of some people who discriminated against African people fleeing the war. <https://www.aacc-ceta.org/posts/list/category/aacc-statements>

4.3.6 Fiona Kendall, working for the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy which sent a group to assess what needs they could offer help and support with, noted that those arriving were deeply traumatized, and a key priority was shelter and psychological support. While the level of support offered to those fleeing is remarkable, with flight, also comes risk. Traffickers exploit the chaos for their own ends; women who accept a lift to the border and then disappear; unaccompanied minors who are preyed upon. There are no depths, it would seem, to which some will not sink.

4.3.7 Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (SFAR) has **compiled a list of seven ways your faith community can respond to the situation**. As well as advocacy, prayer and donating you will see ways in which Presbyteries and Congregations can be welcoming of refugees coming to Scotland.

4.3.8 As we pray for Ukraine and offer support, we need to remember too, others throughout the world who struggle: those in occupied Palestine, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Myanmar for whom there is not the same upsurge of international support.

4.4 Faithful Welcome Project

4.4.1 The Church of Scotland continues to lead and have responsibility for the multi-faith partnership Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (www.sfar.org.uk). In September 2021, with Faith in Community Scotland as lead partner, Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees was successful in securing external funding from the New Scots Refugee Integration Delivery Project for work lasting until October 2022, called *Faithful Welcome*. The project invites people from Scotland's rich diversity of faith traditions to be part of creating a more welcoming and inclusive society for refugees and asylum seekers. Faith plays an important role in many refugees' lives and churches have provided a sense of belonging, hope, and comfort as well as practical support when all else has been lost. Through *Faithful Welcome*, local congregations are supported in their work to show hospitality to refugees and asylum seekers, and enable them to be an integral part of community life.

4.4.2 Local congregations are invited to link in with *Faithful Welcome*, whether they have been involved in this work for many years or if they are wanting to welcome refugees for the first time:

- Join free workshops and information sessions on refugees, asylum and integration.
- Work with the staff team for one-to-one support and build capacity to welcome newcomers.
- Engage in networking opportunities and connect with like-minded people.
- Benefit from funding and practical advice.

To find out more visit: <http://www.sfar.org.uk/faithful-welcome/>

4.5 Afghanistan, Resettlement and Asylum

4.5.1 New resettlement routes, including from Afghanistan, have provided new opportunities for congregations to welcome refugees locally. For more information on the Afghan resettlement schemes and what congregations can do please visit: <http://www.sfar.org.uk/8-things-you-can-do-to-respond-to-the-situation-in-afghanistan/>

4.5.2 At the time of writing, the UK Home Office is still housing asylum seekers in hotels in other parts of Scotland beyond Glasgow, a policy which marginalises people from communities, limits their access to comprehensive support, makes it hard to connect to a local community and contribute their skills, thereby limiting opportunities to integrate.

4.5.3 Local church communities continue to have a vital role to play in saying, 'You are welcome here.' and offering care and support to refugees and asylum seekers from all parts of the world. Across Scotland, Churches, and other faith communities, have been organising trips for people stuck in hotels, coffee mornings, English language practice and kids' activities. With the expansion of the resettlement schemes and changes to the way asylum seekers are cared for, it is vital that the Church's work to welcome the stranger continues and is expanded in all parts of Scotland. The Church can play a critical role in what are often very dark and lonely situations. For support on how you can do this, please contact the Co-ordinator of Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees (Sabine Chalmers schalmers@churchofscotland.org.uk) or connect with the Faithful Welcome project.

4.6 Community Sponsorship

4.6.1 As the UK Government continues to develop hostile policies towards refugees and asylum seekers, congregations can display hospitality and directly impact the number of refugees that are given sanctuary in the UK through Community Sponsorship. Community Sponsorship is a refugee resettlement programme with local people at its heart. It provides a safe route for refugees at risk to reach Scotland and build a life here as part of a supportive community. It is a shared endeavour where one or more congregations or local groups can work together to prepare for and welcome a refugee family to their local area. The group then supports the family through their first year in the UK to live independent lives, learn English, and access schools, benefits, healthcare and employment and participate fully in the community. More information can be found here: <https://www.sponsorrefugees.org/>

4.7 Nationality and Borders Bill

4.7.1 At the time of writing, a major piece of legislation is being considered by the UK Parliament at Westminster. The Nationality and Borders Bill follows on from the Government's 2021 'New Plan for Immigration' which the Faith Impact Forum responded to on behalf of the

Church (<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/church-proposes-alternative-to-uk-government-asylum-reform-plans>). Working with ecumenical and interfaith partners, and as part of a secular coalition called Together With Refugees, the Church of Scotland has expressed profound concern and disappointment with the UK Government's proposals. By the time the General Assembly meets, the legislation is expected to have completed its Parliamentary consideration and the final text will be known. Whatever the outcome, this legislation is expected to have a major impact on the poorest and most marginalised people on the planet, and how our society offers a hand of friendship or a cold shoulder of indifference.

4.8 Korea Peace Appeal

4.8.1 Seventy years ago, the Korean War was raging, not ending until June 1953, with an Armistice rather than a peace treaty. Nearly five million people died, more than half – about 10 percent of Korea's pre-war population – were civilians. Among the military casualties were 1,114 British soldiers. Perhaps 10 million families were separated on either side of the 38th Parallel. The Republic of Korea entered 34 years of military rule, while the Kim dynasty in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) devised the Juche political doctrine that has led to isolation, widespread poverty, and human rights abuses while at the same time enduring the harshest sanctions regime in the world. South Korea pays \$1 billion annually for hosting 28,500 United States military personnel.

4.8.2 At a webinar in January 2022, hosted by National Christian Council in Korea (NCCCK) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), churches in Britain and Ireland were urged to support the Korea Peace Appeal (<https://en.endthekoreanwar.net/>) to bring about a Peace Treaty to formally end the Korean War, end sanctions against DPRK, promote links between North and South Korea, and sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula. NCCCK is one of over 370 civil society groups, that include each of the country's seven faith communities, campaigning to end the Korean War by collecting 100 million signatures by June 2023, the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice Agreement.

4.9 Forced Conversions in Pakistan

4.9.1 On freedom of religion or belief, Pakistan has, for a long time, been a country of particular concern. Its government has systematically enforced blasphemy and anti-Ahmadiyya laws and failed to protect religious minorities from abuses by non-state actors. Abduction, forced conversion to Islam, rape, and forced marriage remain threats for religious minority women and children, particularly from the Hindu and Christian faiths. All the evidence indicates that such incidents are on the rise with more than half involving minors. Provisional estimates suggest up to 1,000 religious minority women and girls face this fate every year, however, the true numbers may never be known. The Pakistani government has done little to ensure minor girls' safety and return them to their families, while authorities often take no action in abduction cases that are brought to the courts.

4.9.2 Our partner organisation, the Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS) has reported on many cases of forced conversion and contributed to a report published by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Pakistani Minorities: *Abductions, Forced Conversions, and Forced Marriages of Religious Minority Women and Girls in Pakistan*, released in November 2021^[iii].

4.9.3 In 2021, the Church of Scotland and the Church of England, in partnership with and support of the Church of Pakistan, organised a series of Roundtable Briefings on Forced Conversions and Forced Marriage in Pakistan to help broaden the understanding of the situation and to support churches and concerned people around the world to engage in more informed, targeted, and joined up advocacy. The Roundtables provided an opportunity to hear from voices on the ground as well as those that are documenting abuses and supporting victims seeking legal redress, and explored what churches and related agencies can do to show solidarity with affected communities and the steps that can realistically be taken to affect change. These Roundtable Briefings have continued in 2022.

4.10 Lebanon

'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up' (Galatians 6:9)

4.10.1 We have looked on in despair at the deteriorating situation in Lebanon, a country which has suffered greatly over the last few years. Our partners report a devastating economic collapse, a lack of electricity and water, and a poverty level which has increased to over 80%, with an unemployment rate of 40%. In the face of this disaster, the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) continues to provide much needed care and relief to the people of Lebanon, as emphasised by the biblical reference above that they are using as their guide.

4.10.2 They are a shining example of the Church working in a situation of poverty and need, seeking to provide basic food, heating and medicine to the families in and around their churches. The need for this would have been unheard of just two years ago. Students are unable to attend school without major financial aid, and even the pastors are in a situation of not being paid. This has led many people to leave the country in search of a new life.

4.10.3 However, being a shining example does not come without pain and desperation, and financial hardship. Now, more than ever, we need, as a Church, to look out for those who are in difficulties and need, whether they be in Scotland or further afield, and support our brothers and sisters in the crucial work that they are doing for God's Kingdom. Only then will we see the harvest that the writer to the Galatians envisages. Our **stamp appeal** for 2022-23 is to support pastors in NESSL.

4.11 HIV

4.11.1 In a major report last year, UNAIDS highlighted how Covid-19 has shown the fragility of the health and development gains made over the past decades in relation to the AIDS pandemic and exposed glaring inequalities amongst populations.

4.11.2 Working alongside the World Council of Churches Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiatives and Advocacy (WCC-EHAIA) to promote HIV competence among churches and addressing the root causes of the pandemic, the Church of Scotland HIV Programme and its partner churches play an influential role because they are deeply rooted in the communities they serve around the world. They can be a force for transformation – bringing healing, hope and accompaniment to all people affected by HIV.

4.11.3 In a typical year the Church of Scotland HIV Programme raises much of its income through donations from Souper Sunday Services and other events such as the Heart & Soul Swing Band Concerts. In 2021 this was not possible but we were thankful to receive a substantial

amount of legacy monies and are grateful to supporters who leave such gifts in their will to the programme. This means we can continue to support projects of Partner Churches internationally as well as partner organisations in Scotland, and be able to support what can sometimes be seen as small initiatives, but actually provide real opportunity for transformative work. Supporting partners to continue their project work through the Covid-19 pandemic has allowed people living with HIV to live well. This includes provision of PPE and other necessary nutritional, medical, emotional and spiritual support.

<https://www.unaids.org/en/Global-AIDS-Strategy-2021-2026>

<https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/ehaia>

5. INTERFAITH RELATIONS

5.1 Jewish-Christian Glossary Project

5.1.1 Church of Scotland and Jewish community representatives were in a formal dialogue process from 2017-2019, with the objective of repairing relationships between the Jewish community and Church of Scotland after the *Inheritance of Abraham?* report to the General Assembly in 2013. The dialogue set about to establish a frank theological exchange on this report, and the politics and theological ideas it contained. The broader aim for this dialogue was always to share insights and mutual learning that reflected the dialogical process for those who could not be involved directly. This objective was the subject of a meeting with the Chief Rabbi and the Convener of the Assembly Trustees, along with participants of the dialogue and staff support, in February 2020. It was agreed that a small group of Ministers and Rabbis should begin a process of focused dialogue that concentrated on terms and words that either directly or implicitly convey beliefs and attitudes to the politics and theology of land. These words and terms were identified because of their prominence and importance with overt theological connections to Israel and Palestine such as 'holy land' and 'Israel'. Some were chosen because they were very specifically important to the beliefs of one faith and identity in relation to Israel and Palestine, and would aid understanding by drawing attention to them. These include 'Chosen People', 'Kingdom of God' and 'exile'. An additional reason some terms were chosen was because there are often underlying assumptions that terms will be mutually understood and heard in the same way. In reality however, these words often contain different signifiers, associations and ideas for Jews and Christians, both between and within our faith communities given different denominational cultures, beliefs and contexts.

5.1.2 Words are living things and therefore fluid and, even when used by people from the same or very similar backgrounds, can carry underlying nuances that are assumed and often go unnoticed. This would be true of any words we use in virtually every context, which means that any glossary cannot be an exhaustive and conclusive interpretation of the words under its consideration, merely a marker in what are, of necessity, continuing conversations that will, like shifting sands, carry on evolving.

5.1.3 The challenges of agreeing which words would be examined, how to manage the fact that some terms will have more significance to one faith, and how to ensure that individuals could be honest and curious put a lot of emphasis on what format we designed for the dialogues

and how entries would be displayed. The first initial meeting therefore began with agreeing expectations, determining the values of this work that would be important and identifying the principles that would help the group work together. The values that were chosen were friendship, collaboration and understanding and these values represented the attitudes and spirit in which we approached our task. The principles of the group's approach also convey important principles bear in mind for when this glossary may spark future dialogues. These include the fact that our understanding of the 'other' is often overestimated and it is only through true and careful listening that we discover the myths and bias underpinning our initial perspective. It was also reflected from the outset that no single participant could represent a whole faith, that there is a myriad of beliefs behind each word. Participants could, however, be mindful of a spectrum of meanings and attitudes that we could bring to the glossary in order to shed some light on several different views within both the Church of Scotland and amongst Orthodox British Jews.

5.1.4 The process following from the initial meeting involved participants splitting into pairs and using an interview format to discover the meanings and significance of the term for their respective faith tradition, how that term relates to Jewish or Christian identity and how it has featured in the history of each faith group. At the end of the session, the key differences and similarities were identified and discussed as a group with each answering what would be helpful for the other faith to know about how this term is used by either Jews or Christians. Jewish and Christian answers have then been placed side by side to shed light onto each other, whilst ensuring that this glossary does not attempt to conflate the meanings and thus dilute the differences. Participants were asked to give a spectrum of beliefs and answers from within their traditions. However, the focus is naturally limited by the fact that participants come from Orthodox Jewish and Church of Scotland backgrounds. Glossary entries therefore reflect ideas and attitudes that participants felt confident describing and cannot be seen to represent all Jews and Christians. The hope is that those who come to use the glossary will benefit in three important ways:

- Firstly, that they will learn new things about their own faith as well as another;
- Secondly, that they will appreciate seeing the different meanings and significances alongside one another, to discover similarities, key differences, ambiguities and sometimes common roots of terms that took on new and diverging meanings as the two faiths developed from the first century onwards; and,
- Thirdly, it is hoped that users of this glossary will approach these terms in a new way, particularly in relation to how they may preach and express hopes and prayers for peace and justice in Israel in Palestine.

One of the main reported impacts of creating this glossary for the project participants has been that they are more intentional and mindful of how terms may be heard and understood outside of their own tradition. The glossary is a tool for testing assumptions as well as granting access to learn the impact of those assumptions. This represents a rare privilege in a world where one often learns about impact once the damage is done. One of the themes that can be seen across multiple entries and was voiced in multiple dialogues is the tendency with which Christianity has unintentionally fossilised Jewish concepts, beliefs and

ideas due to the fact that Christian roots are indelibly tied to Jewish origins. Jewish participants have similarly been surprised to see how terms often start out having very similar meanings but then go on to be used and understood quite differently in Christianity, showcasing the different priorities, beliefs and journeys each faith has been on. The interview process has allowed participants to be open and honest, with themselves and their partner, allowing new opportunities for understanding and friendship to emerge. The intention is for this glossary to be a useful resource to spark future dialogues, both within our own Church and with our friends and colleagues in the Jewish community. An example entry from the glossary can be found in *Appendix 1*.

5.2 Islamophobia

5.2.1 The Faith Impact Forum has agreed to support a campaign for the widespread adoption in local authorities of the All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) definition of Islamophobia. In lending the Church of Scotland's support to this campaign it has also agreed that it would be helpful for the Church to also adopt this definition. The APPG definition is: "Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness." It is useful to the Church and society as a whole because it defines Islamophobia as a form of racism. Seeing Islamophobia in this way helps to frame it as something more structural and multifaceted than overt expressions of religious hatred or abuse. It helps to demonstrate that this form of prejudice is rooted in a profound 'othering' that belittles, sees as intrinsically alien, generalises and stereotypes Muslims. Going further, it also helps us understand how Muslims are subject to a system of discrimination, control and socio-economic exclusion. The reasons the Faith Impact Forum agreed to adopt this definition and support the campaign for widespread recognition and adoption are threefold:

1. It would be an important act of offering solidarity to the Muslim community which is dealing with this issue on a number of fronts from the UK government to the streets of our cities and towns.
2. The definition captures all the different forms of Islamophobia that may otherwise go unnoticed and we, as a Church, should be championing this approach.
3. It helps us understand what we are opposing when we say 'we oppose Islamophobia' and it helps us recognise it when it happens in the Church. By adopting it along with the guidelines we will have a tool to reflect on speech and actions from members and leaders as well as our communications, reports and resources should they stray into relevant subjects. It also can inform any future policy work relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). While this would be a tool, it wouldn't affect how we then respond to instances of Islamophobia from members and leaders, that would still be a matter for the disciplinary and complaints process.

6. INTEGRITY – VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN TASK GROUP

6.1 At the 2021 General Assembly, the increase in domestic abuse and violence against women in Scotland was noted through a brief report on the impact of Covid 19, including the effects of associated multiple lockdowns and the impact on women's equality more generally. This year the full consequences of the pandemic are beginning

to emerge, and parish ministers are seeing their effects on the lives behind the statistics as women find themselves turning to friends and leaders in the hope of a safe space and a caring, sensitive response. The Church has a stark choice when facing this issue. Church members and leaders can either ignore it as something that happens 'out there' in other homes and communities and parts of the world that look and sound very different from ours, or they can begin to address how and why violence against women takes place. This involves examining the justice issues underpinning it and the various cultural frameworks, found in all parts of our society, that provide justification for both trivialising and normalising domestic violence, aspects of which we all contribute to. Most importantly the Church can choose to address the fact that violence against women happens here in Scotland, in affluent as well as poor communities, in rural as well as urban contexts, and in a broad spectrum of homes, including those of church members and leaders.

6.2 The Church of Scotland's violence against women task group, Integrity, has been working to ensure that the Church of Scotland can be a place people can turn to, where they will be believed and helped. An integral dimension of its approach is the focus on gender inequality as the key issue through which to understand why violence against women takes place, can be ignored and becomes normalised. It is only by recognising its source and nature that we can hope to bring an end to this targeted form of violence. The focus of 2021 has therefore been to roll out a training pilot that provides an introduction to violence against women in order to increase awareness, understanding and confidence in speaking about the issue within the Church. Thanks to a great deal of interest, and recognition of the Church's potentially beneficial role, Integrity managed to coordinate six pilots in very different parish settings. Through testing material, reflective exercises and methods of delivering information, an interactive and practical training module has been developed and has begun to be rolled out from the start of 2022. Integrity has now been able to offer this training to anyone in a position of leadership and pastoral responsibility by offering three open events this year and up to four bespoke sessions for groups within congregations. With a small budget to ensure we have professional input from an expert on the theme of violence against women, participants are encouraged to discuss how the Church can be a place that is welcoming, supportive and where all violence is challenged, with the hope that the Church can encourage equal and healthy relationships and enable anyone experiencing abuse to come forward and seek help. Those who participated in the pilot training reported leaving feeling 'more confident if someone were to approach them' (Brightons Parish, Falkirk). 100% of participants also reported that the training had given them helpful ideas when it came to improving gender justice in their congregation.

6.3 In October 2021, a strategy day took place with stakeholders present from across the Church. At this event, Integrity members could reflect on achievements from the past two years and how priorities have developed since then. The main outcome of discussion and feedback from stakeholders has been a call to focus on capacity building within the Church so that at every level the Church is confident and responsible in responding to the issue as well as being equipped with the practical skills to help individuals within parishes to seek help and support. It was also felt that the theological and spiritual

aspects of what Integrity brings needs to be emphasised. The role of spirituality in resisting all forms of violence is at the centre of real and lasting change. Furthermore, it is recognition of the importance faith and spirituality that differentiates Integrity's work from secular campaigns and helps give credibility to this issue within Christian contexts. For this reason, Integrity hopes to focus its efforts through capacity building and awareness raising with an exploration of Christian beliefs and Church of Scotland cultures to underpin the content of the resources it promotes and training it develops. This will involve continuing training of all leaders and collaboration with others in the Church on matters that relate to gender justice and domestic abuse (with the hope that Integrity will work with Safeguarding to produce e-learning training on domestic abuse to be in use by 2023). Integrity will also collaborate with safeguarding and others in the Church on a survivor's policy and a trauma informed approach. Integrity's communications subgroup will aim to ensure that the 16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women in November/December, Thursdays in Black (an ecumenical campaign that encourages people to speak out against all forms of gender-based violence) and International Women's Day are engaged with across the Church, to become key features of worship, reflection and inspiration for all Church leaders and members.

7. SOCIETAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES

7.1 Poverty

7.1.1 The longstanding commitment of the Church of Scotland to the gospel bias to the poor continues to be reflected in the work and priorities of the Faith Impact Forum, particularly with regard to our societal and political activity. The General Assembly has in the past called for more Government support for social security payments to help people out of poverty. Child poverty in particular has been a particular concern. Over the past year the Church has joined with other faith groups and anti-poverty organisations to call on the Scottish Government to double the Scottish Child Payment to £20 for eligible children; we were very happy with the announcement by the Finance Secretary, Kate Forbes MSP, that this change will take effect from April 2022 and will make a real difference to children living in poverty. However, more work and effort are required, and the main responsibility for welfare spending and decisions remains with the UK Government Department for Work and Pensions. We remain committed to working with UK Church partners to seek further changes, including as part of a new campaign 'Scrap the Cap' which seeks to end the benefits cap policy, which has a detrimental impact on larger families or households where there are complex needs.

7.2 Assisted Suicide

7.2.1 Soon after the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections, Liam McArthur MSP announced he intended to introduce a Member's Bill that would permit assisted suicide in Scotland. The General Assembly has previously said that the Church does not support any change to the law which would permit assisted suicide (sometimes called assisted dying). The Faith Impact Forum encouraged ministers and members to respond to the consultation and we submitted a response on behalf of the Church of Scotland. More information and a copy of the response which details the arguments we have put forward is available on the website <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-views/end-of-life>

7.2.2 If Liam McArthur can gain enough cross-party support, his Bill will be introduced and follow the normal Parliamentary process. If this happens the Faith Impact Forum will continue to share the opinion of the Church that opposes any introduction of assisted suicide.

7.3 Conversion Therapy

7.3.1 The Scottish Government's 'Programme for Government 2021-2022' says that they "will protect LGBT people from harm by banning the damaging promotion and practice of conversion therapy, bringing forward legislation that is as comprehensive as possible within devolved powers by the end of 2023, if UK Government proposals do not go far enough." At the time of writing a UK Government consultation process is ongoing,^[iv] and the Scottish Government have announced plans to establish an expert advisory group to assist them.^[v]

7.3.2 The proposal for a ban on Conversion Therapy would prohibit any kind of therapeutic process which would seek to change (or 'convert') someone's sexual orientation to be heterosexual and trans to cis (birth) gender. Such practices have been sometimes been used by religious organisations and so the language of 'conversion' has often been used. Research has shown that therapies aimed at altering, changing or 'converting' someone's sexual orientation have not been proven to have the intended outcome, and many practices connected to such therapies were harmful to the recipient.

7.3.3 In 2011 the General Assembly adopted the following statement on the pastoral care of homosexual Christians:

It is contrary to God's will that Christians should be hostile in any way to a person because he or she is homosexual by orientation and in his or her practice. In other words we view homophobia as sinful. We do not include in the concept of homophobia both the bona fide belief that homosexual practice is contrary to God's will and the responsible statement of that belief in preaching or writing.

It is the duty of the Church to welcome, minister, and reach out to people regardless of their sexual orientation and practice. The Church should strive to manifest God's love to all of his people.

In particular, the Church should recognise the heavy burden which a homosexual orientation continues to place on some who find it difficult or impossible to reconcile their orientation with their understanding of God's purposes as revealed in the Bible. There is a particular need for the Church to reach out pastorally to them and to make them welcome.

7.3.5 In light of this position, the Faith Impact Forum recommends that the Church of Scotland should concur with the position of the Church of England General Synod and the Methodist Conference, namely that there should be a ban on Conversion Therapy. We note the support of the Church of England and Methodist Church to use the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK',^[vi] as an important and widely understood definition of Conversion Therapy that is backed by more than 20 health, counselling and psychotherapy organisations including the Association of Christian Counsellors.

7.3.6 In the creation of legislation to ban Conversion Therapy we hope there will be wider attempts with and within religious institutions to address issues of spiritual abuse or psychological pressure. There is no place in pastoral care for activity which is coercive or

exploitative. We aspire to the highest standards of conduct and practice that is done in the name of the Church. Through provision of pastoral care, ministry and support to individuals, Church ministers, elders and members should follow best practice in their conduct and we recommend that the policies of Pastoral Care UK and the Confederation of Scottish Counselling Associations be understood and followed. The Church has its own Safeguarding policies and procedures for work with children and vulnerable adults.

7.3.7 Information about how to complain about the inappropriate or unethical behaviour of someone involved in the life the Church of Scotland is available on the Church's website.

7.4 Social Care and Substance Use

7.4.1 Over the last year the Faith Impact Forum has worked particularly closely with CrossReach. In the autumn the Scottish Government consulted on plans for a 'National Care Service for Scotland', implementing recommendations of an independent review headed by Derek Feeley which reported in early 2021. The consultation suggests the Scottish Government are planning far-reaching reforms to the way social care is planned and managed, and will have an impact on formal service providers, such as CrossReach, as well as informal and voluntary led activities (that might work to tackle loneliness and social isolation) such as church coffee mornings or pastoral visiting. The Faith Impact Forum and CrossReach issued a joint response to the consultation. For more information see <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/our-views/social-care-reform>

7.4.2 It is anticipated that the Scottish Government will introduce a Bill in the Scottish Parliament in 2022 and the Forum will continue to work with CrossReach to highlight opportunities and concerns from the Church of Scotland.

7.4.3 Scotland's relationship with and treatment of substance users has increasingly come under the spotlight in recent years. The number of deaths caused by drug use in Scotland is at a record high, and is far higher than in other parts of the UK, and in other European countries. Last year the First Minister appointed Angela Constance MSP as Minister for Drugs Policy and some new funding for residential rehabilitation was announced. Late in 2021 the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party leader, Douglas Ross MSP, introduced a proposal for a Member's Bill that would introduce a Right to Addiction Recovery, with the aim of improving access to a range of treatment services. The Forum also noted the remarkable joint visit by the First Minister and Douglas Ross to Bluevale Community Club in Glasgow, and their shared commitment to work together to tackle Scotland's drugs deaths crisis. In the Church, as well as the important work of CrossReach's range of substance use services, there are a number of congregations and parish ministers who have been involved in local work for many years, including the former Moderator the Very Rev Dr Martin Fair and the incoming Moderator, the Rev Dr Iain Greenshields. With this wealth of experience, and the current appetite for new ideas and collaboration, the Faith Impact Forum thinks that the time is right for the Church to collectively reassess our work, actions and policies with regards to drugs and substance use; the last time the General Assembly considered a report on this topic was 1995. The Forum invites the General Assembly to instruct that work be done and to receive a report in 2023.

7.5 Legacy of Slavery

7.5.1 The General Assembly of 2020 instructed the Faith Impact Forum to report to a future Assembly on the issue of racial justice, the legacy of slavery and the Church of Scotland, in partnership with the Faith Nurture Forum, Assembly Trustees, and General Trustees and to consult widely with people of colour in the Church of Scotland and with Black Majority churches in Scotland. This work commenced in the Spring of 2021 and we aim to present the report to the Assembly in 2023.

7.6 Gender Recognition Act Reform

7.6.1 The Scottish Government have indicated that they will soon begin legislating to reform the Gender Recognition Act. The General Assembly has not considered the question before, and there is likely to be a wide diversity of opinion among the membership of the Church. The legislation is likely to lead to two debates in wider society.

7.6.2 The first is on the detail of the actual legislation, which will be about amending the process by which someone can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate and whether or not it should be made easier for people in this situation. The second will be on much more general issues not addressed in the Bill itself, around diverse gender identities, trans rights and the acceptance (or discrimination) of difference within society as a whole. The two conversations are connected, but the Bill only deals with the former.

7.6.3 On the first debate about the Bill, the Faith Impact Forum will seek to consult and engage constructively on the issues that will soon come before Holyrood and where the views of the public will be invited. We urge individual ministers, elders and members to consider the ideas for reform themselves, and if they are so moved, to make representation to their own MSPs. The Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office will publish a briefing on the issues once the legislation is introduced.

7.6.4 The second debate around gender and transgender issues more generally has, regrettably, often become a battleground for controversy and angry disagreement. This is not a helpful atmosphere for the consideration of people's identities and a topic that is possibly new or unfamiliar to a large part of the general public.

7.6.5 The Church of Scotland published a very helpful resource *Diverse Gender Identities and Pastoral Care* <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/learn/publications/diverse-gender-identities-and-pastoral-care>, and recognises the need for further thought and study of the issues of human identity. The publication of the very helpful resource speaks to the matter from a pastoral care perspective, but we have been missing serious and considered theological reflection and we have not done enough to resource meaningful and serious conversations at a local church level.

7.6.6 The debates around the Bill are likely to generate controversy, and we urge prayer for those who feel afraid, misunderstood or marginalised on both sides of the argument. We hope that as legislation is brought forward, its consideration can take place in an atmosphere of empathy, kindness and co-operation. Campaigners, politicians and those commenting on public life have a role in contributing to this culture, and no one on neither side of the debate should have to face personal attacks for expressing their thoughts, feelings, opinions or experiences.

7.6.7 The Bill also creates an important opportunity for many people to learn more about the issues involved. The conversation about trans issues will not be confined to legislative scrutiny and we feel the time is right for the Church of Scotland to begin to address issues of gender and transgender identity. The starting point for this thinking is reflected in the work of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, set up by the Assembly Trustees in 2021: who are asking the question about Church practice and policy: what does "All God's People" and "All Are Welcome" mean?

7.6.8 The Church of Scotland, through the Faith Impact Forum, should seek to remain proactive in considering the transgender debates, as it does for many public issues in society. We ask the General Assembly, through receiving this report, to note that we will keep gender and transgender questions on the agenda over the coming months, especially in relation to the Bill in Holyrood. We hope that this may allow for conversations to develop with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group and the Theological Forum and others in the Church to deepen our understanding and to come up with some responses to an ongoing dialogue – within the Church and to wider society. Our hope is that we will be known as a Church where all people can speak and be listened to in a safe space and a respectful manner. The Church has a role as reconciler and healer on an issue which has generated so much controversy and hurtful comment.

7.7 Society, Religion and Technology

7.7.1 Following a review of their activities, which wholeheartedly endorsed the value of the project, while making constructive recommendations as to its future direction, the Society, Religion and Technology Project continues to help the Church engage with ethical issues in science and technology, and also to work around issues of health and wellbeing, at both a policy and a congregational level.

7.7.2 The SRT Project is committed to producing, over the next 3 years, a series of interlinked studies around the special role which the Church has in addressing the many health challenges which we face as a society. From isolation and loneliness, use of social media, climate change, the Covid-19 pandemic, there are many factors having serious adverse effects on mental health and wellbeing in Scotland and globally. SRT is well placed to help develop the Church's response to some of these issues. In addition, the SRT will explore use by the church of digital technologies in worship and beyond (e.g. present practicalities such as websites and Alexa apps, as well as looking further to our potential presence in the metaverse).

7.8 Digital Church

7.8.1 It is widely recognised that all of our lives are increasingly being lived online. The Church of Scotland should be making the best use of digital technologies, and it is an area of our life which requires urgent attention.

7.8.2 While it is clear that the current Covid pandemic has meant that many of us have been on an uncomfortably steep learning curve to use digital technologies in worship and beyond, there are many ways in which these technologies provide opportunities for the Church to extend its reach.

7.8.3 As this affects all aspects of church life, the Faith Impact Forum is suggesting the pooling and sharing of ideas and creative thinking across a range of committees and departments. We recognise that the first port of call

for information for most people is to look online. We need to begin to help churches to think strategically about present practicalities. For individual congregations, this may mean things like more accessible websites, or the livestreaming of worship services on platforms which we already use such as Facebook.

7.8.4 While many Presbyteries and congregations do well in providing online information, we are aware that there are many who struggle, and who would benefit from practical support and help in these areas.

7.8.5 We appreciate that there is much which could be learned from other denominations. For example, the Church of England has helped to pioneer the use of contactless payments for donations and the collection of weekly, they have created a process to assist in the collection of data to help measure energy consumption in church buildings, and they have deployed missional tools such as daily devotions on Amazon Alexa. Several Church organisations have interactive Apps, which share prayers, bible studies and news, as well as showing where a nearby church is. There are also some great examples of innovative practice within the Church of Scotland which could be shared more widely. Our impression, however, is that there are many who would appreciate help and guidance from those with experience or skills in this area.

7.8.6 We should also acknowledge that a growing number of people, (perhaps especially younger people) are “digital natives” – who have grown up surrounded by technology. They might be as comfortable (or perhaps even more at home) online as in the real “analogue” world. How does the Church, inhabit both places with authenticity and integrity? What is the potential for our involvement in these technologies? What would a Church of Scotland presence in the ‘metaverse’ look like? What would its absence mean for mission? There is much to be done, and many questions to be asked. We need to make progress on the digital journey.

In the name of the Faith Impact Forum

VERY REV DR SUSAN BROWN, *Convener*
REV ALAN MILLER, *Vice-Convener*
REV DR SCOTT SHACKLETON, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev Alan Miller

Alan has served as Vice Convener of the Forum since its inception, and prior to that, as Convener of the Asia Committee, then Convener of the Europe Committee of the former World Mission Council. He has brought to these roles wisdom born of both knowledge and experience, as well as a passion for Christ’s mission in the world in all its facets. Alan is a man whose words are measured not by volume but by their carefully chosen, thoughtful and incisive nature.

The Forum is grateful for the calm sough Alan has kept, for his loyal commitment to the work of the Forum, for his social and political thoughtfulness, and for keeping the Church of Scotland engaged with the world church, its concerns and hopes, and helping build and sustain supportive relationships internationally.

VERY REV DR SUSAN BROWN, *Convener*

Appendix 1

Meaning(s) within Jewish tradition

Peace or *shalom* refers to completeness and harmony. It refers to both a tranquillity and non-belligerency i.e the absence of war or conflict. There is a strong sense that there can be no flourishing without peace.

Peace sits alongside truth and justice as the core values of Judaism. There is an obligation to strive for peace, this means it is not just valued but actively sought. A famous Talmudic sage, Hillel, states that we should 'be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace.'

A story from the *Genesis Rabah* 85:8 stanza 7 (Midrash, which is an ancient commentary on the Hebrew scriptures) offers a story illustrating the relationship between truth, righteousness, justice and peace. In it we find the ministry of angels divided over whether or not God should create Adam. "Mercy and truth collided, righteousness and peace clashed". Mercy and righteousness both argued for Adam to be created saying that he will do merciful and righteous deeds. Truth and peace, however, said 'let him not be created for he will be full of falsehood and will never stop quarrelling'. In this story God took truth and 'threw it to the ground'. God sacrifices truth for the sake of peace. This story shows the tensions between all four values and gives us a sense of how sometimes truth needs to be seen as plural rather than singular, by fragmenting it, no single human can claim to possess it.

In the ethics of the fathers there is an idea expressed that any dispute for the sake of heaven will never end, there will be no victor, and both views are, arguably, right. Through this we see an idea of fragmented truth and peace not being about the victory of one view over another.

War is something which is given a legal framework within scripture, though there is no such thing as a holy war. There is an understanding that war can be commanded by God under certain conditions. There is therefore a tension between the scripture which points to and describes a Messianic era where all nations worship God and there is universal peace through a new holy order (as found in Isaiah) and the practical aspects of sovereignty over a land which involves both conquering it and protecting it through war. War is therefore seen as an acceptable and at times inevitable tool of foreign policy. In Exodus (15:3) God is joyfully praised as 'Man of War' and in Deuteronomy the Israelites are told: 'For the Lord, your God, is He Who goes with you. To fight against your enemies, to save you. (20:4)

Meaning(s) within Christian tradition

Peace is understood as lying at the heart of everything. On an individual level it involves oneness with God, creation, others and yourself. Given that it runs through so many things, it can often be hard to grasp which leads to it being defined as the absence of something e.g. war, conflict, violence.

The word *Eirene* is the New Testament Greek word for peace. It overlaps with *shalom* in many ways but is broader in its usage.

There is similar attention given in Christianity to the relationship between righteousness and peace, with the idea that peace would be disturbed if one did not live before God and others in righteousness. There can therefore be no God for those who are considered wicked.

Peace is seen as coming through the Messiah as described in Isaiah and Micah. The departure from Jewish understandings is that Jesus is understood to be the Messiah so peace is achieved through his death and resurrection. This is why the passages from Isaiah heralding the 'prince of peace' are used in worship at Christmas as Jesus is understood to be this prince of peace. In John 14:27 Jesus says 'my peace I give to you all.' This is also understood to be peace between God and humanity and to restore this relationship: "We have made peace with God through our Lord Jesus" (Romans 5:1). With the idea of *shalom* as completeness Paul describes Jesus as our 'peace' given that he restores to completeness our relationship with God.

Working for peace is similarly commended in the New Testament 'blessed are the peacemakers' is one of the most used phrases to underline this, along with the instruction to pray for 'your enemies and those who persecute you' and to turn the other cheek when slapped, which for many is an example of the more radical pursuit of peace modelled in the Christian message and good news.

The commandment to be peacemakers also translates into understanding the importance of maintaining unity through the bond of peace, which requires humility, love and patience. This is meant to be channelled into how Christians conduct themselves and how to view the world. I.e. the Christian message is meant to restore brokenness as we see it in our world through poverty, broken relationships, conflict etc. Peace therefore becomes a message of wholeness rather than absence of war which is how it can be used in English.

The emphasis that gets to heart of what peace means is mutual flourishing.

Importance of the term in Jewish history

While there is an ethical and legal framework found in the Torah for how and when to wage war, there is a long historical gap from the era in which Jews were sovereign over their own land and the modern era of sovereignty in Israel. In addition, the modern state of Israel is not a theocratic state so it's hard to translate the legal frameworks found in the Bible onto a modern military.

There are however many on the religious right who interpret the Six Day war in 1967 to be one which was commanded by God.

The influence of history and how it converges with ethics and spirituality can be seen through the work of Israel's first and second chief Rabbis. Rabbi Kook who was chief rabbi in the 1930s expressed a mystical and universalist vision for Israel and an era of peace where Zionism would no longer be necessary. His son Zvi Yehuda Kook wrote after the Holocaust and illustrates much more mistrust of the non-Jewish world and thus the need to conquer and protect. In that sense the pursuit of peace is seen as a luxury which is much further away, out of reach, given the political reality on the ground.

As we get further from the Holocaust, this may change however we saw in Netanyahu's speeches a consistent rhetoric which drew on themes from the Holocaust to gain support for aggressive policies.

What meanings/importance does this term have in relation to Jewish identity?

The Jewish tradition does not mandate pacifism, nor peace at any price though some Jews become pacifists based on Jewish values.

Regarding identity and issues of peace within the diaspora, there is often a tension between seeing oneself as a vulnerable minority with limited autonomy and the also identifying with Israel which has power and autonomy. This sense of being vulnerable influences interpretation of Israel's' actions as it is underpinned with the sense of diaspora fear that the world is out to get us (both Israel and Jews across the world).

In Israel, while there may be a day to day absence of conflict, this is not a real peace because the security measures and policies of the state require the subjugation of others. This leads to uncomfortable but necessary conversations about peace and how to ensure that both peoples can flourish.

While peace is definitely the ideal, with the likes of Rabbi Hirsch pointing to a future without war, Jewish identity is caught between seeing it as something aspirational but far away and at odds with the present realpolitik of what's necessary for security.

On the other hand, there is a firm understanding that religious disagreement does not need to be settled through a violent conflict. Rabbi Sacks was keen to point out that the Jewish role is to bring a dignity to difference and to see it as valuable and important in the world. In other words, if one day the world turns to monotheism, this does not need to be pushed for through war or force.

Importance of the term in Christian history

As a faith which calls for a specific acceptance of Jesus as God and saviour, there is some difficulty for Christians in dealing with differences of religion and belief. This can be seen in much of history, as Christian rulers have interpreted Christian victory over others as a sign of God's favour and Christianity as the one true faith. This has resulted in a fear of dissent and different views and can be seen in the actions and events of the Crusades leading to the concept that war could be holy if it was seen as purging the world of enemies of Christ. It can also be seen in the violent persecution during the Spanish Inquisition and witch trials. It has also led to periods of national crisis when other nations were seen to be more powerful than Protestant Christian nations e.g. English horror at Spain's dominance in South America and the rise of the Ottoman Empire.

Christianity is a faith which developed from a very vulnerable minority with the mindset and scriptures of a small group that became the majority almost overnight. Arguably this has resulted in it looking to prove itself and its claims about the world through war and power rather than through the more radical message of peace contained in the gospel message. In this way power could be seen as the opposite of peace, given that pursuit of power it opposes any campaign for humility, love and patience.

What meanings/importance does this term have in relation to Christian identity?

There is a strong pacifist tradition within Christianity and many would see this to be part and parcel of living out one's faith but most mainstream Christians see war as a last but often necessary resort.

Peace is then something aspirational for humanity and achievable with God and in individual relationships.

Many Christians tend to slide into a way of thinking that sees peace as the absence of conflict. This then results in a vision that doesn't help lead towards lasting and real peace of human flourishing. It also doesn't help address differing views as it can result in conflict avoidance and the desire for one view to simply be 'right' and win. There is also a sense that those who are right will see suffering as a part of what it means to be right which then results in an idealised sense of martyrdom. It also results in the idealisation of victims and then seeks to identify the victim in any situation. This has definitely influenced how Christians may view the conflict in Israel and Palestine as many Christians automatically identify more with the Palestinian cause given the asymmetry of power which seems straightforward to so many.

Remembrance Sunday is difficult day on the national and Christian calendar as there is a tension between those more inclined to criticise all warfare and those who either served or saw it as a practical duty. It becomes a difficult day for ministers as they write the service with words carefully chosen in order not to glorify war but also respect the experiences and views of those wishing to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifice. One of the most moving parts of one Remembrance service was a dialogue between a 16-year-old and a Lancaster bomber. The congregation were moved to tears hearing the young person describe war games on his game console and the veteran describing the harsh reality of actual warfare.

What is important for Christians to know about the Jewish understanding?

Judaism has not had the length of experience of sovereignty that Christian nations have had given the past 2000 years of living in diaspora.

There is definite obligation to pursue peace in Judaism, which is an active commitment.

There does however have to be recognition that Jewish people have suffered and this has resulted in a policy of defensiveness which affects the other. There can often be an overly simplistic Christian view that Jews as victims have become perpetrators which paints Jews into a role.

There seems to be a lot of discomfort from Christians in the idea of borders and policing those borders given the ideas contained in the Kingdom of God. This means it must be hard for Christians to see Israel with such a strong army which is supported in Israel, this must seem particularly wrongheaded or anathema to Christians.

What is important for Jews to know about the Christian understanding?

Christianity has had a lot of experience of balancing sovereignty over nations and peoples with Christian beliefs. This has resulted in adaptations of ideals and grafting concepts such as 'holy war' onto the scriptures.

Christians have looked back on the wars waged in the name of Christianity and there has been a renewed emphasis on the need to pursue peace and reconciliation as both a Biblical commandment and a moral duty. There is also a practical call to pursue peace by addressing poverty, injustice etc as more structural reasons for conflicts and war.

Christians find disagreement of views hard to cope with and could learn from the Jewish tradition in many ways in seeing a dignity in difference.

Key Differences Summarised

- Jews and Judaism sees peace as one of the core values but something that is promised in a Messianic age this therefore means that war is still a necessary part of life and sovereignty.
- Christianity sees Jesus as messiah bringing peace to the world and restoring God's relationship with humanity.
- Jews have suffered at the hands of other nations and peoples which has resulted in more defensive instincts when it comes to sovereignty in Israel and protecting that sovereignty.
- Christian understandings of peace are influenced by a history of problematic and unjust uses of violence and war in the name of religion to push for peace in the world today. There is more of an emphasis on righting the wrongs of the past.

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FAITH NURTURE FORUM MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum to continue work on the Capability framework (*Section 2.1*) (*Appendix 1*).
3. Adopt the Code of Professional Practice and Good Conduct for the Ministries of the Church of Scotland as a standard to which all those involved in the recognised ministries of the Church should be expected to adhere (*Section 2.2*) (*Appendix 2*).
4. Instruct the Forum to update the relevant Handbooks with the revised Code of Conduct at the earliest opportunity, make an electronic copy available on the Ascend website, and alert all those engaged in the recognised ministries of the Church to the revised Code by email.
5. Invite comment on the working of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII, 2003) with submissions being emailed to **VacancyAct@churchofscotland.org.uk** (*Section 2.6*).
6. Pass an Act amending the terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) (*Appendix 3*).
7. Approve the figures contained in Appendix 11 as the total number of ministry posts to be allocated among the Presbyteries, and this to be the basis for the next five years, subject to annual reporting and agreement of the General Assembly as required in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. (*Section 8.1.11*) (*Appendix 11*).
8. Pass the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act Act (*Appendix 4*).
9. Pass an Act amending the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act [Act X 2004] (*Appendix 5*).
10. Pass an Act amending the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992) (*Appendix 6*).
11. Pass an Act amending the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011) (*Appendix 7*).
12. Express thanks for the service given by Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore as Principal of New College, Edinburgh, and affirm the proposal that Rev Dr Alison Jack be appointed as her successor from 1 September 2022 (*Section 5.14*).
13. Nominate as trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund; (*Section 8*).
 - i. Dr Eilidh Renwick to serve for a second term;
 - ii. The Reverend Scott McCarthy.
14. Affirm the commitment of the Church to place priority for the poorest at the heart of all that it does, recognising the mission of Priority Area congregations in this (*Section 15*).
15. Instruct the Forum to continue to develop and deliver the key priority of implementing the whole Church strategy of prioritising support for those living in poverty and at the margins within the Faith Action Plan, through the Priority Areas Implementation Group and Priority Areas Team.

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This past year has been one of significant change for the Faith Nurture Forum with the appointment of Rev Dr Scott Shackleton as Head of the Faith Action Programme and the development of the Faith Action Plan. This has seen staff moving into one group with redefined roles and the Forum involved in discussions with the D10 Group about the future format of both Forums.

1.2 It has often been commented over this past year that we are in the perfect storm – Pandemic, Presbytery Restructuring and Presbytery Mission Planning. The work of the Ascend Programme in supporting those in the ministries of the church has been invaluable during these uncertain times. However, the disconnect that many have felt from church and the erroneous belief that we have too many ministers has impacted on recruitment. This remains a pressing challenge.

1.3 The introduction of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act dominated last year's General Assembly. Much was said and much was promised so, not surprisingly, fulfilling these promises has been a key priority for the Faith Nurture Forum in this past year. It was never going to be easy, and we are in a very unsettling place at the moment, but there is excitement and possibility as Presbyteries work prayerfully and imaginatively on their new mission plans. Support for those most affected – those training for ministry and going through the admissions process – has been a paramount concern of the Forum.

1.4 Along with the staff we are undergoing a strategic planning process to enable more focused working on our key priorities to fulfil the Faith Action Plan. We have worked with the Assembly Trustees Training Task Group and our Education and Training Implementation Group to review our training process for Ministers of Word and Sacrament alongside the broad portfolio for training all our people within an Integrated Learning Programme.

1.5 We have welcomed Sanctuary First as our new Digital Ministries partner and are delighted that the Society, Religion, and Technology Group from the Faith Impact Forum is developing a digital strategy for the church alongside our ongoing work with Resourcing Worship through a variety of platforms. We are supporting the Under 40s Working Group with members and staff sitting alongside those from Faith Impact and the Assembly Trustees to develop this important work. We are also managing the work of the new Leadership Advisory Group and the Gaelic Group. We have managed this year to reduce our central spending significantly (excluding ministries support) which is a great credit to our staff and members (£1.4m), whilst at the same time our support to all our areas of output – recruiting, training, support, retirement, priority areas, children and young families/adults and more – has been first-rate despite the challenges of COVID. We have worked hard on fulfilling all of our Deliverances from the General Assembly this year which is worthy of comment.

2. UPDATE ON PREVIOUS DELIVERANCES

2.1 Capability Procedure for Ministers

2.1.1 The Forum reported on the need for a Capability Procedure to the General Assembly of 2021 in S.10 of its Report. This is not the place to repeat what was said then, all of which still applies. It is however worth repeating the Forum's view, affirmed by the General Assembly, that the main goal of a Capability Procedure is always improvement in what a Minister does and how he or she does it, with a view to helping the congregation to discern its mission in context and be faithful in fulfilling that mission. This is always rooted in time and place, and should be reflective of the best practice in Local Church Review which helps to determine a congregation's mission in context.

2.1.2 The question is rightly asked how to determine what capability means, when ministers of word and sacrament inducted to parishes are office holders; and where there is no job description to reflect on and assess whether a minister is being faithful to his or her ordination vows and exercising ministry in a manner which is appropriate.

2.1.3 One other area of work which the Forum is engaging in is what terms and conditions might be appropriate for ministers of word and sacrament. Within Education and Learning, work is also underway on developing a competence framework, reflecting on Act 10, 2004, on Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministers, which states that practical training for the ministry is designed to promote competence in the following areas:

- Public worship and preaching;
- Principles of effective communication;
- Speech training;
- Sacramental practice in the Church of Scotland;
- Church law and procedure;
- Team working;
- Leadership, support and encouragement of volunteers;
- The practice of ministry and mission, including the minister as celebrant;
- Personal prayer life.

2.1.4 Further work will be carried out in the coming months, looking ahead to the roll-out of the new shape of Presbyteries, which will offer a more consistent framework within which a Capability Procedure might be applied. An outline of the contents of a possible Capability Procedure is attached as Appendix 1.

2.1.5 Issues which require to be discussed before presenting a final version of such a Capability Procedure are varied. The Forum is clear that issues of pastoral support are critical, and that such pastoral support need not necessarily come from within the Presbytery. The provisions of Act X 2012, on Co-operation among Presbyteries will usefully be applied in any Capability Procedure, to allow for appropriate involvement of others. Equally, ensuring that the Appointed Person, and members of any Capability Procedure Panel, are equipped and possess the appropriate skills will be an essential part of a Capability Procedure.

2.1.6 The Forum will also make recommendations to the 2023 General Assembly about how such a Capability Procedure relates to ill-health issues. The Forum is of the view that ill-health issues are best dealt with through an Incapacity Process, rather than through a Capability

Process, and conversations will continue with the Legal Questions Committee to tease through how this might look. In addition, a robust Capability Procedure will be an appropriate response to some situations where tenure is being viewed as an obstacle to the Church fully exercising its ministry.

2.1.7 Alongside this is the need too to determine how appeals will be heard. The role of the Ministries Appeal Panel could usefully be expanded to take in appeals against decisions made under a Capability Procedure. Finally, the processes within the Church of England and the United Reformed Church both see a role for suitable Human Resources involvement in a Capability Procedure, and further conversations need to take place to determine how that might happen, and alongside this is the need to affirm that any Capability Procedure meets best practice requirements in ACAS terms. Let the last words in this section be with one of the early Church Fathers, St Irenaeus; his words resound down through the centuries, that the glory of God is a human being who is fully alive. Our hope and prayer is that our ministers will be fully alive and exercising their potential in the context where they find themselves.

2.2 Code of Professional Practice and Good Conduct for the Ministries of the Church of Scotland

2.2.1 Following the GA 2021 instruction to bring a revised Code of Professional Practice and Good Conduct for the Ministries of the Church of Scotland to the General Assembly of 2022, Faith Nurture brings forward the revised Code for adoption. (Appendix 2)

2.2.2 The revised Code accordingly updates references and applicability, and includes a new section regarding Communications.

2.2.3 The Code's terms are relevant to all who serve in the Recognised Ministries of the Church, and all paid employees in parish appointments, and each should familiarise themselves fully with the Code.

2.3. Tenure and Retirement of Ministers of Word and Sacrament

2.3.1 The General Assembly 2021 noted the Forum's intention to keep questions around call and tenure under review, and also instructed the Forum to undertake a review of S.18 of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) and report to the General Assembly of 2022.

2.3.2 Questions about tenure, and the desirability or otherwise of a greater use of the provisions of legislation around reviewable charges in the Church's polity, are rightly at the forefront of people's minds as the Church engages in the work of Presbytery Mission Planning. In its engagement with Presbyteries, the Forum's Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group (PMPIG) has heard questions about tenure and flexibility. Where a minister has been inducted on a basis of Reviewable Charge, the Presbytery has the right to review the Charge, and to recall the tenure on six months' notice. In responding to these two separate instructions from last year's General Assembly, it is appropriate to reflect on the provisions of S.18(2) of the Parish Ministry Act as these provisions also provide for the recall of a minister inducted on an unrestricted basis. To recap on this section, it allows Presbytery, where a Presbytery Plan anticipates adjustment at the next vacancy in a charge where a minister is inducted on an unrestricted basis, to recall tenure, at six months ahead of state pension age where a minister was inducted after the General Assembly of

1995 but before the General Assembly of 2012 when the retirement age was raised to 75; and allows for those ministers inducted prior to the General Assembly of 1995, where the Presbytery Plan anticipates adjustment, for their tenure to be recalled six months ahead of their seventieth birthday.

2.3.3 While it is possible for inducted ministers of word and sacrament to continue in post until their seventy-fifth birthday, the reality at time of writing is that few ministers do in fact remain in post beyond their seventieth birthday. The question was asked at the 2021 General Assembly about the need for sensitivity and care, particularly against the background of uncertainty and anxiety experienced by so many in ministry at this time. Consultation has also taken place with the Convener of Legal Questions; the Procurator; the Principal Clerk; and the Solicitor of the Church about the legality of an employer-justified retirement age, which has three different retirement points, and while there are opportunities available for those who were inducted prior to 2012 who find their tenure recalled in line with S.18(2) to apply for other vacancies, questions of fairness and equity arise.

2.3.4 The Forum, in light of the fact that use of the provision of S.18(2) has been limited and in reviewing data around retirement ages as well as acknowledging the increase in state pension age, accordingly asks that the General Assembly repeal the provisions contained therein. This is also a positive step given that those who have been inducted since the General Assembly of 2012 enjoy a greater degree of security.

2.3.5 When this question was raised at the General Assembly of 2021, the questioner was concerned that this option to recall tenure should not be used without careful thought and that it would be applied with pastoral sensitivity. The point made in last year's Faith Nurture Forum Report to the General Assembly about the need for pastoral care of a minister whose tenure is recalled, or is likely to be recalled, whether on grounds of age or as a minister in a reviewable charge still applies, even more so at this time, and Presbyteries are asked to give particular attention and brief such ministers in confidence ahead of general release of such documentation.

2.3.6 The Forum will continue to engage with Presbyteries in supporting the development of Presbytery Mission Plans, and to track questions of tenure during that process. When all plans have been submitted and concurred with, that will be the time and place, with more accurate evidence, to determine what the way forward is and to engage in further consultation with the Church on this question of tenure and whether a universal application of reviewable charges should be introduced into the Church's legislation.

2.4 Manses

2.4.1 In its report to the General Assembly of 2021, the Forum indicated that it hoped to present a Report responding to a 2019 section of deliverance on Manses. This was to cover sustainability of current provision; whether a mixed economy of Manses and private housing was feasible; the provision of Manses to Associate Ministers, Deacons and Ministries Development Staff where appropriate; and consultation with HMRC, General Trustees, other denominations and other relevant parties.

2.4.2 That General Assembly also passed the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, with its direction of planning to numbers to be agreed by the General Assembly, working

towards a figure of 600 ministries and 60 vacancies. The ultimate outworking of this Mission Plan process will be a reduction in the numbers of charges.

2.4.3 The Partnership Development Secretary has been involved with a Working Group on Manses led by the General Trustees, primarily focusing on maintenance and standards issues and Presbytery's role in ensuring that Manses are fit for habitation and are being maintained in accordance with five yearly property survey findings; more information on that Manse Working Group can be found in the Report of the General Trustees to this year's General Assembly. What has become clear from that Manse Working Group's activity thus far is that some Presbyteries have been diligent in this work, while others have been less so. Further work will take place on compiling data on Manses, and establishing this baseline picture will be a critical part of exploring the sustainability of current practice. The Forum reports diligence in responding to this section of deliverance, and is of the view that now is not the time for such a report against the background of Mission Planning, Presbytery Reform and the absence of a detailed national overview of the condition of Manses and how Presbyteries have exercised their responsibility in oversight. Work with the Church's professional advisers on taxation has consistently indicated that Manse provision can only be granted free from the full rigours of benefit in kind taxation where such provision is necessary for the performance of the post-holder's role; this would preclude provision of Manses to Deacons and Associate Ministers. Manse provision in Team Ministries is however permitted.

2.4.4 The Forum will continue to keep this area under review and will report back to a future General Assembly.

2.4.5 The Forum, and the General Trustees, have received correspondence from individual ministers and Presbytery Property Conveners relating to the increases in fuel prices, amounting to around £200 a month in some cases. Some manses are difficult to heat and to insulate, and the Forum sympathises with Presbyteries as they seek to encourage congregations to consider whether manses are fit for purpose and appropriate for ongoing use. Work was done with the then Church and Society Council in a survey on fuel poverty in manses in 2012/2013.

2.4.6 As Presbyteries work their way through the Mission Plan process, there will be a rationalisation of buildings, and opportunities may arise to dispose of some of the more inefficient buildings or to invest in upgrading existing manses. The Forum asks Presbyteries and congregations to be mindful of the needs of Ministers and their families as decisions are taken about manses at this time, and the Forum will work with the Assembly Trustees in exploring questions on stipend levels in the light of fuel increases.

2.5 Pulpit supply and locum remuneration

2.5.1 Since the General Assembly of 2021, the Forum has been in correspondence on matters relating to Pulpit Supply and Locum remuneration. The link between any increase in stipend and its relationship to the Pulpit Supply element of Locum remuneration has been questioned, and the extent to which Locum remuneration reflects the national minimum wage has been raised too. The Faith Nurture Forum makes a recommendation to the Assembly Trustees about proposed stipend levels for Parish Ministers, and salary levels for employed MDS staff, and this was also the practice with the then Ministries Council and the former Council of Assembly. In 2021, the Forum made a recommendation for a 2% increase in

stipend and salary, and the recommendation that there be a 2% increase was accepted by the Assembly Trustees. Current rates for 2022 are referenced at Appendix 8.

2.5.2 With regard to Pulpit Supply and Locum remuneration, these were last increased in 2018. The Forum will consider the affordability of an increase in these rates alongside its deliberations on any increase in stipend and salaries for 2023, including taking into account how the pastoral element of the Locum remuneration relates to minimum wage and national living wage levels, while remembering that *Locum Tenens* references someone covering for the inducted minister and that the inducted minister is an office holder. These are however costs ultimately carried by the local church, and the Forum is mindful of pressures on the local at this time.

2.6 Guardianship Allowance

2.6.1 The Presbytery Mission Plan Act requires Presbyteries to allocate an allowance of 0.25 in their Mission Plan for charges in guardianship, encouraging Presbyteries only to use guardianship where it is essential. On the floor of the General Assembly in 2021, a plea was made that alternative provision of a lesser amount of FTE ministry might be possible where a Presbytery deemed it appropriate. The Forum has considered this, exploring the possibility of a lower Guardianship allocation of, say, 0.15 FTE, where a Presbytery deemed it appropriate and where the Forum would approve such a request. After considering the pros and cons of such an approach, the Forum believes that to allow the possibility of a lower Guardianship allocation would hinder the radical approach needed in Mission Planning affirmed by the General Assembly of 2021. The additional burden of finding Interim Moderators for a potentially higher number of Guardianships was also considered in this discussion.

2.6.2 In the interests of consistency and fairness, and as part of the general desire to reduce the administrative burden on Presbyteries, the Forum asks the General Assembly to reiterate the allocation of 0.25 FTE from Ministries Numbers for charges in Guardianship.

2.7 Vacancy Procedure Act

2.7.1 When work was being done on the drafts of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, it was recognised that the corollary of this was that the Vacancy Act (Act VIII 2003) would need reviewing and revised or replaced. Previous General Assemblies had raised the question of whether the Vacancy Act was fit for purpose, given that vacancies were increasing in length, and the choice of candidates was no longer as plentiful as had once been the case – a reflection of reducing numbers of ministers and a commitment to longer ministries on the part of many ministers who, increasingly, were – rightly – prioritising family and stability. The question of the place of call in this changed landscape had been raised. The Forum was asked, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, to review the Vacancy Act and report to the 2022 General Assembly.

2.7.2 Various issues have been highlighted in these conversations, and among them are the following, although this is not an exclusive list:

- the value of Vacancy Procedure Committee process as a tool to expedite processing of vacancies;
- the need to reconsider the length of time a congregation's permission to call can continue without the Presbytery revisiting that permission –

currently, in terms of section 28, two years;

- the role and place, and effectiveness, of Presbytery Advisory Committees;
- and the wording of the schedules which is at times arcane.

2.7.3 The other issue which is often raised – outwith this period when most vacancies are sisted – is the length of time taken to process vacancies. There is a balance to be struck between moving promptly to fill a vacancy, particularly where a lengthy period of notice has been given, e.g. on retirement, and the need to allow a space for movement and transition to reflect on the ending of one ministry; to give thanks for that ministry, and, perhaps to grieve; and the time to discern what lies ahead.

2.7.4 Commissioners will have their own experiences and views of the Act, and comment is invited by making submissions to the mailbox **VacancyAct@churchofscotland.org.uk** with comments closing on 30th September 2022. It is hoped to bring proposals for revisions to the existing Act, or a replacement, to the 2023 General Assembly.

2.8 Gaelic Language Development plan

2.8.1 Deliverance from GA 2021: *"Instruct the Forum to explore the possibilities of developing a 3-year Gaelic Language Plan [2022 – 2025] that includes a particular emphasis on Gaelic Ministry and Mission to children and young people and to bring a report to the General Assembly of 2022."*

A working group was formed in 2021, including members of the Gaelic Group and FNF staff, to develop and deliver a plan.

2.9 Engaging with the Under 40s

2.9.1 A new Under 40s Task Group of the Assembly Trustees was formed in 2021, to bring together strands of this work from across the different teams and departments of the church, convened by Barry Hughes from the Assembly Trustees. The group is engaged in a process of understanding challenges and opportunities, and of coordinating the work which is already happening. It is anticipated that a strategy will be presented to the GA of 2023.

2.9.2 The group is following up on the instructions and requirements of previous GAs with relevance to this area of work. The group is also involved in discussions with the Scottish Youth Parliament, as the Church of Scotland, at this time, does not meet their criteria for the involvement of young people in decision-making. The details of current work can be found in the reports of the relevant teams across both the Faith Impact and Faith Nurture Forums.

2.10 Scripture Union Scotland

2.10.1 The General Assembly of 2019 agreed the following section of deliverance: *"Note the changes to the Scripture Union Scotland Ethos Statement which adversely affects volunteers, and the potential impact this could have with chaplains, schools and young people and instruct the [Church and Society] Council, in collaboration with the Mission and Discipleship Council, to hold meaningful conversations with SU Scotland regarding this issue."*

Such meaningful conversations took place between members of the Scripture Union Scotland leadership team and staff of the Faith Nurture Forum during 2021, having been postponed from 2020 due to the pandemic. At every stage our questions were welcomed. We appreciated SU

Scotland's willingness to have the conversations and their openness and sincerity throughout.

During the conversations, various topics were covered, including:

- The purpose of the Ethos Statement.
- How the Ethos Statement relates to the statement about inclusion in 'Deepening Relationships' in their Values.
- How the Ethos Statement is being implemented: training & guidance given to key personnel, inconsistencies in volunteer experience, concern over the level of intrusiveness experienced by those who brought their concerns to the Church of Scotland and the pastoral support offered to volunteers.
- How the breadth of the Church of Scotland relates to the breadth of SU Scotland.
- How a volunteer's agreement to uphold the Ethos Statement sits within the process of recruiting, accrediting and training volunteers.

2.10.2 The members of SU Scotland's leadership team were concerned to hear of the stories which had been brought to the Church of Scotland, during and following the General Assembly in 2019, and recognised that the way certain situations were handled by Scripture Union representatives did not match up to their expectations. They indicated that they are keen to learn and grow from the experiences shared, and as a result of our conversations will be reviewing the training of their staff and volunteers.

2.10.3 We must recognise that SU Scotland is independent of the Church of Scotland, and is an interdenominational organisation which is part of a larger international whole. As such their work generally tends not to focus on theologically contested issues, but instead on a broader vision of enabling "the children and young people of Scotland to explore the Bible and respond to the significance of Jesus". Through our conversations the members of SU Scotland's leadership team reiterated that anyone who can agree to uphold their Ethos Statement is welcome, without judgment, as an SU volunteer. They also reinforced that if anyone is unhappy about their engagement with an SU Scotland representative, they can go directly to the Volunteers' Manager to express their concern and will receive a warm response.

3. RECRUITMENT

3.1 Recruitment

3.1.1 Recruitment for the Recognised Ministries continued fully during 2021. While Assessment remained online due to the pandemic, aspects of Discernment and Familiarisation re-started in person as restrictions allowed across the year. Faith Nurture remains indebted to all involved in Assessment who have continued to adapt as necessary to allow this to happen.

3.1.2 This remains a challenging time overall for Recruitment in the Church of Scotland, and especially Recruitment for Full-Time Ministry of Word & Sacrament and the Diaconate. We have seen a significantly lower number of Enquirers this year come forward into Discernment overall, and there are a number of relevant factors.

3.1.3 The pandemic has presented for some a time of dis-connection from regular church worship and involvement, and it may be that this has impacted on the exploration of a call to ministry that often stems from

local participation and encouragement. That, combined with the significant change and reduction in ministry numbers being planned for by Presbyteries at this time, seems to be affecting people coming forward in this time of transition and uncertainty.

3.1.4 However, the underlying challenge remains one for the whole Church to be aware of, as the age profile of those in active membership of the Church has been increasing upwards over the years. This means, demographically, that the proportion of active members who are of an age to consider and explore the call to Full Time Ministry has been much reduced.

3.1.5 For any form of recruitment, there has to be a pool of people from which to actively recruit. When we talk of recruitment in terms of ministry, we are not only bringing faith, belief and vocation into the equation, we are also expecting active participation in the life, worship and witness of the Church over a period of time, as well as a sense of call, and the evidence of gifts and skills for ministry.

3.1.6 The challenge is one shared by the whole Church to encourage and nurture disciples in faith, who may come to feel and respond to a call to ministry. We know, from those who do enter ministry, that the shaping of faith and experience in local Church communities is what lies behind most ministry stories. The Talking Ministry series offered each month through the Church of Scotland website continues to offer such individual stories, alongside Discernment resources which can be used for further reflection. <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/serve/vocations/talking-ministry>

3.1.7 The Forum remains committed to exploring opportunities to broaden the reach of recruitment, and asks the whole Church to prayerfully and actively encourage the exploration of vocation to the recognised ministries.

3.1.8 Recruitment statistics for both the Discernment & Assessment process and the Admissions process can be found at Appendix 9.

3.2. Recruitment Legislative Changes

3.2.1 4.1 Faith Nurture brings forward a new Admission and Readmission Act and associated changes to Act X 2004 (Appendix 4).

3.2.2 The New Admission and Readmission Act outlines the full process for each category of application and evidences learning from the Covid pandemic, where processes moved online by necessity. For Admissions applicants [ministers holding status in another denomination], the Act describes a two-stage process of Assessment for those eligible to apply, with the initial stage of assessment being online. Those proceeding to the second stage of assessment would then have a full assessment at an Admissions Conference in Scotland. This offers benefits for applicants being able to be assessed online prior to incurring any expenditure to travel to Scotland.

3.2.3 For Re-admissions applicants [ministers who held previous status as a Church of Scotland minister before transferring to another denomination] a Readmission Panel will make the Assessment. The new Act also brings in age limits for Admissions that are consistent with the existing age limits in Act X 2004. This means that an Admissions applicant for a Standard Certificate of Eligibility, must be able to complete all Admissions requirements in the year which is 10 years in advance of

their equivalent UK State Retirement Age. It remains possible for an applicant to apply to serve under a Temporary Certificate [retaining status in their own denomination], as long as a minimum of 3 years' service is possible prior to their equivalent UK State Retirement Age.

3.2.4 The Act also outlines the right to make Application a maximum of 3 times, and to have the right of Appeal after a third non-accept decision [or at the non-accept decision where the applicant would be age-barred from making further application].

3.2.5 Faith Nurture also brings forward associated changes to Act X 2004, Act XVII 1992 and Act IX 2011 to define similarly the rights of Application and Appeal, as well as additions for clarity in the existing process. (Appendices 5, 6, 7)

3.2.6 These changes reflect the Forum structure and mirror the new Admission Act for consistency and clarity.

4. EDUCATION AND LEARNING

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The Education & Training team merged with the Congregational Learning team in the summer of 2021, as a step towards ensuring an integrated approach to training and learning across the church. The work of each team continues, but always looking for opportunities to connect and contribute towards an integrated training programme.

4.2 Integrated Training Programme

4.2.1 A vision to Catalyse and Equip Inspirational Leadership for every part of our Church; for Worship, Witness, Nurture and Service.

4.2.2 First modules for the programme have been written and await the building of a suitable digital platform before recording and making these available for the wider church. Mission and pastoral care feature heavily in the initial materials. While it is anticipated that a number will wish to access materials on their own, from home, attention is being given to ensuring materials are fit for congregations and presbyteries to use.

Much work has been given to building a Competence Framework which will enable assessment of the effectiveness of any and all training delivered and future provision of training by the Church.

4.3 Discipleship

4.3.1 Exploring Discipleship is an excellent resource for congregations and individuals to use to grow their faith. Encourager Training is a new course which has been written to equip people to take a lead in prioritising discipleship in local churches. Five Presbyteries are piloting this work.

4.10 OLM Training

Placement	Duration	Timeframe	Details	Time commitment
1 – Autumn	25 weeks	September – May	Part-time	3 hrs per week plus Sunday
2 – Autumn	25 weeks	September – May	Part-time	3 hrs per week plus Sunday
Probation	12 months	Starting between June and August	Part-time	10 hrs per week plus Sunday

4.4 Office bearers

4.4.1 Consideration is being given to where an Integrated Training Programme can offer development opportunities for all key roles in local church in presbytery and where there continues to be need for a national conference, e.g. for elders.

4.5 Initial Ministerial Education

4.5.1 Placement and study opportunities have continued to be limited by various Covid-19 restrictions. Resilience has been evident and creativity abounding. We continue to monitor the need for future additional support and training opportunities for this cohort of candidates as they begin serving in recognised ministries.

4.6 Probationers

4.6.1 Those who completed Probation in autumn 2021 were offered support by the Faith Nurture Forum to identify their next step in what was an uncertain time for the church. Opportunity to approach a charge after nine months, the possibility of extending Probation by six months and an encouragement of Presbyteries to look for creative opportunities all helped everyone transition to their next step. The larger than usual group of Probationers in 2022 is anxious about what the vacancy scene will look like this summer, and the Faith Nurture Forum are helping with transitions in any way they can.

4.7 Pilots

4.7.1 A new Formation Partner scheme has launched this year, with eleven new Candidates participating. This aims to provide a supportive relationship with Presbytery which prioritises formation across the entirety of someone's training period, partnering with the vital work of placement Supervisors. Three Probationers have been placed in vacant charges with remote supervision and help from Interim Moderators. This creates more stretching opportunities for those who are able as well as serving the Church in a new way. The demands on individuals are high so further consideration will be given before increasing numbers experiencing Probation in this way.

4.8 Ordained Local Ministry – Flexibility in Training

4.8.1 This important ministry will become increasingly significant through the changes the Church will undergo in the next few years. We hugely value the service offered by an Ordained Local Minister (OLM) to the ministry of a Presbytery.

4.9 Call

4.9.1 Enough space needs to be given during discernment to consider the role of an OLM; to ensure that the demands of OLM training and ministry are indeed compatible with the rest of life, especially where full-time employment is undertaken; to understand that the call is not theirs but God's.

4.10.1 OLM Candidates at present spend two years in training, before their one-year probation. The candidacy period is given over to academic work alongside placements. OLM candidates usually undertake a Certificate in Higher Education, which includes a Sacramental Theology module, with the further possibility of ongoing learning towards a diploma or degree. Study is done by distance learning. A large number of OLMs will undertake their training and subsequent ministry alongside other employment or caring duties. OLM Candidates need to fully understand the number of hours that will be required each week, during the training period. This is hard to quantify exactly, due to individual response to the demands of academic work and of placements. However, it should be clearly agreed how many hours are set for placements and the breakdown of the academic course in any given year.

4.10.2 To build more flexibility into the system, OLM candidates will be allowed to increase the duration of the time taken to complete their training. While the training should be completed in three years, a period of no more than six years could be allowed from the point of beginning training until finishing probation. It is requested that an OLM candidate complete at least one module of academic study and one placement in their first year to ensure the relationship between theological learning and ministry practice is strong. Thereafter, if required, the Candidate could alternate academic study with placement until the completion of their training. A year of deferral of both study and placement would be possible, as long as everything is completed within six years. A minimum of three Candidate Gatherings and two Probation Conferences should be attended.

4.11 Supervisors

4.11.1 It is important that Supervisors understand the role of an OLM. Further, it is important for Supervisors that they have an open conversation as to what level of work the candidate is able to manage and to ensure that the OLM candidate is maintaining a good work/life balance. Amongst parishioners, some members may not understand that Ordained Local Ministry is not a full-time or paid role and so Supervisors should seek to ensure the whole congregation understand the part that the OLM candidate will play in the life of the church.

4.12 Deployment

4.12.1 When Presbyteries work alongside people in this ministry to see where their gifts lie, and how they can best be of service to the local church, everyone flourishes. Presbyteries should be encouraged to take an approach which is as imaginative and creative as possible to harnessing the talents of their OLMs. OLMs fit well as part of a team ministry, where all understand how and what each member of the team is contributing. It is expected that OLMs once ordained, will be gifting ten hours of service to their Presbytery before engaging in any Locum work.

4.13 Ascend – Changes to Study Leave

4.13.1 The following changes had been agreed by the Training Task Group when the Ministries Council came to an end in 2019. The Education and Training Implementation Group have since endorsed these changes, and an additional one regarding pre-retirement, and these have been approved by the Faith Nurture Forum.

- The current seven-year accrual allowance to be shortened to five years. The current annual value of £275 will remain the same, being capped after five-years accrual at £1375.
- The current time allowance of two weeks per year remains the same, but people are only allowed to accrue up to ten weeks maximum.
- All Study Leave accounts will reflect this new allowance as of 1 January 2023.
- Pre-retirement Study Leave applications need to be of value to the church at large in addition to personal value. Any and all pre-retirement Study Leave must be taken before the final year of ministry begins. Retirement is a huge period of change and quite stressful and people should not be overburdened at this juncture. If learning is to be of value to the church at large, time after Study Leave, prior to retirement, will be required to ensure learning is passed on.

4.14 Principal of New College – Alison Jack to succeed Susan Hardman Moore

4.14.1 At the end of Academic Year 2021/2022, the Reverend Professor Susan Hardman Moore will be stepping down as Principal of New College, Edinburgh.

4.14.2 The Senate of New College has proposed that the Reverend Dr Alison Jack be appointed as her successor.

4.14.3 Professor Hardman Moore will be retiring from her role as Professor of Early Modern Religion. The Forum expresses its appreciation for Prof Hardman Moore's contribution in the role as Principal over the last ten years and the incredible contribution she has made to parishes up and down the country through her commitment to ministerial education and wider education of the people of God, particularly in the developing of courses in worship leadership and pioneer ministry.

The Forum supports the appointment of the Reverend Dr Alison Jack, and the General Assembly is invited to support this appointment.

5. SAFEGUARDING

5.1 This is to note that work has continued in scoping out a mandatory advanced safeguarding training programme for ministers; this is reported on within the Safeguarding Committee's Report. Resourcing Worship staff in the Faith Nurture Staff team also ensured that worship resources for Safeguarding Sunday were available on the website.

5.2 The Scottish Government passed the Disclosure Act in 2020; the most significant part of this for the Faith Nurture Forum is the change from lifetime membership of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme to membership being for a five-year period, with a renewal at five years. This will have financial implications, both for ministers of word and sacrament, and those others within the aegis of Faith Nurture who require PVG membership, including MDS staff and Readers. The Forum will work with the Safeguarding Department to cost this and make appropriate provision when it is required.

This will have implications too for the Registration of Ministries Committee, and this matter will be taken up in conversations between Faith Nurture and that Committee.

6. SUPPORT

6.1 Support for those who serve in the ministries of the Church is a key priority for Faith Nurture. The Covid pandemic has added another layer of challenge over the last couple of years, and while this has brought opportunities, it has also been a time of loss and adjustment and for many, frustration. These realities are acknowledged, but it is also recognised that much has been achieved despite these limitations, and the Forum wants to record its thanks to all in ministry for rising to the challenges in each community and context.

6.2 It is further acknowledged that the planning for ministry numbers in each Presbytery is also providing a time of uncertainty for many. Positive stories of collaboration are heard in the midst of the practical challenges, and the Forum understands this time of change and transition is not easy. Faith Nurture is committed, through its Support Team and under Ascend Support services, to provide a range of support options and opportunities which can be accessed in confidence. The Support Team retains a person-centred approach which engages with an individual to access the most relevant support at any given time.

6.3 Advice and support provisions are available across the different recognised ministries, and information is provided for all on the Ascend website. <https://ascend.churchofscotland.org.uk/support/>

7. NOMINATION TO HOUSING AND LOAN FUND

7.1 The Reverend Joanne Hood will complete her service as Faith Nurture representative on the Housing and Loan Fund at the General Assembly. The Forum supports the appointment of Dr Eilidh Renwick to serve for a second term; nominates the Reverend Scott McCarthy to serve for a first term, and invites the General Assembly to support this appointment.

8. PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Presbytery Mission Planning

8.1.1 The General Assembly of 2021 passed the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, in response to the financial pressures facing the Church, and also recognising that increasing numbers of the Church's ordained ministers of word and sacrament were of state pension age. That background – both in terms of potential retirement profile, and finance – has to be reiterated at the outset; that the process of discernment of how a reduction in ministry numbers takes place through the lens of mission is something for which the Forum makes no apology.

8.1.2 The Forum has taken on the task of working with Presbyteries in implementing that Act, and has done so at a time of extreme change in the life of the Church of Scotland. The prevailing mood, in some quarters, is one of anxiety and tiredness, as the Church emerges from Covid-19, and its congregations begin to re-open as local circumstances permit. In the extensive work carried out with Presbyteries and with clusters of Presbyteries, these feelings have been shared from all parts of the Church, and the Forum wishes to acknowledge the hard work being taken as the Church responds to the financial realities and does so in faith, seeking to encourage Mission Planning for the good of the Church. That this is also happening as the Church navigates its way towards a new shape of Presbyteries, in an in-between liminal space, also brings its own challenges. The Forum is aware of the

passion that people feel for the place where they worship; for the significant life events which have taken place in those spaces; and the joy, sorrow, and sense of community that is a hallmark of Church at its best, as we serve the communities in their midst in Christ's name.

8.1.3 After the General Assembly of 2021 agreed the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, work started on its implementation almost immediately, with the production of two key documents available on the Church of Scotland website <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/presbytery-planning>. The Guidance, and the Protocol for Presbyteries seeking approval for permissions to call, went live on 18th June, and other resources are available on that section of the website. These have been further developed with information on Local Mission Church. The Guidance will continue to develop as dynamic working documents to support Presbyteries in their development of Presbytery Mission Plans, and suggestions for improvements are always welcome.

8.1.4 The Presbytery Planning Task Group became the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group (PMPIG) in August 2021, under the Convenership of the Rev Dr Karen Katrina Campbell, and this group has met every month since September and will do so throughout 2022, as work continues towards the deadline of 31st December 2022 for submission of plans.

8.1.5 The Forum reiterates the decisions of the General Assembly of 2021, that plans be submitted by 31 December 2022, outlining the configuration of ministries envisaged for the end of December 2025, while recognising that plans will run for five-year terms, with annual reviews, as provided for at section 2.3 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII, 2021).

8.1.6 PMPIG is working with Presbyteries, considers requests from Presbyteries for approval of permissions to call for those charges which are seen as strategic in the future life of Presbyteries, and offers advice and guidance in its interactions with Planning Conveners and clusters of Presbyteries. PMPIG has considered eleven requests at time of writing from Presbyteries seeking approval of permission to call, and has approved permission to call in six instances, and has reverted to Presbyteries asking for additional information in the other instances. The range of background information which PMPIG seeks is outlined on the Church's website. The Forum wishes to encourage such applications in the coming months; a progress report will be made to the General Assembly of the number of Presbytery Mission Plans with which the Forum has concurred. The Forum is aware too of the large group of Probationers who will be seeking charges this summer, and has sought to respond to those challenges, as well as recognising that there are Ministers in Charges who know that God is calling them to serve somewhere else.

8.1.7 The attention of Commissioners is drawn to the provisions of section 2.0.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act, which states that it shall be in order for a group of Presbyteries anticipating union to present to the Forum and the General Trustees a shared draft Mission Plan in terms of this Act. For this to become an Approved Mission Plan in terms of this Act it must have been approved at a meeting of each of the individual Presbyteries and then the final approval of the Forum and the General Trustees must be obtained. Both the Forum, and the General Trustees, would wish to commend the provisions of this section to those Presbyteries anticipating union, and would strongly encourage such collaboration to be part of the landscape ahead of the formal date of union of Presbyteries.

8.1.9 Where existing MDS posts are being reviewed as part of the Presbytery Mission Plan process, appropriate steps are being taken to ensure that Human Resources and Faith Action staff are engaged in support of MDS staff, line managers, and Presbytery representatives. Faith Action staff are also working with ministers inducted on a basis of reviewable charge to hear, and respond to, their particular concerns.

8.1.9 In a basis of union as is currently used, the standard form of wording provides for the Kirk Sessions of the charges coming together to jointly form the Kirk Session of the newly united charge, i.e. the aggregated membership of all previous Kirk Sessions. As part of the journey towards union, it is common for a process of discernment to take place to allow elders the opportunity to consider continuing or to step back and also to allow space for exploring the role of elders who have not attended or engaged, and to consider whether they should continue as elders.

8.1.10 In conversation with Presbyteries, the challenge of working with what could be a Kirk Session with a significant number of elders following a union of congregations has been highlighted, and the request has been made that the Presbytery Mission Plan Act might allow for the Basis of Union to specify the number of elders from each existing Kirk Session who shall transfer to the new Kirk Session and the means by which such elders shall be selected or elected. The Forum has considered this and believes that allowing the possibility of determining the size of the new Kirk Session would contribute to better governance, at a time when demands on office-bearers at congregational level are increasing.

Accordingly, the Forum asks the General Assembly to amend the Presbytery Mission Plan Act at section 7.0(1) by adding: The Basis of Union shall specify the number of elders from each existing Kirk Session who shall transfer to the new Kirk Session and the means by which such elders shall be selected or elected.

8.1.11 The Forum acknowledges the difficulty presented by the reduction in ministries, presented at the General Assembly of 2021. The Presbytery Mission Plan Act at section 2.4.1 requires that the Forum shall bring annually to the General Assembly for approval the proposed total number of ministry posts to be funded by the Parish Staffing Fund, allocated among the Presbyteries, in each of the next five years, so that there is a five-year rolling plan for such allocations. These numbers, as outlined at *Appendix 11*, will form the shape of the Church's ministry over the next five years, given that financial projections do not indicate a significant improvement to the extent that an increase in ministries numbers would be affordable. The question of the finances available to the Church is one where the Forum takes its lead from the Assembly Trustees, and questions on an increase to ministries numbers are for the Assembly Trustees to consider.

8.1.12 The Forum will also undertake additional work on the overall allocation of ministries, given the new shape of Presbyteries as reported on elsewhere to this General Assembly. Stand-alone Presbyteries which enjoyed an enhanced allocation on account of rurality or remoteness have merged with urban Presbyteries which had an allocation with no weighting. These classifications can be found at *Appendix 12* and a report on these will come to the General Assembly of 2023.

8.1.13 The Forum looks forward to continuing engagement with Presbyteries; the PMPiG has twelve

members, six Assembly-appointed members of the Faith Nurture Forum, and six co-opted members. Their biographies can be found on the Church of Scotland website <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/presbytery-planning/presbytery-mission-plan-implementation-group-pmpig-facilitators>. They have each been allocated to serve as Facilitators with clusters of Presbyteries. Their role is to build relationships with Presbyteries; to offer knowledge and expertise; and to be critical friends in scrutinising drafts of Mission Plans before they are submitted to the Forum.

8.1.14 It should be noted too that final concurrence with Mission Plans lies with the Faith Nurture Forum and its Assembly-appointed members, and not solely with the PMPiG. Work with existing Presbyteries continues and a critical part of the next phase of Mission Planning is engaging with the clusters of Presbyteries which will shape the emergent Presbyteries which are yet to come into existence. Close working with the General Trustees has been a mark of these last months, and there is representation from the General Trustees at each meeting of PMPiG. In addition, the Convener and Vice-Convener of PMPiG, along with the Partnership Development Secretary, meet monthly with the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the General Trustees.

8.1.15 The Forum reiterates, along with the General Trustees, the need for the AMBA (Asset Management Building Audit) process to be completed by Presbyteries, to offer a consistent and transparent approach to auditing buildings and their suitability, as final plans are submitted for concurrence. The Forum and the General Trustees are engaging too with those Congregations who have received external grant funding for building renovations, and where conditions of continued use as places of worship exist. The Forum would reiterate that Mission Planning decisions should be based on missional principles alone while considering timescale issues around grant clawback from different funding bodies.

8.1.16 Supporting the Church's strategy of striving towards well-equipped spaces in the right places has never been more important, and recognising the value of smaller churches as well as the larger is critical in the Forum's work in Presbytery Mission Planning; it was 50 years ago in his book *The Go-Between God* that John V Taylor talked about the importance of 'little congregations' in the life of the whole church. Today, we strive to affirm both the smaller church and the larger, and to explore how they are part of what Church is today.

9. DIACONATE REPORT

9.1 Throughout the current pandemic, Deacons have continued to bear witness through a ministry of word and service within a variety of settings and ministries. The Diaconate is aware that COVID-19 has highlighted inequality, poverty and social injustice within our communities.

9.2 As servants and apostles, Parish Deacons have cared for and supported some of the most marginalised and vulnerable adversely affected by COVID-19. Due to a large legacy, Diaconate Council were able to offer COVID Grants to provide "seed funding" to projects throughout Scotland. A total of £2399.00 was paid out to 6 projects – covering urban and rural communities supporting work with the bereaved, children, the elderly and families. In Douglas Valley, the "Bags of Love" Project let people know they were loved and valued by the church.

9.3 A grant to Buckhaven and Wemyss's Prayer Shawl Ministry Group enabled a sense of purpose and belonging. The words of one member, a lady of over 90 years isolated from her family, sum up just how valuable such a small grant can be; *'Thank you for the wool. I don't know how I would get through the pandemic without being able to knit my shawls, it keeps me busy and helps me to remember as I pray that God is always near'.*

9.4 Within Chaplaincy, Deacons have served as Prophets and Collaborators; working in the "Red Zones" in a variety of settings; offering an Incarnational Ministry, coming alongside ships' crew members unable to leave Port and offering them physical, mental and spiritual support; providing a ministry of presence when many agencies and support systems suddenly stopped or were denied such as being available to prisoners confined to their cells 23 ½ hrs a day with such a presence being valued by prisoners and staff alike; developing relational ministry in COVID Wards and intensive care units – bringing comfort and support to staff, patients and families unable to visit loved ones.

9.5 Diaconate Council, and the Faith Nurture Forum, congratulates its President Mr Mark Evans DCS on his appointment as the Scottish Government's first Spiritual Care Strategic Advisor & Operational Lead. Finally, last year's General Assembly instructed the Forum, together with Diaconate Council and others, to review the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010) and to bring to the General Assembly of 2022 a revised or, if appropriate, a new Act on Diaconal Ministry within the Church of Scotland. Discussion has taken place with Diaconate Executive Committee, and Forum officials, and at this stage, conversations continue and a report on this will come to a future General Assembly.

10. DEAF MINISTRY REPORT

10.1 The Church remains committed to providing ministry to the Deaf congregations in three national regions; Aberdeen and the North, Glasgow and the West and Edinburgh and the South East. Two of these posts are filled, with the Rev Mary Whitaker in Aberdeen and the North, and the Rev Richard Durno in Glasgow and the West.

10.2 Over the past year, Faith Nurture staff have been working with the Edinburgh Presbytery and Albany Church to discuss and plan to recruit to the vacant post. The job description has been drafted in consultation with the Albany Deaf Church in Edinburgh and the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group, in the central Church offices. At this time of writing, the vacancy is being prepared for advertisement and it is hoped that an appointment will be made in the first half of 2022.

10.3 The remit of this post has been revised to include a national remit which will involve working with the other existing post holders and the EDI Group, to review the national provision and to draft a new strategy.

10.4 This new strategy will explore and develop the online opportunities that the past 2 years have offered and which the Church has learned from, as well as considering new discipleship communities in all three regions. Finally, the work will also cover revision and updating of the legislation associated with recruiting, deploying and training those for ministry in our Deaf congregations. Work on updating the legislation has already begun and will continue with the input of the three hosting Presbyteries: Edinburgh and West Lothian; Aberdeen and Shetland; and Glasgow.

11. INTERIM MINISTRY

11.1 Interim ministry celebrates its 25th anniversary this year and remains a unique and valued resource for the Church. The ministry includes acute Interim Ministry, longer term Transition Ministry and consultancy-style Interim Ministry Accompaniment. Over 80 congregations have benefitted from the work of the interim ministry team over the 25 years and in more recent times the work has broadened to include working directly with presbyteries which have required this particular skill and experience. The ministry has attracted the attention of other denominations and has featured in the Church Times, alongside the initiatives of the Church of England.

11.2 The core purpose of interim ministry has developed over the years but has never veered too far off its core purpose, that of:

1. Coming to terms with history (Remedial)
2. Discovering our new identity (Transformative)
3. Planning for the future (Inspirational)

11.3 Responding and supporting congregations through periods of change and transition has been most notable in more recent years and it is anticipated that this will continue as the Church itself transitions through the current round of presbytery planning.

11.4 The team currently comprises 5 Transition Ministers and 7 Interim Ministers. The team remains engaged in the life of Presbytery and undertakes various CPD, most significantly with specialist training provided by Place for Hope.

11.5 The ministry is well aware of the challenges currently being experienced in the Church and remains committed to serve and support the local.

12. NEW CHARGE DEVELOPMENT

12.1 The General Assembly of 2019 agreed to a moratorium on any new application for a New Charge Development, to allow for new model church planting to be developed and deployed. At that time, there were 3 NCDs and 1 legacy Church Extension. In 2020 both Stewartfield NCD and Greenhills Church Extension moved to full status and in 2021, Inverness St Columba NCD also gained full status. The Faith Nurture Forum affirmed and congratulated these congregations in their work as church plants and as they secure full status recognition.

12.2 That leaves one NCD that remains supported by the Faith Nurture Forum.

13. FUNDED PARTNERS

13.1 Due to the financial situation which the Church of Scotland faces at the moment the Faith Nurture Forum decided to reduce the contributions made to all Funded Partners by 50% for 2022 and to review, in consultation with partners, any future working models for 2023 and beyond. Work with all funded partners will be measured against the priorities of the Faith Action Plan and the financial situation.

14. PRIORITY AREAS

14.1 Priority Areas: an indelible mark of our Church's Mission

14.1.1 Priority for the poorest and the most marginalised is the gospel imperative of the whole Church, not just the Church in the poorest places. The Priority Areas team and

Implementation Group are responsible for the support, development and co-ordination of the Church's work within its poorest communities; supporting the local at congregational and presbytery level. Priority Areas are those parishes which sit within the 5% most deprived rankings in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Priority Areas are at the heart of the mission of the Church as it develops the Faith Action Programme.

14.2 Supporting our Priority Areas and widening our offer

14.2.1 The current list of parishes includes sixty-four Priority Areas and thirteen which are transitioning off. Our offers of support included:

- Staff advice/consultancy/regular contact
- Access to the Priority Area Learning Programme
- Membership of the network; offering mutual support and sharing of ideas and experience
- Invitation to our annual conference – The Big Conversation and all other events
- Taking part in consultations and the development of new and existing programmes
- E-communications/social media/web/resources

14.2.2 Last year's General Assembly endorsed a widening of our support to a supplementary list of 112 parishes which have some part of their population within one of the 5% data zones within SIMD. Accordingly, we were pleased to invite these parishes to join up with us; offering support through the continued opening up of our programmes and the extension of our network to encompass these congregations.

14.3 Strengthening our network

14.3.1 Our Priority Areas are good places to be. Mission weaves through these good places, offering an inviting and welcoming church model. Often doors are open seven days a week. Typically, there will be: community meals and other food poverty initiatives, outreach into the streets around the church, worship not just on Sunday but in other spaces in the week, work with older people, children and youth work, employment initiatives, and more. The best places have a continually outward focus, joining up with local people and organisations to support the community.

14.3.2 It is in belonging to this network that we see real benefits for congregations. They are able to share their good practice with each other and support each other through exchanging knowledge and providing a listening ear in times of difficulty.

14.3.3 Our role has been to look for ways to strengthen this network approach. One of the ways we have done this is to provide a weekly space for gathering together. This has been our online Wee Conversation which we host each Friday. This met over 40 times last year and provided opportunities to learn, develop ideas, commiserate in harder moments and be a space for having fun.

14.4 The Big Conversation

14.4.1 To continue to grow our network, we hosted a two-day conference online in November – our annual Big Conversation. We were able to focus on the local, sharing the learning from good practice on the ground. We took some time to begin to understand more about the Faith Action Programme as it starts to develop and we used the opportunity as we gathered together to listen to Priority Areas as they talked about the support they needed.

14.4.2 Our final session explored the thinking behind universal Basic Income (BI) as a strategy to alleviate poverty and focused directly on the Scottish Government's policy on Minimum Income Guarantee as their response to the growing support for BI-type policies.

14.5 Support for Presbytery Mission Planning

14.5.1 We are growing our Faith Action Programme for the whole Church; specifically, to support at the local level. We worked with presbyteries as they engaged in presbytery mission planning to talk about how they could ensure the needs of those parishes who are intent on addressing poverty can be supported in their plans.

14.5.2 We supported the development of Fife Presbytery Poverty Forum as it began work to determine how the new Presbytery could engage county-wide with parishes and work against poverty in all its forms; working towards a poverty hearing in spring of this year.

Meanwhile we continued to join up our thinking with the Presbytery Mission Planning Implementation Group and took part in the approvals process for Ministries Development Staff to be recruited.

14.6 Communications are Key

14.6.1 We continued to look for opportunities to share resources across our network and the wider Church. We encourage congregations to come alongside us and sign up for our monthly e-news, supporting this to become a whole Church movement. <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/newsletters>

14.6.2 Transparency is important to us; we want to open up our work so that those who are intentional about working with the poorest communities can join with us. One of the ways we did this this year was to publish the Priority Areas List and Supplementary List, along with full data on all the congregations in Scotland on our website <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/priority-areas/priority-areas-list-2021>

14.6.3 We also updated our deprivation and population statistics for the whole Church (accessed through the church finder link: <https://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church-finder/>) This allows congregations to see at a glance how their parish looks in terms of deprivation and see key statistics about their population.

14.7 Listening and Learning

14.7.1 Our Learning Programme forms one of the core offers of support from the Priority Areas team to those in ministry in Priority Areas, and those engaged in anti-poverty work in the wider church. All our courses and workshops are developed in direct response to what our Priority Areas tell us; we took time to listen and reflect on this over the last year to feed into our developing programme.

14.7.2 We continued to offer in-depth learning in Asset Based Community Development and in Missional Discipleship; successfully maintaining learning communities in both these areas.

14.7.3 We began work on conversations with Priority Areas in relation to how they viewed evangelism and what learning events we could provide that will meet this need. At the same time, on a more practical level, we offered Getting to Know your Community, a webinar exploring how we understand our communities using both statistics and community research. Full details of our Learning Programme are available at: <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/priority-areas/what-we-offer>

14.8 Worship at the Heart of What We Do

14.8.1 Making worship integral to all that we do is one of the key strategic goals for Priority Areas. We work with congregations in this through providing support for those leading worship locally. We model an inclusive and collaborative approach to leading worship which connects with the wider themes of Asset-Based Community Development and Missional Discipleship in our Learning Programme. We developed a successful webinar, Preaching in Priority Areas, which we ran in August and which will be repeated this year.

14.8.2 As well as offering individual support and workshops, we began work on developing a programme to build the confidence of worship teams to deliver worship. This course aims to build the confidence and ability of people from congregations to plan and lead worship together. It is about enabling congregations to shape worship that is contextual, participative and sustainable.

14.8.3 This year we have been co-leading with other colleagues in Faith Action, the development of a CH4 Hymnary Supplement. Again, this has been a participatory process; ensuring the practice and voices of Priority Areas are included.

14.9 Campaigns and Consultations

14.9.1 Our work links directly to public policy and we join up our work with our colleagues in Faith Impact within the Faith Action Programme. We worked together in various ways; participating in monthly meetings of the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, encouraged congregations to contribute to Government consultations such as Ending the Need for Foodbanks and supporting the doubling of the Child Payment campaign. We look for ways to share knowledge and practice from Priority Areas and for our communities to be heard and engaged in the debate and decision making.

14.9.2 We took part in and promoted Challenge Poverty Week, a Poverty Alliance-led campaign to end poverty. With the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) being held in Glasgow in 2021, the focus of our Challenge Poverty Week content was themed around poverty and climate change, highlighting that those already in poverty faced the greatest impact from climate change, that they contributed the least to bringing it about, and that our responses to tackling it need to be done in a way which does not push people further into poverty. Through short videos we highlighted projects in Priority Areas which are tackling climate change at a local level. <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/priority-areas/what-we-offer> We also ran four weekly webinars throughout October, focusing on making the links between poverty and climate change, theming worship around this, the contribution of local food projects and how our buildings link to climate change.

14.9.3 Developing on from one of the themes of the Big Conversation, Basic Income, as a policy to alleviate poverty, we joined up with the Catholic Commission on Basic Income and a network of faith groups to assist in the development of a public hearing in Scotland planned for April of this year.

14.10 Young Adult Volunteers at Work in Dundee

14.10.1 We continued our partnership with the Presbyterian Church of USA to run the Young Adult Volunteer programme. This gives congregations the opportunity to host a volunteer on work placement for a year. Volunteers from the USA provide practical assistance

to church and community activities. We successfully established the programme in Dundee this year; with four young people placed in four different congregations. They live in Christian community together offering support to their individual congregations but also supporting each other's work and assisting in building a network in the city. This programme enriches our other areas of work as we use the young volunteers as an extension to our team and they contribute greatly to our other programmes. This year they led workshops at our conference and provided an outsider's perspective on the challenges and opportunities of work in Priority Areas. We will build on the learning from this programme in the coming year to look at how similar models could be developed as part of our Faith Action Programme.

14.11 Work with Under 40s

14.11.1 We are excited about the potential of the Young Adult Volunteers (YAV) programme model to contribute to the Faith Action Programme's objectives of work with under 40s and leadership development. Accordingly, we have begun development of a number of offshoots of the programme with three clear outcomes to develop:

- How do we support young people from our poorest communities to develop as leaders?
- How do we enable a clear path to emerge into recruitment to the recognised ministries?
- How do we ensure that young people are fully engaged in the life of the church and become its future?

14.11.2 The YAV programme model is valuable in creating opportunities for young people to gain a broader life experience, grow in personal development and nurture spiritual formation. We are keen to see a reciprocal model developed where young people from Scotland travel to sites in the USA to complete a YAV year. We are also exploring opportunities with other potential partners who currently have placement programmes, to support the development and formation of young people in line with these outcomes.

14.12 With grateful thanks...

14.12.1 It has always been a great benefit to our work to have the support of the Moderator during the year. This year was no exception and we were delighted to work with Lord Wallace as he raised the profile of anti-poverty campaigns and affirmed our work at The Big Conversation. Our incoming Moderator, Rev Iain Greenshields has already spoken with us on his plans to place special emphasis on Priority Areas in his Moderatorial year and we are looking forward to working together to support our local congregations and presbyteries to deliver on the General Assembly's instructions.

15. NEW WAYS OF BEING CHURCH

This team carries the remit for the former Church Without Walls Team in mission development and the Children's, Young People and Young Adults development work.

15.1 Mission Development

15.1.1 Sharing Faith

The ACORN initiative has helped provide a natural way for individuals to share their faith. Following the deliverance from 2021, which urged congregations to adopt the programme in helping members practice mission and discipleship, two ACORN webinars (in June and August) and an in-person autumn roadshow reached a total of 550

people. Over 110 of these have since gone on to join and/or lead Acorn groups across Scotland. An informal oversight group now helps provide training for group leaders. It is estimated that over 12,000 'God conversations' have now taken place that have helped many people in a number of ways, ranging from receiving pastoral support, to finding faith in Christ. Further evaluation of the impact of ACORN will be carried out in 2022.

15.1.2 Facilitation

The Future Focus process continues to offer facilitation to congregations to enable them to discern their vision for mission, assist in forming a plan, and begin the first steps in achieving it. The process has been extensively revised to offer online and hybrid processes in addition to the existing in-person process. The materials have been updated to reflect a focus on the Five Marks of Mission and are currently being reviewed specifically to help congregations focus on their ministry and mission with Under 40s.

15.1.3 Pioneering

Strategy: The team and Faith Nurture Forum members have been considering the impact of COVID on the strategy which emerged from the Joint Emerging Church Report to the 2019 GA. While the aspirations remain, the operational landscape has shifted considerably.

15.1.4 Fresh Expressions and Pioneering Scotland Network

The partnership with Fresh Expressions has been renewed during 2021. In addition, the Church of Scotland has been instrumental in forming a new network of pioneer mission practitioners across different denominations and agencies in Scotland, launched in the first quarter of 2022.

15.1.5 Pioneer Ministry

In 2021 the Faith Nurture Forum agreed to extend the Pioneer Pilot posts to the end of 2022, to enable the Presbyteries concerned to align their intention for the post with their new Presbytery Mission Plan. There are three remaining posts; Farming, Arts and Paisley, in the Presbyteries of Ayr, Glasgow and Clyde. Discussions with each of these will happen in the autumn of 2022 to ascertain the intentions of the respective Presbyteries and action the necessary procedures. All three Pioneer Pilots have met with success within their Presbyteries and the three Pioneer Ministers are to be congratulated for their work over the years.

16. RESOURCING WORSHIP

The team continues to develop and to support and enable the worship life of the church:

16.1 Weekly Worship

This has been enhanced by input from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and ecumenical projects that the Resourcing Worship team have contributed to such as Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and Racial Justice Sunday. (<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/weekly-worship>)

16.2 Healing

The annual Denis Duncan lecture delivered in partnership with Guild of Health and St Raphael (**Home - GoHealth**) and development of healing ministry in its broadest sense.

16.3 COP26

Event in conjunction with Resound Worship, Tearfund, Eco Congregations Scotland, A Rocha and St George's Tron,

learning new worship songs that help us with the Five Marks of Mission in our desire to 'strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'.

16.4 Joint Liturgical Group (JLG)

Membership of the ecumenical JLG including an online gathering that was shaped and funded by Church of Scotland input.

16.5 Pilgrimage

Membership of Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum (<https://www.sprf.org.uk>), Martin Fair's conversation resourced by Resourcing Worship and New Ways of Being Church, pilots in local congregation of pilgrimage/prayer walking resources.

16.6 Hymnary Supplement

In response to a section of the Mission and Discipleship Deliverance from the 2019 General Assembly, "33. Encourage the Council^[1] to produce an online supplement to CH4 focusing on contemporary music, recognising that radical reform within our Church requires new forms of worship", Worship Development Workers from Resourcing Worship and Priority Areas have been jointly leading this project and have assembled a diverse steering group that has been working since 2020 on the selection process for material. There was a very successful call for songs that went out to the whole church. Formal launch is planned by GA 2024.

16.7 Sanctioned Liturgy

16.7.1 Should the General Assembly approve the Overture on the Solemnisation of Same Sex Marriage, following it being sent down to Presbyteries after the General Assembly of 2021, there will be a need for such authorised celebrants to be resourced with a form of liturgy to be used in the solemnisation of a same sex marriage.

16.7.2 It should also be noted that the Marriage Scotland Act (1997) stipulates that the Registrar General may require the nominating body presenting such authorised celebrants to produce the form of words used at its marriage ceremonies for marriage between persons of the same sex. The Forum is consulting with Legal Questions; Ecumenical Relations; and the Theological Forum, in preparing such a liturgy, and further information will feature in the Supplementary Reports. Work is taking place to consider the shape such a liturgy might have, drawing on the experiences of the Scottish Episcopal Church and the United Reformed Church.

16.7.3 Some resources are already available in the orders of service for the blessing of a marriage which featured in both the 1940 Book of Common Order and the 1994 Common Order, and it should also be noted that a suggested order for the blessing of a civil partnership was included in the Report of the Theological Commission on Same Sex Relationships and the Ministry presented to the General Assembly of 2013.

16.8 Path of Renewal

The third tranche of Path of Renewal was due to end in December 2021. However, as it was heavily impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, it has been extended until Easter 2022. A review of the third tranche and the initiative as a whole is being conducted at the time of writing, and will inform decisions about the future of Path of Renewal.

17. SUPPORTING CHILDREN, FAMILIES, YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG ADULTS

Throughout the last year the team have continued to develop provision for those involved in children, youth and family ministry, utilising the opportunities of new ways of connecting that a pandemic brings.

17.1 Communities of practice

We offered regular opportunities for those employed by the Church of Scotland as children/youth/family workers to gather together online as a community of practice. Through the series of thematic conversations, book groups, prayer gatherings and a conference, participants have been supported and connected, with many reporting that the community has been a lifeline for them during the pandemic. At the start of 2022 we developed the provision further by also offering opportunities to explore scripture and termly gatherings for worship.

17.2 Support for volunteers:

Support was offered to volunteers by means of our monthly thematic newsletters, the sharing of resources and information thorough our 'Now You're Talking' Facebook group, a series of online conversations in the spring, and training on family ministry was provided jointly with some ecumenical partners in the autumn. Work is continuing with our ecumenical partners on re-developing the core skills training material on children's ministry, and developing new material on intergenerational ministry.

17.3 Intergenerational Church:

Our intergenerational church webinar series (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcE1-KuB42WicLQp2_6SfXUyNaKJWQFMv) with Darren Philip was concluded with a third in the summer focusing on engaging with scripture using an intergenerational lens.

17.4 Family Ministry:

In the autumn we were delighted to host a webinar on family ministry. All our webinars have been recorded and are available on the Church of Scotland YouTube page, so you are invited to watch them, either individually or as a group, and consider what it can mean for your own local context (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcE1-KuB42WJ8CD_NOMmowNW3KkyvmK5c).

17.5 Communication:

Recognising that there was no centralised database of people involved with children/youth/family ministry throughout the Church of Scotland, and responding to the expressed need of people in local congregations for direct information, in the autumn of 2021, people were invited to add their details to a new children/youth/family ministry contacts database. At the end of 2021 only 216 people had accepted the invitation so our desire to contact the right people in the right places with support and information is still hampered. All those involved with children/youth/family ministry are therefore encouraged again to complete the contacts database form <https://forms.office.com/r/bbcqhMEgWW>.

18. LIFE AND WORK

18.1 The role of Life and Work has perhaps never been more vital. Readers have reported how the magazine has played a key role in 2021 in keeping in touch with the work of our Church during the ebb and flow of the Covid-19 global pandemic.

18.2 The year was not without its challenges, with sales, distribution and advertising impacted by enforced change as a result of the pandemic, although a move to single subscriptions to help support churches in sharing the magazine was introduced for the January 2021 issue and has proved popular.

18.3 Much work has taken place to reduce costs, but not the quality, of the magazine and a balanced budget is again offered for 2022. In common with other church businesses, a long-term business plan is being developed to return the magazine to a long-term sustainable footing to serve and resource the people of the Church of Scotland – and keep them vitally connected with our Church.

18.4 During the year we were able to switch the wrapping of many of our deliveries to paper in a partnership with our printer, Warners Midlands, to reduce the cost of the switch which was achieved thanks to new technology. This, coupled with an increase in our digital sales, is helping to reduce our carbon footprint.

18.5 We have also developed a closer working relationship with the Faith Action Programme, which will further support our work in 2022.

18.6 Despite the challenges thrown up by the changing landscape created by Covid-19, the magazine has continued to be published in print and digital and its social media channels have been updated with new material on every single working day. There is good news: the magazine's online website has enjoyed double digit percentage increases in its engagement over the year and digital sales of the magazine have increased.

18.7 Digital supplements were produced in May and November offering a snapshot of the business covered at the General Assembly and an introduction to COP26, the United Nations climate change conference which took place in Glasgow over a two-week period at the beginning of November.

18.8 New income streams have opened up in the shape of reader offers and there are plans to develop this further in 2022 and beyond.

18.9 During 2021, the team faced up to the challenges of the year and were again committed to deliver the magazine to our loyal readers every month – and to them (and our team of promoters) we owe a huge debt of gratitude.

18.10 The Life and Work Advisory Committee met on two occasions in 2021 via TEAMS and the Editor remains thankful for the support of this valuable and helpful group and its collective wisdom and support.

19. SAINT ANDREW PRESS – (JANUARY 2022)

19.1 Summary

19.1.1 In the publishing year that ended 30 September 2021, Saint Andrew Press (SAP) published four titles:

Out of the Ordinary, a new collection of poems by Kenneth Stevenson

The Church of Scotland Year Book 2020-21. The print edition sold out and supply continued via print on demand. This continues to be an important resource.

Scottish Presbyterian Worship, a major historical study by the renowned liturgical scholar Bryan Spinks. This was published in association with the Alcuin Club which purchased copies for all its members

Mission in Contemporary Scotland by Liam Fraser.

19.1.2 With the exception of the *Year Book*, each of these titles was commissioned by the publishing team at Hymns Ancient & Modern (HA&M) and we would welcome more proposals from within the Church of Scotland, especially as strategic priority areas are developed and could be supported by publishing. In the current year, only two titles are scheduled, *The Church of Scotland Year Book 2021-22* and *Assist Our Song* by Douglas Galbraith, both of which were published in the first quarter. No further SAP title are scheduled to appear this year.

19.2 Sales

Financial year October 2020 to September 2021
Budget £52000 Actual £85340 Variance
£33340

Financial year October 2021 to September 2022
Budget £78000

Year to date (Oct to Dec) Budget £35000 Actual
£29217

19.3 Marketing work

HA&M have supported new titles with a mix of launch and online event support, press and PR, web and e-newsletter work and advertising in Life and Work. SAP ran a General Assembly online bookshop offer – April/ May 2021 – total of 86 orders; £1922.

SAP improved its presentation and offer on e-books via Kindle and Google and other leading e-retailers. With a significant drop-off in book trade and event income, we successfully moved sales to online traders (especially Amazon) and especially SAP website. We ran a regular programme of offers and promotions in order to attract traffic and attention.

In the name of the Faith Nurture Forum

ROSEMARY FREW, *Convener*
KAREN CAMPBELL, *Vice Convener*
SCOTT SHACKLETON, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev Dr Karen Campbell has served as Vice-Convener of the Faith Nurture Forum since its formation. A minister with wide experience and a former Convener of Safeguarding, she has brought to this new role passion, imagination, and commitment and has been instrumental in helping establish the identity of the Forum. Since August 2021 Karen has convened the Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group. (She has lived and breathed PMPIG...) This has been a key piece of work in the most challenging of times and the Church is greatly in her debt. The Convener has much appreciated her wisdom and support, good humour and friendship during these unprecedented times.

ROSEMARY FREW, *Convener*

Appendix 1

OUTLINE CONTENTS –

POSSIBLE CAPABILITY PROCEDURES RELATING TO INDUCTED PARISH MINISTERS

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Appendix 2

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND GOOD CONDUCT FOR THE MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Introduction

Applicability of the Code

The Code applies to all those serving in the recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland. Throughout the Code, the terms 'ministry' and 'recognised ministries' shall include ordained ministers, deacons and readers, and all paid employees in parish appointments, as defined in section 16(1) and 16(1)(a) of Act VIII 2021.

Scope of the Code

The Code sets out the standards of conduct expected by the General Assembly. The Code is not intended to be an expansion or amplification of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) and should not be regarded as containing an authoritative or exhaustive list of disciplinary offences but Presbyteries, and Assessors and Discipline Tribunals operating in terms of the Discipline Act, shall have regard to the terms of the Code in making their assessment of the character of conduct. The Code complements the policies and rules set out in the Ministers' and Employees Handbooks which cover such matters as balance of duties, absence, maternity and paternity leave, holiday arrangements, health and safety, discrimination, bullying and harassment. In addition, the Code can be used:

- as a basis for education programmes to support good practice;
- as a document to reassure the public that all those serving in recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland are provided with a framework of standards and accountability;
- as a framework for analysing concerns and defining problems about conduct in all aspects of church life and work.

The Code is not a substitute for reflective and ethically disciplined practice, continuing learning and development, and regular supervision. Equally the Code is not to be used as a measure of ministerial capability.

An ethical basis for the Code

All who serve in ministry should be bound by the ordination vows taken (where applicable) and the Gospel values of the Christian faith we proclaim.

The Church is concerned with the spiritual care, nurture and wellbeing of all, whether within or out with the membership of the Church of Scotland. Those engaged in the ministries of the Church of Scotland (as defined above) have ethical obligations in the way they carry out their ministry. These obligations prohibit harm and promote the good of the person. The context of ministry is one in which people are often vulnerable and in need of support, and in which ministerial office is seen by society at large as a marker of integrity. Establishing appropriate boundaries fosters trust, helps to clarify ethical actions and enables the relationships involved in ministry to function effectively.

Ministry usually proceeds without any explicit agreement. It takes place wherever there is need and it is often unplanned. Even in a caring relationship, however, there is also a possibility that attempting to do good may result in a degree of harm, and that in helping others, those involved in ministry may be fulfilling a personal need. Therefore, in deciding what to do in any particular

situation, those involved in ministry need to be able to exercise ethical reasoning and deliberation in order to justify their actions.

1. General Conduct

Those serving in the recognised ministries of the Church of Scotland are responsible for their personal and ministerial conduct and must be able to justify their actions and practice towards those in their care, to colleagues and to all those with whom they come into contact. In particular they should:

- act at all times in ways that promote trust and confidence in their profession;
- act at all times to promote and safeguard the interests and wellbeing of others;
- affirm the equal dignity and worth of others;
- act with integrity and with due respect for diversity and differences including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability
- maintain good standing in the Church of Scotland;
- ensure that their conduct is consistent with their profession and appropriate to the setting in which they work.

2. Relationships between those in ministry and those to whom they minister

Those involved in ministry must at all times be conversant with, and advocates for, the Church's policies and procedures in relation to the safeguarding of children and protected adults.

Relationships have the capacity to be nurturing and healing, but they also have the potential to be damaging and destructive. An important reason for this is the intrinsic imbalance of power in the relationship. Those involved in ministry, therefore, should be aware of issues of power and should exercise any influence they may have with sensitivity, discernment and within ethical boundaries.

Those involved in ministry should seek to develop appropriate pastoral and supportive relationships within the whole people of God. The primary focus will be meeting the needs of those being ministered to; in this it may be appropriate to express our own vulnerability; but it would be an abuse of a pastoral relationship for those in ministry to use it to meet their own needs.

Those involved in ministry should recognise the limits of their competence and should take care to direct those to whom they minister to the help available from other suitably qualified professionals where appropriate.

3. Maintaining Trust

Ministry is both a privilege and a responsibility and those involved in ministry need to establish boundaries that enable trust and safeguard ethical relationships with those to whom they minister. In particular those involved in ministry should:

- behave in ways that honour the dignity and value of others;
- ensure as far as possible that no action or omission on their part and within their sphere of responsibility could be detrimental to the wellbeing of others;
- respect the trust established with others, while understanding the limits of confidentiality;
- respect the autonomy of others;
- recognise and act within the limits of their competence;

- maintain clear boundaries in the areas of self-disclosure, intimacy and sexuality;
- avoid any conflicts of interest; but in the event that the person involved in ministry has to withdraw on the grounds of conscience or ethical principles, endeavour to refer to someone else who can facilitate the transfer and continuity of ministry.

4. Respecting Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a condition of trust that enables people to seek help at a time of need and to talk about personal and private matters relevant to their spiritual health and wellbeing. Ministry often involves access to confidential information. Those engaged in ministry, therefore, must respect confidences, and in particular they should:

- respect the right of individuals to control access to their own personal information and to limit its disclosure;
- establish the boundaries of confidentiality with others and respect as far as possible the limitations of disclosure that an individual can reasonably expect or request;
- treat information about those to whom they minister, and others, as confidential and use it only for the purposes for which it was given;
- guard against breaches of confidentiality by protecting information from improper disclosure at all times;
- ensure that confidential information is only shared with a third party where the individual consents to the disclosure, where it can be justified in the public interest or where there is lawful authority such as a court order or statute. A disclosure in the public interest is likely to be justified where it is necessary to prevent a serious and imminent risk to public health, in the interests of national security, to protect children and adults from risks of serious harm or death, or to prevent or detect serious crime. If a person says or does something that leads you to think they or another person are at risk you have a duty to pass this on to the appropriate person or authority. You should always refer to the Safeguarding Service staff for advice in particular cases;
- discuss with those to whom they minister reasons why disclosing confidential information to other persons might be of benefit to the provision of good care.

5. Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and legal rights by any other person or persons. It is behaviour that is a clear departure from the ethical conduct required of us all. It can result from a misuse of power or a betrayal of trust, respect or intimacy which causes harm or exploitation. It can be caused by purposeful or negligent actions as well as a failure to act where a duty exists. The main forms of abuse include spiritual, physical, psychological, domestic, sexual, and financial, and are defined here in the context of Christian ministry:

- spiritual abuse is the imposition of values and beliefs on others; and while mission is part of the work of ministry, it is an abuse to fail to respect the freedom of others to make choices for themselves;
- physical abuse is any form of physical contact which is likely to cause distress, pain or bodily harm;
- psychological/emotional abuse is behaviour by a person in ministry which is exploitative, manipulative, coercive or intimidating;

- domestic abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour, including sexual violence, with a spouse, partner or family member;
- sexual abuse is forcing, coercing or inducing any person to whom you minister or to whom you stand in a position of trust, whether because of your office or for any other reason, to establish or pursue a sexual or improper emotional relationship and also the passing of hurtful remarks of a sexual nature;
- financial or material abuse is the misappropriation of a person's money or assets by those involved in ministry through fraud or deception; or through negligence or misuse of a person's assets or money while having a legitimate access to them.

6. The Use of Touch

People use touch informally as a gesture of care and formally within rituals to signify beliefs and theological actions. However, because the use of touch can be misunderstood or misinterpreted, or it may be unwanted, particular sensitivity should be exercised and assumptions about gender and personal space carefully considered. If in any doubt as to whether touch may be acceptable, permission should be obtained. The use of ritual that involves touch should be carefully explained and permission obtained. Parental or guardian consent may also be necessary where children are too young to give their own consent or an adult is without capacity to consent.

Touch is a basic human gesture and physical contact is an integral part of wellbeing. Touch conveys to many people reassurance, care and concern and it can be a valuable expression of a supportive or therapeutic relationship. But touch is not value-free, it is conditioned by social and cultural norms and it can convey powerful signals. Therefore, touch may be perceived as threatening or manipulative, it could be physically painful and it can be a form of abuse.

7. Working with Colleagues

Working in ministry often depends on collaboration with colleagues both in other ministries and in other disciplines. In particular those in ministry should:

- respect the skills, contributions and integrity of colleagues;
- work in a collaborative and co-operative manner with colleagues and communicate effectively with them within the limits of confidentiality;
- honour their commitments and at all times be reliable, dependable and trustworthy, and willing to play a full part in the life and worship of the Church within their Presbytery;
- respect the boundaries of other parishes, and take care not to undertake pastoral or sacramental duties within another parish for anyone other than a member of the congregation in which they minister. The recognised exceptions are (1) the conduct of a marriage or a funeral by private invitation and (2) circumstances in which the express permission of the minister of the other parish has been secured;
- participate in the work of multidisciplinary teams they are members of and respect their confidentiality;
- challenge colleagues who appear to have behaved unethically or in contravention of this Code and be prepared to bring concerns of misconduct to those charged with responsibility for colleagues.

8. Communications, Media and Social Media

Upholding high standards in all communications is important for the exercise of ministry. Communication is a powerful tool that can be used to benefit the work of ministry, but if used carelessly can reflect badly on an individual and the wider Church.

Communication and involvement with the media can:

- spread good news stories to inspire others
- reach those who may not be able to attend church or who may not be sure about attending church in person
- engage in topical conversations and respond to enquiries on behalf of the Church
- encourage involvement, collaboration and learning
- resolve misunderstandings and correct inaccuracies
- establish and strengthen relationships locally, nationally and internationally

When using Social Media there is a responsibility to:

- respect and model positive behaviours and language
- be transparent, relevant and kind
- be careful when sharing content, ensuring it is accurate and relevant
- consider the safety of yourself and others
- refrain from sharing any confidential information
- avoid any communications that might damage the reputation of the Church

Those serving in ministry should take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their work and their personal life just as much in the use of social media as in “real life” encounters. They should recognise the importance of knowing themselves and their own emotional needs. Working with a spiritual accompanier or pastoral supervisor can greatly help the development of this insight, which is difficult to achieve when working alone. Ministers should not expose themselves or others to material which is sexually explicit, profane, obscene, harassing, fraudulent, racially offensive, politically inflammatory, defamatory or in violation of any British, European or international law.

Ministers must remember that they are public figures whose opinions when proffered have weight and significance. In using social media ministers should always assume that anything they post or contribute is in the public domain and will be shared. The power of the internet for doing harm as well as good must always be borne carefully in mind and weighed before saying anything which may prove to be damaging to oneself as well as to others.

If contacted by the media for any reason those in ministry should before making any response contact the Church communications team. They should not speak to journalists “off the record”.

Ministers should familiarise themselves with the established policies and procedures and guidance for all communications.

9. Probity in Practice

The office of a recognised ministry in the Church of Scotland requires the highest standards of moral integrity and honesty. In particular those involved in ministry must:

- be honest and accurate in representing their professional affiliations, qualifications, and experience, and not make unjustifiable claims about their competence;

- keep their knowledge and skills up to date, taking part in regular learning and development activities in order to maintain and develop competence;
- distinguish between pastoral care and formal counselling and ensure that those to whom they minister understand the form of support being offered;
- not charge individuals personal fees for baptisms, weddings or funerals: in all circumstances ministers should follow the guidelines contained in the Year Book in respect of charging for weddings and funerals.
- refrain from encouraging those to whom they minister to give, lend or bequeath money or gifts which will be of a direct or indirect benefit to themselves, or put pressure on those to whom they minister to make donations;
- refuse all but trivial gifts and never accept any offers of loans, bequests or benefits of any kind from anyone to whom they minister (or anyone close to them)
- manage any finances for which they are responsible with diligence and for the purpose for which they are intended;
- declare any involvement that might cause a conflict of interest;
- demonstrate honesty and objectivity when providing references for colleagues or completing and signing forms. Reasonable steps must be taken to verify any statement before they sign a document, and they must not write or sign documents which are false or misleading.

10. Discipline

Where allegations involving issues of professional conduct are raised, Presbytery must proceed to investigate in terms of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) for all subject to its terms. Paid employees in parish appointments are also subject to the relevant disciplinary policy of the Church entity which employs them. Where an investigation establishes a suspected criminal action, this must be reported to the police.

11. Contracted working for other employers

Office holders of the Church of Scotland who are contractually employed out with the Church of Scotland are bound by the declared policies and procedures of their employing body. However, they remain subject to the Code of Conduct in regard to the holding of their designated Office.

Appendix 3

ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) shall be amended as follows:

1. Add a new section 4.2:

“A minister inducted to a charge on a Basis of Unrestricted Tenure, whose charge is one where the Approved Mission Plan anticipates adjustment at the next vacancy, shall, if so requested, participate in a review conducted by the Presbytery, to consider if any revised arrangements can be agreed with the minister to facilitate the implementation of the Approved Mission Plan.”

2. *Consequently, delete section 18(2) of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) and amend cross-references within the said section 18 accordingly.*
3. Amend section 7.0(1) by adding: *"The Basis of Union shall specify the number of elders from each existing Kirk Session who shall transfer to the new Kirk Session and the means by which such elders shall be selected or elected."*

Appendix 4

ADMISSION AND READMISSION OF MINISTERS ACT (ACT ZZ 2022)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain as follows:

PART A – DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Definitions

1. In this Act the following definitions apply:
 - (a) "Admission" means the process of making an application to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from a person who has not previously held a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (b) "Admissions Applicant" means a person who is seeking to be recognised as an Admissions Candidate.
 - (c) "Admissions Candidate" means a person who has been accepted at an Admissions Conference or Admissions Panel.
 - (d) "Admissions Conference" means a conference of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the fitness of applicants for Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (e) "Admissions Panel" means a panel of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess transfer from Temporary to Standard Certificates.
 - (f) "Certificate of Eligibility" means one of the Certificates referred to in section 12 below.
 - (g) "Certificate Holder" means a person who has received a Certificate of Eligibility.
 - (h) "Familiarisation Placement" means a placement as described in section 11 below.
 - (i) "the Forum" means the General Assembly's Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for Ministry.
 - (j) "Ministry" means a post which is commensurate with the requirements for Category O in the Registration of Ministry Act (Act II 2017).
 - (k) "Ordinand" means a person who has completed all requirements for training for ministry in their own denomination and who is eligible for ordination in that denomination but who has not yet been ordained there.
 - (l) "Readmission" means the process of making an application to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from a person who has previously held a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (m) "Readmissions Panel" means a panel of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess Readmission.

- (n) "UK State Pension Age" means the age at which a person, had they been a UK citizen, would reach UK State Pension Age as determined at the relevant time by the UK Government's calculations.^[2]

2. Wherever a matter referred to in this Act is within the discretion of the Forum, that decision may be delegated, whether to staff or suitably qualified persons, as the Forum sees fit.

Part B – ADMISSION

Pre-assessment of eligibility

3. (1) A person wishing to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from another denomination shall submit to the Forum a Pre-Assessment Form (supplied for completion on initial contact with the Forum), together with their current curriculum vitae and academic transcripts of subjects studied in their theological degree, to enable the Forum to assess their suitability and equivalency of academic qualification.
- (2) In addition:
 - (a) a person who has been ordained in their own denomination shall supply their Ordination Certificate to enable assessment of whether or not their ordination is recognised by the Church of Scotland for the purpose of Admission, and
 - (b) a person who is an Ordinand in their own denomination shall supply information to verify the completion of their academic training, their Church completed placements/probation and their current eligibility for ordination in their own denomination.
- (3) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not they are eligible to make an Application in terms of sections 4 & 5. The Forum's decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

Denominational and age limits

4. (1) The Forum will accept applications from ordained ministers and Ordinands from denominations belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) or the Church of England (in terms of the Columba Declaration). Applications from those in other denominations may be considered on an exceptional basis.
- (2) The Forum will not consider an application for a Standard Certificate of Eligibility from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the requirements for a Certificate of Eligibility before 31 December in the year which is ten years before the calendar year in which that person will reach the age which would be their UK State Pension Age.
- (3) In the case of a Temporary or Restricted Certificate of Eligibility, an application will not be considered from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the requirements for such a Certificate of Eligibility before 31 December in the year which is three years before the calendar year in which that person will reach the age which would be their UK State Pension Age.

Application for Admission

5. (1) If the person satisfies the requirements of sections 3 & 4, the person may then make an application to the Forum for Admission.
- (2) Such a person shall complete the application form prescribed by the Forum, including any self-declaration(s) and shall send it to the Forum along with the required accompanying documentation and payment of the appropriate fee(s), all by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (3) The application shall give full particulars as to the person's age, present Church connection, educational curriculum, ministerial career and other employment, together with a statement indicating the reasons for the person's wish to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The application shall be accompanied by all the documents (originals, extracts or copies) necessary in the opinion of the Forum to substantiate the facts set forth, and shall include the names of three referees.
- (4) If English is not the person's first language, he or she shall also complete such evaluation(s) as the Forum may require as to their linguistic proficiency.
- (5) If the necessary visa to exercise Ministry in the Church of Scotland cannot be obtained at any time, the application may not proceed. All visa fees shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- (6) All persons making application shall also be subject to a criminal record check.
- (7) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not their application can proceed to the next stage under section 6. The Forum's decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

Initial Online Assessment

6. (1) Following application under section 5, a person who is accepted by the Forum to proceed to the stage of Initial Online Assessment shall be known as an Admissions Applicant.
- (2) An Admissions Applicant shall take part in an Initial Online Assessment arranged by the Forum.
- (3) The Initial Online Assessment shall take place on a date supplied to the Admissions Applicant and shall assess the Admissions Applicant's Call, doctrine and gifts. Following the Initial Online Assessment, a decision shall be made by the Forum as to whether or not the Admissions Applicant may proceed in terms of section 7 to Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference in Scotland.
- (4) An Admissions Applicant who is not accepted at Initial Online Assessment must wait a minimum period of one year, as notified to that person by the Forum, before they may again participate in an Initial Online Assessment under this section 6.
- (5) The outcome of each Initial Online Assessment shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal, save as set out in section 9 below.

Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference

7. (1) A person who is deemed ready to proceed after an Initial Online Assessment may undertake Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference.
- (2) An Admissions Conference shall normally be a residential in-person conference held in Scotland, but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Admissions Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable.
- (3) A fee shall be payable by the Admissions Applicant in order to reserve a place at an Admissions Conference, and this fee shall be refundable on attendance. Travel costs are payable by the Admissions Applicant.
- (4) At an Admissions Conference there shall be careful consideration of the Admissions Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability. Following the Admissions Conference, a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Admissions Applicant should be accepted as an Admissions Candidate.
- (5) All Admissions Applicants who attend an Admissions Conference shall receive notification of the decision taken at the Admissions Conference in terms of sub-section (4) and feedback on the reasons for the decision.

Opportunities to become an Admissions Candidate

8. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Online Assessment and Admissions Conference to become an Admissions Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one "non-accept" decision. Once a total of three "non-accept" decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Admission process, at any stage, will be possible for that person. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 9 below.
- (2) Following a "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Admission process shall start again at section 3, i.e. at the stage of Pre-assessment of eligibility.

Appeals

9. (1) An Admissions Applicant shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel as follows:
 - (a) following a third "non-accept" decision, whether that is at Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, or
 - (b) following a first or second "non-accept" decision where the person would thereafter be age-barred in terms of section 4(3) from pursuing a fresh application for Admission.

For the avoidance of doubt, in no other circumstances shall an appeal shall be possible after a first or second "non-accept" decision.

- (2) Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or of the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, was intimated to the Admissions Applicant.
- (3) At the Appeal Hearing the Admissions Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Admissions Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Initial Online Assessment and/or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be.
- (4) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (5) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (6) and (7) below will apply.
- (6) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Admission process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Initial Online Assessment (and, if accepted there, one further Admissions Conference) or Admissions Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision and shall be permitted notwithstanding the terms of sections 4(2) and 4(3) of this Act. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Admission process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (7) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Admission process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Medical Assessment

10. (1) A person who is accepted as an Admissions Candidate shall, following Admissions Conference, undergo a medical assessment

in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as an Admissions Candidate if that assessment is, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. The Forum's decision shall be final.

- (2) If the medical assessment is unsatisfactory, the Admissions Candidate shall lose their status as such. The person may choose to apply again under this Act, in which event they shall commence at section 3, and subject always to the provisions of section 8, and provided always that the person must wait for the period prescribed by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year. In this situation the person must consent to undergoing a further medical assessment prior to making the new application at section 3 and that assessment must be satisfactory in the opinion of the Forum in order for the application to proceed. An unsatisfactory medical assessment on that occasion shall mean that no further entry into the Admission process is possible for that person.

Familiarisation Placement/Probationary placement

11. (1) Following a satisfactory medical assessment in terms of section 10(1) above, the Admissions Candidate will enter a Familiarisation Placement assigned by the Forum, or in the case of an Admissions Candidate who is an Ordinand, shall enter into a fifteen-month full-time probationary placement undertaken according to the provisions of section 17 to 22 of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004).
- (2) An Admissions Candidate must commence their Familiarisation Placement within three years of becoming an Admissions Candidate, failing which their status as an Admissions Candidate shall cease. If a matter which would constitute a material breach of the Terms and Conditions document referred to in section 11(4), had that been signed, comes to the attention of the Forum in the period between acceptance as an Admissions Candidate and commencement of the Familiarisation Placement, the Forum may advise the Admissions Candidate that they have been removed from the Admissions process under this Act and shall not be entitled to reapply. There shall be no right of appeal against such a decision.
- (3) During a Familiarisation Placement, the Admissions Candidate will work under the supervision of a Supervisor. The Familiarisation Placement shall last for a period of twelve months, subject always to sub-section 11(12) below. A proportion of minimum stipend will be payable during the Familiarisation Placement, but the Admissions Candidate will be responsible for locating and funding their own accommodation during this time.
- (4) At the start of the Familiarisation Placement the Admissions Candidate shall enter into a Terms and Conditions document in the form prescribed by the Forum.
- (5) The Supervisor for the Familiarisation Placement will be chosen by the Forum. The

Supervisor shall undertake such training for the role as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Supervisor shall be responsible for supervising the Familiarisation Placement according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum.

- (6) During the Familiarisation Placement the Admissions Candidate shall undertake such courses as may be prescribed by the Forum in Scottish Church History, Church Law and Safeguarding.
- (7) During the Familiarisation Placement an Admissions Candidate may be invited by the Presbytery within which lies the charge or appointment where his or her Familiarisation Placement is proceeding, to become a corresponding member of that Presbytery.
- (8) After six months, the Forum shall undertake an interim review of the Admissions Candidate according to the Terms and Conditions document.
- (9) After nine months the Forum shall undertake a final review of the Admissions Candidate according to the Terms and Conditions document. At that point a decision shall be made as to sustain, extend or not sustain the Familiarisation Placement.
- (10) If the Familiarisation Placement is sustained and provided the Admissions Candidate has completed the necessary courses in terms of section 11(6), the Admissions Candidate may commence applying for charges or appointments. At the completion of the full Familiarisation Placement, the candidate shall be entitled to receive a Certificate of Eligibility of the type determined by the Forum. Such a person shall thereafter be known as a Certificate Holder.
- (11) It shall be competent for the Forum to refuse to sustain a Familiarisation Placement, or to terminate a Familiarisation Placement in the event of a material breach of the Terms and Conditions document which was entered into between the Admissions Candidate and the Forum in terms of section 11(4). There shall be no appeal against such a decision but a written explanation shall be provided to the Admissions Candidate in question. Such a person shall be removed from the Admission process under this Act and shall not be entitled to reapply.
- (12) Exceptionally a Familiarisation Placement may be extended at the instigation of the Forum, on a month-by-month basis, for a maximum period of up to three months to allow the Admissions Candidate to be inducted to a charge or take up an appointment.
- (13) Exceptionally, where in the opinion of the Forum there is sufficient evidence of rooted and recent experience of ministry in the Church of Scotland, the Forum may decide that an Admissions Candidate need not complete a Familiarisation Placement and the Forum may instead immediately grant to that person a Certificate of Eligibility of the type determined

by the Forum subject to a mentoring arrangement, such mentoring arrangement to be put in place by the relevant Presbytery.

Certificates of Eligibility

12. The types of certificate which may be issued by the Forum under this Act are:

- (a) a "Standard Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for charges and appointments in Ministry in the Church of Scotland. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall take effect at the point of admission to membership of Presbytery, which, in the case of an Ordinand, shall involve ordination. Certificates of Eligibility shall be valid for three years from the date of issue.
- (b) a "Temporary Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for charges and appointments in Ministry in the Church of Scotland, but to hold any such post for an initial period of three years only. The following shall also apply to the holder of such a Certificate:
 - (i) The Certificate shall entitle the holder to hold a post for period of three years provided that post commences within three years of the date on which the Temporary Certificate of Eligibility is granted.
 - (ii) At the request of the Kirk Session/ employer, and with the concurrence of the Presbytery and the Forum, the initial period of three years may be extended for one further period of not more than three years.
 - (iii) The holder, if inducted to a charge, shall be granted a seat in Presbytery.
 - (iv) The holder shall retain status as a minister in their denomination of origin. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall only take effect if the holder makes application to the Forum for such status. The age limit specified in section 5(3) shall apply save that an allowance shall be made for service already rendered. Such an application shall be considered at an Admissions Panel and the paperwork considered shall be as specified by the Forum, to include an application form and references. At least one reference shall be provided from a person with knowledge of the holder's current post.
 - (v) Any employment contract which the holder enters into shall have a condition that it is an essential requirement for the person to hold a Temporary Certificate of Eligibility and without it the employment shall cease.
 - (vi) The holder of a Temporary Certificate of Eligibility whose Certificate expires without him or her having successfully applied to be admitted to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall have no further right to apply for or be inducted to a charge or appointed to a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.

- (c) a "Restricted Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for a specified charge within the Presbytery of International Charges and that on the basis of the holder being introduced to the charge for an initial period of three years only, subject to the following provisions:
- (i) The Certificate shall entitle the holder to hold a post for a period of three years provided that post commences within six months of the date on which the Restricted Certificate of Eligibility is granted.
 - (ii) At the request of the Kirk Session and with the concurrence of the Presbytery of International Charges and the Forum, the initial period of three years may be extended for one further period of not more than three years.
 - (iii) The holder shall sign the Formula upon being introduced to the post and shall thereafter be granted a seat in Presbytery.
 - (iv) The holder shall retain status as a minister in their denomination of origin. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall only take effect if the holder makes application to the Forum for such status under the Church's normal process of admission in terms of this Act and satisfactorily completes same, though the applicant's service in the Presbytery of International Charges shall be taken into account in determining what Familiarisation Placement might be required. The age limit specified in section 4(3) shall apply save that an allowance shall be made for service already rendered.
 - (v) Any contract which the holder enters into in the Presbytery of International Charges shall have a condition that it is an essential requirement for the person to hold a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility and without it the contract shall cease.
- (d) An "OLM Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to serve in the Church of Scotland in accordance with the provisions of the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011).

PART C – READMISSION

Application for Readmission

13. (1) A person wishing to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland shall complete the application form prescribed by the Forum, including any self-declaration(s) and shall send it to the Forum along with the required accompanying documentation, their current curriculum vitae, their ordination certificates for the Church of Scotland and for their current denomination (if any), and proof of status in their current denomination (if any), all by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (2) The application shall give full particulars as to the person's age, present Church connection, educational curriculum, ministerial career and other employment, together with a statement indicating the reasons for the person having demitted status in the Church

of Scotland and the reasons for their wish to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The application shall be accompanied by all the documents (originals, extracts or copies) necessary in the opinion of the Forum to substantiate the facts set forth, and shall include the names of three referees.

- (3) If the person requires a visa in order to exercise Ministry in the Church of Scotland and this cannot be obtained at any time, the application may not proceed. All visa fees shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- (4) All persons making application shall also be subject to a criminal record check.
- (5) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not their application can proceed to a Readmissions Panel under section 14. The Forum's decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

Readmissions Panel

14. (1) Following application under section 13, a person who is accepted by the Forum to proceed to a Readmissions Panel arranged by the Forum shall be known as a Readmissions Applicant.
- (2) A Readmissions Panel shall normally be held in person in Scotland, but the Forum reserves the right to hold a Readmissions Panel online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable.
- (3) The Readmissions Panel shall take place on a date supplied to the Readmissions Applicant and shall assess the Readmissions Applicant's Call, doctrine and gifts/character and beliefs, vocation, motivation, general suitability, together with their reasons for having demitted status in the Church of Scotland and the reasons for their wish to be readmitted. The Readmissions Panel shall make a decision as to whether or not the Readmissions Applicant may be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
- (4) All Readmissions Applicants who attend a Readmissions Panel shall receive notification of the decision taken by the Readmissions Panel in terms of sub-section 14(3) and feedback on the reasons for the decision.
- (5) If the decision of the Readmissions Panel is that the Readmissions Applicant is to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland, the Panel may additionally determine as follows:
- (a) that the Readmissions Applicant will require to undergo a Familiarisation Placement and that the granting of a Certificate of Eligibility will be subject to satisfactory completion of that Placement, in which case section 11 shall apply amended as appropriate, or
 - (b) that the Readmissions Applicant will be granted a Certificate of Eligibility subject to a mentoring arrangement to be put in place by the relevant Presbytery; and declaring that both such decisions will be subject to a medical assessment in terms of section 17 below.

- (6) A Readmissions Applicant who is not accepted at a Readmissions Panel must wait a minimum period of one year, as notified to that person by the Forum, before they may again participate in a Readmissions Panel.

Opportunities to be accepted by a Readmissions Panel

15. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to be accepted by a Readmissions Panel. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one “non-accept” decision. Once a total of three “non-accept” decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Readmission process, at any stage, will be possible for that person. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 16 below.
- (2) Following a “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before making application for Readmission again.
- (3) After a “non-accept” decision at a Readmissions Panel, a person who chooses to re-enter the Readmission process shall start again at section 13, i.e. at application stage.

Appeals

16. (1) A Readmissions Applicant shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel following a third “non-accept” decision at Readmissions Panel. For the avoidance of doubt, no appeal shall be possible after a first or second “non-accept” decision.
- (2) Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision of the Readmissions Panel was intimated to the Readmissions Applicant.
- (3) At the Appeal Hearing the Readmissions Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Readmissions Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the documents from the Readmissions Panel.
- (4) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Readmissions Panel there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Readmissions Panel was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Readmissions Panel acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (5) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Readmissions Panel, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (6) and (7) below will apply.
- (6) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision of the Readmissions Panel the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Readmissions Panel and shall be entitled

to attend only one further Readmission Panel and that within one year of the appeal decision. Any further “non-accept” decision on that next attendance shall terminate that person’s eligibility to enter the Readmission process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.

- (7) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Readmissions Panel, that shall terminate the Readmission process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Medical Assessment

17. (1) A person who is accepted by a Readmissions Panel shall undergo a medical assessment in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed to enter Ministry in the Church of Scotland (subject to section 14(5)) if that assessment is, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. The Forum’s decision shall be final.
- (2) If the medical assessment is unsatisfactory, the person may choose to apply again for Readmission under this Act, provided always that the person must wait for the period prescribed by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year. In this situation the person must consent to undergoing a further medical assessment prior to making the new application and that assessment must be satisfactory in the opinion of the Forum in order for the application to proceed. An unsatisfactory medical assessment on that occasion shall mean that no further entry into the Readmission process is possible for that person.

Type of Certificate

18. (1) A person who is readmitted into Ministry in the Church of Scotland following acceptance at a Readmissions Panel and subject always to sections 14(5) and 17(1) above, shall be granted a Standard Certificate of Eligibility.

Additional requirements where the person applying for Readmission has been previously judicially deprived of status

19. If a person has been previously judicially deprived of status as a Church of Scotland minister in terms of Act VII 1935, Act III 2001 or Act I 2019, all as amended, the following additional provisions shall apply in the Readmission process:
- (1) At the application stage, the person must submit a statement as to why they were judicially deprived of status, how they have resolved the issues around their deprivation of status and why they wish to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
- (2) The Readmissions Panel shall be entitled to see and take account of the judicial documents relating to the deprivation of status.
- (3) The Forum shall forward to the Presbytery of residence, or, in the case of an applicant who has not resided in Scotland for three months prior to the date of the application, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and also to any Presbytery within whose bounds the applicant was previously appointed as a minister, such

documents as are reasonably required (which may include (a) a copy of the application in full and (b) copies of any documents obtained by the Forum) to enable the Presbytery or Presbyteries, as the case may be, to provide the Readmissions Panel with its/their opinion of the application.

- (4) The Readmissions Panel shall then make its decision on the application in terms of section 14 and sections 15 to 18 may thereafter apply.

PART D – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Confidentiality

20. Each application and all procedure under this Act shall be taken in private by the Forum and by Presbyteries.

The Diaconate

21. The provisions of this Act shall apply, with necessary changes, to members of the diaconal ministry of the Church of Scotland and other Churches. The Forum shall be responsible for determining the interpretation of this Act consistently with the provisions of Act VIII 2010.

Repeals and Amendments

22. The Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act IX 2002) shall be repealed on the date this Act comes into force, subject to section 24 below. Any references to Act IX 2002 in other Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly shall from that date be read as references to this Act.

Commencement date and transitional arrangements

23. This Act shall come into force on *[date it passes at GA]*.
24. Where a person is in a Familiarisation Placement as at *[date Act passes at GA]*, such a person shall continue to be subject to the provisions of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act IX 2002) until they have been granted a Certificate of Eligibility, or their application expires, whether due to refusal by the Forum to sustain their Familiarisation Placement or otherwise. All other applications for Admission or Readmission to Ministry in the Church of Scotland, whether new or ongoing, and whether such applications commence before or after *[date Act passes at GA]*, shall from *[date Act passes at GA]* be dealt with under the provisions of this Act. Any disputes as to what that shall mean in practice for any particular person shall be resolved by the Forum and its decision as notified to the individual shall be final and not subject to any right of appeal.

Appendix 5

ACT AMENDING THE SELECTION AND TRAINING FOR FULL-TIME MINISTRY ACT (ACT X 2004) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing sections 1 to 6 and substitute the following sections 1 to 6 and in addition 6A and 6B:*

“Definitions

1. In this Act the following definitions apply:
 - (a) “The Forum” is the General Assembly’s Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for the full-time ministry.
 - (b) *This definition was repealed by Act [] 2022.*
 - (c) “The Assessment Conference” is the body of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the calling and fitness of applicants for all forms of ministry (in terms of 6(1)), and to accept as Prospective Candidates those deemed appropriate.
 - (d) “Ministry” is the full-time ministry of inducted parish ministers, and other posts requiring the same training and qualifications.
 - (e) *This definition was repealed by Act XI 2014.*
 - (f) “Applicants” are persons who are seeking to be recognised as Candidates for the ministry.
 - (g) “Prospective Candidates” are persons who have been accepted by the Forum at an Assessment Conference and who are awaiting the outcome of their application to Presbytery for nomination.
 - (h) “Candidates” are persons who have been both accepted by the Forum and nominated by their Presbytery. The term “Candidate” may not be used of or by any person who has yet to be, or who has failed to be, nominated by Presbytery.
 - (i) “Probationers” are persons currently undertaking the full-time probationary placement of fifteen months described in section 17(1).
 - (j) “Graduate Candidates” are those who have completed their training and received Exit Certificates in terms of section 22, but who have not yet been ordained. The term is to be applied without limit of time to anyone in this situation.
 - (k) “Accredited institutions” are academic institutions accredited by the Forum for the academic formation of Candidates”
 - (l) “Recognised institutions” are academic institutions recognised by the Forum for the purposes of section 12(1)(c) and sub-section 12(1)(f)(ii) below.
 - (m) “UK State Pension Age” means a person’s UK State Pension Age as determined at the relevant time by the UK Government’s calculations.^[3]

Discernment conversation and Initial Screening process

2. (1) A person wishing to apply for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall have a discernment conversation with a staff member of the Forum's Recruitment Team to determine how they will proceed, and should they subsequently make application, this will be followed by an Initial Screening process arranged by the Forum.
- (2) A person deemed ready to proceed after that screening process shall be entitled to apply in terms of section 4 to be recognised as a Candidate for the Ministry. Any person who makes such an application shall be known as an Applicant.
- (3) A person who is not deemed ready to proceed after that screening process must wait a period of between one and three years, as notified to that person by the Forum in writing, before they may again participate in an Initial Screening process.
- (4) The outcome of each Initial Screening process shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal.
- (5) The provisions of this section are subject to those of section 3.

Age, Time and Membership Limits for Applicants

3. (1) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who has not attained the age of eighteen years by the date on which the Forum receives the application.
- (2) The Forum will not normally consider an application from any person who has not been either a member or adherent of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been actively involved in a congregation of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been a member of a denomination belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), in any case for a period of 3 years immediately prior to receipt of the application.
- (3) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the prescribed course before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that person will reach UK State Pension Age. The acceptance of a Candidate who has delayed commencement of the prescribed course will be discontinued if in all normal circumstances that course could not be completed before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that Candidate will reach UK State Pension Age.
- (4) The acceptance of a Candidate may be reviewed by the Forum if the prescribed course has not been commenced within three years of acceptance.

Submission of Application

4. (1) The Forum will, on request, issue to each Applicant who has fulfilled the requirements as set out in sub-section 2(2) and section 3 the relevant application, which shall be completed

by the Applicant and sent to the Forum by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.

- (2) The Forum will inform Presbyteries of Applicants within their bounds, the appropriate Presbytery being determined according to section 8 of this Act.

Period of Discernment and Local Review

5. (1) Following the Forum's receipt of their application, the Applicant will enter a period of discernment with a Mentor. During the period of discernment, the Applicant and the Mentor shall explore together the nature of the Applicant's call and gifting. The period of discernment shall last for three to six months. The Mentor will be chosen by the Forum and shall undertake such training as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Mentor shall be responsible for supervising the period of discernment according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum, and shall produce assessment materials as required using such *Indicators for Assessment* document as may be from time to time in use by the Forum. During the period of discernment the Applicant shall also meet regularly with a representative (or representatives) of Presbytery.
- (2) At the end of the period of discernment the Applicant shall proceed to a Local Review. The Local Review will be undertaken by a group consisting of a National Assessor appointed by the Forum, the Mentor and a representative appointed by the Presbytery. In the event that one of the three individuals undertaking the Local Review cannot attend the Local Review, it may still proceed if the Applicant consents.
- (3) In addition, before the end of a period of discernment, the Presbytery or the Forum may require that an early Local Review takes place. Such a Review shall be undertaken by the same group as specified in section 5(2) but may only reach a decision in terms of section 5(4) (ii), (iii) or (iv). Sections 5(5) and 5(6) shall still apply.
- (4) Subject to the provisions of section 5(3), arising out of the Local Review, one of the following written decisions shall be reported by the Review to the Forum:
 - (i) That the Applicant is ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6 (or in the case of the Readership, to proceed to training for the Readership);
 - (ii) That the Applicant should undergo a further period of discernment of such length as may be determined by the Local Review before a decision to proceed to National Assessment can be made;
 - (iii) That the Applicant is not yet ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of Section 6;
 - (iv) That the Applicant is not suitable to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6.
- (5) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iii) shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.

- (6) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iv) may have a right of appeal in terms of section 6 below, subject to the terms of section 6B.
- (7) (i) All materials received by the Forum from the Local Review in terms of sub-section 5(4) shall be available to those making consideration in terms of sub-section 6(1).
(ii) individual shall serve as an Assessor for the same Applicant more than once.

National Assessment

6. (1) National Assessment shall consist of a conference at which there shall be careful consideration of the Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for ministry in the Church of Scotland. The conference shall normally be an in-person residential event but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Assessment Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable. At the Assessment Conference a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Applicant shall be accepted as a Prospective Candidate for the Ministry and the Presbytery shall be informed of the decision.
- (2) All Applicants who attend an Assessment Conference shall receive, as part of their training and development, feedback in the form of a report
- (3) An Applicant who is accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall, following Assessment Conference, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as a Prospective Candidate if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum's decisions on these matters.
- (4) An Applicant who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.
- (5) An Applicant who has not been accepted at Local Review in terms of a decision under section 5(4)(iii) or (iv) or who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate by an Assessment Conference may have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel, subject to the provisions of section 6B. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Local Review or the Assessment Conference's decision, as the case may be, was intimated to the Applicant. At the Appeal Hearing the Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Local Review and/or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be.

- (6) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Local Review or Assessment Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Local Review or Assessment Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Local Review or Assessment Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (7) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (8) and (9) below will apply.
- (8) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Local Review or Assessment Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Local Review or Assessment Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Assessment process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Local Review (and, if accepted there, one further Assessment Conference) or one further Assessment Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision and shall be permitted notwithstanding the terms of section 3(3) of this Act. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Assessment process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (9) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Assessment process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate

- 6A. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Screening, Local Review and Assessment Conference to become a Prospective Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one "non-accept" decision. Once a total of three "non-accept" decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Assessment process, at any stage, will be possible for that person, save that a fourth application may be submitted only with the prior approval of the Forum. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 6 above, subject to the terms of section 6B.
- (2) Following a "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Assessment process shall start again at section 2 i.e. at the stage of discernment conversation and Initial Screening.

- (4) For the purpose of this section, a decision at Local Review in terms of section 5(4)(iii) and also section 5(4)(iv) would each count as a “non-accept” decision.

Appeal at third “non-accept” decision only unless age-barred

6B. A person shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel as follows:

- (a) following a third “non-accept” decision, whether that is at Initial Screening, Local Review or Assessment Conference, or
- (b) following a first or second “non-accept” decision where the person would thereafter be age-barred in terms of section 3(3) from pursuing a fresh application for Assessment,

For the avoidance of doubt, in no other circumstances shall an appeal shall be possible after a first or second “non-accept” decision.”

2. *Wherever the word “Committee” appears, substitute “Forum”.*

3. *Delete the existing section 10(2) and substitute the following:*

“(2) Notification of the intention to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery’s decision was made. At the Appeal Hearing the Prospective Candidate shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Prospective Candidate. Such an appeal can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Presbytery acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.”

4. *In section 13(e) delete “child protection” and substitute “safeguarding”.*

- (c) A Local Review, established as described in section 5(4) of Act X 2004 *mutatis mutandis*, will arrive at one of the following written determinations:

- (i) That the applicant is suitable to commence training as a candidate for the readership;
- (ii) That the applicant should undergo a further period of discernment before a decision in terms of sub-paragraph (i) can be made;
- (iii) That the applicant is not ready to commence training as a candidate for the readership; or
- (iv) That the applicant is not suitable to be a candidate for the readership.

(d) An individual whose application is successful will be known as a candidate for the readership.

(e) An applicant who is accepted as a candidate for the readership shall, following Local Review, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum’s decisions on these matters.

(f) A decision in terms of section 1(c)(iii) or (iv) shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10 of this Act and section 6B of Act X 2004.”

2. *Delete the existing section 8 and substitute:*

“Admission of Readers from other Churches

Readers, and individuals with equivalent status in other Churches, may be admitted to the readership of the Church of Scotland upon becoming communicant members of this Church, and the following procedure shall be followed:

- (a) The person wishing to transfer (“the applicant”) shall intimate to the Presbytery in which he or she resides, and to the Faith Nurture Forum, his or her intention to apply for recognition as a reader.
- (b) The Faith Nurture Forum shall determine whether the applicant’s status is recognised by the Church of Scotland, and may use only that ground to refuse to accept an application. The Faith Nurture Forum’s decision on this is final.
- (c) The Faith Nurture Forum shall specify in each case what written materials are required in support of the application: these shall always include an application form; a criminal record check and declaration; and references (including one from the minister of the Church of Scotland congregation of which the applicant is a member, and one from the previous denomination confirming status and whether the applicant is in good standing).
- (d) The Faith Nurture Forum shall establish an Assessment Panel and that Panel shall carry out an assessment in the form of (i) an interview with a psychologist and (ii) an interview with two national assessors.
- (e) A report from the Panel shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum, and shall contain

Appendix 6

ACT AMENDING THE READERSHIP ACT (ACT XVII 1992) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing section 1 and substitute:*

“Application and acceptance as a candidate

- (a) The provisions of sections 2, 4, 5(1), 5(2) and 5(3), 6A and 6B and 7-10 of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), and (in respect of decisions in terms of (c)(iv) below) the appeals process referred to therein, shall be followed *mutatis mutandis* by any person wishing to apply for recognition as a candidate for the readership.
- (b) An application cannot be accepted from any person less than 18 years old. No upper age limit shall apply to application for acceptance for training.

recommendations relating to approval of the application and any training requirements to be imposed. The Faith Nurture Forum shall make a final determination of the training requirements that shall be imposed, and convey that determination and its overall recommendation to the Presbytery and to the applicant.

- (f) The Presbytery shall resolve whether to admit the applicant to the status of reader in the Church of Scotland, adopting without amendment the training requirements determined by the Faith Nurture Forum. The Presbytery shall arrange for a service of admission of the reader as soon as any requirements have been completed to the satisfaction of the Faith Nurture Forum.
- (g) These decisions shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10 of this Act and section 6B of Act X 2004."

3. *Delete the existing section 10 and substitute:*

"Appeals

An appeal in terms of section 1, 2, 6 or 8 of this Act shall be heard by the Ministries Appeal Panel in terms of the Ministries Appeal Panel Act (Act VI 2007) and may be taken on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the process was conducted contrary to the principles of natural justice. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision was intimated to the applicant or candidate, as the case may be ("the appellant"). At the Appeal Hearing the appellant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Faith Nurture Forum, and to address the Panel. The appellant may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the appellant."

Appendix 7

ACT AMENDING THE ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTRY ACT (ACT IX 2011) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing sections 1 to 8 and substitute the following sections 1 to 8 and in addition 8A and 8B:*

"1. Definitions

In this Act the following definitions apply:

- (a) "The Forum" is the General Assembly's Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for the ministries of the Church.
- (b) *This definition was repealed by Act [] 2022.*
- (c) "The Assessment Conference" is the body of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the calling and fitness of applicants for Ordained Local Ministry, and to accept as Prospective Candidates those deemed appropriate.

- (d) *This definition was repealed by Act XIII 2014.*
- (e) "Applicants" are persons who are seeking to be recognised as Candidates for the Ordained Local Ministry.
- (f) "Prospective Candidates" are persons who have been accepted by the Forum at an Assessment Conference and who are awaiting the outcome of their application to Presbytery for nomination.
- (g) "Candidates" are persons who have been both accepted by the Forum and nominated by their Presbytery. The term "Candidate" may not be used of or by any person who has yet to be, or who has failed to be, nominated by Presbytery.
- (h) "Presbytery of the bounds" is the Presbytery containing the larger or largest part of the area of the Ordained Local Minister's responsibilities.

2. **General**

- (1) An Ordained Local Minister is a person who has been ordained for life to a Ministry of Word and Sacrament exercisable on a non-stipendiary and normally a part-time basis, supporting the Ordained National Ministry of the Church.
- (2) Except insofar as qualified by the terms of this Act, an Ordained Local Minister is hereby declared to be a Minister of the Church of Scotland. An appointment to a designated appointment is to an office of the Church of Scotland.
- (3) No person by virtue of his or her status as an Ordained Local Minister shall be eligible for induction to a Charge.

3. **Entrance Qualifications**

- (1) Applicants must be persons:
 - (i) who are possessed of such professional, vocational or educational experience as shall be acceptable to the Forum, and
 - (ii) who have demonstrated the potential to cope with and benefit from the academic course involved in training for the Ordained Local Ministry.
- (2) Proficiency in spoken and written English will be required.

4. **Discernment conversation and Initial Screening process**

- (1) A person wishing to apply for the Ordained Local Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall have a discernment conversation with a staff member of the Forum's Recruitment Team to determine how they will proceed, and should they subsequently make application, this will be followed by an Initial Screening process arranged by the Forum.
- (2) A person deemed ready to proceed after that screening process shall be entitled to apply in terms of section 6 to be recognised as a Candidate for the Ordained Local Ministry. Any person who makes such an application shall be known as an Applicant.
- (3) A person who is not deemed ready to proceed after that screening process must wait a period of between one and three years, as notified to that person by the Forum in writing,

before they may again participate in an Initial Screening process. Forum.

- (4) The outcome of each Initial Screening process shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal.
- (5) The provisions of this section are subject to those of section 5.

5. **Age, Time and Membership Limits**

- (1) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who has not attained the age of eighteen years by the date on which the Forum receives the application. No upper age limit shall apply to application for acceptance for training.
- (2) The acceptance of a person as a Candidate may be reviewed by the Forum if that person's prescribed course of training has not been begun within three years of that acceptance.
- (3) The Forum will not normally consider an application from any person who has not been either a member or adherent of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been actively involved in a congregation of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been a member of a denomination belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), in any case for a period of three years immediately prior to receipt of the application.

6. **Submission of Application**

- (1) The Forum will, on request, issue to each Applicant who has fulfilled the requirements as set out in sub-section 4(2) and section 5 the relevant application, which shall be completed by the Applicant and sent to the Forum by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (2) The Forum will inform Presbyteries of Applicants within their bounds, the appropriate Presbytery being determined according to section 9(2) of this Act.

7. **Period of discernment and Local Review**

- (1) Following the Forum's receipt of their application, the Applicant will enter a period of discernment with a Mentor. During the period of discernment, the Applicant and the Mentor shall explore together the nature of the Applicant's call and gifting. The period of discernment shall last for three to six months. The Mentor will be chosen by the Forum and shall undertake such training as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Mentor shall be responsible for supervising the period of discernment according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum, and shall produce assessment materials as required using such *Indicators for Assessment* document as may be from time to time in use by the Forum. During the period of discernment the Applicant shall also meet regularly with a representative (or representatives) of Presbytery.
- (2) At the end of the period of discernment the Applicant shall proceed to a Local Review. The Local Review will be undertaken by a group consisting of a National Assessor appointed by the Forum, the Mentor and a representative

appointed by the Presbytery. In the event that one of the three individuals undertaking the Local Review cannot attend the Local Review, it may still proceed if the Applicant consents.

- (3) In addition, before the end of a period of discernment, the Presbytery or the Forum may require that an early Local Review takes place. Such a Review shall be undertaken by the same group as specified in section 7(2) but may only reach a decision in terms of section 7(4) (ii), (iii) or (iv). Sections 7(5) and 7(6) shall still apply.
- (4) Subject to the provisions of section 7(3), arising out of the Local Review, one of the following written decisions shall be reported by the Review to the Forum:
 - (i) That the Applicant is ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8;
 - (ii) That the Applicant should undergo a further period of discernment of such length as may be determined by the Local Review before a decision to proceed to National Assessment can be made;
 - (iii) That the Applicant is not yet ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8;
 - (iv) That the Applicant is not suitable to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8.
- (5) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of paragraph 7(4)(iii) shall be subject to the terms of section 8A below.
- (6) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 7(4)(iv) may have a right of appeal in terms of section 8 below, subject to the terms of section 8B.
- (7)
 - (i) All materials received by the Forum from the Local Review in terms of sub-section 7(4) shall be available to those making consideration in terms of sub-section 8(1).
 - (ii) No individual shall serve as an Assessor for the same Applicant more than once.

8. **National Assessment**

- (1) National Assessment shall consist of a conference at which there shall be careful consideration of the Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for Ordained Local Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The conference shall normally be an in-person residential event but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Assessment Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable. At the Assessment Conference a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Applicant shall be accepted as a Prospective Candidate for the Ordained Local Ministry and the Presbytery shall be informed of the decision.
- (2) All Applicants who attend an Assessment Conference shall receive, as part of their training and development, feedback in the form of a report.
- (3) An Applicant who is accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall, following Assessment

Conference, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as a Prospective Candidate if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum's decisions on these matters.

- (4) An Applicant who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall be subject to the terms of section 8A below.
- (5) An Applicant who has not been accepted at Local Review in terms of a decision under section 7(4)(iii) or (iv) or who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate by an Assessment Conference may have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel, subject to the provisions of section 8B. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which Local Review or the Assessment Conference's decision, as the case may be, was intimated to the Applicant. At the Appeal Hearing the Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Local Review and/or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be.
- (6) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Local Review or Assessment Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Local Review or Assessment Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Local Review or Assessment Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (7) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (8) and (9) below will apply.
- (8) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Local Review or Assessment Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Local Review or Assessment Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Assessment process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Local Review (and, if accepted there, one further Assessment Conference) or one further Assessment Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Assessment process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.

- (9) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Assessment process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate

- 8A. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Screening, Local Review and Assessment Conference to become a Prospective Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one "non-accept" decision. Once a total of three "non-accept" decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Assessment process, at any stage, will be possible for that person, save that a fourth application may be submitted only with the prior approval of the Forum. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 8 above, subject to the terms of section 8B.
- (2) Following a "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Assessment process shall start again at section 4 i.e. at the stage of discernment conversation and Initial Screening.
- (4) For the purpose of this section, a decision at Local Review in terms of section 7(4)(iii) and also section 7(4)(iv) would each count as a "non-accept" decision.

Appeal at third "non-accept" decision only

- 8B. A person shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel following a third "non-accept" decision, whether that is at Initial Screening, Local Review or Assessment Conference."
2. *Wherever the word "Committee" appears, substitute "Forum".*
3. *Delete the existing section 9(4)(b) and substitute the following:*
 "(b) Notification of the intention to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery's decision was made. At the Appeal Hearing the Prospective Candidate shall be entitled to appear either online in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Prospective Candidate. Such an appeal can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Presbytery acted contrary to the principles of natural justice."
4. *Delete the existing section 9(5).*

Appendix 8

FINANCIAL INFORMATION AND ALLOWANCES

Stipends and Salaries

The Assembly Trustees approved the recommendation of the Faith Nurture Forum that stipend & salary scales be increased by 2% for 2022.

Stipend Scale (including Associate Ministers) 2022

Point 1 £28,700
Point 2 £30,577
Point 3 £32,453
Point 4 £34,331
Point 5 £35,269

Ministries Development Staff Scales 2022

MDS General Scale
Point 1 £26,136
Point 2 £26,991
Point 3 £27,843
Point 4 £28,698
Point 5 £29,547

Team Leader Scale

Point 1 £31,821
Point 2 £32,531
Point 3 £33,241
Point 4 £33,952
Point 5 £34,662

Deacon Scale (Genuine Occupational Requirement)

Point 1 £27,843
Point 2 £28,698
Point 3 £29,547
Point 4 £30,400
Point 5 £31,252

Island Allowance

This allowance remains the same for 2022.
Outer Island Allowance: £1,798
Inner Island Allowance: £707

Travel Expenses 2022

Travel expenses payable remain as:
Rates for those providing their own car:
a) reimbursed to ministers and MDS providing their own car for pastoral duties:
45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles
25p per mile for all additional mileage
Ministers also receive capital reimbursement of £80 per month.
b) reimbursement of travel expenses for students, probationers, OLMs, auxiliary ministers and locums:
45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles
25p per mile for all additional mileage
c) reimbursed to ministers and MDS providing their own motor bike for pastoral duties:
24p per mile travelled per annum
d) reimbursed to ministers and MDS providing their own pedal bike for pastoral duties:
20p per mile travelled per annum

The cumulative rate of Church of Scotland stipend and salary increases over the past five years as compared to cumulative UK CPI (consumer price index) is shown below. Consideration of CPI inflation rates form part of the annual decision-making process in recommending stipend and salary increases for the following year, however budgetary constraints mean that it is not always possible to match them.

	% Increase by CofS	CPI % as at 1st Jan
2022	2.00%	*
2021	0.00%	0.70%
2020	2.00%	1.80%
2019	2.00%	1.80%
2018	1.50%	3.00%
2017	1.00%	1.80%
2016		
Cumulative increase	6.66%	9.42%

* Not available at time of writing report.

Recommended Pulpit Supply Fee and Expenses

In Charges where there is only one diet of worship, the Pulpit Supply Fee shall be a Standard Fee of £60. In Charges where there are additional diets of worship on a Sunday, the person fulfilling the Supply shall be paid £30 for each additional service.

In all cases, Travelling Expenses shall be paid. Where there is no convenient public conveyance, the use of a private car shall be paid for at the standard rate of 45p per mile.

Removal and Disturbance Allowance

When a Minister is called to a Charge, the congregation(s) to which the Minister is called shall meet the removal costs incurred in transporting the minister's personal effects into the manse of the Charge. In addition, a manse disturbance allowance of up to £1,740 can be paid on production of appropriate receipts.

If a Charge has an average income base of less than £30,000, the Faith Nurture Forum will meet the full cost of the removal expenses and disturbance allowance. When a Charge's average income base is between £30,001 and £60,000 application may be made to the Faith Nurture Forum for assistance in meeting these costs. This assistance may take the form of a grant or loan or a combination of both.

When a minister retires on account of age or infirmity, and in the case of a widow(er) of a Minister who dies in service, the Faith Nurture Forum will meet the cost of removal expenses.

Funerals

Where a congregation calls upon the services of a minister not already in receipt of a stipend, or other suitably qualified person, to conduct a funeral, a fee of £60 may be paid by the congregation. On no account should such a fee be charged to the family of the deceased.

For the avoidance of doubt, no fee may be offered to or received by a serving Parish Minister for the conduct of a funeral service, whether in their own or another parish.

Vacancy Allowance

For 2022 the Vacancy Allowance remains at £933 per month and £1,082 for linked charges. This is sufficient to cover pulpit supply and two days per week pastoral cover at the rate of £315 per month for each day of pastoral cover per week should a vacant congregation choose to engage a locum. The Vacancy Allowance is deducted directly from each vacant charge's Ministries and Mission Allocation.

Guardianship Allowance

For 2022 the Guardianship Allowance also remains at £933 per month in line with the vacancy allowance.

Appendix 9

Discernment & Assessment

The table below provide statistics relating to Enquirers and Applicants at different stages in the Discernment and Assessment processes. [Discernment Conversations replaced Vocations Information Days in 2019 and the table reflects this change.] However, it should be understood that an Enquirer might not choose to apply/enter Discernment until a subsequent year.

Year	2017	2018	2019	Jan-Dec 2020	Jan- Dec 2021
Enquirers			170	124	95
Discernment Conversations			93	65	36
Applicants for Ministry (all types)	78	49	74	50	28
Entered Local Assessment	58	43	62	52	31
Chose to Withdraw (locally)	14	6	5	3	3
Readership (Applicants)	8	4	2	1	6
Readership Accepted	8	3	2	0	6

The table below reflects the Assessment Year with a cycle of Assessment Conferences taking place across a year e.g. those accepted as noted in 2021 would be eligible to begin training in that same year, but may choose to defer to a later date.

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Completed Local Assessment	44	37	29	37	45
Attended Assessment Conference	29	37	29	36	39
Full-time Ministry (Applicants)	20	21	17	25	26
Full-time Ministry Accepted	13	16	15	17	15
Ordained Local Ministry (Applicants)	8	14	11	9	12
Ordained Local Ministry Accepted	5	10	8	7	9
Deacons (Applicants)	1	2	1	2	1
Deacons Accepted	1	1	0	1	1
First Time Applicants	24	31	25	30	31
Accepted	17	21	19	21	21
Returning Applicants	5	6	4	6	8
Accepted	2	6	4	4	4

Admissions

Numbers of attendees at Admissions Conference

YEAR	ATTENDEES	ACCEPT	NON ACCEPT
2017	16	9	7
2018	24	17	7
2019	23	13	10
2020	27	15	12
2021	27	12	15

Those accepted at Admissions Conference are then invited to begin their Familiarisation Period in the Church of Scotland [within a period of 3 years] and on successful completion are granted a Certificate of Eligibility.

Appendix 10**Candidates and probationers**

<i>Candidates who started training in August 2021</i>	
FTWAS	15
OLM	9
Diaconal	1
<i>Total across categories</i>	25
<i>Candidates accepted for entry for August 2021 but deferred entry</i>	
FTWAS	2
OLM	1
<i>Deferred training total</i>	3
<i>Candidates across all years prior to probation as at August 2021 including those who have deferred</i>	
FTWAS	42
OLM	17
Diaconal	2
<i>Total across all categories</i>	61
<i>FTWAS candidates studying at recognised providers 2021-22</i>	
Aberdeen campus based	0
Aberdeen distance learning	2
Glasgow campus based	12
Edinburgh campus based	7
Highland Theological College campus based	3
Highland Theological College distance learning	12
St Andrews campus based	1
<i>OLM candidates studying at recognised providers 2021-22</i>	
Aberdeen distance learning	7
Highland Theological College distance learning	6
<i>Diaconal candidates studying at recognised providers 2021-22</i>	
Aberdeen campus based	1
Highland Theological College distance learning	1
<i>Number of probationers completing training in 2021/early 2022</i>	
FTWAS	7
OLM	7
Diaconal	0
<i>Total</i>	14
<i>Probationers beginning summer 2021</i>	
FTWAS	26
OLM	6
Diaconal	1
<i>Late Starts 2021/early 2022</i>	
FTWAS	3
OLM	2
Diaconal	0
<i>Total</i>	38
<i>Readers</i>	
Readers in training in 2021	9
Readers set apart in 2021	1

Appendix 11**Ministries Figures for the period to 31 December 2023**

Presbytery	Presbytery Number	2021 TOTAL
Edinburgh	1	48.5
West Lothian	2	17
Lothian	3	25
Melrose and Peebles	4	9
Duns	5	4.5
Jedburgh	6	5.5
Annandale and Eskdale	7	8
Dumfries and Kirkcudbright	8	12.5
Wigtown and Stranraer	9	6
Ayr	10	24
Irvine and Kilmarnock	11	13.5
Ardrossan	12	13.5
Clyde	14	40
Glasgow (inc. Cumbernauld)	16	84
Forth Valley and Clydesdale		44
Argyll	19	18
Falkirk (excl. Cumbernauld)	22	15.5
Stirling	23	21.5
Fife	24	44.5
Dunkeld and Meikle	27	6.5
Perth	28	16.5
Dundee	29	18
Angus	30	15.5
Aberdeen and Shetland	31	28
Kincardine and Deeside	32	10.5
Gordon	33	16
Buchan	34	14
Moray	35	11.5
Abernethy	36	4.5
Inverness	37	16.5
Lochaber	38	5.5
Ross	39	10
Sutherland	40	4
Caithness	41	5.5
Lochcarron-Skye	42	5
Uist	43	2
Lewis	44	5
Orkney	45	7
England	47	4
International	48	5
TOTAL		665

Appendix 12

Previous Geographical Weightings Categories

Group A: City Weighting 1.0

Aberdeen
Dundee
Edinburgh
Glasgow

Group B: Predominantly Urban Weighting 1.0

Dumbarton
Dunfermline
Falkirk
Greenock & Paisley
Hamilton
Irvine & Kilmarnock
Kirkcaldy
Lothian
West Lothian

Group C: Urban/Rural Weighting 1.5

Angus
Ardrossan
Ayr (added to this category at GA 2011)
Buchan
Dumfries & Kirkcudbright
Inverness
Kincardine & Deeside
Lanark
Melrose & Peebles
Moray
Perth
St Andrews
Stirling

Group D: Rural/Urban Weighting 2.0

Annandale & Eskdale
Caithness
Dunkeld & Meikle
Duns
Gordon
Jedburgh
Ross
Wigton & Stranraer

Group E: Scattered Rural Weighting 3.0

Abernethy
Lochaber
Lochcarron – Skye
Sutherland

Group F: Island Weighting 3.0

Argyll
Lewis
Orkney
Shetland
Uist

References

- [1] Now replaced by the Faith Nurture Forum
- [2] Ascertained currently by the calculator found on the gov.uk website
- [3] Ascertained currently by the calculator found on the gov.uk website.

TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND HOUSING AND LOAN FUND FOR RETIRED MINISTERS AND WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS OF MINISTERS MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance	Report
<p>The General Assembly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive the Report. 2. Appoint Mrs Barbara Finlayson as a Trustee of the Fund. 	<p>1. AIM OF THE FUND</p> <p>1.1 The Fund exists to support retired Church of Scotland ministers, widows, widowers, separated or divorced spouses and separated or former civil partners of Church of Scotland ministers who are in need of help with housing. The Trustees endeavour to provide assistance by way of either a house to rent or a house purchase loan in accordance with guidelines set and regularly reviewed by the Trustees. Guidance Notes incorporating these guidelines are available on the Church of Scotland website or can be requested from the Secretary at the Church offices. The Secretary is always accessible to potential applicants to discuss their particular situation and the assistance which the Trustees may be able to provide to them.</p> <p>1.2 The Trustees own, and regularly acquire, houses for leasing at concessionary rents to those with insufficient resources to enable them to purchase houses for themselves. Alternatively, loans on favourable terms are granted up to 70 per cent of a house purchase price, subject to an overriding normal maximum of £25,000 for Standard Loans and, since January 2022, £154,000 for Shared Appreciation Loans.</p> <hr/> <p>2. HOUSING TRANSACTIONS: 2021</p> <p>2.1 Assistance provided during 2021 to ministers, widows and widowers, and separated and divorced spouses, is detailed in Appendix 1 annexed to this Report. Covid-19 has had an impact on house purchase, sale and loan activity. The property market has been buoyant with a supply and demand issue created by Covid-19. It is impossible to predict if this will continue.</p> <p>2.2 The Trustees owned 189 houses at the end of 2021. The houses purchased and those sold by the Trustees during that year are detailed in Appendix 2 which also shows the average price of the houses purchased, and the average price of the houses disposed of. At the end of 2021, four houses were being marketed or prepared for sale.</p> <hr/> <p>3. RENTS AND RENTAL REVIEWS</p> <p>3.1 Rents charged for housing provided by the Fund are set, at the beginning of the tenancy, at 50% of the Market Rent (as professionally assessed at that time), for ministers, and at 25% for widows, widowers and bereaved civil partners of ministers.</p> <p>3.2 The Trustees considered carefully the level of annual rent increase. In light of the good financial position of the Fund, the Trustees decided that rents should not be increased in 2022.</p> <p>3.3 Rental income has been sufficient to cover maintenance and repairs. Routine visits to rental properties have not been carried out as a result of Covid-19 restrictions and for much of the year only essential maintenance has been permitted within Government Guidelines. Some visits were resumed in the latter part of 2021 and repairs prioritised.</p>

4. LOAN TRANSACTIONS: 2021

4.1 The Fund provides loans by way of Standard Loans, Shared Appreciation Loans, and Short Term Bridging Loans.

4.2 In June 2021 the Trustees carried out a review of interest rates. The rate for Standard Loans was reduced from four per cent to two percent for ministers and from two per cent to one percent for surviving widows, widowers or bereaved civil partners of ministers. The rate for Shared Appreciation Loans was reduced from two and a half per cent to one and a half percent for ministers and from one and a quarter per cent to three quarters of a per cent for widows, widowers or bereaved civil partners of ministers.

4.3 Standard Loans are granted up to a normal maximum limit of £25,000 at a rate of interest of two per cent for ministers and one per cent for surviving widows, widowers or bereaved civil partners of ministers.

4.4 Shared Appreciation Loans, which link loan repayment values over their term to the value of the property concerned over the same period, were granted up to a normal maximum limit of £140,000. Currently rates of interest for such loans are one and a half per cent for ministers and three quarters of a per cent for widows, widowers or bereaved civil partners of ministers. For a second year, borrowers due their 5-yearly visit by the Secretary, were consulted by telephone instead as a result of Covid-19 restrictions. Visits will be resumed when conditions enable this.

4.5 Short Term Bridging Loans are granted for a specific period, and in specific circumstances, at the discretion of the Trustees. Interest is charged at a rate equivalent to that permitted by HM Revenue & Customs without liability for benefit-in-kind taxation. At the time of writing this was two per cent.

4.6 Details of each of the three types of loan outstanding as at 31st December 2021 are given in Appendix 3.

5. DONATIONS, BEQUESTS ETC.

5.1 The Trustees are gratified to report that during 2021 they received a total sum of £65,780 by way of donations, bequests and gifts and a property was bequeathed to the Fund.

6. FUNDS

6.1 The amount realised from sales of houses, less the expenditure on house purchases, during 2021 was £1,402,817. The net decrease in long-term loans during 2021 was £241,500.

6.2 Investments at market value, and cash deposits, at 31st December 2021 amounted to £27,770,307.

7. THE FUTURE

7.1 Those Ministers who are within five years of retirement are encouraged to contact the Fund if they feel they may need to avail themselves of the Fund's assistance. Similarly, the Trustees always welcome an initial approach from those who are within five to ten years of retirement. Such approaches not only assist the Trustees with financial forecasting, but can help to alleviate some of the anxieties which ministers and their spouses may experience in respect of housing as they

contemplate their future after retirement. 17 new and 3 updated applications were approved in 2021. Details of commitments for the provision of either a house to rent, or a loan, during the next five years, and approved at 31st December 2021, which will require to be met from funds, can be found at Appendix 4. The number of ministers due to retire within a five to ten year period from 31st December 2021 and the number placed on the Preliminary Applications List for assistance can also be found at Appendix 4.

7.1.1 The Trustees would like to make clear that the Fund can be of assistance beyond the point of retiral. Already retired Church of Scotland ministers, widows, widowers, bereaved civil partners, separated or divorced spouses and separated or former civil partners of Church of Scotland ministers who find that their circumstances have changed and would now like to be considered for assistance from the Fund are welcome to speak to the Secretary at any point. This can include those already in receipt of loans from the Fund who may now wish to seek a further advance.

7.2 In December 2021 the Trustees considered carefully the parameters for granting assistance with housing to rent, and assistance by way of housing loans, taking into account the current state of the housing market, the numbers of ministers due to retire, and equally the Fund's obligations towards the Church and the proper and appropriate stewardship of its resources. Particular note was taken of the sale prices of properties returning to the Fund which were often exceeding the previous maximum price and the buoyant market created by Covid-19 conditions. The Trustees agreed that the house purchase price limits for 2022 be increased so that the maximum price for a house to rent increases by £20,000 to £220,000 and the maximum price, or value, of a house in respect of which a loan would be given, similarly is increased to £220,000. The Trustees are satisfied that such parameters will enable appropriate housing to be purchased for rental, or with the aid of Fund loans, in the current housing market for those who are eligible for assistance from the Fund. Applicants for whom assistance is to be granted by way of a house to rent are requested to consider, first, the Fund's vacant properties before the Trustees will be prepared to purchase a house for them.

8. CONSULTATION WITH ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

8.1 The Trustees continue to work on a Strategic Review of the Fund and continue in discussion with the Assembly Trustees. The Trustees are working with the Assembly Trustees and other departments to identify how, in compliance with the Fund's purposes, assets which currently outstrip the Fund's anticipated obligations, can be best applied for the benefit of the Fund's Beneficiaries and the wider benefit of the Church.

8.2 Since the start of their Review, the Fund Trustees have already taken the following action to maximise the spend on beneficiaries within the existing Constitution:

- The maximum house purchase price has increased by £45,000 since December 2019.
- The Fund now pay for the Law Department's legal fees rather than seeking any contribution from beneficiaries.
- Factoring fees are now paid by Fund unless a care element is included.
- Reduced interest rates charged on loans.

- Removal of enhanced loan interest rates on the immediate death of borrower.
- An expanded maintenance spend on properties is moving forward.

8.3 Further proposals are now being discussed with the Assembly Trustees and work continues to bring the matter to a conclusion.

9. DILIGENCE

9.1 The Trustees confirm that, as far as possible within the constraints of Covid-19, the staff have monitored their stock of rental housing, and housing over which loans have been secured, and have continued to support all of their tenants and borrowers. Covid-19 has made it challenging to find available tradesmen.

9.2 Any empty property held by the Fund presents challenges, as the Fund follows good practice by ensuring that they are all checked regularly and heated during cold weather, a practice underlined by the Insurers' requirement for such precautions. Garden upkeep and payment of council tax add significantly to the costs of maintenance for such properties. Efforts are made to try and re-let such properties but, for a variety of reasons, this is often not practicable. Commercial rental of such properties is only undertaken rarely, where the prospect of a sale, is for market reasons, highly unlikely. Empty properties are offered to potential tenants in the first instance and if not suitable are marketed for sale as soon as possible.

9.3 We endeavour to maintain the properties owned by the Fund at a high standard and all legal requirements are dealt with.

9.4 During 2021 safety procedures for visits and repairs were introduced and altered as appropriate as a result of Covid-19.

10. STAFF

10.1 The Trustees wish to place on record their indebtedness to the work of the staff of the Fund, and in particular the care and support afforded by staff to all those who apply to, or have been assisted by, the Fund.

11. MEMBERSHIP

11.1 The Trustees would be pleased if the General Assembly would agree to the appointment of Mrs Barbara Rachel Finlayson as a Trustee of the Fund.

11.2 Rev Joanne Hood comes to the end of her second term as a Trustee appointed by the Faith Nurture Forum. The Fund has appreciated her insight, compassion and understanding of the Church.

11.3 Rev MaryAnn R Rennie is coming to the end of her second term as a Trustee and has served recently as Chair. She became a Trustee of the Housing & Loan Fund in 2014 and Chair in 2019. Throughout these 8 years she has brought to the work of the Fund not only her knowledge and understanding of the Fund's purposes, but also her concern and compassion for the Fund's applicants and beneficiaries, and her support and care of the Fund's staff, which has been especially important in recent years. She has conducted Trustee meetings with a firm but gentle hand, a willingness to listen to all viewpoints and, often, a twinkle in her eye and a smile on her lips. The Trustees are

grateful to all that she has brought to and done for the Fund's work, and wish her well as she continues with her studies.

11.4 Rev Dorothy U Anderson will be taking on the role of Chair and Rev Bruce H Sinclair the role of Deputy Chair.

11.5 The Trustees and Secretary would be delighted to speak to anyone interested in becoming a future Trustee of the Fund.

In the name of the Trustees

MARYANN R RENNIE, *Chair*
DOROTHY U ANDERSON, *Deputy Chair*
HAZEL BETT, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

Assistance provided	2021	2020	2019
Number of Ministers retiring *	40	29	37
Percentage assisted with a house to rent	15%	7%	11%
Percentage assisted with a house purchase loan	8%	3%	5%
Total percentage assisted	23%	10%	16%
Instances of assistance provided*	2021	2020	2019
Retiring Ministers	9	3	6
Ministers already retired	3	4	2
Widow(er)s & Civil Partners	1	1	1
Spouses	0	1	1
Total	13	9	10

* Assistance may be provided in a different calendar year to that in which the Minister actually retires

Tenants as at 31st December	2021	2020	2019
Ministers	123	123	130
Widow(er)s & Civil Partners	51	51	55
Spouses	9	9	7
Commercial rental	2	3	3
Vacant	4	11	8
Borrowers as at 31st December	2021	2020	2019
Ministers**	65	72	73
Widow(er)s & Civil Partners	34	38	39
Spouses	0	0	0

** 2 Ministers have dual loans

Appendix 2

Rental Housing	2021	2020	2019
Total number of houses owned at 1st January	197	203	212
Houses purchased during year	8	4	5
Total cost of purchases	£1,336,621	£641,673	£783,000
Average house price	£167,078	£160,418	£156,600
Houses sold during year	16	10	14
Total amount realised	£2,739,438	£1,599,297	£2,250,674
Average proceeds	£171,215	£159,930	£160,762
Houses bequeathed/gifted during year	0	0	0
Houses re-let during year	0	1	1
Total number of houses owned at 31st December	189	197	203
Average market rent of property purchased during year	£8,250	£8,175	£7,848
Average rent of new tenancies – Ministers/Spouses	£4,125	£4,088	£3,924
Average rent of new tenancies – Widow(er)s	£2,063	£2,044	£1,962

Appendix 3

Housing Loans			
	2021	2020	2019
<i>Long term loans outstanding at 1st January</i>	110	112	118
Value of loans outstanding	£6,241,750	£6,337,955	£6,516,250
New loans granted during year	4	4	1
Additional loans granted during year	1	0	2
Value of loans granted	£377,000	£252,500	£137,205
Loans fully repaid during year	13	6	7
Loans partially repaid during year	1	1	0
Value of loans repaid	£618,500	£348,705	£315,500
Long term loans outstanding at 31st December	101	110	112
Value of long term loans outstanding	£6,000,250	£6,241,750	£ 6,337,955
<i>Short term Bridging Loans outstanding at 1st January</i>	0	0	2
Value of Bridging Loans outstanding	£0	£0	£80,000
Bridging loans granted during year	0	0	1
Value of Bridging Loans granted	£0	£0	£40,000
Bridging loans repaid during year	0	0	3
Value of Bridging Loans repaid	£0	£0	£120,000
Short term Bridging Loans outstanding at 31st December	0	0	0
Value of Bridging Loans outstanding at 31st December	£0	£0	£0

Appendix 4

Outstanding Commitments at year end	2021	2020	2019
For next 5 years			
Houses to rent	21	23	20
Housing Loans	5	9	12
Value of outstanding commitments	£5,183,000	£5,550,000	£4,552,075
Preliminary Applications	2021	2020	2019
For those retiring between 5 – 10 years	4	2	3

REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.

Report

1.1 The Registration of Ministries Committee's main function is to consider applications from Church of Scotland Parish Ministers, who are currently categorised as E or R, who wish to have the status of O, which entitles them to be inducted to a charge. The Registration of Ministries Committee's responsibility is to assess an individual's readiness for parish ministry, and then to specify what steps need to be taken to address any gaps in knowledge, understanding and experience which come to light. Category O is for those in Parish Ministry or working as Associate Ministers; Category E refers to those in employment, such as staff in the national offices, or chaplaincies, while Category R indicates those retaining status as a minister and authorised to perform the functions of ministry outwith an appointment covered by Category O or Category E. In addition, where ministers are returning from suspension, and wish to transition out of category S (for those who have been suspended) the Committee will consider such applications. Further information is contained with Act II 2017, on the Registration of Ministries, and that Act can be found at this link https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/72031/2017-Act-2-II-revised-to-October-2020.pdf.

1.2 The Committee, in common with other Committees and Forums of the Church, has met online for its regular meetings since the General Assembly of 2021. It continues to examine how it operates and seeks to offer a process which is robust and yet pastoral and meets the needs of both those coming before it and the needs of the wider church. As part of this, the Application Form for Category O has been significantly revised, and has been shaped to be more discursive in its nature, seeking to help applicants to reflect on why it is that they wish to consider applying for a charge and re-engaging with ministry in a deeper manner.

1.3 The Committee has also considered whether its title is appropriate as it operates within clear parameters and it does not have any policy making role; the principal responsibilities for the Act lie with Presbyteries and the Faith Nurture Forum, particularly at the point of annual review of the Register and deciding which ministers fall into which category for each Presbytery.

The Committee, in 2022/2023, will seek to engage further with Presbyteries as to the operation of the Act, given that it is now just over four years since the Act was introduced on 1 January 2018. The Committee is keen to learn how Presbyteries maintain and review the Register of Ministries for those Deacons and Ministers within the bounds, whether they are full members of Presbytery or not.

1.4 Dates for the Committee's cycle of meetings are published on the Church of Scotland website along with an indication of a deadline for prior submission of papers.

In the name of the Committee

HAZEL HASTIE, *Convener*
FIONA SMITH, *Vice-Convener*
ANGUS R. MATHIESON, *Registrar*

Addendum

Fiona Smith has served an all too brief period as Vice-Convener of the Registration of Ministries Committee, having taken up that role following the General Assembly of 2021. Her legal background and her wisdom have served the Committee well, building on her 12 years of parish and Presbytery experience in Ness Bank Parish in the Presbytery of Inverness and her service to the wider Church. Her involvement in the Assembly Arrangements Committee and in the Assembly Business Committee has enhanced and enriched the Committee's understanding of what it means to minister in the Church of Scotland today. The Committee look forward to welcoming her back in her new role as Principal Clerk.

HAZEL HASTIE, *Convener*
ANGUS R. MATHIESON, *Registrar*

COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HM FORCES MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Thank those who serve in Her Majesty's Forces as Chaplains for their service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel, their families and the wider military community.
3. Recognise the particular service of those Chaplains who have served in support of the contribution of the Armed Services to efforts relating to Covid-19 and on operations in Afghanistan in summer 2021.
4. Recognise the contribution of Forces Chaplains to the Church's engagement with many young adults, some of whom might not otherwise come into contact with the ministry of the Church.
5. Commend to the prayers of the Church all Chaplains and all those whom they serve.
6. Encourage eligible ministers of the Church to consider service as a Chaplain to HM Forces, Regular or Reservist.
7. Encourage those eligible to consider service as Chaplains in any of the Cadet organisations and thank all serving Cadet Chaplains.

Report**1. THE WORK OF CHAPLAINS****1.1 Routine Work**

1.1.1 When the Committee asked one or two of the Church's chaplains to express their passion for the work of ministry they uniquely do, the snippets of experience that emerged were inspiring.

1.1.2 One Army chaplain immediately thought of a young corporal, atheist and in despair, encountered just at the point of attempting to 'complete suicide' (as the padre put it), who has been disciplined and encouraged, and reached the point of seeking Baptism and looking forward to life with new possibilities.

1.1.3 Craig, the senior Church of Scotland RAF Chaplain, talks of the presence of a Chaplain in any Command meeting as 'an outside, occasionally jarring, voice of humanity amidst process and technology'. a 'living reminder to those in command that each person is made in the image of God and is to be cherished and loved'.

1.1.4 Naval chaplains are always known as 'friend and adviser to all on board and an advocate for those of all faiths and none', which makes them universally approachable and able to provide a pastoral and prophetic voice anywhere it is needed.

1.1.5 Every member of the Committee gives thanks for the routine, unsung, humbling work of Forces chaplains as they offer Christian ministry to thousands of people – especially younger adults – who might not otherwise encounter the Church at such close quarters and with such a profound effect. And every member of the Committee gives thanks for the Church's support of the work. Not many denominations have the sophistication and nuance to realise the difference between debates about strategic issues and Christian mission to Service personnel and their families, between the big political questions that excite the Assembly and the pastoral needs that motivate those commissioned to this work, between criticism of some of the things governments do and day-by-day sustaining of the spirits of those charged with doing them. The Committee prays that the Church never loses that sophistication of thought, that ability to keep those different things in tension.

1.2 Chaplains and the Events of 2021

1.2.1 The Committee is sure that the whole Church is grateful to personnel, including chaplains, who responded quickly and expertly to the desperate situation in Kabul in the summer of 2021. Whether in theatre recovering people and equipment, or in military establishments in the UK dealing with the difficult questions posed by veterans of operations in Afghanistan, their families, and the bereaved, chaplains rose to the kind of dramatic challenge that stretches every skill in ministry, all the while dealing with their own feelings, memories and questions.

1.2.2 Less headline-grabbing challenges for military chaplains have included work in South Sudan, the constant rhythm of NATO and UN deployments, and long absences from home on sea or land. The stress is shared with families, which have to learn to manage two very different routines of family life: one with that key partner/parent away, and the other with them present at home.

2. CHAPLAINS AND THE CHURCH

2.1 Tri-Service Conference 2021

The Tri-Service CPD conference for Church of Scotland and Presbyterian Church in Ireland chaplains was held at Leuchars Station in September 2021, where the visiting speaker was Rev Prof Drew Gibson from the PCI.

2.2 Safeguarding Training

The Committee has expressed its gratitude to the Safeguarding Service for their assistance in ensuring chaplains remain current in safeguarding training, to the standards required by the Services and by the Church.

2.3 Pastoral Contact

The Committee continues to offer regular pastoral contact with chaplains and their spouses, organised by the Vice Convener. During the recent time of constraint this has been achieved on-line, which has given the bonus of enabling the Committee to engage with chaplains and spouses in many places far beyond Scotland. The Convener responds to more acute pastoral situations, which can involve any chaplain's ill-health, professional stress (eg due to legal processes), and discernment of future service.

2.4. Moderator's Visit

In February, just a few days before events in Ukraine escalated, the Moderator and Convener visited the Royal Navy in the Portsmouth and Poole areas. Time was spent with all three of the Church of Scotland's chaplains as well as with two others from the Church of Scotland and Free Churches branch. It was fascinating to spend time aboard HMS PRINCE OF WALES, which Susan Brown had toured as a ship in build three years earlier; this time, as then, prayers were offered in the ship's chapel, now no longer an empty space but a living, well-used, well-equipped spiritual resource (co-ordinated by Mark Davidson the ship's Church of Scotland chaplain) in the heart of a unique community. Shortly after Lord Wallace's visit, the carrier sailed at short notice as part of the UK's response to international events, a reminder of the constant readiness of service personnel, and their chaplains, to be where they are most needed on our behalf.

2.5 Armed Forces Champions

When the current exercise in uniting Presbyteries has been completed, it will be a great deal easier for the smaller number of larger Presbyteries each to nominate an Armed Forces Champion, and easier too to continue to keep that resource up-to-date. The Committee will return to that exercise when the new structure makes that easier to do.

3. RECRUITMENT

3.1 The Appendices to this Report detail movements in each chaplaincy service. The Committee was happy to assist in the two-fold transfer of Rev David Young, both from reservist to regular service and from the Royal Navy to the Royal Air Force.

3.2 At the time of writing, the Committee was exploring the recruitment options that might be presented to probationers affected by the recent restrictions on the filling of parish vacancies.

3.3 There is a constant slight tension, in a Church with a ministry shortage, between the recruitment needs of parish ministry and those of Service Chaplaincy. In this Report, the missional contribution of chaplains in many

aspects of their military ministry has been highlighted. Most chaplains eventually return to the civilian ministry of the Church, bringing expertise in work with youths and young adults, knowledge of the Church throughout Britain and across the world, and pastoral experience that equips them for anything parish ministry can throw at them. The Committee believes the Church gains far more than it loses, over the long term of a minister's career, by encouraging the discernment of God's call to serve as a chaplain in the Royal Navy, the Army or the Royal Air Force, full-time or part-time.

3.4 Meanwhile, chaplaincy in the cadet forces provides those benefits – mission to the young and development of ministerial skill-sets – in the course of parish (or other civilian) ministry. It is a calling worth considering, and enquiries can be made through the Committee.

4. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

4.1 Presbyterian Church in Ireland

The Committee resolved a historical anomaly by confirming that it is possible for the Presbyterian Denominational Representative Chaplain in the Royal Army Chaplains Department to be a PCI chaplain. Since that appointment has existed, it has always been held by a Church of Scotland chaplain.

4.2 Tri-Service Advisory Group

The Convener serves on this Advisory Group (known as the TRIAG), along with the Anglican and RC Bishops, three other Conveners from Protestant Churches or groupings, and – increasingly in the coming years – representatives from other faiths. The Group plans to extend its schedule of meetings, to enable its work to include briefings by the Heads of Chaplaincy Services to the TRIAG members and also a better flow of advice, direction and guidance from the Churches/faith representatives to the Heads of Service.

4.3 Constitutional Role of the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces

4.3.1 From time to time, as the membership of the General Assembly gradually changes, it is important to recollect the purpose of the Committee, especially in face of some puzzlement that there is no equivalent Committee dedicated to any other form of chaplaincy conducted by Church ministers and others. There are two distinctive functions of this Committee, both alluded to in this Report.

4.3.2 First, the Services require those Sending Churches that are also Endorsing Authorities (which is the case for this Church) to endorse applications from potential chaplains, giving the Church a screening task that has no parallel for any other form of chaplaincy outwith the employment of the Church. The relationship continues as one of denominational accountability throughout the chaplain's time of service.

4.3.3 Second, the role of the Convener of the Committee, partly through membership of the TRIAG but more generally throughout the military establishment, provides this denomination's parallel to the presence of the Bishops of the larger Sending Churches. This is a role that is largely invisible within the life of the Church, though the Committee's remit (found on the Church's web-site) hints at the unusual character of the

Committee's convenership compared to that of other Forums and Committees. The Committee exists as a self-contained body, receiving no part of its budget from the annual budget of the Church and yet accountable only to the General Assembly, to be able to fulfil these special tasks. It is grateful to the Assembly Trustees and the Nomination Committee for their understanding of these structural issues and their assistance in helping to plan for future needs especially regarding size and membership.

In the name of the Committee

MARJORY A MACLEAN, *Convener*
JOHN C DUNCAN MBE, *Vice-Convener*
DARAN GOLBY, *Secretary*

Addendum

Rev John Duncan MBE

Following his retirement from parish ministry, John has stepped down too from his Vice-Convenership of the Committee after nearly two years in the role. An unfailingly positive presence, John inherited an increasing focus on the routine pastoral engagement with our chaplains that is mentioned elsewhere in the Report. His cheerful face co-ordinating a Zoom coffee for chaplains or spouses, his warm energy in Committee meetings and visits, and his encouragement and counsel to the Convener, all these have marked a distinguished period of service to the Church and the military community.

MARJORY A MACLEAN, *Convener*
DARAN GOLBY, *Secretary*

Rev Dr Marjory MacLean

The Reverend Dr Marjory MacLean finishes her four-year term as Convener at this General Assembly and the Committee wishes to express its gratitude to her. Marjory became Convener of the Committee in 2018 bringing her own experiences as a Royal Naval Reserve Chaplain, a role which she served in until 2017. She was mobilised for service within the Royal Naval Chaplaincy Service from June 2010 to February 2011 and this included time on deployment in Afghanistan. She was inducted to South Ronaldsay & Burray, in the Presbytery of Orkney, on the 1st December 2020. Her wide knowledge of the Church and her commitment to pastoral care of chaplains in all three services have been defining characteristics of her Convenership; the Committee is grateful for her time and commitment.

DARAN GOLBY, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

ROYAL NAVY

Rev Stephen Ashley-Emery RN has settled into life as a regular chaplain and has already circumnavigated the globe. Following a distinguished period of service aboard HMS KENT, he now begins an appointment in a leadership role in a shore-based training establishment.

Rev Mark Dalton RN currently serves with 43 Commando, and provides additional support at HMS NEPTUNE (Faslane) at a time of stretch for the other chaplaincy resources there.

Rev Mark Davidson RN is the chaplain of HMS PRINCE OF WALES.

Appendix 2

ARMY

The team of Army chaplains has volunteered for short notice tours (less than 21 days' notice) in support of operations in Cyprus and the Sultanate of Oman, as well as 6 month extended overseas exercises in Estonia and Kenya in the last year.

Ministry continues to go from strength to strength with promotion to CF1 (Assistant Chaplain General) and CF2 (Deputy Assistant Chaplain General) appointments.

List of Church of Scotland Regular Chaplains (Actively recruiting)

Chaplain	Unit	Location
Rev Dr Jim Francis MBE	Regional Command	Aldershot
Rev David Anderson	HQ North West England	Preston
Rev Chris Kellock	Advanced Command & Staff Course	The Defence Academy
Rev Duncan Macpherson	MAB	London
Rev Nicola Frail	HQ Defence Medical Services	Whittington
Rev Alan Cobain	Infantry Training Centre	Catterick
Rev David Thom	Army Foundation College	Harrogate
Rev Hector MacKenzie	5 Regt RA	Catterick Garrison
Rev Mike Goodison	1 YORKS	Catterick Garrison
Rev Paul Van Sittert	2 YORKS	Cyprus
Rev Richard Begg	1 PWRR	London
Rev Geoff Berry	3 SCOTS	Fort George
Rev Stewart MacKay	2 LANCS	Preston
Rev Neil McLay	Army Air Corps Training Centre	Middle Wallop

List of Church of Scotland Reserve Chaplains (2 vacancies in Scotland)

Chaplain	Unit	Location
Rev Mike Mair	32 Sig Regt	Glasgow
Rev Dr Ken Jeffrey	7 SCOTS	Perth
Rev Christopher Rowe	5 MI Bn	Edinburgh

List of Church of Scotland ACF Chaplains (9 Vacancies out of 20)

Chaplain	Unit
Rev Alen McCulloch	1 Bn The Highlanders, ACF
Rev Shuna Dicks	2 Bn The Highlanders, ACF
Rev Keith Blackwood	2 Bn The Highlanders, ACF
Rev Fiona Wilson	West Lowland, ACF
Rev Ecilo Selemani	Glasgow & Lanarkshire, ACF
Rev Cameron McKenzie	Lothian & Borders, ACF

Appendix 3

ROYAL AIR FORCE

Rev Craig Lancaster continues to minister as Senior Chaplain at RAF Lossiemouth. The base has had a frenetic year of squadron deployments, home commitments and support to the Government's COVID response. Craig is due to deploy to the Falkland Islands in the summer to care for personnel based there.

Rev David Young became a full time RAF Chaplain in February having served previously as a Royal Navy Reservist and minister of Helensburgh, Rhu and Shandon Parish Churches. His first posting takes him also to RAF Lossiemouth.

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL (KNOWN AS CROSSREACH BOARD) MAY 2022**Proposed Deliverance****The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the staff for their continued efforts throughout the past year in dealing with the challenges of an ongoing pandemic and give thanks for their dedicated service in Christ's name. (*Section 2*)
3. Note the financial impact of Covid-19 as it has affected occupancy, recruitment, service delivery and fundraising. (*Section 2*)
4. Thank all those who have supported CrossReach over the past year and encourage congregations to adopt CrossReach as a charity of choice for the next year and beyond so that services can be maintained and developed. (*Section 3*)
5. Commend the close collaboration between CrossReach and the Faith Impact Forum in responding to areas of concern to the Church as they impact on wider society and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to continue to work with CrossReach to make representation on issues of national importance including the proposed legislation on a National Care Service; the investment needed to support a net carbon zero target in the care sector; and the policy and funding framework required to tackle Scotland's high level of drugs related deaths. (*Section 3*)
6. Encourage the newly formed Presbyteries to recommit to the Presbytery Pledge at the earliest opportunity and consider how they might work more closely with CrossReach in their congregations and communities as they develop plans for the future. (*Section 3*)
7. Note the concerted efforts already made by CrossReach to deal with the challenges which pose a risk to future operations and endorse the priorities identified by the Board which will help set the conditions for consolidation and growth as part of a missional Church. (*Section 3*)
8. Welcome the investment being made by Scottish Government to ensure that a Living Wage can be paid to all staff within the regulated Adult Care Workforce; thank the Assembly Trustees for their continued commitment to tackling this area of gender inequality and social injustice and encourage the Assembly Trustees and CrossReach Board to continue to push for the necessary resources to ensure parity across the whole workforce. (*Section 3*)
9. Give thanks for the thousands of people who have engaged with CrossReach services over the last year and who have enriched the life of CrossReach by sharing their stories and situations; rejoice in the achievements of those who have worked so hard to overcome personal challenges; commit to hold all who are being supported through the services in prayer. (*Section 4*)

Report**1. A HOPE AND FUTURE****1.1 A Season for Social Care**

1.1.1 The past year has posed continuing challenges to organisations delivering Social Care in both community and residential settings. Covid-19 has continued to cause disruption and uncertainty to those relying on services as much as to those working to support them. News programmes report that many service providers are at breaking point. There is an ongoing recruitment challenge and a fear that there might not be enough funding to provide people with the services they need in the future. While Covid-19 may have brought some of the problems to a head, it is widely acknowledged that the social care sector has been under strain for many years, and that change is necessary. The Independent Review of Adult Social Care Report (2021) made some sweeping recommendations for change and those have now been widely consulted on with draft legislation expected in the summer of 2022. Meanwhile, the Scottish Government has pledged investment in the sector and this is already being seen to have an impact in some service areas and across the adult care workforce.

1.1.2 There is certainly much to consider but it is a good time to pause, to reflect and to ask how CrossReach might best respond to the changes in the social care sector so that it can continue to play its part in fulfilling the mission of the Church of Scotland by offering loving care, in Christ's name, to the thousands of people who turn to it each year for support.

1.1.3 Whilst the CrossReach staff have worked relentlessly to respond to the real and present threats posed by Covid-19 and the more immediate issues facing the social care sector, the CrossReach Board and senior staff have taken time to consider the work of CrossReach more broadly to discern the best way forward for the future. They firstly asked questions about the place of CrossReach within the wider ministry of the Church of Scotland, carefully considering the report of the Theological Forum on the Five Marks of Mission, presented to General Assembly 2020. Although the report does not specifically reference CrossReach, it sets out a helpful theological vision for a broad understanding of mission within the Church. The Board has also considered the recommendations of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care alongside those contained in 'The Promise' which address the shortcomings in the current childcare system. Both reports are seen as critical in reshaping the design and delivery as well as the funding of social care in the future.

1.1.4 The Board looked with fresh eyes at each area of service and considered some of the deep rooted and critical issues to ensure that they were being addressed. They then proposed a number of recommendations which are laid out in the body of this report. These include thoughts about the continuing relationship between CrossReach and the wider Church of Scotland, the value placed on both those using the services and those employed to support them, and the use of all resources, including buildings, so that they too could be part of a longer-term solution and be used to honour the work of the Kingdom.

1.1.5 Fundamentally, these early recommendations speak to hope, recognising that with well managed and targeted resources, people in vulnerable situations can be given an opportunity to thrive; that lives can continue to be saved or transformed; that the value of those currently undervalued can be fully recognised and that conditions can be set for growth rather than decline in the activity of CrossReach.

2. A SEASON OF TRIAL

2.1 Pandemic Response

2.1.1 Since the General Assembly May 2021, the services have continued to respond to changing guidance and the regional variations of virus spread across the country. Staff working in Social Care and those in receipt of support were amongst the first to be offered vaccination against the virus and there has been a high level of take up across all services with some 1400 staff members having had two or more vaccinations up until the end of February 2022.

2.1.2 The success of the vaccination programme saw the continued unlocking of care homes so that activities and family contact could be restored to something like they had been pre-pandemic. It also allowed the welcome reintroduction of community based services which had been operating to a limited capacity or had been forced to close during the lockdown in early 2021. While these were very welcome moves, it has required a high level of organisation and resourcing so that services could manage all of these changes safely.

2.1.3 The introduction of lateral flow tests and the stringent guidance applied to social care staff who tested positive or were a close contact of someone who had tested positive has meant that services have had to constantly juggle to be able to provide cover in services. The third wave of the virus between December 2021 and January 2022 were particularly difficult for staff in this regard. As community infections rose to unprecedented levels, there was a huge impact on CrossReach services with many staff forgoing time off at Christmas to cover for colleagues who were sick or self-isolating in order to keep services running. Many more services were affected by the third wave than in the first two waves, with care homes being particularly badly affected. However, all staff and most service users who contracted Covid-19 in this third wave have made a good recovery.

2.1.4 Scottish Government guidance has continued to change on a regular basis and given the diversity of services, along with the geographical spread, it has taken concentrated effort to distil the relevant information to staff and ensure that changes could be made quickly. Some 78 internal bulletins helping to contextualise that advice have been issued to staff since the pandemic began.

2.1.5 Inevitably, the relentless nature of the past year coupled with long hours and uncertainty over the future of services has taken its toll on staff wellbeing with many staff members reporting exhaustion and high levels of anxiety. Annual staff turnover has been higher than average this year, reaching 20% at its peak, however, this has now stabilised again at around 19%. The sector, on average, records a 30% turnover but with recruitment being a key challenge, it is recognised that there is no room for complacency.

2.1.6 The Wellbeing Champions programme, launched in April 2021, saw 40 Wellbeing Champions trained and matched with services as a first point of contact for colleagues. There have been good initial reports from services of the difference that this is making both in terms of immediate support and in being able to find help from other sources and we are currently conducting a review of how effective that initiative has been and if more could be done. However, wellbeing of staff remains a high priority for the organisation and is high on the risk register. The Scottish Government have also recognised this as a critical issue and have invested in a National Wellbeing Hub containing self-help resources for those working in Health and Social Care in Scotland and to which CrossReach staff have access. They are also making funds available to organisations working in social care to improve wellbeing resources for staff.

2.2 Pandemic Recovery

2.2.1 Whilst there has been a significant human toll as a result of the pandemic, there has also been a significant financial strain. It has taken both time and strenuous effort to build up occupancy in residential care homes which were hit both by infection outbreaks and by delays in admitting people to care homes from either a community setting or hospital. Whilst there was strong recovery projected for most care homes, it was recognised by the Board that there remained a risk of further closures. In October 2021, the difficult decision was taken to close Wellhall Care Home in South Lanarkshire which remained only half full. No future demand was foreseen due to the high number of vacancies in residential care and nursing homes across the local authority area. The closure was effected as quickly and as compassionately as possible, but the disruption to the lives of those caught up in these circumstances is always a matter of deep regret.

2.2.2 Community based services have also been hit, partly by the stop/start nature of services affected by lockdown, cuts to funding support for some individuals, and a loss of fundraising income.

2.2.3 The sustainability funding made available by Scottish Government has helped offset the worst of the potential losses. By the end of the year, both Adult Care and Older People Services were ahead of the significant deficit budget set, with Adult Care services in a surplus position overall.

2.2.4 The picture has been different for Children and Family Services where very little sustainability funding from Scottish Government was made available and where the hit on charitable income was also most keenly felt. Plans are in place to support these services throughout 2022 to allow for a more gradual recovery and for further action to be taken if necessary.

2.2.5 The Board were heartened by strong financial performance captured in the end of year result which gave them confidence that with continued effort the services could be financially sustainable in the future. However, they recognised that there was still some way to go, particularly in a challenging funding environment and with cost pressures continuing to rise.

2.3 Recruitment and Retention of Staff

2.3.1 There were some challenges around recruitment of staff before the pandemic but the past year has seen the number of vacancies soar with difficulties reported in recruitment across all disciplines. Whilst this mirrors a larger problem in recruitment across the country, it is

particularly challenging when trying to ensure those in the most vulnerable situations in Scotland get the support that they need. Ideas to stimulate recruitment have been pulled together through an internal recruitment summit and we continue to work with colleagues in Scottish Government and SSSC who regulate the social care workforce, to take advantage of broader recruitment initiatives.

2.3.2 Staff terms and conditions, however, are recognised as fundamental to driving change and attracting new people to the workforce. In recognition of the fact that wages were fundamental to better recruitment, the Scottish Government announced a plan to invest in the Adult Social Care workforce over the winter of 2021 with further investment promised in April 2022. Again, no funding was made available for Children and Family services in the winter payment initiative. This has posed a significant difficulty for organisations such as CrossReach, with its diverse workforce engaged across a range of services from pre-birth to end of life. The CrossReach Board engaged with the Assembly Trustees to ensure that temporary funding could be made available to allow implementation at the 1st December implementation date and also to ensure parity across the frontline workforce. The Board are grateful to the Trustees for their support on that matter. CrossReach continues to work with Scottish Care and CCPS on the implementation of wage increases but it remains uncertain as to whether such increases will attract the funding the organisation needs to ensure the whole workforce are recognised in the future.

2.4 Management of Risks

2.4.1 There has been a significant amount of work done both to identify and manage the key risks facing CrossReach at this time. The newly formed Audit and Performance Committee have taken oversight of this on behalf of the CrossReach Board and were pleased to see several risks including occupancy, cashflow, and a complex insurance renewal being managed down. There is still work to do to ensure all risks have good mitigations in place.

2.5 Scottish Government Redress Scheme for Survivors of Historical Abuse

2.5.1 The Scottish Government redress scheme for survivors of historical abuse in care opened in December 2021 and is designed to make meaningful reparation to those abused in care settings prior to 2004. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/financial-redress-for-survivors-of-child-abuse-in-care/>

2.5.2 Over the past eighteen months, CrossReach senior staff, the Church of Scotland solicitor and officers of the Faith Impact Forum have worked closely with the Scottish Government team and other organisations to ascertain the appropriate level of financial contribution which would allow the Assembly Trustees to agree participation in the scheme. While the scheme seeks to make redress beyond simply financial considerations, it is recognised that for many of those who have been abused, some financial recognition of the trauma experienced is important to them. There have been some deeply challenging conversations around the principles of fair and meaningful as well as proportionate and affordable, but agreement has now been reached. This will allow the Church of Scotland to be a full participant in the scheme and to be part of the national collective endeavour to right the wrongs of the past for survivors of historical abuse.

2.6 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

2.6.1 At the end of 2021, CrossReach were contacted by the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and asked to provide information around the past work with List D schools. This work included providing records from Ballikinrain, Geilsland, Tynepark and Langlands Park and was completed in February 2022. CrossReach continue to fully co-operate with the Inquiry team to provide appropriate information as required. The evidence provided will be reported on in due course.

3. A SEASON OF REFLECTION

3.1 In considering the future of CrossReach, the Board has considered a number of different questions which included the ongoing place of CrossReach within the Church of Scotland, the need for the breadth of services provided and future sustainability. They were also keen to think how best to ensure those using the services and those working with them were able to have their voices heard in all decision-making forums and that staff were properly recognised and remunerated for the work they do.

3.1.1 As a starting point, the Board considered the work of the Theological Forum on the five marks of mission and took cognisance of the wider reviews undertaken by the Scottish Government on the service redesign needed in both Adult and Children's services.

3.2 CrossReach as part of the wider ministry of the Church of Scotland.

3.2.1 In 2020, the Theological Forum report to the General Assembly described the Five Marks of Mission as below:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
3. To respond to human need by loving service;
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation;
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

3.2.2 The report concluded that *The Five Marks may be helpful in offering a broad, generous theological vision to frame pragmatic decisions over priorities, but the Five Marks themselves do not do the work of prioritisation. That requires a practical wisdom, with an awareness of specific local, regional and national contexts. Such decision-making will also recognise the missional lives and work of members, ministers, churches and presbyteries alongside central Forums, and the possibility of sharing responsibility for aspects of mission through ecumenical partnerships.*

3.2.3 While the work of CrossReach was not specifically referenced, it was important to Board members that CrossReach is anchored within the broader theological vision of the Church of Scotland. The Board concluded that while Mark 1 was evidenced in the activity within CrossReach, at some level and in some contexts, Marks 3 and 4 could be easily recognised. All CrossReach activity has at its very core the imperative to respond to human need by loving service which remains freely offered 'In Christ's name'. To challenge and inform unjust structures of society is an essential part of the work when the organisation helps those with lived experience of injustice to press for change. This has been evident particularly in the work we have done alongside the Faith Impact

Forum in responding to two consultations this year where those using services informed the response of the Church of Scotland. The Board wish to express appreciation to both the Moderator and to the policy team at the Faith Impact Forum for their support in engaging directly with the Scottish Parliament and co-ordinating a response on the National Care Service and also for leading on a collaborative response to The Right to Recovery Bill.

3.2.4 The Board agreed that they would welcome further dialogue about the place of CrossReach within the wider ministry and mission of The Church of Scotland recognising that the Presbytery Plan provided a good opportunity to engage at both a national and local level. Board members were keen to work with the new Presbyteries to understand areas of need within the congregations they support and to explore the relevance of the Presbytery Pledge approved by General Assembly in 2018 in the future planning of the Presbyteries.

3.3 Review of Services

3.3.1 At a day conference in December, Board members heard from each of the Operational Directors who talked through each of the areas of service for which they were responsible. These include:

- Residential Care for Older People including specialist dementia care
- Heart for Art - community based support for those living with dementia and their carers
- Residential and community-based treatment and support for addiction
- Residential and community-based support for children or adults with a learning disability
- Residential and community-based support for those living with a mental illness or mental health problem
- Residential and community-based support for people who find themselves homeless
- Residential and community based support for those caught up in the criminal justice system
- Generic and Specialist Counselling services
- Community houses and a specialist education centre for children in care or at risk of family breakdown
- Family Support

3.3.2 They discussed the merits and challenges of offering such a diverse group of services over a geographical spread from the Isle of Lewis to Ayr. However, recognising that the services are offered in Christ's name, and that Christ's love is freely offered to all in need irrespective of geographical location or ability to pay, there was no area of service which they could identify as not relevant to the needs being identified in Scottish society today. They also recognised that there was a reported need for more support for many people as the country emerged from the pandemic. The Board were keen to explore areas of growth so that areas currently underrepresented in terms of service provision could have access to CrossReach support wherever and whenever needed. They were particularly keen to engage in areas of unmet need or where gaps exist and have recommended that this is prioritised in the future planning of CrossReach.

3.3.3 The progress towards keeping The Promise in CrossReach Children's services was looked at as part of the strategic review of services and the Board noted the additional resources which had been made available by the Scottish Government were being harnessed by CrossReach to bring about the change needed. They

recognised the importance of the work being done across the organisation to work in a trauma informed way and have committed to understanding more about this approach as a Board so that they can lend appropriate oversight as needed.

3.3.4 The Board went on to examine future sustainability and were satisfied that with a couple of exceptions, each of the individual services had an identified route to being sustainable in the future. They recommended closure of one further care home, Budhmoor, Isle of Skye, based on several factors and asked for a review of the model operating in some of the children's services.

3.3.5 Finally the Board looked at the quality and outcomes of the service areas. They recognised that while everything did not run smoothly all of the time, the quality of services remained high with no significant quality concerns being highlighted either internally or by regulators or insurers at the end of the year. The Board did however recognise that there was a need for the organisation to continue to develop service user participation and co-production so that those using the services, and their relatives or carers, were at the heart of policy and decision making in the organisation and had maximum influence over the design and delivery of services.

3.4 Valuing Staff

3.4.1 Board members were hugely challenged by how best to value staff. They recognised that the principles of Fair Work did demand a change in the way in which CrossReach engaged with the workforce in a number of areas. As a result, the staff Advisory, Consulting and Negotiating Group (ACNG) have worked alongside management to identify the key challenges and opportunities for change and recently relaunched as the Employee Representative Group, which will take forward the work on strengthening their voice.

3.4.2 The Board very much welcomed the Scottish Government initiative to invest in frontline care staff but recognised that there were still staff who fell below the threshold of being paid a Scottish Living Wage. They recognised that this was a difficult position to maintain and that while some progress had been made, it was time to keep up the pressure so that all could be included in Living Wage initiatives in the future. The Board are now in discussion with commissioners of services along with the Assembly Trustees in order to address this issue.

3.5 Digital Innovation

3.5.1 The CrossReach Board welcomed the progress of the IT strategy which entered its second year and which they see as fundamental to the efficiency and sustainability of CrossReach in the future. The strategy seeks to address both IT infrastructure and security issues alongside introducing digital solutions to enhance care and support. They approved investment in a number of areas, including the introduction of electronic care plans and the roll out of virtual platforms to deliver counselling and other types of support remotely. CrossReach is a member of the Coalition of Care Providers 'Let's get Digital' programme which champions the use of technology to provide solutions for organisations, the workforce and those who use services. Over the past year, CrossReach has also collaborated with the Scottish Tech Army; a network of people skilled in IT who volunteer their services to help with the application of technology for public good in Scotland.

3.6 Buildings

3.6.1 While many of CrossReach's services are delivered in community venues, including church halls, or in people's own homes, there are a number of services which remain buildings based, including the residential care homes for Older People. The CrossReach Board support the aspiration to have well equipped spaces in the right places. They have agreed a targeted programme of investment to improve some of the buildings while they consider how best to tackle some of the challenges posed by others. The importance of the Net Carbon Zero target is acknowledged as an opportunity as well as a challenge for care services. The CrossReach Board were pleased to secure the support of the Moderator in a special roundtable event convened by Eurodiaconia, to consider issues relating to net-zero carbon emissions for buildings, specifically those used for social care/diaconal services. Members that were working on the common goal to safeguard the integrity of creation met and exchanged views and projects from different countries and different Christian traditions. The Church of Scotland and CrossReach shared recent experiences and highlighted the importance of working to tackle the climate emergency.

3.7 Communication

3.7.1 The Board recognised that while CrossReach services are highly valued, and that some £40 million is invested in them from outwith Church of Scotland's own resources, there is still a lack of visibility of CrossReach both within the Church of Scotland and wider. They recognise that there is a need for investment in this area, both in terms of time and resources and have asked that senior managers bring back thoughts on how to tackle this area recognising it as a precursor for growth. This will be important, particularly as commissioning in the future changes and there will be a need to build solid partnerships from a place of mutual understanding and sharing of interests. A more visible organisation can only help as that change works through.

3.7.2 The Board believe that by concentrating on these strategic priorities, CrossReach will have laid a solid foundation for the future, will be able to react to changes as they arise and will have set the conditions for future growth and development. The Board have committed to working alongside the Assembly Trustees to discern the best way of providing oversight and support to this major area of the Church's charitable work so that it can remain sustainable for the future.

4. A SEASON OF CELEBRATION

4.1 Despite all of the challenges, changes and contemplations, there are many reasons to celebrate the work of CrossReach, which has touched the lives of thousands of people over the past year in many different ways. Sometimes, CrossReach becomes a place where people can be looked after well at the end of life, sometimes, it is merely a springboard to success, laying the foundations for people to change life patterns and to thrive or to live independently and sometimes, it is a place of succour and support when life becomes particularly tough. The services are all specialist resources offered by trained professional staff and volunteers. Most services are regulated by the Care Inspectorate and most staff carry registration with SSSC. However, the stories are about individuals, about fullness of life and about how their lives have changed as a result of coming into contact with Christ's love, often for the first time. The following paragraphs provide a snapshot of the types of care provided by CrossReach but more can be found out

through CrossReach News (<https://bit.ly/3vLt58Z>) or the Impact report (<https://crossreach.org.uk/bb/impact22>).

4.2 Adult Care

4.2.1 Recovery Volunteers

General Assembly 2021 noted the shocking statistics around drugs deaths and asked that CrossReach work with the Faith Impact Forum to engage politically around this issue. This has been done but importantly, CrossReach has continued to make a real and lasting difference in the lives of individuals who access their recovery services. One of the initiatives, started in 2012, which has grown to be very successful, is the recovery volunteers training programme supporting those well into recovery to get alongside others on a recovery journey to share their knowledge and experience and to get involved in the care sector.

4.2.1.1 Recognising that people with 'lived experience' have a particular ability to inspire and give others hope, we have developed service models that utilise these skills and approaches to both enhance provision and give volunteers the opportunity to develop for the future, as they realise their potential and, in the process, strengthen their own recovery.

4.2.1.2 This has been a 'win-win' situation; benefitting people using our services, benefitting volunteers who have gone on to employment, benefitting CrossReach as volunteers have progressed into staff roles and benefitting the public purse as we deliver more cost-effective services and divert people away from justice and health services.

4.2.1.3 Our growing team of recovery volunteers and staff have been vital in maintaining service provision throughout the pandemic, and, despite the challenging times, a record number graduated this year and are keen to use their new-found skills within Substance Use, Homelessness, Justice, Mental Health and Learning Disability services.

4.2.1.4 Recognising the benefits of this work, The CORRA Foundation has awarded CrossReach additional funding to roll out this model across the country and to help contribute to reducing drug deaths in Scotland. We are delighted to advise that one of our former graduates has been appointed to the staff team to take this work forward.

4.2.1.5 One of this year's graduates commented: "My daughter's never lived with me as a sober mother. So, it's all new to her. I need to accept that everything's not going to be hunky dory straight away, because she's never lived with a mother doing things for her, like tidying her room" and "People can change! I never ever thought that I would be sitting here sober. People don't believe in themselves. I didn't believe in myself for many years, but you can change. You just can!"

4.2.1.6 Recovery is also the aim of the Umbrella Project, a new mental health support group running within Irvine Old Parish Church in North Ayrshire. The project was due to launch in March 2020 but was postponed because of the pandemic. Instead, support was delivered remotely, and Umbrella re-opened in July 2021. Meeting a local need for welcoming, sociable, and non-clinical support, Umbrella has already outgrown its original meeting space. We are grateful to Irvine Old Parish Church for hosting us in their church halls.

4.2.1.7 One of the service users stated "I feel like part of a community at Umbrella, I've met new friends and now socialise out-with the group which has been a real help to me."

4.2.2 Threshold Edinburgh – Transitions

Having a strong commitment to, and a passion for “A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People”, CrossReach opened its Young Adults Day Opportunities Service (Transitions) in Edinburgh in July 2019.

4.2.2.1 Perhaps recent feedback from one parent describes it best: *“My 18-year-old son who has autism, recently hugged me for the first time in his life, I feel that this is down to the support and interaction he is getting from Threshold.”*

4.2.2.2 While the current climate sees the availability of Disability Day Services decline, Threshold’s Transitions is a sought-after service shaped around the principles of the National Care Standards. It is committed to keeping young people’s individual aspirations and needs at its heart. People are encouraged to be involved in the decision making relating to every aspect of their lives and the user-friendly approach utilises pictorial, easy read outcome-focused support plans, which shapes each individual’s support package.

4.2.2.3 Understanding that consistency provides confidence and helps build relationships, customers choose when and how they want their service and, if possible, those providing their main support. The service works flexibly to ensure the people that are being supported are at the front and centre of their service as they navigate life’s everyday challenges.

4.2.2.4 Alex is 20 years old and was brain damaged at birth. His father reflects: *Alex has learning difficulties and some autistic features. He has been at a special school since age 5. CrossReach took Alex after he left school at 18 for 6 hours a day and five days a week. He loves it there. From an uncertain start he has become very settled and fond of the staff and other service users. His social skills, stress levels and communication have all improved. He goes out into the community and experiences what it has to offer such as the gym, pool, cinema etc.*

4.3 Older People Services

4.3.1 Cameron House

It is a residential home in Inverness for older people which has been a very willing participant in a local initiative called Spokes for Folks. A number of local cyclists volunteer to take service users out on these purpose-built trikes. Some of the trikes carry two passengers and others are specifically designed for wheelchairs. Every Wednesday afternoon, four of these trikes pull up at Cameron House and there is great excitement from the residents who get a lot of pleasure from these outings.

4.3.2 Oasis Bankfoot and Tryst

When we were told we had to close in March 2020 due to the pandemic, we had no idea how long it would be and anticipated we would be back in a few months. Over the months, we lived in hope as to when we could open our doors again and we awaited with bated breath the First Minister’s’ announcements.

4.3.2.1 During this time we kept in contact with service users, we arranged video calls or window visits to see how they were managing. At times we would go for shopping and some days we could sit in their garden with them and chat, but nothing was the same as being in the service. Video calls were really important to some of our dementia service users as it meant faces and voices of staff would remain familiar to them. It was even said by family members remarked that special attention would be paid to dress, hair and makeup on the days these calls were to take place and how special that had been for them to witness.

4.3.2.2 After 14 months, we were able to reopen. It has been such a joy to see the service users meet up again and get back to some normality. We share stories, reminisce and laugh about the past and look forward to the future when the restrictions are lifted and we are all back to normal.

4.3.2.3 We had the pleasure of welcoming new service users, who had felt extremely isolated through lockdown and have settled in really well. They very quickly began commenting on the difference; having something to look forward to has improved their wellbeing immensely along with learning new skills.

4.3.3 Heart for Art - speaks to climate change

You are never too old to make a difference or speak out about the things that matter to you, whatever your communication skills. The Heart for Art Co-ordinator tells us how: *Heart for Art featured an artwork display as part of the St Cuthbert’s Parish Church exhibition in Edinburgh from 26th – 30th October 2021. Our artists used a variety of artistic styles and mediums to honour the natural beauty of our planet: the geographical features and creatures showcased in their artworks are frequently put under threat by climate change and urbanisation. Launched as a lead-in to the UN Climate Change Conference 2021 (COP-26) through artwork, the exhibition amplified the voices of people of all ages and backgrounds in their response to climate change. Consequently, the contribution from our Heart for Art artists was all the more significant, as their work promotes environmental awareness and their love for our planet.*

4.4 Children and Family Services

4.4.1 HMP & YOI Polmont Visitor Centre:

‘I was so nervous about coming to see him at the prison, I just didn’t know what to expect’. Prison visiting is something many of us are not familiar with, and the thought of it can be daunting and anxiety-inducing for most adults, let alone children who are going to visit a loved one in prison.

4.4.1.1 The aim of a new short film about visiting HMP & YOI Polmont, produced by the Polmont Visitor’s Centre in collaboration with SPS and Sanctus Media was to give families an idea of what to expect before they come for the first visit, thereby removing some of the initial anxieties.

4.4.1.2 The idea for the film came from feedback from people who used the centre who said that knowing what would happen at the security checks, and what the visit room looks like, could make coming for the first time a little bit easier. Staff also wanted families to be aware that there is support available from the Visitor’s Centre staff so that they do not need to go through this process alone.

4.4.2 Erskine Waterfront Campus: Employability initiative

We now look after children long after school leaving age and one of the gaps identified was being able to provide good employability support for our young people. We were fortunate to receive funding from BBC Children in Need to recruit an employability mentor.

4.4.2.1 In September 2021, the newly appointed Employability Mentor planned, organised, and hosted a Careers Day on campus, which was available for all young people to access as well as the local community. This was an outdoor function which made use of the school field. The event hosted a range of employers and provisions and brought together opportunities and possibilities in one place. Feedback from the young people was very positive

and showed that they liked to explore possibilities for their futures beyond school. The school is full of photos and memories of the day and will be a positive memory for all who attended. Careers Day is something that we wish to expand on and plan for again in the future. We have also accessed and sourced a diversity of work opportunities for the older pupils, which have enriched and encouraged young people to pursue dreams and think beyond school.

4.4.2.2 The Children in Need funding has brought the opportunity to increase the chance of our young people having a positive and productive future and will help close the attainment gap for care experienced young people.

4.4.3 The Promise – Using co-production to improve transitions

4.4.3.1 In 2021, The General Assembly passed a deliverance to help keep The Promise and embed changes in an outdated care system so that young people could have the best chances possible to live a fulfilling life.

4.4.3.2 CrossReach was successful in securing funding through The Promise partnership to help embed the changes demanded by the independent care review and to #keepthepromise so that all children in Scotland grow up to feel loved, safe, respected and realise their true potential. CrossReach had received anecdotal feedback from children, young people, and their families, that making the transition out of children's services into adulthood could be a difficult experience at times, and so we decided to embark on a process of improving that for young people.

4.4.3.3 With help from Who Cares Scotland and our established social media networks, we were able to connect young people leaving care with previous residents and help build up relationships.

4.4.3.4 Feedback from participation in each of the workshops from adults with care experience has been incredibly impactful: *'Although I found talking about the transition of young person into residential care hard and at times quite triggering, I felt safe in the group, and I knew that I had to tell my story'*. A forum has been created with members of the senior leadership team to implement simple changes that emerge from each of the workshops. Emerging themes include the need for young people to remain connected to important people who they have built a trusting relationship with and for young people to be able to try different options of what 'leaving care' can be before committing to an option of their choice. As we continue the workshops as a group of co-designers, we will endeavour to provide young people and adults with care experience, a platform for their voice to be heard, the tools to harness their knowledge and the power to embed their thoughts for change.

4.4.4 Developing the skills of residential staff to meet the needs of young people in our care

4.4.4.1 While much attention has been paid to our physical move to a new model of small houses and a school campus, the Head of Care and the management team have been focussing on the culture of the houses by concentrating on the values and training and development opportunities for staff teams. They have been working on improving outcomes for the children we look after by reducing restraint and restrictive practices and to increase skills and knowledge. The training identified has allowed space for the teams to reflect on their expectations of children who have experienced trauma and how a small thing to an adult can trigger emotions and behaviours

in children because of their previous experiences which can lead to them exhibiting challenging behaviour. The training seeks to address new ways to respond based on that knowledge which is much more respectful of the young people and their experiences.

4.4.5 Counselling Services

4.4.5.1 Our counselling services were heavily impacted by Covid but 2021 has seen a gradual increase to face to face work and embedding of our online counselling offer across all services. An incredible 4627 therapeutic sessions were offered either face to face or online by Counselling Services East during 2021. Between Tom Allan Centre and Bluebell, over 110 clients were seen each week during 2021. 87% of clients in the West reported an improvement in psychological health and improved quality of life. With a small amount of Scottish Government funding, we have been able to start and grow a perinatal service in Moray which is providing support to 24 clients. We were successful in a tender bid to provide counselling in schools in Inverness and this has got off to a strong start with us providing counselling services in 5 secondary schools.

4.4.5.2 Grants and Trust income for our counselling service has reduced significantly over the Covid period, as has the income which comes from client contributions and donations. We are very grateful for the ongoing support from the Church of Scotland in terms of the Mission and Renewal funding, without which our counselling services would not survive.

4.5 Celebrating our staff

4.5.1 The Board recognised the importance of the annual staff awards in recognising staff who had given exceptional service or gained a professional qualification. This year the theme of Ohana was chosen, Ohana meaning family or 'no-one left behind'. Political commentator Brian Taylor hosted the livestream event alongside the Moderator, the Right Honourable Lord Jim Wallace. The premise that working with CrossReach is more than a job but is a calling was evident throughout. 47 staff were recognised for long service at 20, 30 and 40 years. Staff were also awarded certificates for the qualifications they had achieved between 2019 and 2021 with 140 qualifications being recognised, a remarkable result given that they were achieved during the pandemic. Others giving exceptional service were recognised in various awards including Employee of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Adult Learner and The Ian Manson Award for Excellence. The celebrations were paused by the lighting of a candle and the reading of a short poem as those who had died in service were remembered by name.

5. FINANCE AND QUALITY

5.1 Finance

5.1.1 CrossReach sustained a deficit of £0.3m in 2021, before surpluses on disposal of fixed assets, property impairment charges, and unrealised gains on investments. This outturn was £2.3m better than budget, with the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021 not being as extensive as had been feared.

5.1.2 The total income received was £46.9m, against expenditure of £47.1m, before proceeds from the disposal of fixed assets.

5.1.3 In Older People Services, occupancy and costs continued to be impacted by the pandemic, but there was access to Government support which helped to alleviate the financial impact. The closure of the Wellhall

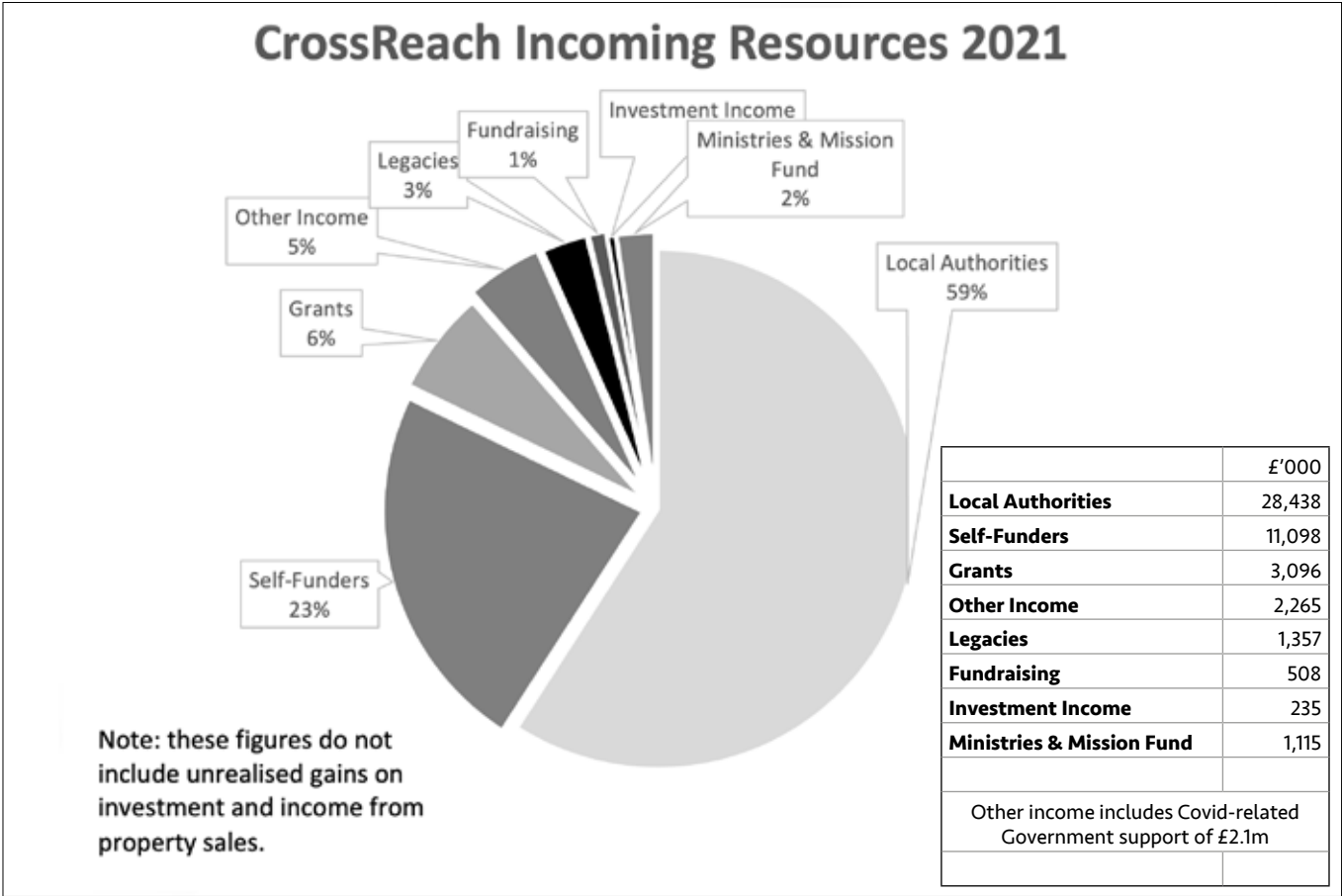
care home in Hamilton in October 2021 contributed significantly to an Older People Services deficit.

5.1.4 Adult Care had a year of strong occupancy, and outperformed its budget for 2021.

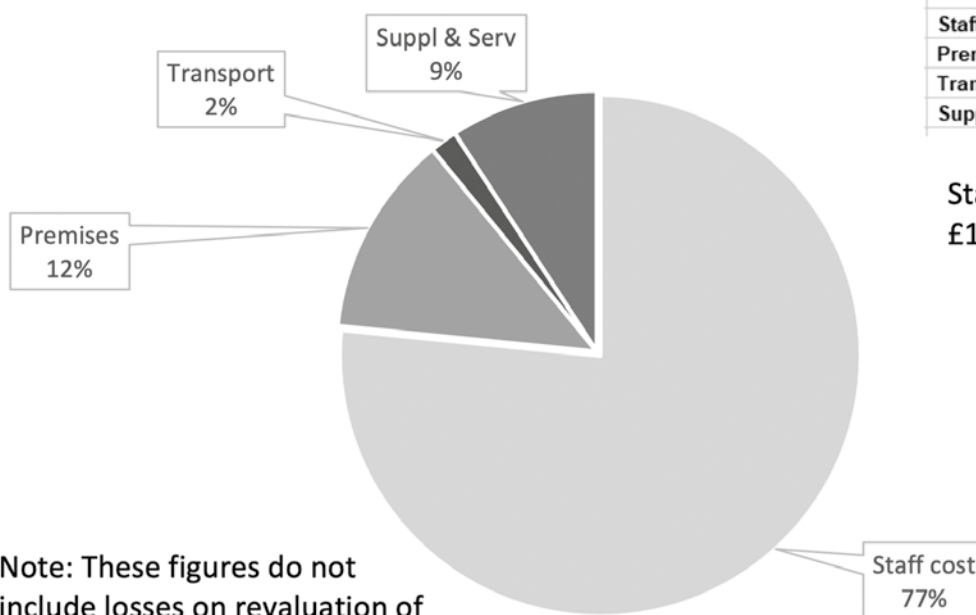
5.1.5 Children & Families Services continued to be seriously impacted by the pandemic, particularly in

counselling and community services, and it did not have access to Government support, leading to a significant deficit in the year.

5.1.6 The graphs below show the profile of income and expenditure in 2021, with income showing an increased reliance on self-funders and a substantial increase in legacy income.



CrossReach Outgoing Resources 2021



	£'000
Staff cost	37,135
Premises	6,083
Transport	821
Supplies & Services	4,456

Staff costs includes
£109k furlough costs

Note: These figures do not
include losses on revaluation of
fixed assets

5.2 Care Inspectorate Gradings

5.2.1 CrossReach has 56 services which are inspected by the Care Inspectorate. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has not been the same level of inspections during 2021. In 2020, a new inspection theme was introduced: 'How Good is our Care and Support during Covid-19 Pandemic'. Seven services were inspected on this theme, one service was graded Good and six services were graded Adequate.

5.2.2 Inspection Methodology

5.2.2.1 The Care Inspectorate are gradually changing their inspection methodology. Their new inspection methodology reflects the Health and Social Care Standards. Currently, 26 of our services have been inspected under the new methodology. There have been no services inspected under the old methodology in 2021. Therefore, analysis is only provided on inspections completed under the new inspection methodology.

5.2.2.2 Grades are awarded for each inspection theme and range from 1 – Unsatisfactory through to 6 – Excellent. Not all inspection themes are assessed in each inspection, but most inspections cover the following two areas:

5.2.2.3 How well do we support people's wellbeing:

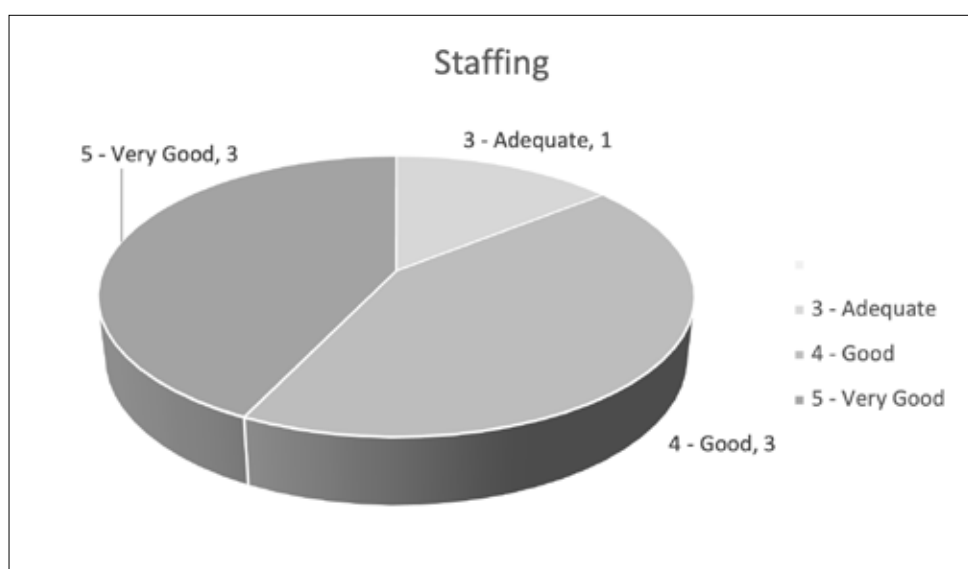
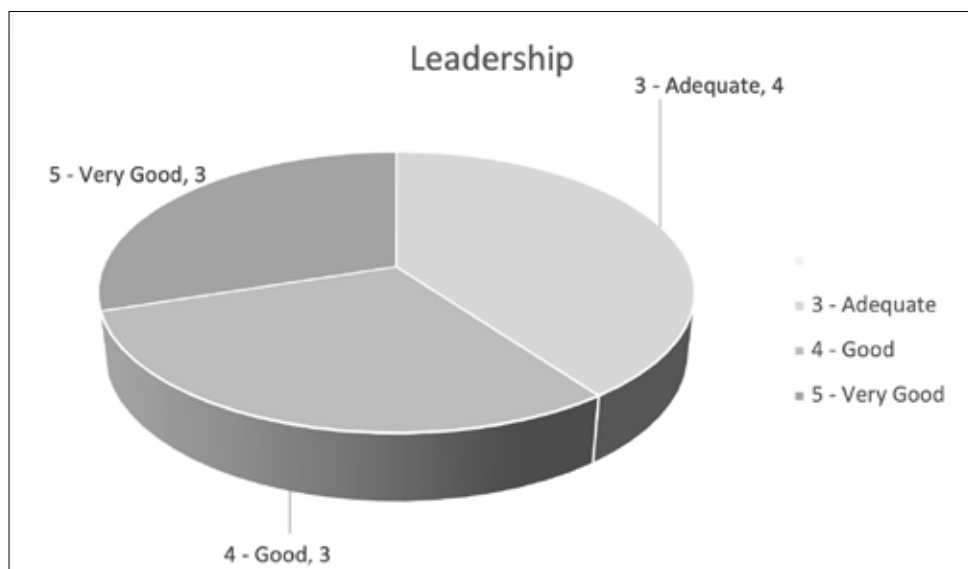
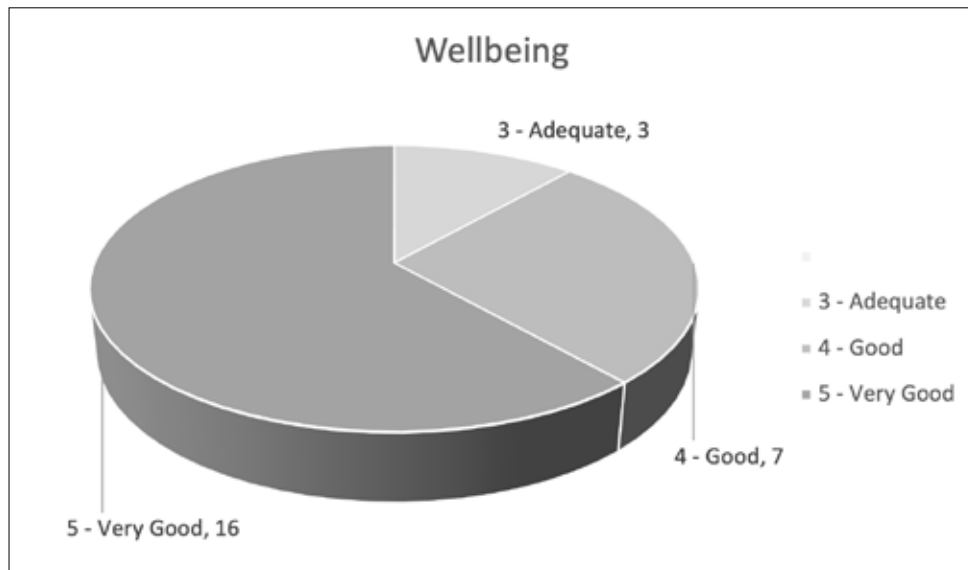
88% of our registered services inspected on this key question achieved a grade of at least 4 – Good, with 62% achieving Very Good (5)

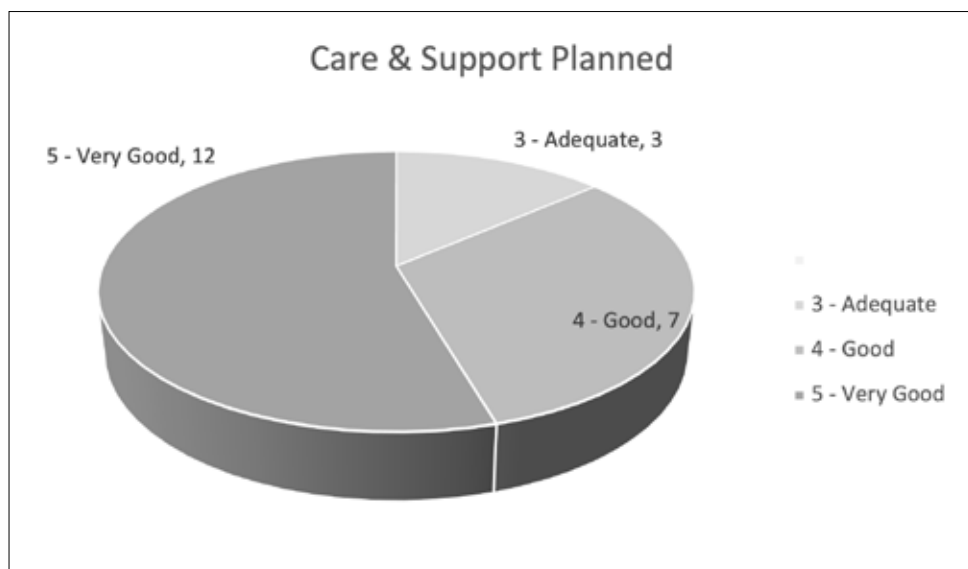
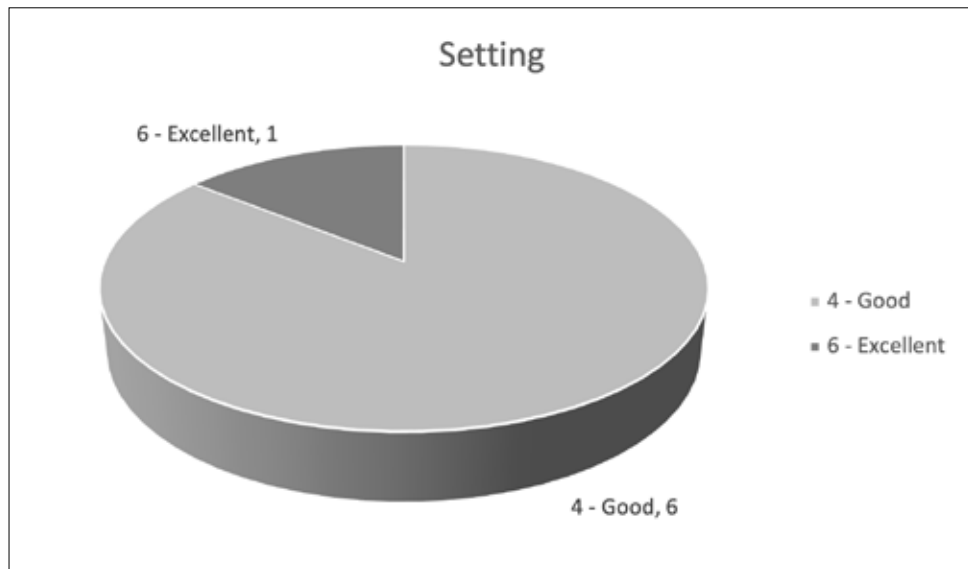
5.2.2.4 How well is our care and support planned:

86% of our registered services inspected on this key question achieved a grade of at least 4 – Good, with 55% achieving Very Good (5)

5.3 Care Inspectorate Grades – New Methodology

5.3.1 The Charts breakdown the Care Inspectorate Grades for each Quality Theme.





5.3.2 Comparative Employee Figures

Comparison of Employee Numbers between 2021 and 2022								
	Full Time		Part Time		Total		Full Time Equivalent	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Operations Staff	408	375	755	709	1163	1084	904.7	841.17
Relief Staff			439	440	439	440	98.60*	105.25*
Executive, Office Support Staff	63	62	31	31	94	93	81.49	80.38
Total	471	437	1225	1180	1696	1617	1084.78	1026.8

Figure calculated as average full time equivalent (FTE) roles per month.

In the name of the Social Care Council (Known as CrossReach Board)

THOM RIDDELL, Convener
SARAH WOOD, Vice Convener
VIV DICKENSON, Chief Executive Officer

Appendix 1 – List of Services

CROSSREACH SERVICES

Adult Services

Justice Services

- Dick Stewart Service (Glasgow)

Homeless People

- Cale House (Inverness)
- Cunningham House (Edinburgh)
- Kirkhaven Project (Glasgow)
- Lewis Street (Stornoway)

Learning Disabilities

- Eskmills (Edinburgh)
- The Bungalow (Stonehaven)
- Threshold Edinburgh
- Threshold Glasgow
- Threshold Support Services (South Lanarkshire)

Mental Health

- Allarton (Glasgow)
- Gaberston House (Alloa)
- Morven Day Services (Kilmarnock)

Substance Use Services

- Beechwood House (Inverness)
- Dochas Housing Support (Stornoway)
- CrossReach Abstinence Recovery Service (Glasgow)
- Rankeillor Initiative (Edinburgh)
- Tayside Support Service (Dundee)
- Whiteinch Move on Service (Glasgow)

Children and Family Services

Looked After Children (7 small residential houses)

- Carraig View (Port Glasgow)
- Dumbrock House (Strathblane)
- Finniescroft Farm (Lennoxton)
- Mill Muir Far (Gargunnoch)
- Mount Pleasant (Dalry)
- Rockwood House (Beith)
- The Old Lodge (Stirlingshire)
- Erskine Waterfront Campus

Children With Disabilities

- The Mallard, The Garratt & GO2 (Glasgow)

Community Services / Early Intervention

- Daisy Chain Early Years Project (Glasgow)
- Perth Prison Visitors Support and Advice Centre
- Polmont Prison Visitor Centre

Counselling, Support & Training

CrossReach Counselling West and North – includes:

- Bluebell Perinatal Counselling Services (Glasgow)
- Tom Allan Centre (Glasgow)
- COSCA Counselling Training (Glasgow)
- CrossReach Counselling Inverness – Young People’s Counselling and Generic Service
- CrossReach Counselling Moray – Perinatal and Generic Service
- Workplace Counselling Service

CrossReach Counselling East – Simpson House and Palmerston Place includes:

- East Perinatal Counselling
- Recovery Counselling
- Sunflower Garden

Older People Services

- Adams House (Elderslie) – Dementia
- Balmedie House (Balmedie)
- Bellfield (Banchory)
- Budhmer House (Portree)
- Cameron House (Inverness) – Dementia
- Clashfarquhar House (Stonehaven)
- Cumnor Hall (Ayr) – Dementia
- Glasgow Day Opportunities
- Heart for Heart, Bankfoot
- Heart for Art, Broughty Ferry
- Heart for Art, Carluke
- Heart for Art, Edinburgh
- Heart for Art, Galashiels
- Heart for Art, Garelochhead
- Heart for Art, Glasgow (Broomhill)
- Heart for Art, Kirkcudbright
- Heart for Art, Musselburgh
- Heart for Art, Stonehaven
- Morlich House (Edinburgh)
- Oversteps (Dornoch)
- Queen’s Bay Lodge (Edinburgh)
- South Beach House (Ardrossan)
- St Margaret’s House (Polmont) – Dementia
- The Elms Care Home (Edinburgh) – Dementia
- The Oasis Bankfoot
- The Oasis Garelochhead
- The Tryst Day Care Centre (Pitlochry)
- Walter & Joan Gray Care Home (Shetland)
- Walter & Joan Gray Day Care (Shetland)
- Whinnieknowe (Nairn)
- Williamwood House (Glasgow) – Dementia

Further information on our services can be found on our website www.Crossreach.org.uk

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Welcome the Guild's 135th anniversary and acknowledge the significant impact the Guild has had in congregations and in the wider world during that time. (*Section 1.1.1*)
3. Commend the Guild on its efforts to maintain contact with and involvement of its membership as they emerge from pandemic restrictions. (*Section 2.4*)
4. Encourage Presbyteries and Guilds Together Groups to explore ways in which they can work together to support the greater involvement of Guilds in the mission of the Church. (*Section 3.6.2*)
5. Commend the further exploration of hybrid methods of meeting to enable wider participation in the national decision-making of the Guild. (*Section 3.7.2*)
6. Celebrate the significant number of new members who have joined this year and welcome the establishment of two new Guild branches. (*Section 5.1.2*)
7. Welcome new branches where Guilds have come together to provide a vibrant, sustainable local group and commend this approach as a model for future development. (*Section 5.1.4*)
8. Congratulate the Guild on the work of its Project Partnership Scheme 2021-24 and recognise the important issues tackled and vital monies raised. (*Section 4.3*)

Report**1. INTRODUCTION****1.1 135 years on**

1.1.1 The Guild has always been a movement that is not afraid of challenge or change. It has always been a movement that has been outward looking and has served local congregations and national and international partners faithfully for 135 years.

1.1.2 Whilst the report will indeed acknowledge the challenges that the Guild has faced over the past year, its aim is to focus on the many ways in which the Guild members, individually and collectively have taken their lights out from their proverbial bushels and shone for all to see in the past year.

1.1.3 The report is written with boldness and assurance about the role of The Guild at its core whilst recognising the significant challenges the Guild has faced particularly in terms of income from capitation fees, loss of income for the current Projects and the continuing challenge of meeting with post Covid-19 restrictions.

1.1.4 A number of groups have not been able to begin again and their contribution to the life of local congregations over many decades is to be celebrated and their loss will also be deeply felt not only in their own congregation but also by the wider Guild family.

1.2 "Lights and Bushels"

1.2.1 The Guild theme for 2021-22 is **Lights and Bushels** sitting alongside our overall strategy of **"Look Forward in Faith"**.

1.2.2 Looking forward in faith is something that the Guild has always done, with the confidence and assurance that comes from knowing that in all things God is in control.

1.3 The Confidence to Shine

1.3.1 The report looks at the many and varied ways in which Guild members have been able to let their 'light shine' locally, nationally and internationally.

2. SHINING LOCALLY

2.1 July 2021 saw many restrictions on meeting together lifted and Guilds began to plan for the year ahead.

2.2 An increasing number of Guilds, in response to local need, have changed their pattern of meeting. For some this has been a move from evening to afternoon meetings and for others it has been a move from winter to summer meetings.

2.3 The growth of summer Guilds is encouraging and it enabled some groups to get up and running quickly from June 2021.

2.4 Guilds continued to find innovative ways to keep in touch with each other with a number continuing to use online platforms to meet together and have opportunities for social engagement even when not able to meet in person.

2.5 As Guilds began to meet, the increasing use of 'in house' speakers and activities helped to minimise external social contacts but also enabled Guild members to share skills, experiences and knowledge with others in their

branch. These opportunities to 'shine' have been positive and well received. We hope that this will continue in the year ahead with Guilds making use of the breadth of talent within their own membership.

2.6 Guild members have been connecting in different ways with local communities, emboldened by the challenge to shine. This has included outreach at Christmas and Easter.

2.7 By working with our project partners, Guilds have been able to provide local communities with much needed information, advice and support on important issues that challenge people in their everyday lives.

3. SHINING NATIONALLY

3.1 During the course of 2021, the Guild nationally has continued to support members and be actively involved in the work of the wider church and Christian community.

3.2 On-going work

3.2.1 Communications

3.2.1.1 Using a wide variety of platforms has enabled the Guild to shine a light on the significant work that we are involved in.

3.2.1.2 Our twice-yearly magazine continues to go to every member and has enabled us to share information, news and updates with our membership.

3.2.1.3 The Guild's weekly e-news has grown its readership by 25% over the past year with 1500 people now receiving it. With a word copy also available, it is estimated that the e-news is read by approx. 6000 people every week.

3.2.1.4 Similarly, the Guild's Facebook page has grown by over 50% with over 3600 "likes". As we seek to shine a light on the work of the Guild and its members these growing audiences are an important way of doing that.

3.2.2 Outreach

3.2.2.1 The Guild has a proud history over the past 135 years of reaching out beyond its own membership to the community and wider world.

3.2.2.2 From the opening of hostels for young women in Glasgow and Edinburgh in 1919, our centenary project working with young drug addict prostitutes in Leith or our work in many ways with CrossReach, the Guild has shown a commitment to those who are on the margins of our communities.

3.2.2.3 This year we have worked with two charities, BEAT and Home for Good.

Together with BEAT, we hope to help local communities in Scotland recognise the signs of eating disorders and understand how to support those struggling to get the treatment they deserve. At the heart of this project, are the powerful stories of those who have lived through the illness. Over the next three years, volunteers with lived experience will join BEAT's training team to increase its impact, speak directly to decision-makers to demand greater action for those affected, and share their personal experience in local communities, as well as the message of hope that people can and do recover from eating disorders.

Working with Home for Good, a Christian charity who are passionate about finding a home for every child who needs one, we will work to inspire people to think about

fostering and adoption. We also hope to equip the Church to welcome these families and help support people on their journeys.

3.2.2.4 By shining a light on these important issues and responding to need in practical and financial ways, the Guild has demonstrated Christ's love in action.

3.3 Resources

3.3.1 Each year members of our National Council work together to provide worship and discussion resources for our members and friends.

3.3.2 These resources are vital to the life and witness of the Guild and support the growth in faith of members.

3.4 Events

3.4.1 Bringing Guild members together to celebrate and share in fellowship is a key part of Guild life.

3.4.2 This year it was possible to hold our Annual Gathering in person at the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh.

3.4.3 The 2021 Gathering, entitled "The Extra Mile", was a day of particular celebration as it was the first in person for two years. However, we also enabled people to join online using live links. Guild members from as far apart as Shetland and Carlisle were able to join us on the day.

3.4.4 The day included the keynote address by the Moderator. Lord Jim Wallace provided encouragement and challenge to our members and it was a helpful insight into his hopes for his year in office.

3.4.5 It was also a day where we were able to shine a light on some excellent work that was being done by Guilds in Edinburgh, Ferintosh and North Berwick in particular.

3.4.6 A particular highlight was the opportunity to chat with members who joined us on a live link from St Andrew Blackadder in North Berwick and St Matthew's in Perth.

3.4.7 Our new format included the handover and taking of the oath of office by our incoming National Convener. This was a particularly poignant and special event. This new term of office has been well received by the Guild and helps to shape the Guild year.

3.5 New Events

3.5.1 We are continually striving to engage with members in new and imaginative ways using in person and virtual events as appropriate.

3.5.2 A series of online reflections provided by ministers in the run up to Easter proved popular and enabled Guild members and friends to have some space to reflect on the importance of Holy Week in a new way.

3.6 Regional Organisation

3.6.1 One of the key components of Guild organisation is the Guild at a Regional level, Guilds Together. These groups are made up of Guild representatives who jointly organise training, events and promotion of the Guild.

3.6.2 Traditionally these groups would mirror Presbytery boundaries and the new amalgamation of Presbyteries and subsequent geographical boundaries will place significant challenges on how Guilds Together Groups relate to the new Presbyteries.

3.6.3 To enable a Guilds Together Groups to work together, our four National Vice-Conveners are coordinating a series of Regional Gatherings across Scotland. These events combine worship, prayer, action and fellowship and encourage Guilds at a Regional level.

3.6.4 Following a re-evaluation of staffing needs, the Guild has begun the process of recruiting two part time members of staff who will support our Regional organisation and work with relevant National Vice-Conveners. They will not be primarily centrally based, focussing their work at a regional level. They will work with Guilds Together Groups and identify ways in which they can cooperate more closely with each other and help organise activities and events which make this possible.

3.7 Meetings

3.7.1 The Guild's National Council and our conferences have continued to meet on an on-line basis.

3.7.2 This has enabled people to remain involved in the decision making of the Guild and has resulted in members who were unable to travel in the past join in with the meetings. It is envisaged that we will try and maintain a hybrid model of meeting when in person Council meetings are possible.

3.8 National Conference

3.8.1 The Guild faces many challenges as it emerges fully from the current restrictions and we brought together representatives of Guilds in March to look at how best that can be done.

3.8.2 The event was an opportunity for representatives from Guilds and Guilds Together Groups to come together and develop our vision for the Guild for the next ten years. The event built on the work of the Action Plan and we are looking forward to moving forward with the conclusions of the conference in the coming year.

3.9 Convener's Challenge

3.9.1 The challenge is, as the name suggests, chosen by the National Convener and reflects something of their own character and interests. Over the years the challenges have reflected the varying interests of the Conveners including bowling, embroidery, writing and photography and the variety of skills and interests supported by Guild members.

3.9.2 This year's challenge is to produce a traybake using six ingredients, the winner to be announced at the Annual Gathering in September.

3.10 External Contacts

3.10.1 The Guild has continued to contribute greatly to the work of several groups, both within the Church of Scotland and beyond. We value the opportunities to share, learn and campaign on a range of issues. In particular we welcome the opportunity to be involved with the work of the Faith Action Programme Mission Support Group.

3.10.2 These partnerships continue the Guild's interest in work beyond its own and its desire to contribute to the broad work of the Church of Scotland and other bodies.

3.11 Staffing

3.11.1 In 2021 Iain Whyte retired after ten years of service to the Guild as General Secretary. Iain brought to the Guild, wisdom, drive and enthusiasm. We are grateful for the ways in which, that under Iain's leadership, Guilds were encouraged and enabled to meet the challenges of 21st century church life.

3.11.2 Then in 2022, Alice Finlayson retired as our Finance Assistant. Alice's attention to detail has always meant that the stewardship of Guild money was clear and accurate which has enabled us to emerge from the pandemic in a good financial position.

4. SHINING INTERNATIONALLY

4.1 From the Guild's inception, looking outward to the wider world was a key component of Guild life. In 1894, a hospital in Kalimpong in India was supported by Guild members and for many years Guild members have continued to contribute to the work there.

4.1.1 Over the years other projects developed and relationships formed with partners across the globe. These mutually beneficial relationships have helped enlighten the lives of Guild members and ensure that God's light has been able to shine in many countries.

4.2 Malawi and other overseas work

4.2.1 Our most developed and sustained partnership is with the Guilds in the Synod of Livingstonia in the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) which continues to grow and develop.

4.2.2 As a Guild we welcome the many opportunities to share with and learn from our brothers and sisters in Malawi. It enriches our faith and enables us to grow as sisters and brothers in Christ.

4.2.3 Twinning with our friends in Malawi

4.2.3.1 Our twinings between Guilds Together in Ayr and District, North Ayrshire, Shetland, and Dunbartonshire with Presbyterial Guilds in Bandawe, Milala, Dwangwa, and Mzuzu respectively have also developed during the past year.

4.2.3.2 The sharing of prayer support over the past year has been particularly beneficial. Using modern technology, we have been able to keep in touch and support each other even when meeting together was not possible and we are currently looking at how best we can develop these relationships further in the year ahead.

4.2.4 Solar light for Schools

4.2.4.1 Over the past year, we have been able to build on our support for solar lighting to extend the programme into CCAP secondary schools and a further 6 primary schools.

4.2.4.2 We are encouraged at the ways in which these units have transformed the lives of students in the local community. With each unit providing 3200 hours of additional study these extra units will provide an extra 96,000 hours of study time. In total the Guild will have added 172,800 study hours for students and community members.

4.2.4.3 Women will be key beneficiaries of the extra hours since having a well-lit, secure space will encourage more community activity and enable women to participate more fully in education and community life.

4.3 Guild Partnership Projects

4.3.1 In 1969 the current project scheme began, initially as an annual project and then in 1997 a three-year project partnership with six individual projects was developed.

4.3.2 This last year has continued to make fundraising challenging and traditional avenues were not available. However, Guilds used their ingenuity to continue to support our partners. Our final total for our partners from 2018-2021, was £587,155.38.

- The Boys' Brigade Scotland, Faith in our Future.
- Free to Live Trust, Seema's Project.
- Malawi Fruits, Growing the Future.
- World Mission Council, Journeying Together with Teenage Mothers in Zambia.
- Sailors' Society, A Chaplain for Our Ports.
- CrossReach, Join up the Dots.

4.3.3 Since 1969 £7,347,490.52 has been raised for the Guild Project Partnership Scheme, a remarkable total and testament to the outward-looking nature of Guild members.

4.3.4 South East Asia

4.3.4.1 Working with Pioneers, we will support the development of a small chocolate kitchen on a beautiful island in South East Asia. It is here that Pioneers staff demonstrate the love of God to a group of unreached people. Chocolate Heaven is providing employment for chocolate makers, fair prices for local growers, producing and selling delicious chocolate in a variety of flavours and sharing God's good news with their employees and wider community whenever they have the opportunity to do so.

4.3.5 Uganda

4.3.5.1 In Uganda our Project Partnership with "Starchild, Finding the Light in Every Child" will help address the challenges of stigma and myths related to intellectual and physical disability. Starchild aims to build a holistic centre called the Sunflower Sanctuary. This centre will offer support, training and guidance to the most marginalised and help to prevent future generations of disabled people from being hidden in their communities and regarded as having no potential benefit to society. It is this lack of equality and inclusion that Starchild is addressing with the Guild and will be going forward in faith to bring these children out of the darkness and into the light.

4.3.6 Brazil

4.3.6.1 "Hear our Voice: empowering young women for ministry and service" is a project at UNIDA, a higher education institute in Vitoria, designed to empower young women through theological education. The partnership with The Guild has three core elements:

1. Providing access to accredited theological education for young women through special scholarships
2. Equipping young women for leadership in churches, faith-based organisations and wider society through practical education
3. Mentoring young women through accompaniment and work placements.

4.3.6.2 "Hear our Voice!" has the goal of providing 3000 students with educational opportunities at affordable prices, often with scholarships, from low-income backgrounds especially women and Afro-Brazilians.

4.3.7 Tanzania

4.3.7.1 Africa Inland Church Tanzania had the vision to create a multi-faceted and sustainable village on the southern side of Lake Victoria and the project 'Kazunzu Village of Hope Tanzania' is that vision. Working with the Africa Inland Church Tanzania and the Vine Trust we aim to:

- Increase the number of homes allowing more young families to serve as Guardian Parents to four or five orphaned children.
- Enrich the life of the village through the development of the community hub, a primary school, health post and vocational training centre.
- Create self-sustainability by investing in agricultural projects and fish farming.
- Fast track the project over the next four years rather than the next ten years.

5. SHINING FOR ALL TO SEE

5.1.1 As reported above, much of the work of the Guild has continued despite the limitations placed upon us by the pandemic restrictions. We encouraged Guilds, as they faced another uncertain year to look to the words of our founder *"It is they who dream bright dreams that in the end deliver....do not be afraid or ashamed to announce splendid hopes. It is enthusiasts the world needs, and I pray you to be enthusiastic."*

5.1.2 In doing so we hoped that new members would come forward and we are heartened by the number of Guilds who have reported a growth in new members. We have welcomed a significant number of new members across the year which is a source of great encouragement. We are grateful to Guild members and supporters who have enabled us to get back meeting again, albeit in a new way. The fellowship that people have missed is now returning.

5.1.3 We dreamed of new Guild branches and following discussions with congregations in Newmilns and in Newport on Tay, we are delighted that two new Guilds have now been established in these congregations, and we are delighted to be welcoming these new members into our fellowship.

5.1.4 Changes to the numbers of building and congregations will have an impact on Guilds and we can see opportunities for this to safeguard the future of Guilds in a particular place by sharing people, skills and resources. Already Guilds in Largs and Lanark have come together and these combined groups are proving to be a real source of vibrancy and hope in times of change and uncertainty.

6. IN CONCLUSION

6.1 This has been a difficult time but we are emerging with renewed vision and enthusiasm for the future.

6.2 As we look forward, we do so in faith and in the words of Hebrews 11:1

'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.'

In the name of the Committee

MARGARET MUIR, *National Convener*
KAREN GILLON, *General Secretary*

Appendix**Guild Finances 2021**

General Fund Income	£	General Fund Expenditure	£
Members' Contributions	86598	Management and admin	182573
Donations and Grants	7178	Objects Expenditure	25544
Sales	4319	Cost of sales	2667
Project Support	15758		
Other	20918		
Total	134771	Total	210784

Project Donations 2021 to 28/2/2022

BEAT There is hope	£5,641.19
HOME FOR GOOD Finding a home for every child	£6,802.33
UNIDA Hear our voice	£1,015.70
VINE TRUST Kazunzu Village of Hope	£4,033.50
STARCHILD Finding the light in every child	£5,501.81
PIONEERS Chocolate Heaven	£3,033.99
Total	£26,028.52

Addendum**MARGARET MUIR National Convener 2021-2022**

The National Council of the Guild wishes to record its thanks to Margaret Muir for serving as National Convener since September 2021.

Margaret Muir has served the Guild for many years in her home church, Airdrie New Monkland linked with Greengairs, as well as serving as Convener of both her Guild and Hamilton Guilds Together. She also represents the Guild on the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale. In 2016 she became National Council Representative for Hamilton North Guilds Together and she has served as Committee Convener, National Vice-Convener and now as National Convener.

Margaret has used her warm personality to encourage people to use their gifts and talents in service to the Guild, their community and the wider world.

The Guild wishes Margaret well for the future, both in the Guild and in her church and community life.

KAREN GILLON, *General Secretary*

IONA COMMUNITY BOARD - MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Unlocked programme to congregations, ecumenical partners and other agencies as a model for supporting those in poverty, and call on local and national church leaders to resist those proposed increases in fuel and National Insurance Contributions which most affect those in poverty. (Sections 3.2 - 3.5)
3. Urge congregations and all people of goodwill to remember the people of Israel / Palestine in their prayers and to press HM Government and MPs to persuade the international community and the Israeli Government in particular to bring about change in the pursuit of human rights, justice and peace for all in the Holy Land. (Sections 4.4/4.5)
4. Call upon all people of goodwill to raise awareness of the historical legacy of slavery, and to support congregations and faith communities in their endeavours to research the historical legacy of slavery in their own areas, particularly in relation to local religious buildings. (Sections 4.8/4.9)

Report

*Creator God, we give thanks
that we have heard the Spirit of God
in the freshening leaves
and the rush of water.
So we pray for the creation
which nourishes and sustains all that lives.
Renew in us the sense of its value
that we may not squander its riches,
or so bend it to our will
that we find we have destroyed it.*

Prayer by Kathy Galloway in
'Living Faithfully in the Time of Creation',
Wild Goose Publications, 2021

1. FOCUS ON EMERGENCE

1.1 The Iona Community Board has met online on two occasions since the last General Assembly. The Board continues to value the equal three dimensions of its membership: from the General Assembly, the Iona Community, and the wider Church, this ecumenical dimension being integral to its work and purpose.

1.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has continued to influence the on-going work and potential developments within the Iona Community. However, the Iona Community emerges from this troubled period with a renewed focus on its core purposes and developmental issues. In particular, it has continued to engage with those most adversely affected by the pandemic, being aware of the tenderness and vulnerability inherent in the world, noticing the strength that comes from community.

1.3 Rooted in a faith that welcomes questions and is open to the Holy Spirit we continue to worship daily at our islands centres and increasingly through our online gatherings. Members meet monthly to pray, reflect on scripture and other nurturing material, and to support one another in local groups. We delight in the glorious global scope of the worldwide Church of Christ, always alert to how we, as a faith community, can reflect more widely the diversity of God's creation. We were enriched in early 2021 by an 8-week programme of reflection through the Psalms. We remain continually open to the emergent Spirit guiding us in our acting, in our reflecting and in our life in community.

1.4 On Monday 7th June, in advance of Columba Day on 9th June, we celebrated the renovation of the living quarters of Iona Abbey through a worship service and party at Iona Abbey. We were particularly delighted to be joined by children from the island community, including three pipers, who helped us tell the story of faith and community on the island over the centuries. We were joined by HRH Princess Anne, Patron of our Capital Appeal, who spoke to us about the impact of a renewed Abbey on the lives of the most needy.

1.5 2021 also marked the 1500th anniversary of the birth of St. Columba. We marked this with the re-publication of Ian Bradley's book, 'Columba: politician, penitent, pilgrim' and by services to mark the occasion.

1.6 In 2021 we Hallowed six New Members and welcomed a further fourteen to our New Members programme from six different countries. Our Young Adults Group now numbers sixteen. The Iona Community

is now made up of 272 Members and 2,000+ Associate Members and Friends scattered across Europe, the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, with Associate Members also in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Cuba, the Philippines, Malaysia and Taiwan.

1.7 Our global membership represents in small part the vastness of the worldwide Church. Yet we acknowledge that our membership is made up largely of those in the north and west of the world, informed by culture and norms of the wealthiest and most economically powerful nations. We confess the limitations of this dominant mind-set and will continue to do all we can to widen and broaden our membership and our programmes to reflect the deep diversity of a truly global movement.

1.8 Members continued to meet online, in local Family Groups, as Regions, and through our Common Concern Networks. In addition, we hosted over 150 Members at the Abbey over the course of three Community Weeks on Iona, along with a youth week at Camas for children of Members. Members were delighted to be joined on Iona by Rev. Alex Wimberly, Leader of the Corrymeela Community, reminding us of the deep connection with sister communities around the world. Our global membership has rekindled links with sister centres and communities in the USA and in Canada.

2. FOCUS ON LIVING A VISION

2.1 Our vision, rooted in faith, is 'for a just and peaceful world in which all of life can flourish.' Any strategy is designed to elevate our vision and focus our passions to glimpse more fully the kingdom of God, present on earth.

2.2 With this in mind, four Strategic Objectives, agreed by Council and then by our membership at the 2021 AGM, focus our work on 1) enlivening and broadening our membership; 2) equipping and empowering people in actions for justice and peace; 3) extending the reach and impact of our programmes and our islands centres; 4) increasing our sustainability and resilience. These are shared more fully in our **'Transforming Lives' booklet**.

2.3 Plans for Iona Learn, an online learning platform and focus for our training, resourcing and programme work were agreed in 2021 and will come to fruition in 2022 and beyond. Through our islands centres programmes, our volunteering opportunities, our new Members Programme, our resources and publications and online training opportunities, and in collaborations with higher education institutions we will continue to inspire and galvanise to action all who seek justice and peace. Memoranda of Understanding signed with the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, and with the Student Christian Movement, provide an additional focus to this programme of learning and equipping. Further partnerships will be sought with educational institutes in the global south to reflect our commitment to genuine globalism.

2.4 In all of this, excellent communication is key. In 2021 we renewed our database, financial accounting package, online bookings system and web-site, all of which ensures easier access to our resources and deeper engagement with our concerns through our membership.

2.5 The start of 2021 saw our staff working from home, our centres closed with an uncertain future, and Council working hard on a deficit reduction plan. With the good will and remarkable generosity of our membership

we were able not only to survive, but to see the signs of flourishing towards the end of the 2021 season. This came at significant cost to the many volunteers who devoted their time and energy to ensuring this survival. To them we owe a huge debt of gratitude, as we do to the staff and to our own membership.

2.6 We said farewell to Sarah Metcalfe who led as our Executive Director through a particularly turbulent few months. Sarah's vision, humour, and sharp thinking were an essential driver in the survival of the Iona Community. We owe her real gratitude and wish her well in her new ventures.

2.7 We were joined in September 2021 by Callum Orr as our Executive Director. Callum brings skills of leadership, clarity of thinking and a 'drive to deliver' to this role and to the life of the Iona Community. We welcome him to this post.

2.8 Council oversaw a structural review to bring renewed focus and clarity to the work of Wild Goose Publications (WGP), Wild Goose Resource Group and our Iona Shop. WGP produced thirty one publications in 2021, consisting of nine books (with e-book versions) and twenty two short downloads. Among the books published were *This is God's World*, a new songbook by John L Bell; *Living Faithfully in the Time of Creation* by Kathy Galloway & Katharine M Preston; and *Refugees from Eden* by Rosemary Power. One issue of *Coracle* was published in 2021 focusing on what it means to belong to a global faith community.

2.9 Due to the hard work and visionary leadership of our Council, members and staff, accounts were presented in 2021 which left the Iona Community in a modestly healthy position at the end of the year. A carefully constructed and implemented deficit reduction plan, which included relocating our offices to the Fairfield Centre in Govan, judicious use of furlough and regrettably some redundancy, eliminated the accumulated deficit. Best practice in budgetary management has been adopted, with regular monitoring and financial reporting, responsibility with accountability for budget holders and accurate advance planning. An ambitious but prudent budget for 2022 is being implemented.

3. FOCUS ON ISLANDS CENTRES

3.1 Iona Abbey rang in the Nuclear Ban Treaty in January and livestreamed each week during Lent, breaking the isolation of lockdown and connecting people in prayer across the continents. The Abbey re-opened to guests with Wildlife Week, led by a member of the Young Adult Group, on 29 May. The Abbey welcomed 346 guests over the course of a slightly shortened season in 2021, with sixty volunteers, six resident group members and four contracted staff.

3.2 Despite distancing and other Covid measures, the Abbey Church welcomed over 400 each week during the summer to worship rooted in the common life of the resident team and outstretched to the concerns of the world. Songs of lament, protest and peace were sung in St. Oran's Chapel during COP26. One guest said they felt "a renewed enthusiasm to work for peace and justice. 'Time and Space' was just what I needed."

3.3 Our Unlocked programme ensured that as soon as our doors opened at Iona Abbey, our spaces, including our cottages on Iona, were available free of charge to those in the greatest need, having struggled particularly during the pandemic.

3.4 Working with our partners, including the Church of Scotland's Priority Areas Team, we welcomed sixty three people to join us in community during 2021 under the Unlocked programme.

3.5 One Key Worker who came with their family said: "We had a truly amazing time on Iona. Thanks for the hospitality, kindness, prayer and inspiring us to become more committed and accountable when it comes to social justice. Our child had the first holiday for years where they felt welcomed, accepted and free to enjoy themselves."

3.6 We recognise that the global pandemic hit the poorest across the globe most severely. As we emerge from the pandemic, we abhor the fact that the uneven distribution of wealth and the scandal of an asymmetrical distribution of the vaccine reinforces this inequality. Within the United Kingdom, 2022 will see those already hit hardest by the pandemic further disadvantaged through job insecurity, the end of the uplift to Universal Credit, an increase in energy bills and in National Insurance Contributions. We commit to continuing to work for the eradication of inequality and poverty, to sharing at least 10% of our disposable income with those most in need, and to ensuring that our islands centres and all our programmes and resources are accessible to all who are disadvantaged.

3.7 Our Abbey Programme for 2022 will include Time & Space weeks, and weeks focussing on LGBTQ+, Environment, Youth Festival, Students Week, Racism, the Renewal of Worship and a week for Scotland's Interfaith Leaders. Visit <https://iona.org.uk/visit-and-stay/iona-abbey-centre/iona-abbey-programme-bookings/> for information and booking.

3.8 Camas, our Adventure Centre on Mull welcomed 133 guests from a range of urban and rural settings during 2021, weathering the storm of the Covid-19 pandemic which limited our numbers, while at the same time focussing on the physical and spiritual well-being of young people. Guests represented groups from Mull, Glasgow, Edinburgh and England. These ranged from local schools to families, vulnerable young people and refugees. They were supported by a team of four residents and nine volunteer staff over various parts of the season. Tribute should be paid to those who have sustained and developed the work at Camas through two years of uncertainty. The Camas Programme for 2022 can be found at <https://iona.org.uk/visit-and-stay/mull-camas-outdoor-centre/camas-programme-bookings/>

3.9 The MacLeod Centre, focussed on offering time and space to families and youth groups, has been closed since 2017, initially to provide accommodation to support the renovation of the Abbey. The building is now in need of urgent attention. Plans are in process for a carbon neutral youth centre focussing on environmental justice. This reflects the Iona Community's commitment to environmental justice, and one of our three core charitable objectives: to 'increase the voice, visibility and agency of young people.'

4. FOCUS ON COMMON CONCERNS AND HISTORICAL LEGACY OF SLAVERY

4.1 Members meet monthly in Family Groups – small groups that root us in prayer and action, in our local areas. Complementing these geographical groups are our Common Concern Networks (CCNs) which root us in shared passions and concerns inspired by our faith.

4.2 Our CCNs focus on Environment; Faith & Spirituality; Israel/Palestine; LGBTQ+; Migration & Refugees; Poverty & Inequality; Reconciliation, Peace & Disarmament.

4.3 Each CCN, including Members and Associate Members from across the globe, meets in a format and frequency to suit their membership. Most meet monthly, online. Their primary purpose is to support one another in living out their faith through prayer, actions and campaigns in relation to this specific concern.

4.4 Our CCN on Israel / Palestine, building on the Iona Community's statement of December 2017, has continued to promote discussion within the Iona Community and more widely, in supporting Kairos Palestine, Sabeel-Kairos UK and other organisations seeking justice for the Palestinians, and opposing the policies of the Israeli government which, in defiance of international law and repeated United Nations resolutions, continues to approve the development of illegal settlements on the occupied territory of the West Bank. Meanwhile Palestinians have their homes arbitrarily demolished or possessed by settlers and their olive trees and vines vandalized and destroyed. In Gaza around two million people live under siege with unemployment running at well over 50% and the social infrastructure, not least health and education services, and water and electricity supplies, is close to collapsing.

4.5 In 2020 the Iona Community, along with others, endorsed an initiative by Palestinian Christian leaders, who in their quest for justice, peace and an end to the occupation, invited churches, congregations and other supporters worldwide to back their 'Cry for Hope', urgently seeking decisive action through study and reflection, political engagement (including economic measures), and supporting and visiting local projects and initiatives. In November 2021 the World Council of Churches released an unprecedented statement expressing grave concern over the deteriorating situation in Palestine and Israel, and appealed to the "conscience of the world" concerning "the unrelenting military occupation of the Palestinian territories and the ongoing marginalization and obstruction of legitimate Palestinian aspirations for equal human dignity and rights."

4.6 Our CCN on Migration and Refugees has looked in detail at how to campaign around organised refugee resettlement, with expert input from a New Zealand campaigner and a member of the group who has a role in European Churches' collective response to refugee issues. As part of Together With Refugees it is likely that a campaign around resettlement quotas will continue into future years.

4.7 As this Report goes to print, we remember the people of Ukraine, fleeing in millions in the face of unwarranted aggression by Russian forces, creating another major refugee crisis in Europe. We commend the worship material of the Wild Goose Resource Group found here: <https://iona.org.uk/ukraine-liturgy/>

4.8 We remain committed to eradicating injustice wherever we see it and to working for peace. This includes interrogating our understanding of the legacies of slavery, while working for the eradication of modern-day slavery in all its forms. We are grateful to the Iona Cathedral Trustees who researched and published a document on '**Iona Cathedral and Historic Slavery**'.

4.9 We commend the Church of Scotland's Faith Impact Forum for keeping this concern on the Church's agenda; recognise the value of making relevant information and guidance available to congregations; commend work being done around reparations, apologies and conversations with partner Churches in west Africa and the Caribbean; and look forward to a report from the Faith Impact Forum at the next General Assembly. We call upon all to support faith communities everywhere in their similar endeavours through researching the historic legacy of slavery in their own areas and in relation to their local religious buildings.

4.10 Our Young Adults Group (YAG) prepared and shared a resource on racism for study and reflection amongst small groups. Two members of YAG contributed to a recently published book by SCM Press, **'Young, Woke and Christian: words from a missing generation'** edited by Victoria Turner.

5. FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENT

5.1 We stand with the thousands who before, during and after COP26 hosted and fed, marched and met, wrote, campaigned, lobbied and blogged, sang, prayed and protested in the name of environmental justice.

5.2 In advance of COP26 members of our Environment CCN published through Wild Goose Publications **'Living Faithfully in the Time of Creation'**, a collection of prayers, songs, stories, liturgies and essays 'for celebrating Creationtide in an age of environmental emergency.'

5.3 The outcome of COP26 fell short of grasping the radical opportunity it presented. Our political leaders should have taken more bold steps to reverse the climate emergency. Nevertheless, we take heart from the energy of millions of ordinary people from around the globe that was focussed through COP26.

5.4 We applaud the actions for justice taken by millions of people which together cry out with one voice for justice for the living earth. In particular we applaud the work of faith coalitions bringing the voice of unity in faith to this common concern.

5.5 The Iona Community played an active part in convening Scotland's Climate Assembly, along with over 100 representative citizens from Scotland. We urge faith leaders, individually and collectively, to familiarise themselves with the recommendations presented by the Citizen's Assembly to the Scottish Parliament with a view to common action in favour of them: **www.citizensassembly.scot**

5.6 We rededicate ourselves to actions rooted in spiritual reflection that promote environmental sustainability in all we do. The scandal of our squandering of the earth's resources must be named and must stop. We remain committed, through our programmes and our Rule of Life, to 'working for justice, peace, wholeness and reconciliation in our localities, society and the whole creation.'

6. FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

6.1 Members of our Young Adults Group made a pilgrimage across Mull in June 2021, to mark the reopening of the renovated living space at Iona Abbey. Their journeying together is a reminder that the journey of faith, in and through community, is transient. Through the silence and the conversation in community, through the

sharing of meals, of support when the journey is tough, and delight when a landmark is reached, we are reminded powerfully of what it means to be pilgrim people focussed on faith.

6.2 We close with the words of prayer with which we began:

*Creator God, we give thanks
that we have heard the Spirit of God
in the freshening leaves
and the rush of water.
So we pray for the creation
which nourishes and sustains all that lives.
Renew in us the sense of its value
that we may not squander its riches,
or so bend it to our will
that we find we have destroyed it.*

In the name of the Board

TOM GORDON, *Convener*
RUTH HARVEY, *Leader*
CALLUM ORR, *Executive Director*

GENERAL TRUSTEES MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and 2021 Accounts of the General Trustees. (Section 1.2)
2. Welcome progress on the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021). (Section 2.1)
3. Welcome:-
 - (a) the decision to provide 50% of the cost of centrally employed Presbytery Buildings Officers for reformed Presbyteries for three years and (Section 3.5.2)
 - (b) the appointments of Presbytery Buildings Officers in Fife and Clyde. (Section 3.5.3)
4. Remind Financial Boards of their duty to provide a habitable manse and to keep it in a good state of repair and decoration and remind Presbyteries of their oversight obligations in terms of Regulations VII 2007. (Section 4.3.8)
5. Welcome the proposed Consolidating Act for General Assembly 2023. (Section 6.1.3)
6. Note that the appointment of the Chair and the Vice-Chair has been delayed due to resignation of the Chair in March 2022. (Section 6.2.1)
7. Authorise payment of £1,900 to each of Mr Ian Townsend as the Chair and Rev Fiona Mathieson as the Vice-Chair for their services over the past year (Section 6.2.2).
8. Note and endorse the position of the General Trustees in relation to ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government about the significant adverse impact on the Church of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (Register of Persons Holding Controlled Interest in Land) Regulations 2021. (Section 7.2)

Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *"The General Trustees support congregations and Presbyteries in maintaining and developing appropriate flexible, robust and sustainable facilities capable of supporting local mission and worship."* (Mission Statement)

1.2 The Trustees submit to the General Assembly their ninety-fifth report since their incorporation under the Church of Scotland (General Trustees) Order Confirmation Act 1921 and their Annual Report & Accounts for 2021.

1.3 As reported in 2021, the impact of the disruption resulting from Covid-19 on all aspects of the congregational, regional and national life of the Church has been immense. We have experienced sanctuaries temporarily closing to worship and then partially reopened and halls empty of congregational and community activities except to facilitate some essential users. The General Trustees' staff have again played a prominent role in giving advice to congregations, and the Board of the General Trustees again wish to record its thanks to them, and to Presbytery and congregational Fabric Conveners and others who have worked tirelessly through these difficult times.

1.4 Due to restrictions, site visits have not been possible and only essential and emergency repairs, other than a few exceptional cases, have been approved by the Trustees. Staff have had limited access to the National Office and have been working from home throughout the period. Meetings have had to be conducted virtually by video conferencing. Only when restrictions are significantly relaxed will any effects of these limitations on the buildings unfold.

1.5 Constituted as a statutory corporation by the Church of Scotland (General Trustees) Order Confirmation Act 1921, the Trustees have now entered their 101st year. They continue to be an integral part of the Church of Scotland, and deliver a service to support a re-invigorated Church in Scotland.

1.6 Throughout the year the Trustees, advised and guided by the Chief Executive, have continued to overhaul and update internal processes and systems to ensure that effective and efficient services can continue to be offered to support Presbyteries and congregations. An electronic Asset Management System (AMS) is being created which will allow more effective use of information and produce more detailed records of buildings. A centrally controlled Document Management System (DMS) has now been implemented and is being developed to enable full control of digital files and documentation, and also to enable better control of documents, content, revisions etc. This will enable Trustees and staff to access information remotely, as well as from the National Office. It is hoped that as the systems develop it will be possible to permit Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to have direct access to files and documentation relating to their properties.

1.7 The Trustees have defined five key Strategic Objectives:-

- Support the effective care and maintenance, refurbishment and, where appropriate, redevelopment of churches, halls and manses etc.
- Disposal of surplus, redundant buildings.
- Management and disposal of Glebe land.

- Administration of Investment of Funds Held by the General Trustees.
- Support congregations in their duty to comply with statutory requirements.

The Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team will develop Strategic Departmental Objectives to support those listed above.

1.8 The Trustees wish to take this opportunity to express their thanks and appreciation to the staff team for their commitment over the last twelve months and the support they have offered to the Trustees, Presbyteries and congregations.

2. PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)

2.1 Reference to 2021 General Assembly decision

The General Assembly 2021 approved the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (ACT VIII 2021) (PMPA) which requires each Presbytery to have an Approved Mission Plan in place by 31 December 2022. The approved Plans will subsist for five years but will be subject to annual review. The Act requires Presbyteries to categorise church buildings into two categories, namely:-

- those which will be required for the duration of the Plan (within five years), and
- those which will be redundant and require to be disposed of during the duration of the Plan (within five years).

2.2 Presbyteries are also required to determine dates for disposal of buildings in category (b) and to list any Historic Properties (referred to later) within their bounds. Presbyteries, the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees have been charged by the Act to work collaboratively to approve the missional aspects and building categorisation respectively.

2.3 The Trustees are offering guidance to Presbyteries in the preparation of their draft Plans, and the Trustees' Projects and Development Department have been directly supporting Fabric Conveners in the process of assessing of their buildings.

3. LAND AND BUILDINGS

3.1 The Church's Estate

3.1.1 In 2020 the Trustees identified that their priority should be to strengthen the planning role of Presbyteries in relation to land and buildings. The Trustees report every year on how Presbyteries fulfil the Assembly's requirement for churches, halls and manses to be professionally inspected on a regular basis. The continued Covid-19 lockdown and other restrictions has meant that the schedule of inspection reports has been interrupted once again. An Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) is required to enable the Trustees to gather relevant information on each building in lieu of out-standing quinquennial reports, and give an accurate report on the current condition of each property – effectively a MOT for each building.

3.1.2 The Trustees continued with a cautious approach to approving applications and only considered applications as referred to in section 4.3.4.

3.1.3 The Trustees current holding of land and buildings is as follows:

Churches	1,276
Manses	770
Halls	1096
Miscellaneous Congregational Properties	330
Total	3,608
Glebes	12,500 acres

3.1.4 Property disposals in 2021

Property	Number	Valuation	Gain/(Loss)
Churches/ & Halls	28	£4,200,356	(£1,923,464)
Manses	26	£8,129,313	£938,003
Halls	1	£102,039	(£35,009)
Glebes	9	£841,000 *	£431,177)
Non-vested	8	-	£1,303,316
Totals	72	£13,292,708	(£2,071,795)

Note: property valuations are obtained (by the Church of Scotland Law Department) as part of the disposal process and are estimated market values provided by independent surveying practices.

**For Glebes, all land is given a value based on an average of £3,038 per acre (for 2021) for accounting purposes.*

3.2 Toolkit

3.2.1 The first edition of the General Trustees' Presbytery Planning Toolkit – Land and Buildings was published (initially) in December 2020, and circulated to all Presbytery Clerks following the Presbytery Clerks' Conference on 23 February 2021. The document covers a vast amount of information on land and buildings, and gives guidance on four key areas to assist with Presbytery Planning:-

- (a) Minimum Standards for Churches and Halls
- (b) Location Assessments – Churches, Halls and Manses
- (c) Surplus Buildings
- (d) Developing a Plan and the General Trustees' support.

3.3 Asset Management System

3.3.1 The Trustees resolved that a new Asset Management System be introduced, which was procured and the cloud-based software (Software as a Service – SAAS) installed in November 2021. In order to create the asset data, the Trustees require detailed information on each property.

3.3.2 As part of this exercise, a list of churches which have benefited from grants from the Heritage Lottery fund and/or Historic Environment Scotland, which are subject to 'claw-back' should the church no longer be used as a place of worship, has been compiled.

3.4 Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA)

3.4.1 The Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) form was developed to assist with the collection of data on each property. The Trustees deemed the AMBA form was also an efficient and effective way to support Presbyteries in the planning process and was amended to assist with this important function of assessing Church and Hall buildings. Congregations can be assured that all church and hall buildings in the portfolio are being audited on a consistent basis, where difficult decisions need to be made, they are done so with the benefit of factual information. The Trustees need the building information to assist in assessing draft Presbytery Plans. Congregations can be assured that this process is consistent in all parishes and Presbyteries, and the process is undertaken objectively in each and every location.

3.4.2 The AMBA form took some considerable time to develop and was issued to Presbytery Clerks in September 2021. The Form is based solely on the principles of the Trustees' Land and Buildings Toolkit (approved GA2020). The Form is designed in such a way that it generates objective information on each property (Churches and Halls) and should be used by Presbyteries to inform their decisions on buildings, as part of their Draft Mission Plans, and support the Trustees in building an asset database for each property.

3.4.3 The Trustees are encouraged by the positive support from Fabric Conveners in relation to the AMBA Forms and the confidence in the level of objectivity the information provides. This has been developed as an 'evidence-based decision making' approach.

3.5 Presbytery Buildings Officers (PBOs)

3.5.1 As reported last year, a pilot of employing a PBO in the North East Presbytery Cluster (Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon and Kincardine & Deeside) was implemented and a Buildings Officer appointed in June 2021. The appointment has proved to be of enormous benefit to the Presbyteries and congregations involved, as well as the Trustees.

3.5.2 The Trustees are liaising with the reformed Presbyteries to encourage similar appointments. The Trustees have committed to provide 50% of the costs of a PBO. The PBOs will be centrally employed, for a fixed 3-year term. Presbyteries will be involved in the day to day working of the PBOs but line management will be the responsibility of the Trustees' Executive Team.

3.5.3 Two new PBOs have been appointed in 2022 – in the Presbytery of Clyde on 1 February 2022 and in the Presbytery of Fife on 14 March 2022.

3.6 Historic Properties - Historic Properties following Dissolution

3.6.1 General Assembly legislation provides that when a congregation is dissolved, the buildings of that dissolved congregation become the responsibility of the Trustees. Once disposed of, the net free sale proceeds are thereafter credited to the benefit of the Central Fabric Fund. In the case of Historic Properties (as defined in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021)), dissolution can create a special set of challenging circumstances for the Trustees.

3.6.2 Historic buildings usually have an important place in a local, regional and indeed national context, and much work is required in liaising with local community groups, local authorities and national heritage bodies in order to find new owners for such buildings. Accordingly, the Trustees established The Historic Properties Portfolio Working Group in Spring 2020. The Group convenes and operates under a Remit agreed by the Trustees.

3.6.3 There are several significant challenges in regard to such buildings which the General Trustees are required to address:-

- The charitable purpose of the General Trustees is to maintain the Church of Scotland at a parish level by applying the assets, which they hold, to assist with the provision and maintenance of churches and manses and the payment of stipends to ministers. They are not a heritage body and must therefore seek to divest themselves of buildings which may be of considerable historical significance but are no longer functioning ecclesiastical buildings.
- The charitable purpose of the General Trustees is to support the care of buildings associated with the furtherance of religion. Surplus, redundant, vacant buildings do not fall within the charitable purpose of the Trustees.
- Provision of finance and staffing resources to assist, post-dissolution, with the ongoing administration (including utilities and insurance), management (including maintenance and repairs) and potential uses appropriate to the building.
- The Trustees have limited financial resources available (in the form of restricted funds) to assist continuing congregations with fabric matters. These funds cannot be used to administer, maintain, operate and insure buildings which are no longer used for Church of Scotland purposes.
- Balancing the need to acknowledge the sensitivities involved in administering buildings of this nature with the requirement to ultimately dispose of them.

3.6.4 Church buildings which fall into the Historic Property category will inevitably require significant sums for upkeep and maintenance until disposal. A designated Historic Property Fund was established to receive funds from sales of these types of buildings. The Trustees are going through due diligence on the first of these

properties in establishing the running costs. Projections indicate that the Fund will only be able to sustain the running costs of these types of buildings for a limited period. The Trustees have assessed this issue as being a major risk (for the Trustees, and the wider Church) which will require very careful management and consideration.

3.6.5 The Trustees acknowledge the significant role Historic Properties have played in the life of the Church in terms of worship and mission, and their importance in town and (less often) rural settings. The Trustees understand that a sensitive and appropriate approach to disposal is required. As such, several factors need to be borne in mind:

- As mentioned in 3.6.3, the purpose of the General Trustees is predicated on assisting continuing congregations, with their building requirements. The limited financial and staffing resources available to the Trustees are insufficient to deal with the long-term administration and management of Historic Properties.
- The Trustees will work with interested stakeholders both in the administration and potential disposal of such buildings (there is at present no appetite for local and national government or national heritage bodies to acquire such buildings).

3.6.6 The buildings within the Historic Properties Portfolio present a number of challenges for the Trustees, and inevitably for the National Church. The Trustees will continue to consider and review all issues relating to HPP risks.

3.7 COVID-19

3.7.1 The work of the General Trustees continued to be affected by the ongoing Covid restrictions but have continued to offer support and assistance to congregations and Presbyteries wherever possible.

3.7.2 The General Trustees have been an active participant in the Church of Scotland Covid Group since its inception. The Trustees would like to note their thanks to all staff and Trustees who have been heavily involved in the Covid Group over the past two years.

3.8 Energy Supply Scheme

3.8.1 The contracts for both gas and electricity were renewed on 1 April 2020 after a detailed procurement exercise carried out in late 2019. Gas continued to be supplied by Scottish Hydro (part of SSE) on a 48-month fixed term contract while the green electricity supply switched to OPUS on a 42-month fixed term contract.

3.8.2 912 congregations with 1,450 supply points currently participate in the electricity scheme while 610 congregations with 843 supply points are in the gas scheme. The Trustees' staff continue to assist congregations wishing to join the scheme and any that face administrative difficulties.

3.8.3 While the terms of the 2020 contract were slightly higher than previously, it should be a real comfort to congregations that these tariffs will continue to apply until 31 March 2024 (gas) and 30 September 2023 (electricity) given the current state of the energy market.

3.9 Heating Consultant

3.9.1 The Trustees provide advice on efficient heating design for congregations through the Trustees' Heating Consultant. Mr Andrew W MacOwan (Andrew MacOwan Associated Ltd) carries out independent surveys of existing heating systems at churches, halls and manses

and gives advice on new heating systems and advises congregations on how they may improve standards relating to the efficiency of heating systems, lowering carbon footprint and reducing costs. Despite the difficulties posed by lockdown during 2021, Mr MacOwan undertook a total of 38 surveys.

3.9.2 Mr MacOwan carried out three surveys to manses to assess the heating requirement and engaged with nine congregations relating to approvals for heating works. Trustees cover one-third of the cost of surveys in respect of Church of Scotland premises.

3.10 Net Zero and Carbon Reduction

3.10.1 The General Trustees continue to actively participate and support the Church of Scotland Net Zero Strategy Group. The Group has acquired an assessment tool which will enable congregations to generate information on their carbon footprint and the footprint of each of their properties.

3.10.2 Key goals determined by the Trustees:-

- Reduction of CO2 emissions from their operations and activities.
- Reduction of the Carbon Footprint from their operations and activities.
- Commitment to Climate Engagement.

3.10.3 The General Trustees are currently members of the Climate Heritage Network and will continue to work with other built heritage organisations to develop strategies to meet our Net Zero responsibilities.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS

4.1 Audit and Assurance Committee

4.1.1 The financial accounts of the General Trustees and other financial reports are prepared to the highest level of competence, accuracy and integrity by professional staff of the Stewardship and Finance Department. They are ably supported by the staff of the General Trustees and the work of the internal and external auditors who report to the appropriate Committee regularly.

4.1.2 The governance of all the work of the Trustees is upheld by meeting the highest level of responsibility and integrity. During the year there was a dedicated meeting revisiting Trustees' duty to ensure that these standards are maintained and appreciated. Identification and assessment of risks faced by the General Trustees is monitored regularly with sufficient control mechanisms in place.

4.1.3 In January 2022, the Trustees implemented a new Risk Management Policy. This Policy now includes Departmental Risk Registers, Committee Risk Registers, Corporate Risk Register as well as a Board Risk Register. Conveners of each Committee and Heads of Departments will now be deemed as 'owners' of the relevant risk registers and the risks associated with their area of responsibility. The Board will assess risks deemed as significant on a quarterly basis.

4.2 Finance and Resource Committee

4.2.1 The General Trustees' principal activities are the support of parish ministry and support of congregations in the provision of '*well equipped spaces in the right places*'. In doing so, the Trustees administer a significant level of funds which are applied towards the achievement of their trust purpose and charitable objectives.

4.2.2 Although administration charges are levied on all the funds, these only partially cover the actual costs

incurred by the Trustees in operating them and so the balance of such costs is met by the General Fund.

4.2.3 The Finance and Resources Committee administer a significant level of funds which are applied towards the achievement of their trust purpose and charitable objectives.

4.2.4 Although administration charges are levied on all the funds, these only partially cover the actual costs incurred by the Trustees in operating them and so the balance of such costs is met by the General Fund. Details of the various funds are referred to in section 5 below.

4.3 Fabric Committee

4.3.1 The Trustees continued to provide guidance and financial assistance to congregations in terms of repairs to and works on buildings. The Covid-19 pandemic inevitably had a significant effect not only on the number of applications which were presented to the Fabric Committee, via Presbyteries, but also on the nature of the applications, many of which were focused on the installation of AV and streaming equipment. The Policy & Legislation Department arranged for much of this type of work to be approved under powers, with recommendations from the Sanctuary Development Officer.

4.3.2 Specialist advice continued to be made available in the areas of:

- Assembly Legislation.
- Procedures and Processes.
- Lighting.
- AV equipment.
- Heating
- Communion-ware, memorials and movables
- Planning and Ecclesiastical exemption
- Release of funds held for the benefit of congregations in the Consolidated Fabric Fund for utilisation against costs for a variety of fabric and related items

4.3.3 Despite the smaller number of applications for approvals for works to buildings and financial assistance, the Fabric Committee made available grants of £714,526 to a total of 35 congregations, and loans of £823,730 to a total of 11 congregations for the year ending 31 December 2021. The Fabric Committee continued to meet regularly, by video conferencing, and although visits by Trustees and staff were significantly curtailed, much guidance was given either by telephone, video conferencing or email.

4.3.4 Another factor affecting the number of new applications during 2021, and which will continue to have a similar effect in 2022, is the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. The General Trustees, Faith Nurture Forum and the Office of the General Assembly agreed that, during the period in which Presbytery Plans are being considered and drafted, only works of a replacement, urgent or wind/watertight nature should be approved by Presbyteries although items such as the replacement or installation of AV equipment and the like would continue to be positively considered. Once Presbytery Plans are approved and in place, the Trustees very much look forward to considering once again applications for project and refurbishment works.

4.3.5 During 2021, the Trustees became increasingly concerned that several manses were not being properly cared for so that some ministers and their families were living in unsatisfactory conditions, while manses which were let were not always being adequately managed. This led to the establishment of a Manse Working Group.

4.3.6 The Manse Working Group considered issues including the lack of attention to wants of repair raised in the annual completion of the Manse Condition Schedule and five -yearly professional reports.

4.3.7 There are continuing examples of poorly maintained manses and church buildings arising on a regular basis. This highlights the need for a more professional approach overall to building management, including occupancy, letting and maintenance and ongoing operation.

4.3.8 It is likely that the Trustees will, in due course, seek the assistance of Presbyteries in identifying manses which do not meet tolerable standards and considering how best to effect more robust enforcement of Assembly legislation regarding maintenance standards. In the meantime, the Trustees wish to remind congregations that they have a duty, through their Financial Boards, to provide a habitable manse and to keep it in a good state of repair and decoration. The oversight of manse inspection (both annual via the completion of the Manse Condition Schedule and five-yearly professional inspections) and follow-up maintenance is a matter for Presbyteries but the Trustees will wish to engage with Presbyteries on the question of more rigorous application of the regulations.

4.4 Safe Buildings Committee

4.4.1 The Safe Buildings Committee (SBC) is concerned at the likelihood of a serious and perhaps fatal accident occurring within a congregational building within the foreseeable future resulting from non-compliance with Health and Safety Regulations, and General Assembly Legislation. This has provided the main driver for publishing up to date health and safety standards, allied to online training for congregations, a helpline for what has been a huge increase in health and safety queries, fire inspections, an ongoing review of the existing web-based Health and Safety Toolkit, and encouragement to congregational Health & Safety Administrators to act where required to keep all congregational properties, including manses, as safe as possible. The application of health and safety standards across all congregational properties is challenging, but Financial Boards should note that they are responsible for the proper maintenance of congregational buildings and for discharging all duties imposed by H&S legislation and statutory regulations in relation to these properties.

4.5 Presbytery Strategy and Innovation Committee

4.5.1 The Presbytery Strategy and Innovation (PSI) Committee has continued to liaise with Presbyteries and congregations in dealing with priority issues and initiatives.

4.5.2 The principal activity following the General Assembly in 2021 has been development of the Land and Buildings Toolkit to create an Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) which will enable an evidence-based audit of each building for the benefit of congregations, Presbyteries and individual congregations. The AMBAs will be an essential mechanism for use by Presbyteries and the Trustees when considering the provision of buildings within the new Presbytery Plans.

4.5.3 The PSI Committee has also been instrumental in promoting the employment of PBOs, referred to elsewhere in this Report. The success of the pilot project in the North East cluster is also referred to elsewhere within this Report.

4.5.4 Support has been provided to the Presbytery of Perth for a Presbytery Mission Initiative at Bertha Park, a new settlement on the outskirts of Perth. A small retail unit within Bertha Park has been acquired by the Trustees and leased to the Presbytery and the sponsoring congregation, Perth: Riverside. The property will provide a physical facility for the mission team as they plant a new presence which will hopefully lead to a requirement for a larger building in due course.

4.5.5 The PSI Committee is collaborating with the Scottish Futures Trust on their Rural Hubs Initiative. This involves assessing both active and redundant rural church buildings to determine what other community based uses the buildings can accommodate. A number of locations in the Highlands and North West are under consideration.

4.5.6 Opportunities for the development of new, or redevelopment of existing, facilities are being actively considered with congregations in locations such as Aberdeen and Inverness.

4.6 Glebes Committee

4.6.1 The Trustees report that income from agricultural, grazing and amenity lets had increased by 4.3% from the previous year by the end of 2021.

4.6.2 Throughout 2021, a total of 99 new leases were approved by the Trustees with a total of 110 reviews of existing leases carried out. The total income generated from glebe rents was £438,000 which continues to assist the financial commitment of congregations to support their Ministry and Mission contribution.

4.6.3 The Trustees continue to work with local congregations to actively manage all glebe land, and to plan for potential development opportunities. The capital from the sale of glebe land is credited to the Consolidated Stipend Fund and, as with glebe rents, the income accrued annually is applied towards Ministry and Mission costs in that particular parish.

4.6.4 The Trustees would encourage all congregations who have glebes to actively engage with the Trustees and consider active management of glebe land to generate income for their congregation. The Trustees would also encourage local congregations to work with their Land and Estates Department to plan for potential development opportunities that may arise, to ensure that glebe land can continue to generate income to support their contribution to Ministry and Mission.

4.7 PMPA Committee

4.7.1 A dedicated Committee has been created to meet the Trustees' responsibilities under the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. The Committee comprises both Trustees and Advisory Members. Committee members are not involved with Plans for their own Presbytery.

4.7.2 Guidance from the Trustees' staff is being provided to Presbyteries regarding completing the Asset Management Building Audits (AMBAs). Presbyteries have the responsibility of categorising each building within the draft Plans and the AMBAs will be an invaluable resource in this regard. They will also provide evidence to the Trustees when assessing a Presbytery buildings' proposals.

4.7.3 Committee members are liaising with facilitators from Faith Nurture Forum to ensure Presbyteries receive, whenever possible, a unified response to both the missional and buildings aspects of plans as they are being framed.

5. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

5.1 Funds Supporting Parish Ministry

5.1.1 Glebe Funds

5.1.1.1 The Trustees hold glebe land on behalf of individual congregations. Rental income net of a nominal amount of administration and collection costs is transferred to the Faith Nurture Forum to be applied as a contribution to each congregation's ministry costs.

5.1.1.2 Funds arising from the sale of glebe land totalling £934,000 were transferred to the Consolidated Stipend Fund in 2021 with the capital being held for the benefit of that congregation.

5.1.2 Consolidated Stipend Fund

5.1.2.1 The Trustees administer the Fund on behalf of 1,164 (was 1,189) congregations with holdings in it. The total value of the fund was £111,972,000 at the end of 2021 and it is almost wholly invested in the Growth Fund of the Church of Scotland Investors Trust (COSIT).

5.1.2.2 This is in accordance with the Fund's investment policy that was revised at the 2021 General Assembly so that (a) it aims to distribute £3.2m each year from 2021 to 2025 inclusive comprising dividend income and sale proceeds and (b) its objective is otherwise to maximise the long-term capital value of the Fund to benefit future levels of income and capital.

5.1.2.3 Distributions in 2021 totalled £3,200,000. After deducting administration costs of £22,000 they were passed to the Faith Nurture Forum to help the individual congregations meet their parish ministry costs.

5.1.2.4 On the recommendation of the Presbytery and with the concurrence of the Faith Nurture Forum, General Assembly Regulations provide for the possibility of surplus capital in a congregation's holding in the Consolidated Stipend Fund being transferred to its holding in the Consolidated Fabric Fund.

5.2 Funds Assisting Congregations in the Provision of Suitable Buildings

5.2.1 Central Fabric Fund

5.2.1.1 This Fund is the main resource which enables the Trustees to provide financial assistance in the form of grants and loans to congregations for repairing and improving the buildings which they use as local resources for Christian mission. Loans totalling £824,000 and grants totalling £680,000 were awarded in 2021. Both these figures are lower than usual due to the pausing of major projects during Presbytery planning and the effects of Covid-19.

5.2.1.2 The administrative costs of the Fund are met entirely by the General Fund admin charge of 6.5% applied against total income, 2021 figure £76,000 (see section 5.3.1) which also makes transfers from time to time. In 2021 there was no transfer of funds from the General Fund.

5.2.2 Consolidated Fabric Fund

5.2.2.1 In this Fund, the Trustees hold both properties and investments on behalf of congregations.

5.2.2.2 The heritable properties are those occupied by congregations which are vested in the Trustees as owners in trust. These properties principally comprise churches, halls and manses. At the end of 2021, their total value in the Trustees' accounts was £520,115,000. The Trustees wish to emphasise that this amount is *illiquid* which means it neither represents cash available to be spent nor

is it an indication of the open market value if the premises were to be sold. However, valuations are undertaken prior to each and every disposal. Local congregations are responsible for the repair, maintenance and insurance of the buildings they occupy and for the health and safety of all those who use them.

5.2.2.3 The Fund also comprises investments derived from the past sale of properties that are held on behalf of individual congregations. The total value of these investments including accrued revenue was £75,815,00 at the end of 2021. Subject to various safeguards and approvals, both capital and accrued revenue may be withdrawn to meet a wide range of buildings-related expenditure incurred by the congregations on churches, halls and manses to enable them to maintain, repair and improve these buildings. On the recommendation of the Presbytery and with the concurrence of the Faith Nurture Forum, General Assembly Regulations provide for the possibility of surplus capital in a congregation's holding in the Consolidated Fabric Fund being transferred to its holding in the Consolidated Stipend Fund.

5.2.2.4 The Trustees are entitled to deduct an administration charge from distributions of income from the investments, and rental income, though they omitted to do so for some investments prior to the end of 2021. No charges are levied in respect of the properties even though much of the work of the staff of the Trustees relates to them.

5.3 Funds Supporting the Work of the General Trustees

5.3.1 General Fund

5.3.1.1 The General Fund, which is unrestricted, is used to meet expenses incurred by the Trustees in the administration of their business, the main item being staff salaries and associated costs. The net incoming resources of this Fund (primarily the payments received under Gift Aid from Church of Scotland Insurance Services Ltd) are applied towards reserves or may be transferred to other Funds such as the Central Fabric Fund to assist in the making of grants and loans to Congregations.

5.3.2 Historic Property Fund

5.3.2.1 The Fund comprises the Historic Buildings and moveable assets of congregations that are dissolved. The Fund monies will be applied towards the costs of keeping such buildings in good order until disposal.

5.3.3 Church of Scotland Insurance Services Limited

5.3.3.1 The Church of Scotland Insurance Services Limited ("the Company") is a limited company incorporated and domiciled in Scotland with registered company number SC001777. The registered office is 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN.

5.3.3.2 The Company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the General Trustees, it provides an income to them and its assets, liabilities and results for the year are consolidated with those of the General Trustees.

5.3.3.3 CoSIS provide competitively priced insurance with comprehensive cover for congregations in respect of the operation of their church, hall, and manse. A portfolio wide revaluation of Building Sums insured will be required in the near future which, due to escalation in construction costs over the last few years, and will inevitably have an adverse effect on premiums.

5.4 Services from the Office of Assembly Trustees

5.4.1 As reported last year, General Trustees staff along with other support services, including legal, financial, IT, HR and Comms, are provided by the Assembly Trustees through the employing agency of the Central Services Committee (CSC). The cost of the staff working directly for the General Trustees, as well as the services provided by the CSC, is re-charged to the General Trustees who meet all these costs from their own funds and not from the M&M budget. The intention is for Service Level Agreements (SLA) to be agreed between the various Departments and the Trustees as soon as practicable. The first SLA with Stewardship and Finance has proved beneficial to both parties. An SLA with HR is under discussion. As decided by the 2019 Assembly, the Chair of the General Trustees also serves as an Assembly Trustee to provide a link between the two sets of trustees.

5.4.2 Staffing and Services Overheads:

General Trustees' Staff Costs	£ 656,954
Support Services Costs (paid to CSC)	£ 593,376
Total staffing and services overheads	£1,250,330

6. WHAT NEXT?

6.1 Legislative Review

6.1.1 In the General Trustees' report to the 2021 General Assembly, reference was made to proposals to undertake a review of Assembly legislation (both Acts and Regulations) pertaining to and governing the work of the Trustees. It is not intended that major amendments are proposed but the Trustees feel that a review is required to make it easier to access and reference the legislation and to update the legislation where appropriate.

6.1.2 The Trustees have established a Legislative Review Working Group and will consult with other committees and departments (in particular the Office of the General Assembly) and Presbyteries when proposing amendments to current Assembly legislation as it pertains to the Trustees. Two online presentations were made to the Presbytery Clerks in mid-November 2021.

6.1.3 It is proposed that all current Assembly legislation pertaining to the General Trustees be brought together, with any proposed amendments, in a single consolidating Act and it is the intention that the draft of this Act will be submitted to the General Assembly of 2023.

6.2 Trustees

6.2.1 Due to the resignation of the Chair in March 2022 the Trustees were unable to recommend either the Chair or Vice Chair at the time of submitting this report. A process of nomination and election will take place in April and the details will be brought before the General Assembly in a Supplementary Report.

6.2.2 The Trustees recommend that Mr Ian T Townsend Chair and Rev Fiona M Mathieson Vice-Chair each receive £1,900 for their services as Chair and Vice-Chair over the past year, as authorised under S.38 of the 1925 Act.

6.2.3 Six Trustees are retiring under the former 75-year age rule at this Assembly (see Appendix 1):

- Mr Michael J P Cunliffe
- Rev James S H Cutler
- Mr J G Grahame Lees
- Mr David Menzies
- Mr Donald W Thomas
- Mr Kenneth M Wright

6.2.4 One resignation in the last 12 months (see Appendix 2):

- Ian T Townsend

6.2.5 No new Trustees have been appointed in the last 12 months.

6.2.6 One Advisory Member has resigned (See Appendix 3):

- Deborah Nicol

6.2.7 Three Advisory Members have been appointed by the Board (see Appendix 4):

- Michael Craig
- Alan Gibson
- Bahar Raeisi-Dehkordi

6.3 Staffing

6.3.1 The staffing structure of the General Trustees has changed due to operational requirements. The former Assistant Secretaries have taken on more of a leadership role and are now classified as Heads of Departments. The Heads of Department support the Chief Executive and have the operational responsibility to lead their respective departments.

6.3.2 The Trustees continue to review their Governance and Strategy arrangements, and continue to empower the Executive Leadership Team to manage the operational aspects and to offer effective and efficient support to Presbyteries and Congregations. The Chief Executive has been tasked by the Trustees to review current policies and produce new policy and procedures that support the business of the General Trustees.

6.3.3 Current staffing number is 24 (20.27 full-time equivalent).

6.3.4 Future Staffing and Resourcing is continually under review by the Trustees. The introduction of Presbytery Building Officers will see the staffing complement continue to grow as Presbyteries move to adopt the support of Building Officers.

7. GENERAL MATTERS

7.1 The Next Twelve Months

7.1.1 The Presbytery Mission Plan Act continues to be a key priority for the Trustees, and is demanding greater resources as the draft Plans are submitted.

7.1.2 Completed AMBA forms are essential to enable Presbyteries and the Trustees to properly assess the building aspects (church and hall buildings) of the plans effectively and objectively. This is designed to be evidence-based decision making for Presbytery and the Trustees.

7.1.3 The Trustees are likely to see a significant increase in requests for support, both financial and technical, as we move into Q3 2022. Congregations are reopening and maintenance work will be required. Many aspects of building development and refurbishment is currently subject to a moratorium other than works to make the property wind and water-tight. The conclusion of Presbytery Planning will see another increase in support required. Any property disposals resulting from Presbytery planning will need to be programmed and managed by congregations and Presbyteries, working closely with the General Trustees and the Law Department, and will take some considerable resource to achieve. Presbyteries who choose to appoint a Building Officer will now have the additional technical support to efficiently maintain and safely operate their properties.

7.1.4 The Trustees continue to work with, and assist, Presbyteries to support the work of the congregations.

7.2 Register of Persons Holding a Controlled Interest in Land

7.2.1 This new Register became effective as of 1 April 2022 and implements the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (Register of Persons Holding a Controlled Interest in Land) Regulations 2021. It brings with it a substantial compliance burden. It has the policy aim of showing who has significant influence or control over dealings with land/buildings by the owner (or tenant, in a lease of more than 20 years) where this information is not publicly available elsewhere. This is done by requiring a property owner, and those who are “associates” of the owner (and thus deemed to have significant influence of control), to notify the Keeper of the Register of certain personal details: name, contact address, date of birth and date on which the “association” was formed. There is provision for non-disclosure in the case of anyone who may be placed in danger if their details were made public, and dates of birth will not appear in the public Register.

7.2.2 In terms of the legislation, office-holders within a congregation are deemed to be “associates” of the General Trustees, where title is vested in the General Trustees. This is because the Regulations say that in the case of unincorporated bodies such as congregations, a person is responsible for the general control and management of the administration of the body if they hold an office or other official position in it. This means that the details of such office-holders (usually the Minister, Session Clerk and Treasurer) in each congregation will require to be provided to the General Trustees, who will then be responsible for making the necessary entries in the Register. It will also be necessary to amend the Register each time any of this information changes.

7.2.3 Statutory duties are placed on the property owner to supply this information to the Register, and also on the “associates” to provide the requested information to the owner and give notice of any changes to the information previously supplied. There is a 12-month period of grace, until 1 April 2023, after which criminal penalties attach to non-disclosure, and to the provision of false or misleading information.

7.2.4 The same duties also apply where congregational properties are vested in local trustees. So, where there is an “Assembly control” clause in the title, local trustees will have to notify details of the General Trustees as an “associate”, and in all cases will have to register details of congregational office-bearers if they are different to the property-holding trustees, and update the Register each time there is a change of trustee.

7.2.5 The consultation document which preceded the Regulations explained their purpose as being to ensure that land in Scotland is sustainably owned, used and developed and that people, including community groups, are empowered by having the opportunity to understand who is in control of land owners. Given that there is no perceived or actual difficulty in this regard so far as land and buildings owned by the Church of Scotland is concerned, the General Trustees and the Solicitor of the Church went to some lengths to highlight to the civil servants engaged in drafting the Regulations the extent of the “disconnect” between any enhanced transparency so far as Church properties were concerned and the huge logistical and financial burden which compliance with

the proposed regime would place on the Church. This did not result in any significant lessening of the compliance burden when the Regulations were finalised.

7.2.6 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out by the Scottish Government, as required, in order to assess the impact of the Regulations on protected characteristics. This noted that the requirements of the new Register would have a significant impact on some religious organisations due to the nature of their organisational structures and the scale of their land holdings, and that actions had been taken to mitigate the impact whilst not compromising the transparency aim of the Register. Three mitigations were listed: none in fact operate so as to reduce the compliance burden to a manageable level.

7.2.7 The Solicitor of the Church, working with the General Trustees and other colleagues, is at the time of writing once again engaging with the Scottish Government to seek to have the Regulations amended so as to take Church of Scotland properties out of their scope, the gulf between the cost of compliance and any possible public benefit being so wide as to be unbridgeable. An update on these discussions will be provided to the Assembly.

7.3 Determinations under Regulations V 1995

The Regulations provide a mechanism to re-allocate the capital held by the Trustees for the benefit of congregations in the Consolidated Stipend and Fabric Funds. The following reallocation was made during 2021: Dalmeny Kirk - £20k from the Consolidated Stipend Fund to the Consolidated Fabric Fund.

7.4 Determinations made under Act VII 1995

The Trustees report that under the powers delegated to them by the General Assembly by Act VII 1995 they have made eighty nine Determinations as set out in Appendix 5.

In the name of the General Trustees

ALAN F K KENNEDY, *Pro-tem Chair*
BARRI S MILLAR, *Chief Executive & Clerk*

Appendix 1

Michael J P Cunliffe (2014-2022)

Michael's main career was that of a Town Planner specialising in urban regeneration and the management of the Crown Estate in Scotland. He then went on to be an Inquiry Reporter on behalf of the Scottish Government and dealt with a number of high-profile Planning Appeals. Michael was a member of the Fabric, latterly as Convener, and PSI Committees. Michael took up the post of Property Convener of Edinburgh and West Lothian Presbytery on 1 January 2022.

Rev James S H Cutler (1995-2022)

James was a member of the Institute of Structural Engineers and worked for Colville Constructional & Engineering Co Ltd, and for both Lanark and Strathclyde Councils. James was a General Trustee for twenty-seven years. A late entrant to the ministry, his work experience coupled with his understanding of the church gained over thirty-six years as an ordained minister, meant that Jim has a skill set which brought distinctive insights to the work of the Fabric Committee, and the General Trustees.

J G Grahame Lees (2017-2022)

Grahame is a qualified solicitor and, prior to retiring, was a partner in a Dunblane based legal practice. Before being appointed as a Trustee, Grahame served on a variety of Church committees including Legal Questions Committee and the Personnel Committee. Grahame has also served as Chair of the Housing and Loan Fund. During his time as a Trustee, Grahame served on the Glebes Committee.

David Menzies (2014-2022)

David's professional background is that of a Chartered Structural Engineer and has spent his career either in professional practice or with consulting firms in the construction industry. David's knowledge and experience has enabled him to advise congregations within Lothian Presbytery where he has served as Convener of the Property Committee. As a Trustee, David served on the Fabric Committee and the PSI Committee of which latterly he was Convener.

Donald W Thomas (2012 - 2022)

Donald worked for over 40 years in local government and was a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. His career covered spells with Glasgow Corporation, Renfrew County Council Strathclyde Regional Council and South Lanarkshire Council. Donald is a keen cyclist and has participated in a number of cycling challenges for various charities. Donald has served on the Finance and Resources Committee and also represented the Trustees on Glasgow St Rollox Project Board.

Kenneth M Wright (2016-2022)

Ken is a member of the Chartered Institute of Building and has a Master's Degree in Construction Management. Much of Ken's career was spent in both the Middle and Far East. On returning to Scotland, Ken was involved in the project management of several large, commercial developments in and around the capital. Ken served on the Fabric Committee.

Appendix 2

Ian T Townsend (2014 – 2022)

Mr Ian Townsend was elected and nominated by the General Trustees as their Chair in 2021 and was appointed by the General Assembly of that year.

Educated at Morgan Academy, Dundee, and Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology, Aberdeen, Ian is also a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. He has a wide experience in commercial property development throughout the UK and is also an experienced Board Director in both business and voluntary sectors. Ian has served as an Elder for 44 years and as a Property Convener, Session Clerk and Presbytery Elder.

Ian was appointed to the General Trustees in 2014. His wide ranging and depth of experience was a real gift to the work of the Trustees. Ian was unstinting in the work which he undertook on our behalf. It was his work with Presbyteries which launched our Presbytery Buildings Officer initiative. He grappled with the challenge of our Historic Building Portfolio. He established the protocol and methodology for our Presbytery Mission Planning Group. He guided the Trustees as we sought to restructure our work to meet the tasks ahead of us as we support the church as it endeavours to provide 'Well Equipped Spaces in the Right Places' and also meet the needs the communities which we serve in the twenty first century.

It was, therefore, with profound regret that the Trustees had to accept Ian's resignation at the beginning of March this year. We thank him for all that he has brought to our work and to the service of the Church of Scotland and we wish Ian, his wife Vivien and their family well for the future years.

Appendix 3

Deborah J Nicol (2021 -2022)

Appendix 4

Michael Craig (February 2022)

Alan Gibson (October 2021)

Bahar Raeisi-Dehkordi (May 2021)

Appendix 5

DETERMINATIONS MADE UNDER ACT VII 1995

General Sales:

In the following cases, the General Trustees made determinations authorising the sale or let of the property concerned and directed that the proceeds should be credited for the benefit of the congregations in the Consolidated Fabric Fund:

Aberdalgie & Forteviot and Aberuthven & Dunning – sale of manse; Aberdeen: North – sale of former Summerhill buildings; Aberdeen: Woodside – sale of manse; Abernethy – sale of ground; Acharacle – sale of manse; Alvie and Insh – sale of Alvie Church; Arbutnott, Bervie & Kinneff – sale of Herd Centre; Assynt & Stoer – sale of Elphin Kirk; Athelstaneford – sale of manse; Auchinleck – sale of halls; Barrhead St Andrew's – sale of building; Bearsden New Kilpatrick – sale of Old Halls; Benbecula – sale of manse; Bucksburn Stoneywood – sale of manse; Carnock and Oakley – sale of Carnock Church; Carnoustie – sale of Philip Hall; Coatbridge: Middle – sale of manse; Coldstream and District Parishes – sale of Ladykirk Church; Connel – sale of hall at St Oran's Church; Cowal

Kirk – sale of church and manse at Innellan; Crosshouse – sale of manse; Dirlerton – sale of flat; Dores and Boleskine – sale of Dores Church; Dun & Hillside – sale of Dun Church and Dun Church Hall; Falkirk: Camelon – sale of St John's Church; Fearn Abbey and Nigg – sale of manse; Fintray, Kinellar and Keithhall – sale of church at Keithhall; Glasgow: Carmunnock – sale of manse; Glasgow: Cranhill – sale of Cranhill church; Glasgow: Gallowgate – sale of church; Glasgow: Greenbank -sale of Church Hall and Church Officer's House; Glasgow: Kelvinside Hillhead – sale of manse; Glasgow: Knightswood – sale of manse; Glasgow: Possilpark – sale of manse; Glencoe St Munda's – sale of St Munda's building; Gretna Old, Gretna St Andrew's, Half Morton and Kirkpatrick Fleming – sale of Kirkpatrick Fleming Church; Gullane – sale of manse; Harthill: St Andrew's – sale of Eastfield Church; Inchture and Kinnaid – sale of church at Kinnaid; Kilmarnock Riccarton – sale of manse; Kilmuir and Logie Easter – sale of Logie Easter Church; Kincardine, Croick & Edderton – sale of church at Edderton; Kirkcaldy: Templehall and Torbain United – sale of manse; Kirkcaldy: Torbain – sale of manse; Langholm, Eskdalemuir, Ewes & Westerkirk – sale of former Eskdalemuir Church; Lochs-in-Bernera – sale of land; Maryculter Trinity – sale of Church Officer's House; Melness and Tongue – sale of Melness Church; Monifieth – sale of St Rule's Church; Monikie, Newbigging, Murroes and Tealing Auchterhouse – sale of manse; Muckhart – sale of Glebe House; Muiravonside with Blackbraes and Shieldhill – sale of manse; Netherlee & Stamperland – sale of manse; Newbattle – sale of Newbattle Church and church hall building at Newtongrange; North West Lochaber – sale of Lochailort Mission Hall; Paisley: North – sale of church and hall buildings; Paisley: South – sale of St Luke's Church and Halls; Peterhead: New – sale of manse; Portsoy – sale of manse; Rattray – sale of church hall; Redgorton & Stanley – sale of manse and remaining church/manse grounds; Shetland Church – sale of Hillswick Church; Shetland Church – sale of Sandness Church; Skene – sale of Kirk Cottage; Stromness – sale of ground; The Bengairn Parishes – sale of manse; The Glens and Kirriemuir United – sale of St Andrew's building; Tarbat – sale of hall at Inver; Tarbert, Loch Fyne and Kilberry – sale of Kilberry Church; Tomintoul, Glenlivet and Inveravon – sale of manse; Traprain – sale of Whitekirk Church; Udney & Pitmedden – sale of Udney Green Church; Watten – sale of manse; West Lochfyneside: Cumlodden, Inverary and Lochgair – sale of church and hall buildings

Glebe Sales:

In the following parishes, the General Trustees made determinations authorising the sale of Glebe subjects and directed that the proceeds should be credited to the benefit of the congregations in the Consolidated Stipend Fund:

Assynt; Dallas; Dun; Kilmelford; Maryculter; Meldrum; New Cumnock; Portnahaven; Saline

Miscellaneous Sales:

The General Trustees made the following miscellaneous determinations:

Banton (Dissolved) – sale of church and hall buildings; Bargeddie (Dissolved) – sale of buildings and proceeds credited to the Central Fabric Fund; Glencorse (Dissolved) – sale of church and proceeds credited to the Central Fabric Fund; Lochwinnoch (Dissolved) – sale of church and proceeds credited to the Central Fabric Fund; Paisley: St Ninian's Ferguslie (Dissolved) – sale of manse and church; Westruther (Dissolved) – sale of church and proceeds credited to the Central Fabric Fund

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Note the Safeguarding Service Annual Statistical Report and thank all Safeguarding Co-ordinators for their continued commitment to safeguarding in the Church. (*Section 2*)
3. Note the work being undertaken by the Safeguarding Committee to manage those who pose a risk in Church communities and thank congregational Safeguarding Panels for their work in this area. (*Section 3*)
4. Instruct Ministers (for this purpose to include parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, Associate Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OLM, readers, locums, and Armed Forces chaplains), to undertake safeguarding training as prescribed by the Safeguarding Service. (*Section 4.1.3*)
5. Instruct Presbyteries to maintain a Presbytery Safeguarding Register and to ensure compliance with the recommended safeguarding training in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 1. (*Section 4.1.5*)
6. Note the change of title from Kirk Session Safeguarding Training to Trustee Safeguarding Training and instruct all active charity trustees to attend. (*Section 4.3*)
7. Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to ensure that all those doing regulated work (paid or voluntary) and charity trustees attend refresher Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role no less frequently than every five years. (*Section 4.4*)
8. Encourage congregations to mark 'Safeguarding Sunday' on Sunday 19th June 2022, or any other suitable Sunday in June. (*Section 5.1*)
9. Instruct Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to put in place a Whistleblowing Policy as soon as practicable. (*Section 6*)
10. Note the collaborative work with the Communications Department to bring an online Safeguarding Handbook to the Church of Scotland website. (*Section 7.1.2*)
11. Note the work of the Survivor Working Group. (*Section 8*)
12. Note the work to bring an online solution to SG7 and SG11. (*Section 9*)
13. Note the updated position in relation to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020. (*Section 10*)

Report**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 One of the Hebrew words for love is "chesed or ton," It's not a word that easily translates into English, but it speaks of a love that goes the extra mile, that bends over backwards and will do whatever it takes to embody mercy and compassion. Put simply, that's the very calling of the Safeguarding Service as it responds to the challenge of ensuring a safe church for all. At the heart of what we do as a Service is a rigorous commitment to go the extra mile and do whatever it takes to embody the love of God in protecting the vulnerable and establishing strong networks of supportive safeguarding across the Church of Scotland.

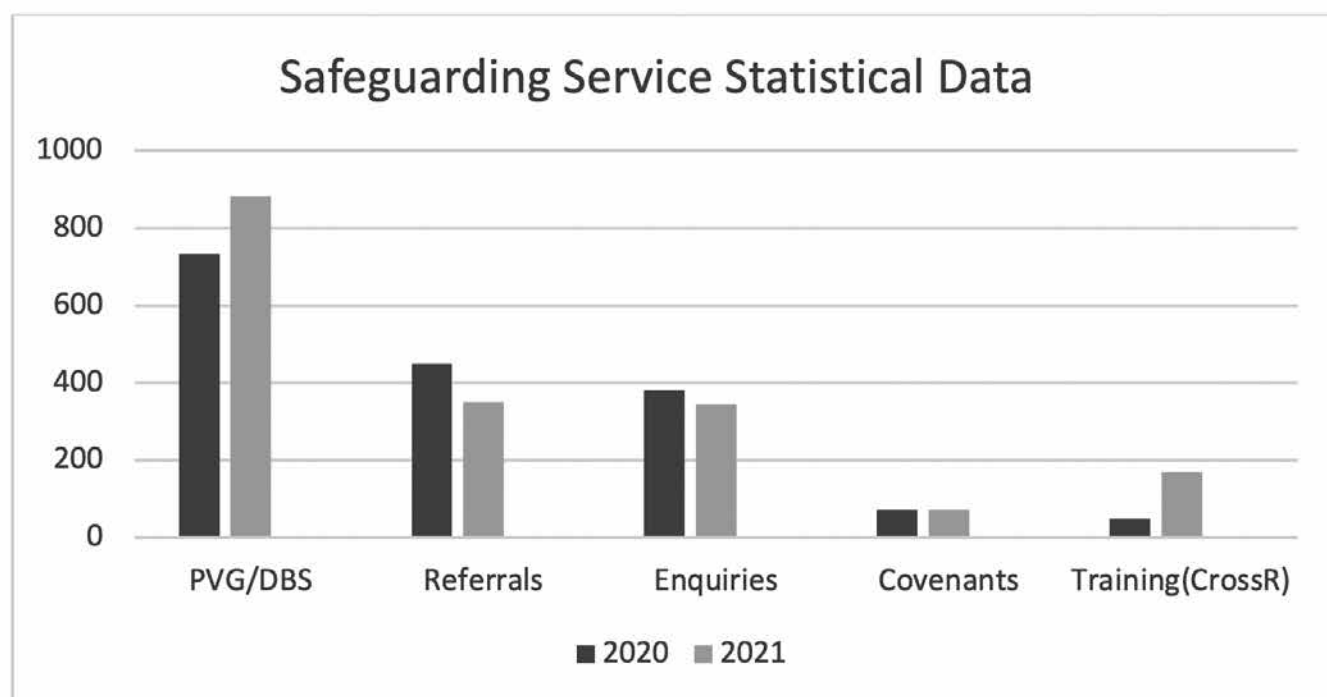
2. STATISTICAL INFORMATION

2.1 The Safeguarding Service continues to provide a professional advisory service across the whole of the Church, responding in a timely manner to safeguarding concerns and enquiries relating to criminal record checks and safe working practices in Church communities. We would like to thank Safeguarding Co-ordinators for their continued commitment to safeguarding in the Church. The Safeguarding Service also provides ongoing support to congregational Safeguarding Panels to help manage those who pose a risk in Church communities and works closely with Presbytery Safeguarding Trainers and CrossReach staff to ensure the appropriate delivery of safeguarding training as required.

2.2 The Safeguarding Service works closely with the Boys' and Girls' Brigade, providing advice, responding to referrals, sharing good practice and undertaking and jointly assessing criminal records checks on behalf of these organisations. The Service also continues to work with the United Reformed Church in Scotland, again responding to referrals, supporting covenants of responsibility and providing safeguarding training at a local level.

2.3 The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on activities since March 2020 which has seen a reduction in referrals and enquiries into the Service. It is anticipated that as we come out of the pandemic that these will increase again. Figure 1. shows that in 2021 there has been an increase in Protecting Vulnerable Groups applications (PVG) and Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS) from 2020 which may be indicative of a resumption or increase in congregational activities with vulnerable groups. There has been a 246% increase in the number of CrossReach managers who have received safeguarding training from the Service in 2021 compared to 2020.

Figure 1.



3. MANAGING THOSE WHO POSE A RISK

3.1 Despite the ongoing challenges that Covid-19 and the various restrictions have offered, the work on behalf of the Church in this area has continued. A new and updated Information Sharing protocol between the Church of Scotland and Police Scotland was agreed and signed off since the last General Assembly. This complies with Data Protection legislation and facilitates the necessary and proportionate sharing of information around risk that is needed to 'Ensure a Safe Church for All'.

3.2 The Managing Those Who Pose a Risk sub-committee of the Safeguarding Committee meet periodically to drive forward the safeguarding agenda in this area in support of the Church's safeguarding objectives. Despite the restrictions on worship placed on congregations in the past two years, the numbers of those subject to a Covenant of Responsibility remain constant and many have already returned to worship. Roughly one in ten subjects have not yet returned to worship but many still participate online.

3.3 Online worship for subjects of Covenants of Responsibilities has been embraced by some, mirroring the experience of others in the wider Church, and can be an alternative way for some people to join in safely with church fellowship.

3.4 The Safeguarding Service would like to re-iterate their appreciation of all the work and support that Congregational Safeguarding Panels offer in managing the individuals who are subject to a Covenant of Responsibilities. Due to confidentiality and the rights of privacy around managed individuals, this work is unseen and unheralded within congregations but it is undoubtedly the case that it tangibly increases the possibility of rehabilitation and Christian fellowship.

4. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

4.1 Ministers' Safeguarding Learning Pathway

4.1.1 The introduction of the Disclosure Act 2020 prompted the Safeguarding Service to review our safeguarding training strategy. This review concluded that introducing a tiered approach to learning, commensurate with a person's role in the Church, was best practice. This review also highlighted the current gap in training for ministers, which resulted in the 2021 General Assembly deliverance: *'Instruct the Safeguarding Service in collaboration with the Faith Nurture Forum to undertake work to scope out a mandatory safeguarding training programme for Ministers and report to the General Assembly of 2022'*.

4.1.2 Having worked in collaboration with the Faith Nurture Forum and HR department tiered approach to learning is being proposed. This is for everyone in the Church who works with, or has some responsibility for, vulnerable groups. As such, and as required by the 2021 deliverance, it outlines the training requirements for Ministers.^[1]

4.1.3 In order to set out a suggested Safeguarding Learning Pathway for Ministers, we looked at all the safeguarding training currently offered at a local and national level. This was compared with safeguarding training delivered by other Christian denominations and organisations. Our proposal for a Ministers' Safeguarding Learning Pathway is set out in **Appendix 1**. Completion of the full Pathway is considered necessary for those holding a leadership position, so that they have the breadth of understanding required to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

4.1.4 The Introductory and Advanced courses are now available; the Leadership course is in initial stages of development and both Safeguarding Presbytery Contacts and Presbytery Clerks will be informed when it becomes available. To ensure that all active Ministers, are brought up to date in terms of safeguarding training, we would ask

them to look back to the last safeguarding training they attended. If this training was more than 3 years ago, the Learning Pathway should be started from the beginning, with Introductory Safeguarding Training being attended as soon as practicable (but certainly by the end of 2022). A compliance process and timescales for completing training are detailed in Appendix 1.

4.1.5 Presbytery has oversight of the training attended by Ministers and should monitor any outstanding training. To this end, Ministers' training should be recorded on the SG7a Presbytery Register which will be distributed to Presbytery by the Safeguarding Service.

4.1.6 It may be that Ministries Development Staff (MDS) and Deacons are also required to complete part of or the full Ministers' Learning Pathway; however, this will be dependent upon the role in which they are employed. Job descriptions and role specifications will detail which parts of the Learning Pathway are required. Further guidance can be obtained from the Human Resources department and/or the Safeguarding Service.

4.2 Advanced Safeguarding Training

4.2.1 Due to the changes in the PVG application process, the courses previously offered as 'Safeguarding Coordinator Training' and 'Safeguarding Panel' training are being streamlined and amalgamated. This will become the 'Advanced Safeguarding Training' course. This course will go deeper into understanding various aspects of safeguarding management at a congregational level, and will be mandatory for all Coordinators and Panel Members, as well as being part of the Ministers' Learning Pathway.

4.2.2 The remaining administrative part of the Coordinators role will be made available on video. This will be shared at the end of Advanced Training courses, as required, and will also be accessible via the Safeguarding Service website.

4.3 Trustee Safeguarding Training

4.3.1 All members of a Kirk Session, and associated congregational board or Deacons' Court (where applicable), are charity trustees and, as such, have legal obligations in relation to safeguarding. The same is true of members of all Presbyteries which are registered charities. To reflect this position and ensure all trustees have received instruction in their legal roles and responsibilities, the Safeguarding Service is updating the training previously referred to as 'Kirk Session Safeguarding' and renaming it 'Trustee Safeguarding Training'.

4.3.2 All charity trustees are required to attend this course. This includes all those in membership of the Kirk Session or Congregational Board even if they are no longer actively participating in meetings, or in the life of the congregation, since 'inactive' trustees continue to be corporately responsible for congregational decisions and liabilities. Further information about this can be found on the Church of Scotland website at: **Charity Trustees, liabilities and OSCR-"Emeritus" Elders**.

4.4 Refresher Training

4.4.1 It is universally acknowledged that refresher training is essential for those who work with, or have safeguarding responsibilities for, vulnerable groups. This ensures everyone is kept up to date with developments in safeguarding legislation, requirements and best practice. Whilst refresher training has been recommended in the

past, there has been no requirement or timescale in church law. It is now felt that refresher training should be made a mandatory requirement, with completion of the relevant course required every 5 years, with the recommended best practice being every 3 years. Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries have a pivotal role to play in ensuring that trustees and all those doing regulated work (paid or voluntary) attend refresher safeguarding training, appropriate to their role, at least every five years.

4.5 Safeguarding Trainers and Safeguarding Presbytery Contacts

4.4.1 We are grateful to all volunteer Safeguarding Trainers and Safeguarding Presbytery Contacts for their continued commitment to the delivery of safeguarding training in their Presbyteries. We would like to acknowledge the way they have adapted to challenging circumstances throughout the pandemic and facilitated the delivery of training online. The course materials have now been adapted by the Safeguarding Service for face to face and/or online delivery and we hope that this hybrid model of training will become the norm. We also continue to work closely with CrossReach to ensure we offer safeguarding training that meets the needs of their diverse range of services.

5. SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

5.1 In October 2021, the Church of Scotland marked 'Safeguarding Sunday'. This was an opportunity to commit together as a Church to create safe spaces for all. The feedback from this event was very positive and as a result, the Safeguarding Committee in conjunction with Faith Action staff, has agreed to hold this as an annual event. This year Safeguarding Sunday will be marked on the 19th June or any other suitable Sunday in June. We would encourage you to mark this day with us.

6. WHISTLEBLOWING - REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

6.1 Whistleblowing is an essential part of safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm. Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern about wrongdoing involving a dangerous or illegal activity in their organisation. It is an important process for identifying risks to people. Individuals are allowed, by law (The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998), to make a 'protected disclosure'. This provides protection against victimisation or dismissal for workers. Currently the law does not apply to volunteers but it is good practice for charities to recognise that volunteers face many of the same challenges as paid staff when seeking to raise concerns.

6.1.1 The Church takes seriously any form of abuse, poor practice and fraud that may take place in the workplace and places importance on maintaining high standards of honesty, openness, integrity and accountability within our Church communities. The Church will, therefore, support all workers and volunteers, temporary staff, agency staff, contractors and students on placement, who make a disclosure (blowing the whistle) where the disclosure is a genuine concern made in good faith.

6.1.2 Some examples of whistleblowing in organisations are:

- Worker bullied for raising health and safety concerns. Had no health and safety training provided by the organisation despite being the designated health and safety lead.
- Worker raising concerns about lack of Covid-19 safety measures in the workplace.
- Youth worker concerned about another youth worker sending sexually explicit texts to a young person at the youth club.
- Worker raising furlough fraud concerns. Charity had asked him to agree to backdate documentation stating he had been on furlough when he had in fact been working.

6.1.3 The Safeguarding Committee, supported by the Law Department, believes that making a whistleblowing policy available to congregations and Presbyteries will help support people to come forward when they have a genuine concern about wrongdoing in the Church. A suitable policy is available for download on the Church of Scotland website at **Whistle Blowing Policy for Congregations**.

6.2 Volunteers are covered by the policy, but should also feel able to raise concerns about poor safeguarding practice without always invoking the policy. More information on how to report concerns can be found on the Safeguarding Service Publications section of the Church website **Safeguarding publications | The Church of Scotland**.

7. SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

7.1 Safeguarding Handbooks

7.1.1 As the public protection agenda in society has evolved, so too has the Safeguarding advice and guidance offered by the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Service, to ensure as far as is possible, a safe environment for everyone. In addition to the numerous Safeguarding Forms used in Church Safeguarding matters and interactions, there are also six different handbooks available which offer practical advice and guidance on all aspects of Safeguarding.

7.1.2 In 2021, work began to condense these different volumes to a single Safeguarding Handbook. Before beginning this exercise, it was recognised that the collaboration, input, expertise and advice from the Communications Department was essential in this task. Safeguarding has been working closely with Communications to revise and update the combined text to deliver an online handbook. The aim is to ensure that users can quickly and easily navigate to the specific areas of advice or guidance they need.

7.1.3 A number of Safeguarding Committee members have agreed to assist with the drafting of the handbook until it is complete. Safeguarding updates can then be added to the handbook in 'real time' and be available on the Church of Scotland website. This will ensure that all guidance and advice will be up to date and relevant when the handbook is consulted.

7.2 CrossReach Adult and Child Protection Policies and Procedures

7.2.1 CrossReach Adult Support and Protection and Child Protection Handbooks have recently been updated to take account of changes in national policy drivers

e.g. new National Child Protection Guidance 2021, and forthcoming changes to the Adult Support and Protection legislation. A significant feature of the changes in policy and practice in child and adult protection takes account of the impact of trauma on people's life chances. This will no doubt inform how services are shaped and delivered for years to come. The revised policies have been submitted to CrossReach and at the time of writing are subject to a consultation process.

8. SURVIVOR WORKING GROUP

8.1 What is the Survivor Group all About?

8.1.2 At the General Assembly of 2021, the Safeguarding Committee gave a commitment to work with representatives of CrossReach, the Violence Against Women Task Group and Place for Hope to better understand the experiences and needs of victims or survivors who have experienced abuse in a Church of Scotland setting and report back on progress of the work to the General Assembly of 2022.

8.1.3 The group has met regularly throughout the past year. During the initial stages of the group coming together it very quickly became apparent that the work, if it is to pay more than lip service to the views of survivors of abuse, will be a longer-term piece of work than initially anticipated, and, to improve our learning, ought to include the views of survivor groups and people with expertise that sit outside of the Church of Scotland. Meetings have been held with different survivor networks as part of our commitment to redress and will inform the work of this group. The group agreed that its role and remit will be: -

- to identify and create a trauma informed policy and framework which is designed to create an ethos in the Church of Scotland where opportunities for abuse to occur are minimised
- to ensure that the Church of Scotland can respond promptly and compassionately to survivors of abuse
- to further affirm the need for the survivor of abuse to be heard
- to raise awareness of the impact of trauma on people's life chances
- to provide written guidance to congregations and other agencies of the Church about good practice for responding to survivors of abuse

8.1.4 In grappling with some of the complexities of the task, the group agreed that an appropriate framework for progressing the work in the first instance was to take a trauma informed approach to self-assessment i.e. to undertake a 'walk through' exercise seen through a trauma informed lens. This self-assessment exercise can help us benchmark how effectively, or not, we think the Church responds to victims and survivors of abuse. The group decided to concentrate on two particular areas - policies and procedures and communication. The 'walk through' resources are adapted from a toolkit published by NHS Education Scotland^[2]. This piece of work is ongoing and has been shared with other crosscutting groups e.g. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

8.2 Redress Scheme for Survivors of Abuse

8.2.1 Many children in care in Scotland in the past were not treated with love or with respect by the people who were supposed to be caring for them. They were abused by those responsible for their care. For many years, survivors of historical abuse in care have campaigned for redress, wanting and deserving to be listened to, heard

and believed. On 23 April 2021, The Redress for Survivors (Historical Child Abuse in Care) Bill became an Act of the Scottish Parliament.

8.2.2 Making redress payments is an important part of dealing with the wrongs of the past. Being part of the Redress Scheme gives organisations the opportunity to be part of a nationwide, collective effort to face up to the harms of the past. Providing contributions to the Redress Scheme will allow organisations to address concerns raised by those who were in their care without requiring them to bear the costs that may be associated with civil court processes. At the time of writing, it is anticipated that the Church of Scotland will be contributing to the Scheme.

9. ONLINE SOLUTION FOR SG7 AND SG11

9.1 The Safeguarding Service has recently procured a new software solution for Safeguarding. This solution will bring all of the service data into one place. We are currently working with the provider on the configuration of the system and as part of this work we are asking them to assist us with the most effective way we can support congregations and Presbyteries with congregational registers and audit checklists. We are hoping to 'go live' with the system in the summer months and will keep congregations and Presbyteries updated with the outcome of the SG7 and SG11 exercise.

10. DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND ACT 2020 UPDATE

10.1 The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 received Royal Assent on 14 July 2020. The new legislation focuses on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, while balancing the need for people with convictions to move on from past convictions and contribute to society. The Scottish Government via their Faith and Belief Unit, and Disclosure Scotland and Volunteer Disclosure Services, have met and consulted with faith groups over the past year to hear our views and keep us informed of their progress in implementing the Act. Disclosure Scotland is currently developing training and guidance on the Act which we will update you on as soon as we can.

In the name of the Committee

ADAM DILLON, *Convener*
FIONA REYNOLDS, *Vice Convener*
JULIE MAIN, *Service Manager*

Appendix 1

Ministers Safeguarding Learning Pathway

Introductory Safeguarding Training (approx. 2.5 hours) - delivered locally by volunteer safeguarding trainers and the safeguarding training officer where necessary.

Learning includes understanding what safeguarding means (and child/adult protection), national guidance and policy, types of harm and abuse, the four R's and your role in reporting.



Advanced Safeguarding Training (approx. 2.5 – 3 hours) (*replaces Safeguarding Coordinator Training and Safeguarding Panel Training*) - delivered locally by volunteer safeguarding trainers and the safeguarding training officer where necessary.

Learning includes understanding the role of the Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding Panel, raised awareness of resources available for ensuring best practice in safeguarding, understanding responsibilities regarding training, management and support of workers, understanding responsibilities regarding Safeguarding referrals and raised awareness of the Church Safeguarding Policies for example in relation to Managing those who pose a risk and Responding to Domestic Abuse.



Leadership Safeguarding Training (approx. 3 hours with some reflective work) – delivered nationally by the Safeguarding Service

Learning will be reflective and collaborative and will seek to include content such as analysing the leadership behaviours needed to promote a healthy safeguarding culture (including how to involve and empower others) and feel confident and determined to demonstrate them, reflecting on the kind of healthy culture that is protective, preventative, healing, and restorative, reflecting on the impact that abuse and trauma has on individuals' lives, relationships, and interaction in a community setting and looking at lessons learned.

Moving forward, our proposal would be that the pathway is completed in this order:

Introductory Safeguarding Training: Undertaken before or within 6 months of starting training

Advanced Safeguarding Training: Completed within the first half of your probation

Leadership Safeguarding Training: Within the first 2 years of your training for ministry ending. It is recommended that this training is refreshed every 3 years. It is a mandatory requirement every 5 years.

As detailed earlier, in relation to relevant Safeguarding refresher training we recommend that the highest level of training previously completed is undertaken as a mandatory requirement every 5 years (recommended every 3 years).

Ministers' Safeguarding Learning Pathway

ROLE & COURSES RECOMMENDED	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	Trustee Safeguarding Training
Ministers ^[3]	➡	➡	➡	
MDS staff and Deacons	➡	^[4] ➡	^[5] ➡	

The Safeguarding Learning Pathway and Other Church Roles

ROLE & COURSES RECOMMENDED	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	Trustee Safeguarding Training
All those undertaking regulated work (paid or voluntary)	➡			
Safeguarding Coordinators and Safeguarding Panel Members	➡	➡		
Interim Moderators (who are doing regulated work)	➡	➡		
Interim moderators (who are not doing regulated work)				➡
Trustees ^[6]				➡

If you are unsure about what training is required for a certain role please contact the Safeguarding Service. You can also find more detail about these courses on the Safeguarding Service section of the Church of Scotland website **Training | The Church of Scotland**.

Compliance Pathway and Associated Timescales for Essential Safeguarding Training: Ministers, Elders (and other congregational trustees), those doing regulated work (at congregational and Presbytery level)

This compliance pathway will be subject to review by the Safeguarding Committee on an ongoing basis.

Ministers^[7]

1. Presbytery should assess whether:

- Ample opportunities have been provided to attend the appropriate safeguarding training (at least two or three suitable opportunities)
- There are exceptional circumstances for the individual not attending the appropriate safeguarding training e.g. sickness absence.

If either of these situations apply, re-assess when reasonable opportunities are available and/or exceptional circumstances have changed.

2. If neither of those circumstances apply (or other circumstances which could be deemed to be exceptional) then:

- Presbytery Clerk should initiate an informal discussion to encourage attendance, discuss the importance of safeguarding training and provide guidance on opportunities. An open discussion should be had about any concerns which the individual faces in engaging with the relevant safeguarding training.
- This meeting should be recorded (albeit informally) and the Presbytery Clerk should write to the individual to confirm agreements made/any actions and the associated timeframe.
- During this meeting if agreement can be reached for the individual to attend the relevant safeguarding training then a timeframe should be set (approximately 3 months or so dependent on the next available training courses)

3. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 2) to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not, continue to next step.

4. If the concern has not been dealt with satisfactorily

- A letter detailing the fact that non- attendance may result in a referral under the Discipline Act should be sent and a more formal meeting should be arranged by the Presbytery Clerk to discuss next steps.
- There is an option at this meeting to set another timeframe for completion of safeguarding training and any actions or outcomes of the meeting should be recorded.

5. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 4) to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not continue to next step.

6. Another letter may be sent from the Presbytery Clerk detailing the need to attend the appropriate safeguarding training and the potential for a referral under Discipline Act.

7. If no resolution reached, Presbytery should treat the ongoing failure as a Discipline matter and refer under the Discipline Act. At this point the Law Department would be consulted.

Trustee/Elder

1. In the first instance, Presbytery should work with the relevant congregation and advise the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and Panel Members to establish whether there are exceptional circumstances for an elder's non-attendance (e.g. illness, infirmity, recent bereavement, lack of training opportunities etc)

If none of these circumstances apply, Presbytery should advise the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and/or Panel Members to have an informal discussion with the elder to try to come to an agreement before the matter is referred to the Presbytery officially. If no resolution can be found, the matter can be referred to Presbytery to take forward.

2. Presbytery should assess whether:

- Ample opportunities have been provided to attend the appropriate safeguarding training (at least two or three suitable opportunities)
- There are exceptional circumstances for the individual not attending the appropriate safeguarding training e.g. sickness absence

If either of these situations apply, reassess when reasonable opportunities are available and/or exceptional circumstances have changed.

<p>3. If neither of those circumstances apply (or other circumstances which could be deemed to be exceptional) then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presbytery Clerk should initiate an informal discussion to encourage attendance, discuss the importance of safeguarding training and provide guidance on opportunities. An open discussion should be had about any concerns which the individual faces in engaging with the relevant safeguarding training. • This meeting should be recorded (albeit informally) and the Presbytery Clerk should write to the individual to confirm agreements made/any actions and the associated timeframe. • During this meeting if agreement can be reached for the individual to attend the relevant safeguarding training then a timeframe should be set (approximately 3 months or so dependent on the next available training courses)
<p>4. Review at agreed timeframe to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not continue to next step.</p>
<p>5. If the concern has not been dealt with satisfactorily</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter detailing the fact that non-attendance may result in a referral under the Discipline Act should be sent and a more formal meeting should be arranged with the Presbytery Clerk to discuss next steps. • There is an option at this meeting to set another timeframe for completion of safeguarding training and any actions or outcomes of the meeting should be recorded.
<p>6. Review at agreed timeframe to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not continue to next step.</p>
<p>7. Another letter may be sent from the Presbytery Clerk detailing the need to attend the appropriate safeguarding training and the potential for a referral under Discipline Act.</p>
<p>8. If no resolution reached, Presbytery should treat it as a Discipline matter and refer under the Discipline Act. At this point the Law Department would be consulted.</p>

Those undertaking regulated work (*appointed by Presbytery*)

<p>1. Presbytery and the individual's line manager should assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether ample opportunities have been provided to attend the appropriate safeguarding training (at least two or three suitable opportunities) • There are exceptional circumstances for the individual not attending the appropriate safeguarding training e.g. sickness absence <p>If either of these situations apply, reassess when reasonable opportunities are available and/or exceptional circumstances have changed.</p>
<p>2. If neither of these circumstances apply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an informal meeting should be arranged with the Presbytery Clerk and individual line manager to encourage attendance, discuss the importance of safeguarding training and provide guidance on opportunities. An open discussion should be had about any concerns which the individual faces in engaging with the relevant safeguarding training • A note of this meeting should be made and timeframe for completion of training agreed.
<p>3. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 2) to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not continue to next step.</p>
<p>4. Arrange a more formal meeting with the Presbytery Clerk and individual's line manager to discuss non-attendance. Another reasonable timeframe can be agreed and a letter confirming this should be sent to the individual.</p>
<p>5. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 4). If training has not been completed or an appropriate resolution agreed, convene a meeting to agree next steps.</p>
<p>6. Letter should be sent to individual detailing the potential outcome of non-attendance at essential recommended training</p>
<p>7. If no resolution is reached, the advice from the Safeguarding Service is that the individual be removed from regulated work with children and/or protected adults. This is to acknowledge that they may present an ongoing risk to vulnerable groups if not suitably trained. If an individual is a paid employee, advice should be sought from the Law Department before any further action is taken.</p>
<p>8. Outcome should be recorded by the Presbytery and communicated to the individual.</p>

Those undertaking regulated work (*appointed by Kirk Session at congregational level*)

1. Safeguarding Coordinator and/or Safeguarding Panel assess:

- Whether ample opportunities have been provided to attend the appropriate safeguarding training (at least two or three suitable opportunities)
- There are exceptional circumstances for the individual not attending the appropriate safeguarding training e.g. sickness absence

If either of these situations apply, reassess when reasonable opportunities are available and/or exceptional circumstances have changed.

2. If neither of these circumstances apply

- **an informal meeting should be arranged with the safeguarding coordinator** to encourage attendance, discuss the importance of safeguarding training and provide guidance on opportunities. An open discussion should be had about any concerns which the individual faces in engaging with the relevant safeguarding training
- A note of this meeting should be made and timeframe for completion of training agreed.

3. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 2) to ensure relevant safeguarding training has been successfully completed. If not continue to next step.

4. Arrange a more formal meeting with the Safeguarding Panel and individual to discuss non-attendance. Another reasonable timeframe can be agreed and a letter confirming this should be sent to the individual.

5. Review at agreed timeframe (in point 4). If training has not been completed or an appropriate resolution agreed, convene a meeting of your Safeguarding Panel to agree next steps.




6. Letter should be sent to individual detailing the potential outcome of non-attendance at essential recommended training






7. If no resolution is reached, the advice from the Safeguarding Service is that the individual be removed from regulated work with children and/or protected adults. This is to acknowledge that they may present an ongoing risk to vulnerable groups if not suitably trained. If an individual is a paid employee, advice should be sought from the Law Department before any further action is taken.

8. Outcome should be recorded by the Kirk Session and communicated to the individual.







TIMESCALES FOR INITIATING COMPLIANCE PATHWAY

Timeframe for initiating compliance pathway for Ministers

NEW IN ROLE	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	
	Completed within 3 months of starting first placement 	Within the first half of full-time probationary placement 	Within the first 2 years of your ministry training ending 	Complete Leadership Training no less frequently than every 5 years thereafter

ALREADY IN ROLE	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	
If no training completed in last 3 years	Complete by 31 Dec 22 	Complete by 30 June 2023 	Complete within 6 months of it first being offered 	Complete Leadership Training no less frequently than every 5 years thereafter
If you have attended Introductory Safeguarding Training in the last 3 years		Complete by 31 Dec 22 	Complete within 6 months of it first being offered 	Complete Leadership Training no less frequently than every 5 years thereafter
If you have attended Safeguarding Panel or Safeguarding Coordinator Training in the past 3 years			Complete within 6 months of it first being offered 	Complete Leadership Training no less frequently than every 5 years thereafter

Timeframe for initiating compliance pathway for other Church Roles

NEW IN ROLE	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	Trustee Safeguarding Training
All those undertaking regulated work (paid or voluntary)	Before starting or within 3 months of taking on role 			
Safeguarding Coordinators	Before starting in post 	Before starting in post 		
Safeguarding Panel Members & Interim Moderators	Before starting in post or within 3 months of taking on role 	Before starting in post or within 6 months of taking on role 		
Trustees ^[8]				Before starting in office or within 3 months of becoming a trustee 

CURRENTLY IN ROLE AND NOT ATTENDED TRAINING IN THE LAST 5 YEARS	Introductory Safeguarding Training	Advanced Safeguarding Training	Leadership Safeguarding Training	Trustee Safeguarding Training
All those undertaking regulated work (paid or voluntary)	Complete by 30 June 2023 ➡			
Safeguarding Coordinators		Complete by 30 June 2023 ➡		
Safeguarding Panel Members & Interim Moderators		Complete by 30 June 2023 ➡		
Trustees ^[9]				Complete by 30 June 2023 ➡

N.B. Refresher Training: All Church roles should complete the highest level of training previously completed no less frequently than every 5 years thereafter

References

- [1] 'Ministers' for the purposes of the Safeguarding Training Learning Pathway, means parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, Associate Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OM, readers, locums and Armed Forces chaplains. The Learning Pathway for Deacons and MDS will be identified through their job descriptions, advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Service.
- [2] **Trauma-informed practice: toolkit - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)**
- [3] 'Ministers' for the purposes of the Safeguarding Training Learning Pathway means parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OLM, readers, locums and Armed Forces chaplains. The Learning Pathway for Deacons and MDS will be identified through their job descriptions; advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Service
- [4] Grey shading in the arrow indicates there may be a recommendation to attend the courses highlighted but it will depend on the persons Job Description. Please seek advice from the Safeguarding Service/HR.
- [5] See endnote 3
- [6] Trustees who are also safeguarding coordinator and/or panel members need only attend the Introductory and Advanced Safeguarding Training module.
- [7] 'Ministers' for the purposes of the Safeguarding Training Learning Pathway, parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, Associate Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OLM, readers, locums and Armed Forces chaplains. MDS and deacons who are appointed by the Church of Scotland national office will follow their HR procedures.
- [8] Trustees who are also safeguarding coordinator and/or panel members need only attend the Introductory and Advanced Safeguarding Training module.
- [9] Trustees who are also safeguarding coordinator and/or panel members need only attend the Introductory and Advanced Safeguarding Training module.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. The Standing Committees and each of the Presbyteries are encouraged to invite members of Standing Committees to speak to Presbytery about the benefits of serving the wider Church and subsequently encouraged to generate nominations. (*Section 1.2*)
3. Make alterations to the Standing Committees of the General Assembly as set forth in the Report. (*Section 7*)
4. Appoint David Di Paola and John Wilson, both solicitors in the Law Dept, as Assessors in terms of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019). (*Section 7.1*)
5. Reappoint Roddy John MacLeod as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal. (*Section 7.2*)
6. Reappoint Ian Miller as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal. (*Section 7.2*)
7. Reappoint Richard McFarlane as a Convener of the Judicial Commission. (*Section 7.2*)
8. Reappoint Morag Ross as a Convener of the Judicial Commission. (*Section 7.2*)
9. Appoint Kenneth Baldwin as Convener of the Audit Committee. (*Section 7.4*)
10. Appoint Scott Brown as Convener of the Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces Committee. (*Section 7.4*)
11. Appoint Ross Blackman as Convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee. (*Section 7.4*)

Report

1. COMMITTEE REMIT AND PROCESSES

1.1 Preamble

1.1.1 In an effort to be more creative in the way nominations were sought we introduced this year's invitation with a series of video interviews, with volunteers who have served or are serving; with those who seek to fill vacancies and with the Chief Officer, Dave Kendall. The interviews were edited into short clips and a longer mix that introduced the Nominations process. The recordings were made available on the Church of Scotland website and elicited some good initial responses. We offer grateful thanks to Bryan Kerr, a committee member, for producing the video recordings.

1.1.2 Conveners of the Standing Committees were asked to participate in a webinar on the nominations process on 17 November 2021. This was an opportunity for proposed and potential nominees to hear what is expected of members and to ask questions. Details of the process for nomination and the number of vacancies was provided.

1.1.3 The nomination form was reviewed and edited. Consideration was given to previous experience, service on National Committees and the age brackets set out on the form. From the online nomination forms submitted, one person stated a preference to attend meetings online only. The remainder indicated that they would attend in person or online.

1.1.4 The Communications Department created and developed online content to promote the nominations process.

1.1.5 Sadly, the responses did not lead to an influx of nominations and we were, once again, faced with fewer than we would have liked. Even with low numbers our process was still rigorous. We worked with Conveners to find the best match for their vacancies. Unfortunately, some vacancies remain unfilled. Given the challenges this year, all proposed nominations reported in Section 7 are to serve for a full term, even where the person is being nominated in place of one resigned or of one appointed as Convener or Vice-Convener who would ordinarily serve for the remainder of the period for which the person was appointed whose place they take.

1.2 2021 and Beyond

1.2.1 It seems there is a pattern developing which may or may not be a result of the pandemic. Generally, the Church has had to find new ways to respond and as a result, the feedback from some individuals is that they are overstretched and unable to offer more time for national committees. As we begin to work with the new presbyteries, we hope there may be a revamp of presbytery nominations. Each presbytery has members who serve on national committees and it would be a positive move if each of those could be invited to speak to their presbytery about the positive benefits of serving the wider church and encouraging others to seek nominations.

1.2.2 The work of the Church continues. The need for new ideas, new voices and new people is more urgent than ever. Therefore, the committee seeks multiple strands for the nominations process in 2022-23. We continue to encourage individual nominations but in addition there will be an expectation that the Standing Committees and presbyteries also generate nominations each year.

All nominations received will go into a general pool and nominees may be invited to serve elsewhere if the committee feel their gifts can be used.

1.3 Nomination to Legal Bodies

1.3.1 In order to source suitably qualified people, the Safeguarding Appeal Group and the Personnel Appeal Group were added to the list of bodies and included in the nominations process for legal bodies.

1.3.2 The existing six members of the Personnel Appeal Group will continue in post. No nominations to this group are reported below. The Convener has existing delegated authority to fill the six current vacancies should suitable persons be identified by the Solicitor of the Church.

1.3.3 The Mission Plan Review Group has also been included in the nomination process for legal bodies. It was noted that the Legal Questions Committee was in the process of recruiting to this new group. Serving on this group will be an onerous task and recruitment is therefore not straightforward. The Legal Questions Committee seeks authority to continue recruitment with reporting to the Convener and Vice-Convener of the Nomination Committee as names are confirmed. Thirteen of the fifteen names required are reported below with the Convener and Vice-Convener to act under delegated authority to approve further appointments.

1.3.4 The Committee received names at its February meeting as agreed by the Legal Questions Committee, Principal Clerk and Solicitor of the Church.

1.4 Social Care Council's CrossReach Board

1.4.1 The Committee was invited to be part of an interview process for membership of the CrossReach Board. Committee representatives were the Convener and Ian Russell.

2. COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE THE MODERATOR

2.1 There were no nominations for consideration at the committee meeting in February to serve on the Committee to Nominate the Moderator 2023. This was very disappointing. It meant that we needed to consider a new approach. Advice was sought from the Principal Clerk on how to create a membership. Each of the nomination forms received were considered. Standing Committee Conveners who had finished their term of office in the past two years were also considered. Members of the Nomination Committee were encouraged to suggest names as well as put their own name forward for consideration. 15 people were approached to be nominated but not all felt able to accept. After further recruitment, this year's final list of nominees is equally balanced with 7 ministers and deacons and 7 elders.

2.2 Standing Order 119 states that the Nomination Committee shall not nominate for Committees any of its own number except in special circumstances which must be stated to the Assembly. Due to the challenges this year in populating the Committee to Nominate the Moderator an allowance is sought for two proposed nominees to join both the Nomination Committee and the Committee to Nominate the Moderator as well as one existing member of the Nomination Committee to be nominated. A similar exception is also sought in relation to the remits and membership set out for the Forums which state: No Assembly Trustee, member of another Agency of the Church or employee of the Church shall be eligible to be a member. Three of the proposed nominees for the Committee to Nominate the Moderator are also nominated to serve on the Faith Impact Forum.

3. APPOINTMENT OF ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

3.1 The Nomination Committee Convener and Vice-Convener were consulted on the process and recommendations for appointment of Trustees, to be submitted for approval to the May 2022 General Assembly.

4. APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPOINTED MEMBERS

4.1 Further to the Report of the Nomination Committee in 2021 the General Assembly invited each of the Standing Committees to reconsider its constitution and confirm the appropriate number of General Assembly appointed members which is required.

4.2 Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces Committee Constitution

4.2.1 As set out in the Nomination Committee Report to the General Assembly in May 2021 the Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces Committee reviewed its constitution in consultation with the Assembly Trustees and the Nomination Committee. A proposed reduction in membership is included in the Assembly Trustees report to the General Assembly in 2022 for approval.

4.2.2 The Nomination Committee was unable to make enough nominations to fill all vacancies. Based on the proposed reduced membership, the Committee has two vacancies unfilled. Additionally, in March 2022 the Vice-Convener resigned and it is anticipated that a nomination for this vacancy will be brought to the General Assembly for approval in a notice of motion.

5. ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES' EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GROUP MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Those who wished to be considered for membership of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group of the Assembly Trustees were invited to submit a nomination through the nominations process. The Convener and Andrew Gardner then represented the Committee on a sifting panel also comprising representatives of the Group and the Assembly Trustees. Further to the resignation of the Convener of the EDI Group this vacancy was also considered.

5.2 The suggested appointments were put to the Assembly Trustees in January for approval and the process and results were intimated to the Nomination Committee when they met in February. Further details of the EDI Group are provided on the Church of Scotland's website www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-group.

6. FACTS AND FIGURES

6.1 Details on facts and figures are provided as a means of highlighting and encouraging the engagement of the Church as a whole with the nominations process. Figures do not include applications received for Charity Trusteeship which is a separate process.

6.2 A total of 71 proposed nominees were considered with several individuals proposed for more than one committee.

6.2.1 21 names were received for the nomination process to legal bodies. Nomination forms were not received.

6.2.2 50 nominations were considered for the Standing Committees. Nomination forms were not received from

6 of the nominees for the Committee to Nominate the Moderator. In addition, 1 nominee withdrew due to personal reasons prior to the February meeting and is not included in the totals or below breakdown:

- 12 nominations from Ministers (compared with 34 in 2021 and 58 in 2020), with 9 being approached (plus 2 who were approached to serve on the EDI Group);
- 1 nomination from a Deacon (the nomination form was edited to include nomination from a Deacon), with 1 being approached;
- 6 nominations from Kirk Sessions (compared with 13 nominations in 2021 and 14 in 2020), with 4 being approached (plus 1 who was approached to serve on the EDI Group);
- 1 nomination from Presbyteries (compared with 4 in 2021 and 16 in 2020), with 1 being approached;
- 0 nominations from The Guild (compared with 1 in 2021 and 1 in 2020);
- 2 nominations from Nomination Committee members (compared with 4 in 2021 and 2 in 2020), with 2 being approached;
- 22 nominations from the Standing Committee Convener (compared with 26 in 2021 and 41 in 2020), with 21 being approached (plus 1 who was approached to serve on the EDI Group).
- A total of 69 vacancies were considered this year for the Standing Committees. 17 vacancies remain unfilled at the time of going to print and the Committee may act under delegated authority to fill some of these.

7. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE STANDING COMMITTEES

7.1 The Committee agreed to appoint David Di Paola and John Wilson, both solicitors in the Law Dept, under delegated powers as Assessors in terms of the Discipline Act. The complete current list of Assessors would therefore be Gordon Barclay, David Di Paola and John Wilson, all solicitors in the Law Dept.

7.2 The following appointments will require the General Assembly to suspend Standing Order 122. It is anticipated that the Convener of the Procedure Committee will arrange for that question to be put to the General Assembly at the appropriate point in the proceedings.

7.2.1 The Committee wishes to nominate Roddy John MacLeod for a further term of four years, as one of the Conveners of the Discipline Tribunal.

7.2.2 The Committee wishes to nominate Ian Miller for a further term of four years, as one of the Conveners of the Discipline Tribunal.

7.2.3 The Committee wishes to nominate Richard McFarlane for a further term of four years, as one of the Conveners of the Judicial Commission.

7.2.4 The Committee wishes to nominate Morag Ross for a further term of four years, as one of the Conveners of the Judicial Commission.

7.3 The following appointments will require the General Assembly to suspend Standing Order 118. It is anticipated that the Convener of the Procedure Committee will arrange for that question to be put to the General Assembly at the appropriate point in the proceedings.

7.3.1 Both of the members retiring from the Theological Forum have specific skills and experience which are of

great benefit at this time and so re-election of both, and therefore more than one-half of the retiring members, is desirable. The Committee wishes to nominate both of the two retiring members for reappointment to serve a second term on the Theological Forum.

7.4 The Committee recommends the following appointments:

** denotes a reappointment*

Assembly Business Committee

Vice-Convener Retiring Susan Pym

Vice-Convener Appointed Michael Mair (Edinburgh: St David's Broomhouse)

Minister Resigning Michael Mair*

Minister Retiring Alison Mehigan

Minister Appointed Sarah Ross (East Kilbride: Moncreiff)

Elder Retiring Graeme Roberts

Elders Appointed Graeme Barrie (Glasgow: Easterhouse), Graeme Roberts* (Aberdeen: Ferryhill)

Audit Committee

Convener Retiring Andrew Croxford

Convener Appointed Kenneth Baldwin (Old Gourrock and Ashton)

Member Resigning Kenneth Baldwin

Chaplains to HM Forces Committee

Convener Retiring Marjory MacLean

Convener Appointed Scott Brown (Buchlyvie linked with Gartmore)

Vice-Convener Resigned John Duncan Mar 2022

Ministers Retiring James Aitchison, Shuna Dicks, William McLaren

Minister Appointed William McLaren* (London: St Columba's linked with Newcastle: St Andrew's)

Members Retiring Morag Crawford DCS, Eric Fraser

Committee to Nominate the Moderator

Ministers and Deacons Appointed Hilary Beresford (Kilwinning Mansefield Trinity), Keith Blackwood (Aberdeen Mannofield), Morag Crawford DCS (Edinburgh Drylaw), Karen Hendry (Glasgow Yoker), Bryan Kerr (Lanark: Greyfriars), Angus Morrison (Edinburgh Liberton), Elisabeth Spence (Cockpen and Carrington)
Elders Appointed Sally Bonnar (Perth North), Eddie Colliar (Grangemouth Abbotsgrange), Frances Heafield (Ashkirk), Isabella McDerment (Glasgow Scotstoun), Robert McQuistan (Kirkmabreck), Darren Philip (Livingston United), Michael Yuill (Dunblane St Blane's)

Ecumenical Relations Committee

Convener Retiring Alexander Horsburgh

Convener Appointed Ross Blackman (Hamilton Old)

Minister Resigning Ross Blackman

Minister Retiring John McMahon

Ministers Appointed William McLaren (London: St Columba's linked with Newcastle: St Andrew's), Elisabeth Spence (Cockpen and Carrington)

Member Retiring Pauline Weibye

Member Appointed Pauline Weibye* (Edinburgh: Craigmillar Park)

Faith Impact Forum

Vice-Convener Retiring Alan Miller

Vice-Convener Appointed Karen Hendry (Glasgow: Yoker)

Ministers Retiring Richard Baxter, Stuart Fulton, Karen Hendry

Minister Appointed Iain Majcher (Bothwell), Linda Pollock (Aberluthnott linked with Laurencekirk), William Wishart (Edinburgh: St. Martin's)

Member Resigned Gordon Sharp Feb 2022

Members Retiring Peter Lloyd, Valerie Macniven

Members Appointed Morag Crawford DCS (Edinburgh: Drylaw), Frances Heafield (Ashkirk)

Faith Nurture Forum

Vice-Convener Retiring Karen Campbell

Vice-Convener Appointed Alan Hamilton (Bearsden: Killermont)

Minister Resigning Alan Hamilton

Ministers Retiring Scott McCarthy, Andrew Morrice

Ministers Appointed Scott Blythe (Netherlee and Stamperland), Sheena Orr (West Kirk of Calder)

Members Retiring Richard Lloyd, Ruth Mackenzie

Members Appointed Lynette Jardine (Uddingston Old), Marie Locke (Stronsay Moncur Memorial)

Iona Community Board

Ministers Retiring David McLachlan*, Alan Miller

Ministers Appointed Sarah Brown (Aberdeen St Machar's Cathedral), Alan Miller* (Stirling: Church of the Holy Rude linked with Stirling Viewfield Erskine)

Legal Questions Committee

Member Retiring Richard Henderson

Member Appointed Robert McDougall (Cambuslang)

Appointment to Legal Bodies

-Discipline Tribunal

Conveners Retiring Roddy John MacLeod, Ian Miller*

Conveners Appointed Roddy John MacLeod* (Edinburgh: Greyfriars Kirk), Ian Miller* (Edinburgh: Corstorphine St Ninian's)

Vice-Conveners Retiring Jonathan Brodie, Andrew Stevenson

Vice-Conveners Appointed Jonathan Brodie* (Edinburgh Canongate), Andrew Stevenson* (Glasgow Newlands South)

-Judicial Commission

Conveners Retiring Richard McFarlane, Morag Ross*

Conveners Appointed Richard McFarlane* (St Andrews Holy Trinity), Morag Ross* (Edinburgh: Portobello and Joppa)

Vice-Convener Retiring Colin Renwick*

Vice-Convener Appointed Colin Renwick* (Dunblane Cathedral)

-Judicial Panel

Minister Retiring Catherine Beattie

Minister Appointed Marjory MacLean (South Ronaldsay and Burray)

Elder Retiring Alan Cox

Elder Appointed Alan Cox* (Airdrie: New Wellwynd)

-Judicial Proceedings Panel

All cases under the Discipline of Ministry Act (Act III 2001) are now complete and this Panel is no longer required. All remaining members may therefore be stood down.

Ministers stood down Hugh Conkey*, Sara Embleton, Alan Garrity*, Tom Gordon, Jane Howitt*, Anne Logan, Ian McLean*, Thomas Pollock*, Fiona Smith*

Elders and Deacons stood down Hazel Hastie*, Richard Henderson*, Robert Hynd*, Helen McLeod*, Anne Mulligan DCS*, Aileen Nimmo*, Janette Wilson, William Windram*

-Ministries Appeal Panel

Minister Resigned Catherine Collins Jul 2021

Minister Appointed Amos Chewachong Aug 2021 (Newport-on-Tay)

-Mission Plan Review Group

Ministers Appointed Scott Blythe (Netherlee and Stamperland), Mike Gargrave (Thornliebank), Neil Glover (Aberfeldy linked with Dull and Weem linked with Grantully, Logierait and Strathhtay), Graham McWilliams

(Fairlie linked with Largs St Columba's), Alison Meikle (Grangemouth: Zetland)

Members Appointed David Alexander (Uddingston Viewpark), David Brackenridge (Peebles: St Andrew's Leckie), Michael Cunliffe (Edinburgh St Andrew's and St George's West), Grahame Lees (Dunblane Cathedral), David Menzies (Tranent), David Robertson (North Berwick St Andrew Blackadder), Donald Thomas (Glasgow: Merrylea), Raymond Young (Perth St Matthew's)

-Safeguarding Appeal Group

Minister Appointed Bryce Calder (Motherwell St Mary's)

Members stood down Mary Coles, David Dick

Life & Work Advisory Committee

Member Retiring Stuart Wilson*

Member Appointed Darren Philip (Livingston United)

Nomination Committee

Vice-Convener Retiring William Wishart

Vice-Convener Appointed Andrew Gardner (Dundee Barnhill St Margaret's)

Ministers Resigned Graham Finch Aug 2021, Paraic Reamonn Mar 2022

Minister Resigning Alison Meikle

Ministers Retiring Andrew Gardner, Alan Greig, Malcolm Kinnear

Minister Appointed Hilary Beresford (Kilwinning Mansefield Trinity)

Member Resigned Iain MacLeod Dec 2021

Members Retiring Mary Gargrave DCS, Isabella McDerment, Ian Russell

Members Appointed Robert McQuistan (Kirkmabreck), Mark Taylor (Glasgow Jordanhill)

Registration of Ministries Committee

Vice-Convener Resigned Fiona Smith Apr 2022

Vice-Convener Appointed Hilary McDougall Apr 2022 (Cambuslang)

Minister Retiring William McLaren

Member Appointed Richard Henderson (Balerno)

Safeguarding Committee

Minister Resigned Morag Muirhead Aug 2021

Ministers Appointed Julia Wiley Nov 2021 (Armada), Malcolm Kinnear (Kinlochleven linked with Nether Lochaber)

Member Retiring John Pears*

Social Care Council - CrossReach Board

Minister Retiring Ramsay Shields

Minister Appointed Keith Blackwood (Aberdeen: Mannofield)

Member Resigning Iain Hunter

Member Retiring John Graham

Member Appointed John Graham* (Edinburgh: Mayfield Salisbury)

Theological Forum

Vice-Convener Resigned Susan Hardman Moore Jan 2022

Vice-Convener Appointed Paul Nimmo (Kemnay)

Ministers Retiring Hector Morrison

Ministers Appointed Hector Morrison* (Inverness: Hilton)

Member Resigning Paul Nimmo

Member Retiring Andrew Torrance

Member Appointed Andrew Torrance* (St Andrews: Holy Trinity)

In the name of the Committee

JULIE RENNICK, *Convener*
BILL WISHART, *Vice-Convener*
DAVE KENDALL, *Secretary*

Addendum

Bill Wishart, Vice-Convener

Bill began to serve as a member on the Nomination Committee in 2018 before becoming the Vice-Convener from 2019. He has worked with two conveners, Lynsey Kimmitt and Julie Rennick. Bill has a gift for encouraging and support, he is a strong team player and has been a great asset to the committee's work. His willingness to step up and pick up some of our additional responsibilities has been greatly valued and his good humour and deep faith will be greatly missed by all who have worked with him. We thank him for his service, and wish him well as he continues to serve this church both locally and nationally.

JULIE RENNICK, *Convener*
DAVE KENDALL, *Secretary*



The Church of Scotland

PART II –
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS
AND MINUTES OF
APPEAL HEARINGS

SEE, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW



General Assembly 2022

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/ga

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

Supplementary Reports and Minutes of Appeal Hearings

- 23/1.....Supplementary Report of the Assembly Trustees
- 24/1.....Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee
- 25/1.....Supplementary Report of the Faith Nurture Forum
- 26/1.....Supplementary Report of the Faith Impact Forum
- 27/1.....Minute of the Appeal Hearing before the Judicial Commission 10 June 2021
- 28/1.....Minute of the Appeal Hearing before the Safeguarding Appeal Group 11 June 2021
- 29/1.....Minute of the Commission of the General Assembly 23 March 2022
- 30/1.....Minutes of Ministries Appeal Panel 14 September 2021
- 30/2.....Minute of Ministries Appeal Panel 17 December 2021

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Supplementary Report.
2. Receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities.
3. Note the budget for 2023 and the indicative budgets for 2024 to 2027. **(Section 2 and Appendices 1 and 2)**
4. Approve the arrangements proposed in respect of the Pioneer Mission Fund. **(Section 5)**
5. Repeal the Growth Fund Regulations (Regulations I 2019) and pass the Seeds for Growth Fund Regulations set out in **Appendix 3**.
6. Discharge with thanks the members of the Seeds for Change Committee.

Report**1. FINANCE****1.1 AUDIT OF ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2021**

The external auditors gave an unqualified or “clean” audit opinion on the Report and Accounts of the Unincorporated Entities Scottish Charity Number 011353 (the “Charity”) which is a very positive outcome given the current operating environment. The General Assembly is invited to receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Unincorporated Entities. Commissioners are invited to view the Report and Accounts on the Church’s website.

2. CONGREGATIONAL INCOME**Introduction**

Section 5 of the Trustees’ main Report describes the challenging financial situation facing the whole Church. The income of congregations has understandably been affected to varying degrees by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The analysis carried out indicates, with a high level of certainty, that the aggregate income of congregations will not recover to pre-Pandemic levels during 2022 or 2023. Beyond that, it is very difficult to forecast the potential levels of income for the following reasons:

- The continuing Covid-19 Pandemic: The number of church members who return to in-person worship; the timing and extent to which “normal activities” are resumed; when and if organisations return to meeting in church halls; and whether there has been a permanent effect on giving.
- The continued decline in church membership: A 34% reduction was seen between 2011 and 2021 with no indication of this trend reversing from 2021 congregational data.
- Presbytery Mission Plans: Previous data tells us that income reduces when congregations unite and dissolve. It is highly likely that income will reduce as more congregations are united or dissolved as a result of Presbytery Mission Plans. We cannot forecast the results of this until the planning process is complete and plans are available for assessment.
- Global and economic uncertainty: Congregational income has not kept up with inflation even during the years when inflation was at very low levels. Church members and supporters will now be adversely affected by the increasing cost of living, putting pressure on their ability to maintain their giving at a time when church income needs to increase just to keep pace with rising costs.

Whilst further mitigating actions will be required, it is highly unlikely that income will recover to the 2019 level.

Notwithstanding the above, the Church still has almost 284,000 members as well as a significant number of other attenders and supporters, and almost a third of congregations report new worshipping communities. These members and supporters contribute to their own congregations, to projects of the wider Church and to special appeals for help, showing a level of commitment and compassion that embodies what it means to be church. The Trustees continue to be encouraged by these tangible expressions of faith. By way of an example, as at 31 March 2022, donations of £230,000 had been received for onward transmission to the Reformed Church

in Hungary: Aid which will be directed to its work with Ukrainian refugees arriving in Budapest.

There remains considerable potential to grow our income as a Church and the Trustees encourage congregations to embrace the new *Giving to Grow* scheme to realise this potential.

2.1. Mitigating the Risk of Declining Income

Should this potential decline in income simply be accepted or is there something that can be done to prevent it? How can this risk be mitigated? Opportunities remain for the development and implementation of strategic initiatives on income generation at local, national and Presbytery levels. Presbytery Mission Planning takes account of the financial health of congregations and builds on success. This can also be progressed by individual congregations by engaging in programmes of Christian Stewardship, by engagement with the Congregational Task Group and by recognising that, as a Presbyterian Church, congregations blessed with financial resources have an obligation to support congregations who are not.

Our Stewardship Team can advise on many practical matters such as how to explore Christian stewardship in its broadest sense using the *Narrative of Generosity* resource; enabling giving through a range of accessible ways including digital methods; promoting the impact of legacy giving; and helping congregations get the basics right to maximise income. The Team can be contacted at stewardship@churchofscotland.org.uk. We would encourage you to get in touch for a conversation; that first step can be a catalyst for helping your congregation improve its sustainability.

We urge congregations and Presbyteries to embrace the new *Giving to Grow* Scheme. Income needs to grow as one of the elements that will help underpin the overall sustainability and growth of the Church. This is a stewardship and missional imperative. Income is not an end in itself.

People are our most valuable resource and this is reflected in the new Scheme which recognises that charges should first pay for their minister ("Ministry Here"). They should also, as part of a Presbyterian Church, contribute to the cost of ministry in other places ("Ministry Elsewhere") and to the activities which provide support for the Church's mission as well as ensuring it complies with statutory regulations, safeguarding functions and best practices ("Shared Activities"). The Scheme thereby encourages congregations to envisage how their efforts can work towards a healthy financial future for their own church, for congregations in other places and for shared work within their Presbytery and beyond.

Where a congregation is in a position to do more, the Scheme allows for Giving Agreements between Presbyteries and congregations towards local or national initiatives and we commend the imaginative use of these.

We have also seen how congregations have benefited from successful grant applications to external funds and would highlight that grants received are not included in the income base for calculating assessable income of congregations. The Church's grants manager, David Williams, is working to support the grants process from identification of opportunities through to supporting the submission process. Email David at grants@churchofscotland.org.uk.

2.2. Analysis of Congregational Income

Appendix I sets out the actual and projected congregational income over the years 2019 to 2023. It should be noted that the congregational income on Appendix I excludes income which is not assessable – such as legacies, grants, receipts for major fabric projects, etc, which are assumed to be used exclusively to meet local congregational expenditure. It also does not include endowment, glebe and consolidated fabric fund income.

The Trustees' main Report states that congregational income decreased by 15%, £12.4 million, between 2019 (pre Covid-19) and 2020. The analysis in Appendix 1 shows a total decrease of 17.7%, £15.4 million. This difference is because the 'Other Ordinary Income' figure in Appendix I excludes income from the Consolidated Fabric Fund and glebes and endowments. In terms of offerings specifically, there was a decrease of 13.1% over 2019 and 2020.

Provisional assessment of 2021 income, based on a 65% return rate of Financial Statistics from congregations, shows that ordinary income increased by 1.3%. Looking at offerings in isolation, an increase of 1.9% is estimated for 2021 compared to 2020. Total offerings based on these returns are estimated at £64.32 million compared to £71.06 million in 2019 which was the last pre-Pandemic year. However, other ordinary income *decreased* by a further 3.3% over 2020. Other ordinary income is more difficult to predict than offerings which have proven to be more resilient and make up the majority of income. The estimates will be further refined when all congregational accounts have been received and analysed. However, the data indicates that any recovery is very tentative and no firm conclusions can be drawn on future trends at this point.

Projections have been made for 2022 and 2023. These assume that offerings continue to be relatively flat from 2021 to 2022 with more recovery in 2023 (an increase of 5.5%). We also assume a continued recovery of other ordinary income in 2022 and 2023.

Based on these estimates, the amount retained by congregations for local expenditure in 2023 will be an estimated 52% (2022 – 44%).

2.3. Analysis of Congregational Reserves

Congregations' accounts as at 2020 have been analysed to establish how much their unrestricted reserves have been affected by the Pandemic. The results show that unrestricted reserves decreased by 3.6% from £117.33 million to £113.30 million when comparing 2019 to 2020. The 2021 position will not be known until the 2021 accounts have been analysed later in the year.

The Trustees' decision to reduce the aggregate congregational contributions from £46.5 million in 2020 to £38.1 million in 2021 and £42 million in 2022 was intended to allow congregations to both protect current reserves and replenish some of the reserves they had used to maintain their activities.

2.4. Presbytery Discretionary Allowance

The unused proportion of the 5% Presbytery Discretionary Allowance will remain available for carry forward up until December 2023.

2.5. National Budget

The 2021 General Assembly approved the introduction of the new *Giving to Grow* scheme which replaces the Ministries and Mission scheme. Therefore, instead of recommending an amount of congregational contributions to the General Assembly, the Assembly

Trustees present in Appendix II estimates of congregational contributions receivable under *Giving to Grow* together with the budgeted expenditure and other income of the Unincorporated Entities for the year 2023, and forward budgets for 2024-2027. The budgeted deficit for 2023 is £8.717 million.

2.6. National Budget – Overview

The budget reflects the significant amount of change the Church is going through over the next five years, which is worth restating: Presbytery Mission Plans, the *Giving to Grow* Scheme and funding of the new Presbyteries. Congregational contributions to the national budget will reduce, as will the cost of Parish Ministry, driven by reducing numbers. The cost of funding the new Presbyteries is included as a new area that requires funding with an initial agreement to cover the baseline budget over the next five years. The budget currently maintains the status quo in terms of national office operating costs following the reductions successfully achieved over 2020 and 2021. Plans are being developed to further reduce central costs through a programme that will be focused on “Stopping, Devolving and Evolving” work. Future iterations of the budget will propose a different direction in this respect with reducing national office costs.

In order to fund and achieve the necessary changes that have been identified, the draw on national reserves, totalling £39.2 million over the period 2023 to 2027, is necessary in the most immediate years at least. This is despite having achieved the substantial savings targeted by the 2019 GA, which emphasises the further degradation in the Church’s financial position over the last two Pandemic years. This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency by the national administration embarking on the following three-step process for determining and mapping out the organisation’s short and long-term financial goals in support of the Church of Scotland’s vision:

- Planning to provide a framework for the Church’s financial objectives – covering the next five years.
- Budgeting to detail how the plan will be carried out month to month for the current financial year (2022) covering items such as revenue, expenses, cash flow and deficit reduction. Monitoring our situation on a monthly basis will allow us to adjust the budget depending on actual income and compare actual financial statements to determine how close they are to meeting or exceeding the budget.
- Forecasting will utilise both our historical data and current data to enable predictions as to how much revenue we can expect to bring in over the next few months and years. Forecasts will be continually adjusted as new information becomes available.

Continual planning and rolling forecasts will be used to update plans, budgets and forecasts throughout the year. These approaches will help us to spot trends and take appropriate action, ensuring that we are better informed and can make more agile decisions on both forward plans and staffing levels.

2.7. Budgeted Congregational Contributions

We have carried out extensive financial modelling on the potential income to be raised through *Giving to Grow* although, as already mentioned, until we have had sight of all Presbytery Mission Plans we cannot forecast the financial impact of the Presbytery Mission Planning Act on congregational income.

Congregational contributions for 2023 will be based on the assessable congregational income for 2021, which we cannot accurately estimate until accounts have been analysed later in 2022. Therefore, the approach taken to estimate assessable income has been to apply an increase of 2% to the 2020 assessed congregational income from congregational accounts which is the most accurate information at this time. This has been tested against the returns of congregational financial statistics returns for 2021. It is judged that 2% is a realistic amount to use for 2023, the base year for the new Scheme. As already mentioned, Appendix I shows a slightly lower rate of improvement but does not include endowment, glebe or consolidated fabric fund income.

Giving to Grow links income to the cost of ministries and caps the contributions payable by a Charge at the cost of the Charge’s allocated post or posts of Minister of Word and Sacrament. For this reason, *Giving to Grow* contributions in later years are reduced in line with the predicted number of minister posts. Unlike the previous system, the intention is that as congregational income grows, the contributions will not continue to rise. On this basis, the aggregate congregational contributions to the national budget would decrease from £42 million in 2022 to £32.21 million by 2027. It must be emphasised that these are estimates which will be continually reviewed. The risks to congregational income outlined in the introduction and the impact on these contributions should not be underestimated.

2.8. Parish Ministry Costs

The observed reduction in the cost of Parish Ministry is a result of increasing retirements of ministers due to the age demographic which has not been matched by a corresponding recruitment of new ministers. The Presbytery Mission Plan Act requires a Plan to be based on the Presbytery’s allocation of ministries posts. The total number of such posts for the Church was agreed by the General Assembly of 2021 under the Report of the Assembly Trustees which reflected both the natural decline in numbers of ministers and future affordability. This number was then shared across the Presbyteries under the Report of the Faith Nurture Forum. However, from the budgets outlined in Appendix II, it can be seen that what the Church can afford will continue to diminish unless urgent action is taken. We are continually reviewing the ministry numbers but they are difficult to forecast. The number of Parish Ministers and Ministries Development staff included in the budget decreases from 731 full time equivalents at the end of 2022 to 610 by the end of 2027. Provision is made in the budget for interim and transition ministers, probationers, deaf ministries and ministers in training from overseas or other denominations. The total cost of these Parish Ministries will decrease by £6.1 million in 2023 from £35.8 million to £29.7 million in 2027.

2.9. Strategic Investment

The forward plan requires up-front investment to enable the identified changes and efficiencies to be implemented. Old and out-dated practices need to be modernised, streamlined and automated. The Church as a whole and the national administration, to which this budget relates, should not be holding under-performing assets including properties. There needs to be investment in some property assets to maintain their value, meet energy standards and improve income. Properties which are surplus to requirements should be disposed of. CrossReach will expend some £500,000 on improving particular service units to enhance its service provision and income and to improve energy standards,

and the Housing and Loan Fund will spend c£1 million on its property improvement strategy.

There will be investment in Information and Communications Technology development projects. This will include introduction of a comprehensive document management system that will provide a controlled, accessible and secure single source of all of our information. Seed funding is being provided for projects to develop digital ministries and new congregational initiatives are being supported through grants from the Small Grants Fund and Pioneer Mission Fund.

Perhaps the most significant strategic investment will be the funding being provided to enable the start-up of the new Presbyteries and the transition from the Ministries and Mission Scheme to *Giving to Grow*. £1.44 million per annum is budgeted for the new Presbyteries and £638,000 (reducing over three years) for transition funding for those congregations who will struggle initially to pay the increased payments towards a Minister under the new scheme.

A specific contingency of £1.478 million is included under Strategic Investment to provide for cost of living increases on salaries and stipends and any short-term changes in the staff cost profile following the pay and grading and organisational reviews.

These strategic investments will cost some £5.5 million overall in 2023.

Exclusions from the strategic investments are the costs of the *Seeds for Growth Fund* which will be incorporated when the plan is developed and agreed for launch in January 2023. Likewise, there are no costs included for any reconfiguration or sale of the National Office until a decision has been made on this by the General Assembly of 2023.

2.10. Budgets of the Forums and Departments

The 2023 budgets of the Forums and Departments will largely be held at the level of 2022 subject to reducing ministerial numbers. For subsequent years, the indicative budgets show minimal change until such time as planning to provide a framework for the Church's financial objectives is developed covering the next five years. The budgets will be adjusted on a continual basis.

Budgeting for the national finances is now focused on expenditure, with managers being accountable for achieving these expenditure budgets. The work of the two Forums is being refocused into the Faith Action Programme which is under development. However, expenditure will be contained within the existing parameters.

Faith Nurture's expenditure budget of £4.4 million covers all costs relating to Parish Ministry other than the direct "employment" costs of Parish Ministries. Other Forum costs include the cost of recruiting, training and supporting ministries and the eldership; Partnership Development and Priority Areas. The Forum is also responsible for two trading areas: Life and Work magazine and the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

Faith Impact's budget of £1.9 million includes an annual block grant of £85,000 to Christian Aid. The Forum, through the residual World Mission Council as the employing agency, employs nine mission partners and provides grant funding to support its programme of attentive accompaniment of partner churches and organisations overseas. The budget also includes expenditure of the Policy and Public Affairs unit which gives the Church a voice on parliamentary and political developments.

The indicative budget shown in Appendix I does not include the work of the Church of Scotland entities in Israel which are not constituent parts of the Charity. However, the results of all of these entities are included each year in the Church's consolidated ("Group") Annual Accounts.

The Office of the General Assembly budget is also held constant at just over £1.2 million per annum. However, this will be kept under continual review and is likely to reduce as reforms are introduced.

The Support and Services departments' costs are shown before income from other entities. These departments provide services not only to the Unincorporated Entities, but to the General Trustees, Investors Trust, Church of Scotland Trust, Presbyteries and congregations. Again, these are being held constant until organisational plans have been developed. The Facilities Management budget includes, as in 2022, costs of essential fabric and rolling maintenance in the National Office.

2.11. CrossReach

CrossReach's deficits will range from £2.4 million in 2023 to £1.89 in 2027, including the annual £500,000 property investment detailed above. This is *before* allocating any congregational contributions or other financial assistance which the Trustees will decide upon later in 2022.

The budget does not include the cost of CrossReach becoming a full Scottish Living Wage employer but does include the estimated unfunded element of front-line care workers' increases as agreed by the Assembly Trustees. It is assumed that there will be continued progress towards a Social Care Scottish Living Wage of £12 an hour, with Operational Services having to assimilate the cost annually, after a period of discussion with commissioners.

While Covid-19 continues to present particularly difficult challenges within the care sector generally and to CrossReach, the assumption for the budget is one of a "living with Covid-19" situation with no exceptional costs included for this.

Services will continue to take appropriate steps towards financial sustainability but otherwise the budget at this point does not allow for any change in strategic direction or closures of services.

During 2022/23, the Trustees will take up once again the instruction of the 2019 Special Commission to consider how CrossReach may become financially self-sustainable.

2.12. Other Funds

These are other entities and trusts which are included in the Charity, most significantly the Housing and Loan Fund but also including New College. This is the first year the Other Funds have been included in the budget presented to the Assembly for completeness. These are included in our statutory accounts as part of the Charity and in our monthly reporting. As already mentioned, the Housing and Loan Fund Trustees are undertaking a property improvement programme to ensure:

- that all of their properties are at Energy Performance Certificate Level C by 2028, moving them towards the Church's net zero aspirations; and
- a more proactive spending regime on their properties for the benefit of the beneficiaries and as a sensible investment in the property portfolio.

The Other Funds have a budgeted net expenditure of £523,000 in 2023.

3. SYSTEMS OF INTERNAL CONTROL

3.1 Role of the Audit Committee and Internal Audit

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining adequate systems of internal control. The Audit Committee's remit includes responsibility for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal financial controls. This function is delivered by Azets as the appointed Internal Auditors alongside the work of the Church's own Audit and Compliance Officer. Azets produce an annual programme of work in consultation with the Committee, Chief Officer, General Treasurer and Director of Finance and Resources for CrossReach. This is based on an assessment of audit risk which seeks to ensure that all the main areas of activity are periodically reviewed. Audit reports are submitted at the end of each assignment and an annual audit report is made to the Audit Committee expressing an opinion on the systems of internal control in place in the Unincorporated Entities

Azets conducted a number of reviews as part of their 2021 programme of work covering the following areas:

- financial planning and budgeting
- strategic and corporate planning
- workforce planning (CrossReach)
- validated self-assessment of the Trustee Board.

Azets reported to the Audit Committee that, on the basis of the work undertaken for the year ended 31 December 2021, the Charity has a framework of controls in place that provides adequate assurance regarding the organisation's governance framework, risk management and achievement of objectives, subject to the implementation of a range of continuous improvement actions, addressing the higher-graded matters arising from internal audit reviews. This also applies to historic/backlog action implementation.

4. THE SEEDS FOR GROWTH FUND

The Assembly will be aware that a central element of the Radical Action Plan was the creation of a £20-25 million Growth Fund. The 2019 report of the Council of Assembly noted that in the spirit of the *Church without Walls Report* and in learning from our ecumenical partners it was time to very "deliberately [use] the Church's limited reserves to encourage greater faith-sharing, innovation and creativity at local and regional levels." The report went on to say, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34) and it noted that, "there [would be] those who [would] caution that we need to keep hold of these reserves for a rainy day. The reality is, as many would point out, the roof is leaking, and the rain has been coming in for some time in the life of the Church of Scotland."

As soon as the Assembly Trustees were formed work began in earnest to establish this fund and it was the intention of the Trustees to bring an update to the Assembly of 2020 explaining the structure and guidelines for the operation of a Growth Fund entitled *Seeds for Change*. This would have seen the formation of a *Seeds for Change Implementation Group* which would have been ready to invite applications from June 2020 onwards. Detailed work on the various aspects of this scheme had almost been completed when the Covid-19 pandemic struck, and the Trustees were forced to recommend that the planned launch of *Seeds for Change* should be put on hold.

Nonetheless, in April 2020 the Trustees noted that "although proceeding as intended with the *Seeds for*

Change Fund is not possible right now, we can position ourselves to be able to act quickly later in the year". Unfortunately, the effects of the pandemic stretched further than any of us imagined at that time, but the Trustees remained at the ready and believe that now is the right time to revisit this crucial strategy.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact at so many levels and there is no hiding from the effect that it has had on the Church's finances. The Trustees' main Report and this Supplementary Report are quite clear that, having managed to eliminate the sources of the deficits of previous years we are now living with the prospect of deficits which have been born out of the changed circumstances which the pandemic has brought.

We will take measures to deal with these, but these measures will not lead to growth in the local Church. We have to be proactive in our approach to Church growth, Church planting and pioneer mission. The trends in relation to our life as a national Church do not lie. For the future, we do not want to be a Church which is asset rich and people poor, so, with the minimum possible delay we must activate this central element of the Radical Action Plan and open a fund which we now consider should operate under the name *Seeds for Growth Fund* with a particular emphasis on the planting of new congregations.

This, in our opinion, is the logical next step following the exceptional and stressful work in Presbytery Mission Planning through which, with the number of ministries which we all hope can be filled and maintained in the foreseeable future, we will be leaner and fitter and in the right place. This initiative is explicitly calculated to meet the aspiration to plant one hundred new congregations across Scotland in the next 10 years and in so doing find new ways to engage with the people of Scotland. Launching this fund two years ago, as first planned, would not have obviated the need for mission planning nor would it have had any bearing on the process of Presbytery reform. With the eventual launch of the *Seeds for Growth Fund* there emerges a different opportunity for fresh expressions of Church life to take root across Scotland.

The landscape against which the *Seeds for Change Fund* emerged has changed markedly. So, in addition to the detailed work that was done in 2019-20 the Trustees will consult more widely with ecumenical partners and with the new Presbyteries in order to ensure that the Fund will be invested in schemes which are expected to be viable and sustainable and to complement approved mission plans. Additionally, it will be essential to ensure that the resources being set aside for this work meet the aspirations and outcomes defined within the Faith Action Plan. To this end it will be important to develop the right interface between Presbyteries and the Faith Action Programme to ensure that the resources available nationally work in harmony with the aspirations of the new Presbyteries. In order to allow for sufficient time in terms of the structure, shape and focus areas for the Fund, including available grant sizes, the Assembly Trustees propose to launch the fund in October 2022 with applications welcomed from January 2023.

It is the aspiration of the Trustees that the value of this Fund (to be named *Seeds for Growth*) will, over a seven-year period, will be the original proposed levels of £20-25m and will follow the pattern set out for the General Assembly in the 2019 Council of Assembly Report. Core funding will come from the general unrestricted reserves of the Church, but it is to be hoped that the fund will be

supplemented by other gifts and donations. The Trustees propose the repeal of the Growth Fund Regulations (Regs 1 2019) and seek their replacement with the Seeds for Growth Regulations (Regs ? 2022) set out in Appendix 3 below. The Fund will be overseen by a Seeds for Growth Implementation Group which will be a Committee of the Assembly Trustees with Terms of Reference set out in the Schedule to Appendix 3.

The Trustees have no doubt that in March 2020 it was right to suspend the implementation of the *Seeds for Change Fund*. However many of the concerns which led to that decision have been addressed or resolved: central costs have been significantly curtailed, Presbytery planning will reduce the intolerable burden of the costs of vacancies, there are no longer major pension deficits in respect of the Church of Scotland Pension Schemes, the cost of participation in the Redress Scheme is now agreed and, importantly, the review of funds is now complete giving clarity as to the level of funds generally available.

The Trustees are equally certain that we cannot delay implementation any longer than is necessary. So, this proposal is offered to the Church with the prayer that it will be embraced by those who are excited about the possibilities of *doing a new thing* (Isaiah 43: 19).

5. PIONEER MISSION FUND

5.1 Introduction

General Assembly 2021 instructed that a Pioneer Mission Fund be established which aimed to support local church growth and had a particular emphasis on church planting and establishing 100 new worshipping communities. In terms of funding, wide ranging support from individuals, businesses and outside bodies was encouraged in addition to central finances being made available. Appropriate provision for the efficient management and evaluation of the fund in addition to the project that supports it were to be put in place. Whilst in time it is foreseen that the Pioneer Mission Fund will become part of the offerings within the *Seeds for Change Fund*, in order to enable this important area of work to proceed, the following is proposed.

5.2 About the Fund

The Pioneer Mission Fund is managed through the Grants Unit of the Office of Assembly Trustees. Assessment and awards will be made through a volunteer panel comprised of representatives with a particular skills and expertise in Pioneer Mission, representatives from Faith Nurture Forum and those with experience in grants management and evaluation.

The fund will be open to applications between April and September 2022 with assessments being made in monthly meetings between June – December or until the monies are exhausted.

The fund will have an initial £100,000 made available from central resources in this and additional years with monies welcomed to be added to this figure from external sources once the fund has been launched (ensuring all appropriate governance arrangements etc. are in place).

Grants of up to £10,000 can be applied for.

5.3 Eligibility Criteria

- Individual Church of Scotland churches and Presbyteries; or
- Groups of churches or Presbyteries; or

- Individuals through and with the support of their church or Presbytery

Only one project at any time from an individual or church can be applied for and awarded.

Presbyteries can hold more than one grant at a time.

A church or Presbytery may also hold a grant from the Small Grants Fund concurrently with an award from the Pioneer Mission Fund.

There will be no limits given on the reserves a church or Presbytery may hold in terms of applicability to apply.

5.4 Criteria for Applications to Fund Projects

Projects should have a revenue project focus. Projects will support:-

- local church growth.
- church planting.
- the establishment of new worshipping communities.

Applicants will be asked to explain how their project will meet each of the following four criteria.

1. Missional – intends to work with non-churchgoers.
2. Contextual – seeks to fit the context of where you are situated.
3. Formational – aims to form disciples.
4. Church – a community shaped by the gospel and seeing itself as part of the worldwide Christian community.

There will be no requirement for match funding although grant applicants are encouraged to identify potential additional sources.

5.5 What Cannot be Funded?

Money cannot be used for:

- Capital based projects including church repairs.
- Covering retrospective costs.
- Making up for reductions in income or covering existing running costs.

5.6 How Financial Contributions Can Be Made to the Fund

The fund encourages monies wider than central resources to be donated from individuals, business and outside bodies. Work has been undertaken to ensure that due diligence is in place to ensure that additional monies coming into the fund are designated in the correct and proper manner. The intention is that monies will be pooled into the central fund for distribution to successful grant applicants. None of this money will be used to support the fund's administration. Further details on how to support the Pioneer Mission Fund can be found by contacting grants@churchofscotland.org.uk

6 CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS

Grateful thanks are given to Presbytery Clerks and Congregations for their diligence and strenuous efforts in obtaining these statistics and transmitting them to the National Office. The information which follows greatly assists in supporting the understanding of the Church at all levels.

6.1 Summary

- As at December 2021 there were 283,600 members of the Church of Scotland, a fall of 4.6% from 2020.
- In the last ten years (2011-2021) the number of members has fallen by 34%.

- 57% of congregations offered online worship, with 38% offering alternative offline provision. Many congregations are offering a hybrid form of worship in 2021.
- Almost a third (31%) of congregations reported a New Worshipping Community, with a further four Presbytery-wide initiatives.
- Baptisms and Professions of Faith increased in comparison to 2020, to around half of pre-pandemic levels.

Technical Summary

- Numbers at both Presbytery level and national level have been rounded, in line with best practice, to avoid giving a false sense of precision. Numbers that would round down to 0 are indicated with e.g. "<5" to distinguish them from 0s.
- There was a response rate of 92% to questions about membership, leadership etc.
- Ecumenical discussion across the UK and Ireland took place to improve the data quality on alternative worship provision, both online and offline. These questions had a 73% response rate.
- Information on New Worshipping Communities was requested from the General Assembly of 2019 for reporting from 2021. Questions were included in this collection and had a response rate of 61%.
- Collection was made in mixed mode – some reported through the Presbytery Information Management System (PIMS) others through MS Excel, with additional questions through MS Forms or MS Excel.

6.2 Introduction

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, church buildings remained closed during the first quarter of 2021 with reopening beginning from 26th March 2021. Subsequently

social distancing required restricting numbers for many congregations with a number of churches reopening at different times. As a result, and as seen in 2020, churches were not open for physical worship for the same number of weeks and for many with limited capacity throughout 2021.

With this in mind, the 2021 congregational statistics should be read and interpreted in light of the continuing impact of the pandemic and care should be taken with any comparisons to past years particularly in regards to physical attendance and congregational activities.

6.3 Church Membership and Participation, 2021

Congregations within the Church of Scotland come in all shapes and sizes, from large city congregations to small rural or island communities. In a typical congregation there are 176 members and no adherents.¹ There are also:

- 4 children associated with the congregation, but none receiving communion.
- 40 people worshipping in the church, 32 people worshipping online and none offline.
- no professions of faith.
- 8 funerals, no baptisms, and no weddings.
- a leadership of 16 elders.

Only 11% of congregations welcomed new Christians through Professions of Faith. 28% of congregations welcomed new members through certificates and 20% through resolution of the Kirk Session. Children received Communion in 17% of congregations.

Table 1 shows the reported participation at the smallest 5% and 25% of churches, the typical or median (i.e. middle) church, the largest 25% and 5% of churches (i.e. 75th and 95th percentile), and the mean (average) church.

	5 th percentile	25 th percentile	Median (middle) church	75 th percentile	95 th percentile	Mean (average) church
Members	18	88	176	306	544	217
Adherents	0	0	0	8	40	8
Weekly Attendance						
In person	13	25	40	65	130	52
Average Age	47	57	64	69	74	62
Online	0	8	32	75	200	57
Offline	0	0	0	10	50	10
Professions of Faith	0	0	0	0	2	0
Children	0	0	4	20	97	21
Children receiving Communion	0	0	0	0	8	1
Elders	4	9	16	27	51	20
Baptisms	0	0	0	1	4	1
Weddings	0	0	0	1	4	1
Funerals	0	2	8	16	34	11

Table 1: Church participation summary, 2021

Data collected within the congregational statistics is presented in the following tables at Presbytery and total levels.

¹ A "typical" congregation is described using the median value as a few large congregations can result in a larger mean value that may not represent the overall data well.

6.4 Presbytery Data**6.4.1 Reporting**

Presbytery	Membership as at 31st Dec 2020	Admissions	Removals	Membership as at 31st Dec 2021	Notices of Removal	Supplementary Roll	Response Rate
EDINBURGH	19,500	170	975	18,700	50	1,085	99%
WEST LOTHIAN	7,000	40	285	6,700	30	1,015	96%
LOTHIAN	10,500	85	700	9,800	<5	1,140	100%
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	5,000	55	320	4,700	15	545	100%
DUNS	2,100	45	130	2,000	20	330	100%
JEDBURGH	4,500	10	145	4,400	–	70	100%
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	3,600	20	155	3,500	5	755	100%
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	7,000	25	445	6,600	5	1,015	100%
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	4,000	10	200	3,800	15	190	100%
AYR	13,900	65	870	13,100	15	905	100%
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	7,600	25	325	7,300	5	1,310	61%
ARDROSSAN	6,700	45	405	6,300	15	590	100%
LANARK	4,700	25	200	4,500	<5	1,035	100%
CLYDE	22,900	190	1,300	21,700	25	2,515	100%
GLASGOW	26,500	150	1,015	25,600	55	1,630	60%
HAMILTON	19,400	125	1,010	18,500	55	3,170	100%
ARGYLL	5,600	55	290	5,400	20	530	94%
FALKIRK	7,800	60	375	7,500	5	880	100%
STIRLING	10,800	65	410	10,400	10	1,150	93%
FIFE	17,500	130	1,110	16,500	25	2,235	99%
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	3,900	25	220	3,700	<5	265	100%
PERTH	10,300	90	435	9,900	20	1,160	86%
DUNDEE	8,900	65	890	8,000	60	785	100%
ANGUS	10,000	30	400	9,600	10	1,130	97%
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	10,900	105	835	10,100	15	775	100%
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	6,000	25	310	5,700	50	610	84%
GORDON	10,400	20	415	10,000	<5	850	100%
BUCHAN	8,400	15	385	8,100	10	915	100%
MORAY	5,200	20	330	4,900	5	290	71%
ABERNETHY	900	10	60	900	5	40	100%
INVERNESS	4,600	15	210	4,400	10	365	79%
LOCHABER	800	20	50	800	–	30	100%
ROSS	1,500	60	130	1,400	5	190	95%
SUTHERLAND	500	25	35	500	<5	285	86%
CAITHNESS	900	<5	50	800	<5	75	100%
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	500	<5	20	500	<5	70	75%
UIST	300	5	5	300	–	<5	83%
LEWIS	800	15	45	800	–	–	91%
ORKNEY	2,100	20	85	2,100	<5	170	100%
ENGLAND	1,800	20	155	1,700	–	30	86%
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	2,300	30	90	2,200	<5	210	75%
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	297,400	2,015	15,810	283,600	605	30,260	92%

Table 2: Presbytery reporting

6.4.2 Membership

Presbyteries	Number of Congregations as at 31 st Dec 2021	Membership as at 31 st Dec 2021	Admissions			Removals		
			Profession of Faith	By Certificate	Restoration or Resolution	By Death	By Certificate	Otherwise
EDINBURGH	70	18,700	25	80	65	590	125	260
WEST LOTHIAN	26	6,700	10	25	5	200	45	40
LOTHIAN	42	9,800	10	35	45	305	60	335
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	22	4,700	<5	25	25	160	35	125
DUNS	13	2,000	25	5	10	80	10	40
JEDBURGH	16	4,400	<5	5	<5	130	5	10
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	19	3,500	5	10	5	95	15	45
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	32	6,600	10	5	10	255	20	175
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	18	3,800	–	<5	<5	130	5	65
AYR	48	13,100	10	30	25	460	50	360
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	23	7,300	10	15	–	130	25	170
ARDROSSAN	27	6,300	5	30	10	265	55	85
LANARK	20	4,500	10	5	5	165	10	25
CLYDE	73	21,700	45	90	55	750	130	420
GLASGOW	128	25,600	65	50	35	535	85	400
HAMILTON	72	18,500	40	65	20	665	135	205
ARGYLL	47	5,400	<5	30	20	160	50	80
FALKIRK	29	7,500	15	15	30	290	20	60
STIRLING	45	10,400	10	30	20	335	30	50
FIFE	77	16,500	15	80	35	635	105	365
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	19	3,700	<5	25	<5	105	10	110
PERTH	35	9,900	10	35	45	295	65	70
DUNDEE	35	8,000	15	25	25	285	115	495
ANGUS	31	9,600	<5	20	10	340	30	30
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	30	10,100	5	40	60	355	60	415
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	19	5,700	<5	10	10	135	5	170
GORDON	28	10,000	<5	20	–	310	25	80
BUCHAN	34	8,100	<5	5	<5	220	30	130
MORAY	21	4,900	–	10	10	115	15	200
ABERNETHY	10	900	<5	<5	10	35	5	20
INVERNESS	30	4,400	<5	5	5	125	35	50
LOCHABER	14	800	10	<5	<5	25	10	10
ROSS	21	1,400	15	20	20	60	5	65
SUTHERLAND	14	500	<5	<5	20	20	<5	15
CAITHNESS	9	800	–	<5	<5	30	<5	20
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	8	500	<5	<5	<5	5	5	10
UIST	6	300	<5	<5	<5	5	–	–
LEWIS	11	800	10	10	–	25	10	10
ORKNEY	19	2,100	–	10	15	70	5	5
ENGLAND	7	1,700	–	<5	15	30	5	120
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	16	2,200	<5	<5	25	25	<5	65
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	1,264	283,600	430	870	715	8,955	1,465	5,390

Table 3: Presbytery membership figures

6.4.3 Persons and Agencies in Scotland for 2021

The membership statistics may be stated thus, rounded to the nearest 5 people:

	Removals by Death	8,955	
Less	Admissions by Profession	<u>430</u>	8,525
	Removals by Certificate	1,465	
Less	Admissions by Certificate	<u>870</u>	595
	Other Removals	5,390	
Less	Restoration	<u>715</u>	4,675
	Total decrease		13,795

And shown graphically in Figure 1, below.

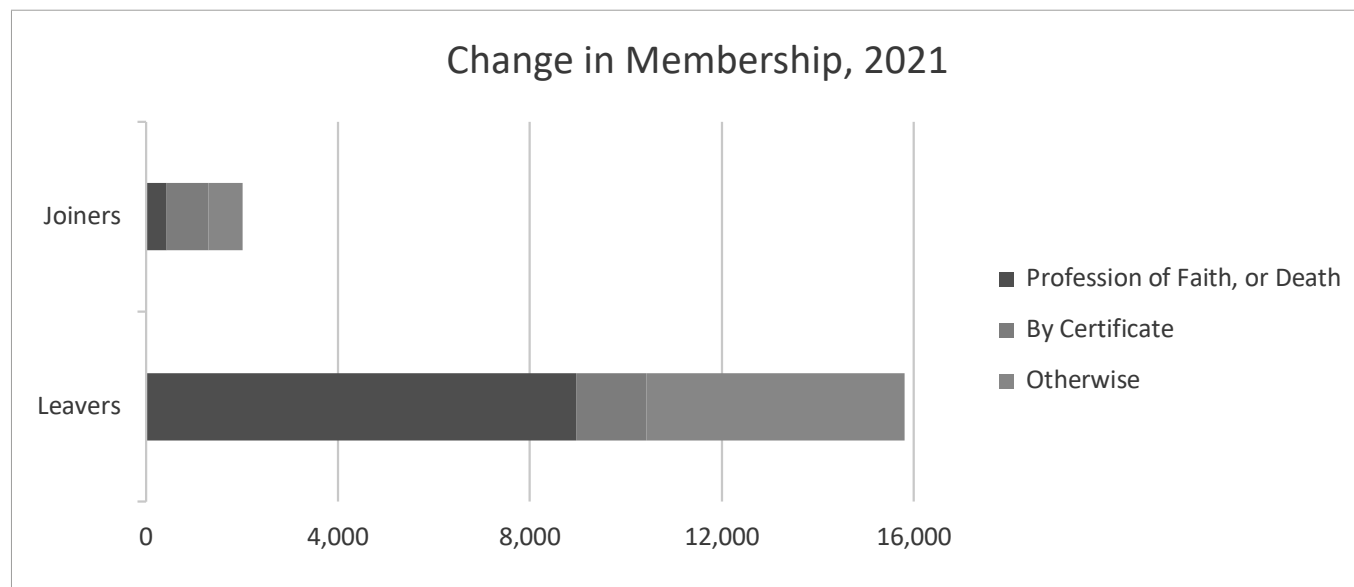


Figure 1: Leavers and Joiners in 2021

6.4.4 Young People and Adults not on the Communion Roll

Work with children and young people was particularly affected throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and Scotland remained in lockdown in the first part of 2021. The data presented below should be read with this in mind.

Reports from the Presbyteries showed that as at 31 December 2021:

1. The number of children and young people aged 17 years and under who are involved in the life of the congregation was 26,755;
2. The number of people aged 18 years and over, whose names are not on the Communion Roll, but who are involved in the life of the congregations was 10,775 and
3. The number of children who receive Holy Communion in terms of Act V, 2000, Section 15 was 1,610, 6% of the total.

Presbyteries	Membership as at 31st Dec 2021	Children under 17	Children receiving Communion	Adults not on Communion roll
EDINBURGH	18,700	2,410	295	1,160
WEST LOTHIAN	6,700	1,340	45	195
LOTHIAN	9,800	850	105	495
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	4,700	190	10	170
DUNS	2,000	105	5	115
JEDBURGH	4,400	155	10	<5
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	3,500	100	15	25
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	6,600	110	10	55
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	3,800	175	<5	65
AYR	13,100	880	40	165
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	7,300	310	35	85
ARDROSSAN	6,300	375	15	115
LANARK	4,500	820	85	230
CLYDE	21,700	3,795	85	640
GLASGOW	25,600	3,135	195	680
HAMILTON	18,500	3,470	100	525
ARGYLL	5,400	105	<5	220
FALKIRK	7,500	840	65	255
STIRLING	10,400	800	50	305
FIFE	16,500	930	90	345
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	3,700	135	–	90
PERTH	9,900	835	10	475
DUNDEE	8,000	695	55	200
ANGUS	9,600	370	45	385
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	10,100	940	30	260
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	5,700	160	20	45
GORDON	10,000	555	50	235
BUCHAN	8,100	455	–	75
MORAY	4,900	275	10	190
ABERNETHY	900	75	10	160
INVERNESS	4,400	345	50	465
LOCHABER	800	55	<5	115
ROSS	1,400	110	<5	405
SUTHERLAND	500	75	<5	75
CAITHNESS	800	60	<5	325
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	500	10	–	310
UIST	300	35	–	220
LEWIS	800	315	25	805
ORKNEY	2,100	115	15	95
ENGLAND	1,700	65	<5	<5
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	2,200	165	15	25
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	283,600	26,755	1,610	10,775

Table 4: Young People and Adherents

6.4.5 Occasional Offices

Church of Scotland congregations:

- baptised or gave thanks for 1,280 people, of whom 120 were adult baptisms, 2.7% of Scottish births in 2021,
- celebrated 1,155 marriages, 4.9% of mixed-sex weddings registered in Scotland, and
- conducted 14,265 funerals, 22.4% of those who died in Scotland in 2021.

Presbyteries	Baptisms			Weddings	Funerals
	All baptisms	Adult baptisms	Birth Thanksgiving Services		
EDINBURGH	95	10	5	90	870
WEST LoTHIAN	50	<5	10	30	430
LoTHIAN	70	10	5	55	525
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	20	<5	<5	25	195
DUNS	10	<5	<5	15	125
JEDBURGH	15	–	–	10	180
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	20	<5	–	30	145
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	35	–	<5	30	315
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	15	<5	5	15	195
AYR	75	5	<5	60	765
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	25	–	5	10	250
ARDROSSAN	20	<5	<5	25	430
LANARK	20	<5	<5	15	340
CLYDE	115	10	15	75	1,165
GLASGOW	105	20	10	50	1,025
HAMILTON	115	20	5	75	1,200
ARGYLL	20	<5	–	40	370
FALKIRK	25	<5	<5	20	465
STIRLING	40	<5	<5	35	500
FIFE	65	5	10	80	1,045
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	20	–	–	40	155
PERTH	15	<5	<5	40	340
DUNDEE	45	10	5	15	270
ANGUS	35	<5	5	35	425
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	35	<5	–	35	570
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	10	–	5	20	130
GORDON	35	<5	<5	25	380
BUCHAN	15	–	<5	15	220
MORAY	10	–	<5	15	190
ABERNETHY	5	<5	–	10	85
INVERNESS	15	<5	<5	10	185
LOCHABER	<5	–	–	10	90
ROSS	10	<5	<5	5	140
SUTHERLAND	5	<5	–	10	70
CAITHNESS	5	–	–	10	140
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	<5	–	–	<5	35
UIST	<5	<5	–	<5	30
LEWIS	20	<5	–	20	95
ORKNEY	5	–	<5	40	105
ENGLAND	15	<5	–	5	45
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	20	–	5	10	35
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	1,280	120	125	1,155	14,265
% Scotland	2.7%			4.9%	22.4%

Table 5: Presbytery baptisms, weddings, funerals figures

6.4.6 Leadership

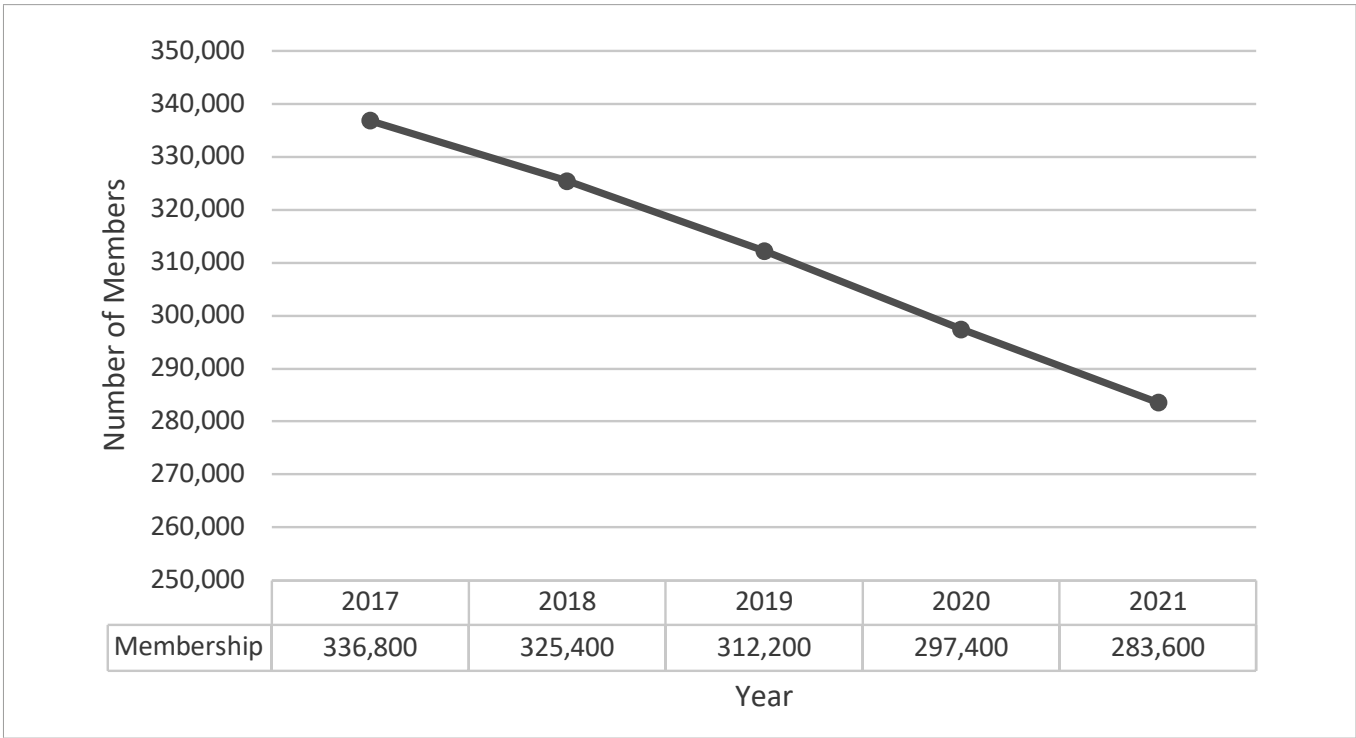
There were 23,575 elders in the Church of Scotland of whom 42.4% are male and 57.6% female. Elders account for 8.3% of the membership.

Presbyteries	Elders			Other leaders		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
EDINBURGH	805	1,085	1,895	45	90	130
WEST LOTHIAN	275	335	610	80	135	215
LOTHIAN	330	430	765	30	55	85
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	160	175	335	25	40	65
DUNS	75	90	165	15	30	45
JEDBURGH	105	180	290	15	30	45
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	120	175	295	5	15	20
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	230	270	500	85	135	220
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	90	120	205	15	35	50
AYR	485	705	1,190	55	110	165
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	170	245	420	20	20	40
ARDROSSAN	245	365	610	50	100	150
LANARK	150	195	350	15	20	40
CLYDE	1,005	1,345	2,350	140	220	360
GLASGOW	730	1,030	1,755	130	250	385
HAMILTON	890	1,185	2,070	130	210	345
ARGYLL	250	350	600	50	80	130
FALKIRK	270	420	685	45	100	140
STIRLING	355	470	825	50	85	140
FIFE	565	880	1,440	55	120	175
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	125	150	275	20	30	50
PERTH	265	345	610	5	10	15
DUNDEE	325	380	705	75	115	190
ANGUS	270	410	680	25	40	60
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	405	530	935	20	40	55
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	95	125	225	<5	<5	5
GORDON	225	315	540	15	40	55
BUCHAN	205	285	485	75	150	225
MORAY	90	175	265	10	35	40
ABERNETHY	35	60	95	<5	10	10
INVERNESS	160	165	325	30	50	80
LOCHABER	40	70	110	15	35	50
ROSS	90	95	185	25	40	65
SUTHERLAND	20	45	70	10	15	30
CAITHNESS	50	50	100	15	45	60
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	20	20	40	25	20	45
UIST	20	5	25	<5	10	10
LEWIS	55	-	55	30	25	55
ORKNEY	80	120	200	10	25	35
ENGLAND	60	85	145	-	-	-
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	70	80	150	25	25	50
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	10,005	13,570	23,575	1,495	2,630	4,125

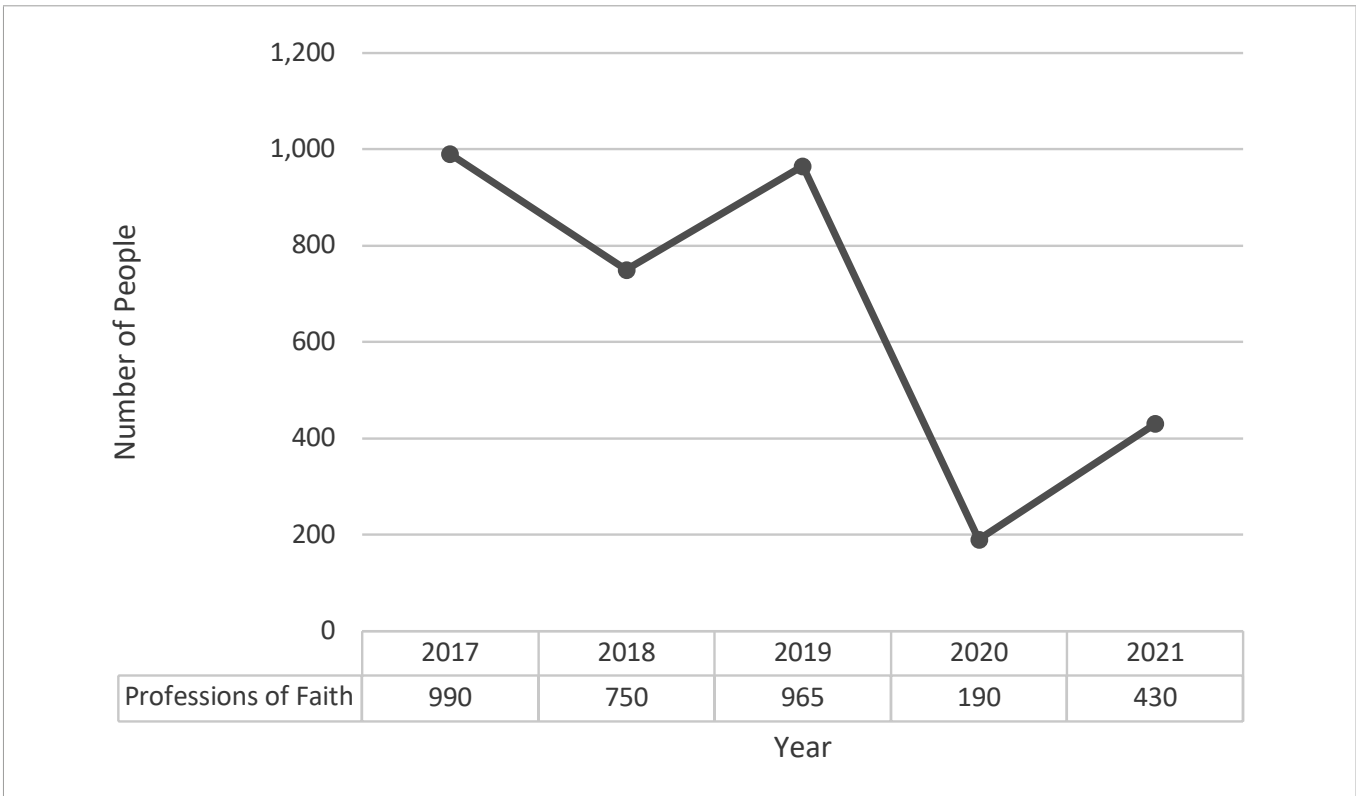
Table 6: Presbytery leadership figures

6.5 Comparative Graphs

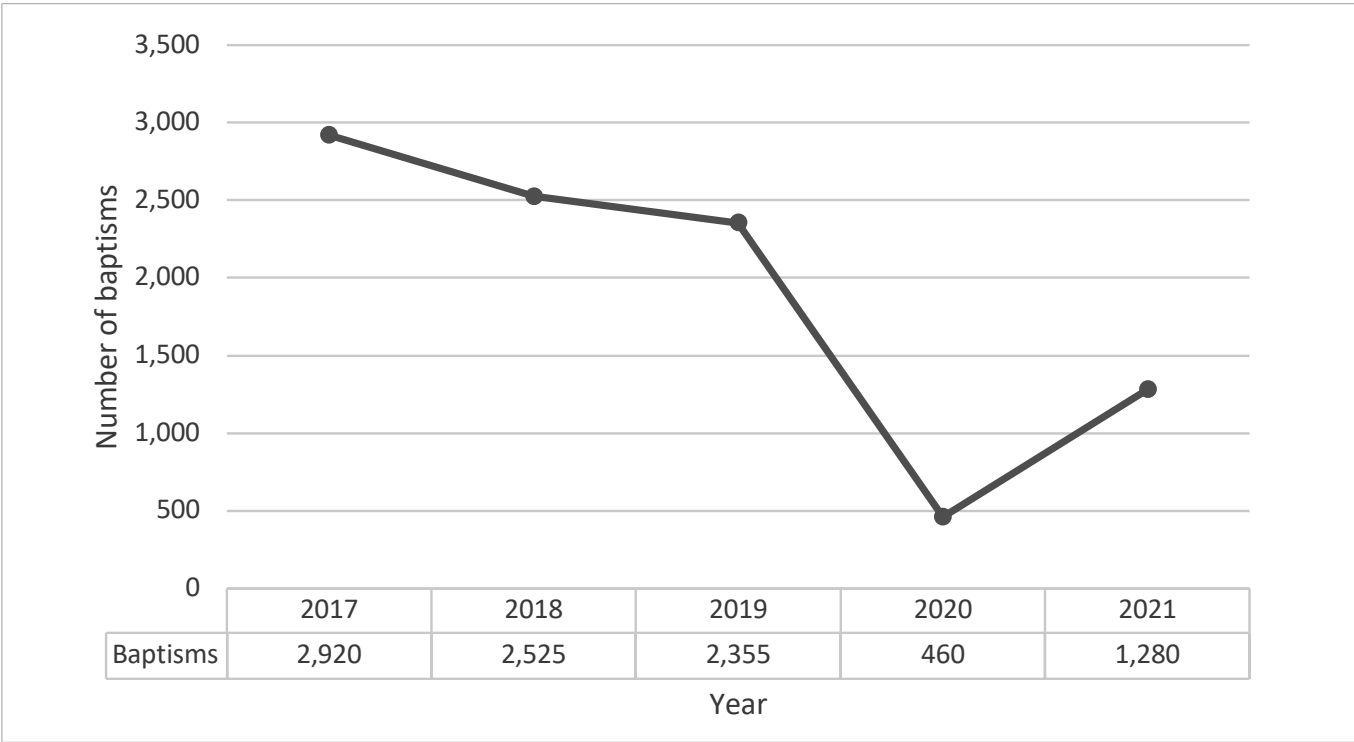
6.5.1 Membership



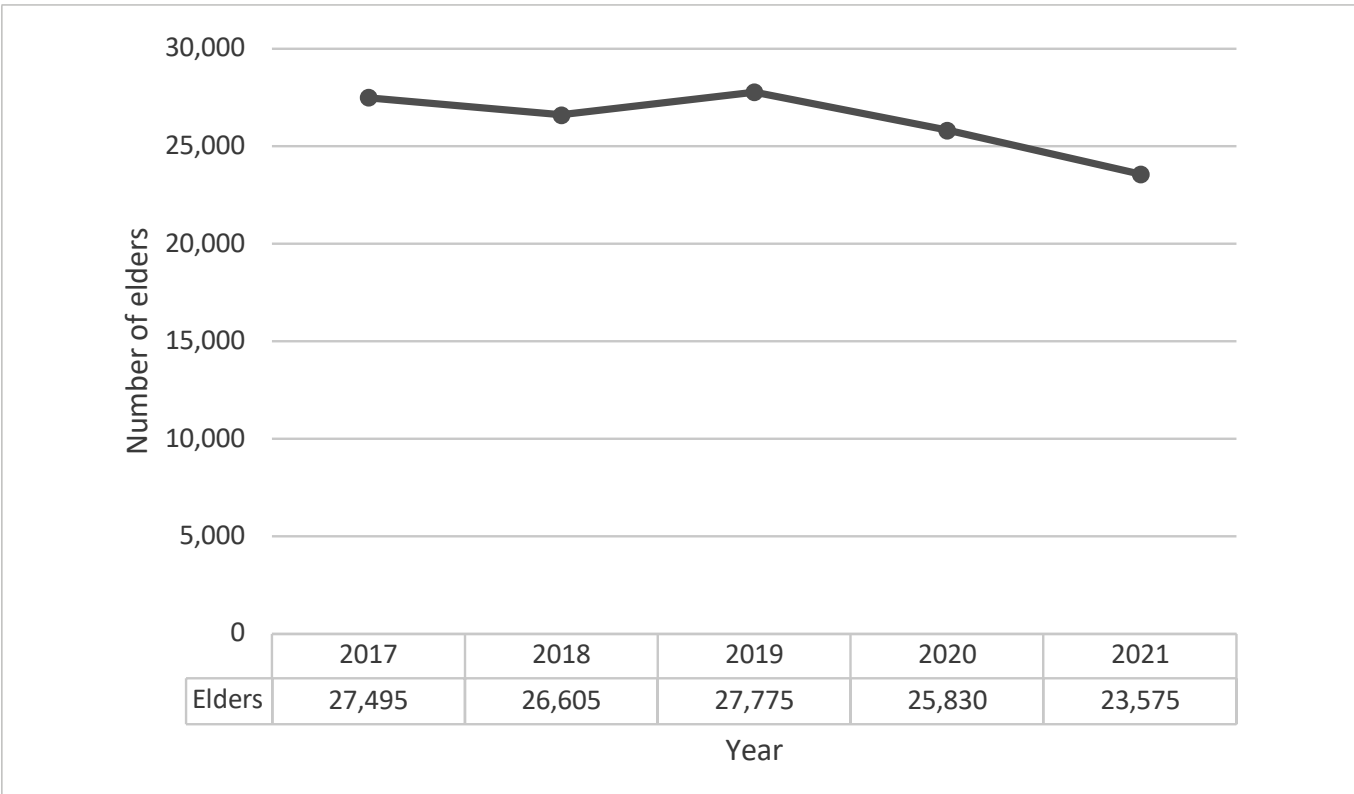
6.5.2 Professions of Faith



6.5.3 Baptisms



6.5.4 Elders



6.6 Public Worship in 2021

Congregational statistics have been gathered on alternative forms of worship to reflect the continuing changes of practice resulting from the pandemic. Whilst many congregations did start reopening buildings from 26th March 2021, alternative worship provision including online services, 'phone-in' services, distribution of service recordings or printed worship sheets continued. Work was undertaken with other denominations across the UK and Ireland to develop guidelines for gathering such congregational statistics. It is very difficult to obtain accurate estimates for the number of online worshippers. However, the levels of engagement are indicative of the wide reach of worship, and the efforts of congregations across the country to allow all who wish to, to worship with their local congregation.

The figures for in-person and accessible worship attendance for Presbyteries are given in Tables 6a and 6b. The overall response rate to these questions was lower – 73% – with no responses from the Presbyteries of England, Hamilton, Lanark, Lochcarron-Skye, Uist and Wigtown and Stranraer.

57% of congregations offered online worship, with 38% making alternative offline provisions such as phone-in services or worship sheets.

From the congregations who responded, we find that around 61,570 people attended worship in person (22% of members), 45,350 online, and 8,275 in other offline ways. Counts are estimated during a 'regular' week in 2021, i.e. not a major festival such as Easter or Christmas. The figures may include double-counting where people take part in worship in a variety of places, as well as undercounting where a number of people watch on the same device. The estimates provide an indication of the levels of engagement in worship outwith the building. It is not possible to accurately estimate the number of individuals viewing online worship or utilising posted material across the Church as a whole.

Presbytery	Age range of worshippers						Number of worshippers	Membership as at 31 st Dec 2021	% Membership attending worship
	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-64	65-84	85 and over			
EDINBURGH	9%	4%	11%	24%	41%	10%	4,675	18,700	25%
WEST LOTHIAN	7%	1%	8%	23%	53%	7%	1,340	6,700	20%
LOTHIAN	8%	3%	9%	24%	48%	9%	2,365	9,800	24%
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	7%	2%	7%	24%	55%	6%	620	4,700	13%
DUNS	5%	1%	5%	19%	62%	8%	455	2,000	23%
JEDBURGH	3%	1%	3%	18%	64%	10%	560	4,400	13%
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	7%	3%	7%	25%	50%	7%	600	3,500	17%
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	5%	1%	7%	21%	60%	7%	905	6,600	14%
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	9%	1%	4%	20%	59%	6%	580	3,800	15%
AYR	7%	2%	8%	23%	52%	8%	2,525	13,100	19%
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	7%	4%	11%	25%	47%	6%	1,695	7,300	23%
ARDROSSAN	12%	3%	9%	20%	45%	12%	1,435	6,300	23%
LANARK	9%	3%	9%	22%	52%	5%	1,125	4,500	25%
CLYDE	8%	3%	10%	22%	47%	10%	5,105	21,700	24%
GLASGOW	11%	4%	11%	23%	43%	8%	7,695	25,600	30%
HAMILTON	8%	3%	10%	24%	48%	8%	4,995	18,500	27%
ARGYLL	4%	2%	5%	22%	61%	7%	1,520	5,400	28%
FALKIRK	7%	2%	7%	23%	54%	8%	1,290	7,500	17%
STIRLING	10%	2%	8%	23%	49%	9%	2,585	10,400	25%
FIFE	8%	3%	8%	18%	55%	9%	3,790	16,500	23%
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	1%	1%	5%	16%	69%	9%	590	3,700	16%
PERTH	7%	3%	7%	20%	52%	10%	1,615	9,900	16%
DUNDEE	7%	2%	8%	18%	53%	12%	1,940	8,000	24%
ANGUS	8%	2%	5%	21%	53%	11%	1,185	9,600	12%
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	5%	2%	8%	24%	52%	9%	1,770	10,100	18%
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	8%	3%	10%	21%	48%	10%	810	5,700	14%
GORDON	10%	3%	11%	24%	44%	7%	1,125	10,000	11%
BUCHAN	5%	2%	6%	26%	54%	7%	1,025	8,100	13%
MORAY	6%	5%	9%	21%	51%	8%	880	4,900	18%
ABERNETHY	6%	1%	6%	32%	47%	8%	450	900	50%
INVERNESS	11%	3%	9%	19%	50%	8%	1,035	4,400	24%
LOCHABER	5%	6%	6%	22%	49%	13%	310	800	39%
ROSS	5%	2%	7%	21%	55%	9%	655	1,400	47%
SUTHERLAND	6%	2%	6%	22%	58%	7%	330	500	66%
CAITHNESS	4%	3%	6%	25%	56%	6%	290	800	36%
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	3%	1%	4%	20%	64%	7%	215	500	43%
UIST	13%	4%	11%	30%	44%	7%	215	300	72%
LEWIS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	800	-
ORKNEY	10%	2%	8%	24%	51%	5%	555	2,100	26%
ENGLAND	9%	4%	10%	28%	41%	9%	320	1,700	19%
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	7%	6%	19%	26%	31%	11%	390	2,200	18%

Table 7a: Presbytery in-person attendance figures

Presbytery	Able to offer online worship	Estimate of online worshippers	Able to offer alternative offline worship	Estimate of worshippers engaging with alternative offline worship	Membership as at 31 st Dec 2021	Response rate
EDINBURGH	95%	4,000	45%	480	18,700	83%
WEST LOTHIAN	96%	1,200	52%	205	6,700	88%
LOTHIAN	87%	1,550	58%	290	9,800	98%
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	75%	800	50%	100	4,700	100%
DUNS	100%	650	15%	10	2,000	100%
JEDBURGH	50%	350	50%	130	4,400	25%
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	50%	300	50%	90	3,500	53%
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	53%	400	43%	285	6,600	94%
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	-	-	-	-	(3,800)	0%
AYR	83%	3,500	57%	680	13,100	88%
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	43%	700	40%	95	7,300	50%
ARDROSSAN	85%	1,750	60%	140	6,300	74%
LANARK	-	-	-	-	4,500	0%
CLYDE	80%	5,800	53%	495	21,700	85%
GLASGOW	92%	3,950	49%	860	25,600	55%
HAMILTON	-	-	-	-	18,500	0%
ARGYLL	53%	1,150	47%	230	5,400	69%
FALKIRK	70%	800	55%	335	7,500	69%
STIRLING	84%	1,100	80%	375	10,400	56%
FIFE	88%	3,200	62%	855	16,500	76%
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	37%	1,750	47%	100	3,700	100%
PERTH	89%	700	63%	175	9,900	54%
DUNDEE	83%	1,250	41%	510	8,000	100%
ANGUS	88%	1,000	71%	155	9,600	55%
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	80%	850	30%	45	10,100	59%
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	76%	650	41%	65	5,700	89%
GORDON	94%	700	50%	100	10,000	57%
BUCHAN	82%	900	24%	120	8,100	50%
MORAY	57%	550	86%	210	4,900	67%
ABERNETHY	83%	250	67%	35	900	60%
INVERNESS	44%	950	32%	115	4,400	100%
LOCHABER	86%	350	86%	440	800	100%
ROSS	82%	1,050	59%	140	1,400	81%
SUTHERLAND	83%	200	67%	70	500	43%
CAITHNESS	75%	100	75%	60	800	44%
LOHCARRON-SKYE	-	-	-	-	(500)	0%
UIST	-	-	-	-	(300)	0%
LEWIS	73%	1,450	80%	95	800	100%
ORKNEY	50%	500	29%	180	2,100	67%
ENGLAND	-	-	-	-	(1,700)	0%
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	100%	950	22%	5	2,200	56%
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	57%	45,350	38%	8,275	254,400*	73%

*Total Church of Scotland membership figure excludes those Presbyteries who provided a nil return for Additional Questions Table 7b: Presbytery online and alternative offline worship figures

6.7 New Worshipping Communities

Information on New Worshipping Communities were requested as part of the Forsyth Report agreed by the General Assembly of 2019, for reporting from 2021.

New Worshipping Communities can take a multitude of forms, and must show evidence of all the following characteristics:

- **Missional:** the focus is on people beyond existing congregations;
- **Contextual:** their format, culture and activities are shaped by the particular setting;
- **Consistency:** a community is developing, with some of the same people participating regularly;
- **Ecclesial:** it sees itself as part of, and is developing connections with, the wider Church;
- **Formational:** participants are encouraged to grow in Christian faith and character

Additional questions were included in the Congregational Statistics to obtain information on those congregations and Presbyteries with a New Worshipping Community during 2021. We present in Table 8 some overall figures; information gathered through this collection will form the basis of further research within Pioneering Ministries.

The overall response rate was 61%, with no responses from the Presbyteries of England, Hamilton, Lanark, Lochcarron-Skye, Uist and Wigtown and Stranraer.

As with other areas of church life, New Worshipping Communities have been greatly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic with many congregations describing communities that had not operated since the start of the pandemic and moving online.

Within the Church of Scotland:

- 31% of congregations offered at least one New Worshipping Community, with a number of congregations offering more than one.
- Over 400 New Worshipping Communities were reported to be operating in congregations,
- 4 New Worshipping Communities operated at a Presbytery-wide level.
- The majority of New Worshipping Communities were described as Messy Church (35%) and Café Church (14%).
- Other types included Youth Church, Older People's Church, and Forest Church.

A number of New Worshipping Communities were organised in collaboration with other Church of Scotland congregations, other denominations, and some with other organisations. More detailed analysis of information collected on New Worshipping Communities will be undertaken during 2022 within the Faith Nurture Forum.

Presbyteries	Number of New Worshipping Communities at a Presbytery Level	Number of New Worshipping Communities within Congregations	% Congregations with New Worshipping Communities	Number of Congregations as at 31 st Dec 2021	Response Rate
EDINBURGH		35	37%	70	81%
WEST LoTHIAN		20	48%	26	88%
LoTHIAN		15	50%	46	87%
MELROSE AND PEEBLES		15	30%	28	71%
DUNS		5	33%	13	92%
JEDBURGH		–	0%	16	25%
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE		<5	13%	19	53%
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT		<5	7%	32	91%
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER		–	0%	18	0%
AYR		10	19%	48	88%
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	3	15	70%	28	36%
ARDROSSAN		15	45%	27	74%
LANARK		–	0%	20	0%
CLYDE		20	30%	78	77%
GLASGOW		25	25%	129	50%
HAMILTON		–	0%	74	0%
ARGYLL	1	5	20%	52	58%
FALKIRK		10	25%	29	69%
STIRLING		20	40%	45	56%
FIFE		60	58%	79	75%
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE		<5	11%	19	100%
PERTH		15	60%	35	43%
DUNDEE		–	0%	35	100%
ANGUS		15	41%	31	55%
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND		10	35%	34	50%
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE		10	35%	19	89%
GORDON		–	0%	28	57%
BUCHAN		10	47%	34	50%
MORAY		<5	29%	21	67%
ABERNETHY		<5	17%	10	60%
INVERNESS		10	20%	34	88%
LOCHABER		15	57%	14	100%
ROSS		10	29%	21	81%
SUTHERLAND		–	0%	14	43%
CAITHNESS		–	0%	9	44%
LOCHCARRON-SKYE		–	0%	8	0%
UIST		–	0%	6	73%
LEWIS		<5	13%	11	0%
ORKNEY		<5	25%	21	57%
ENGLAND		–	0%	7	0%
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES		<5	25%	16	50%
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	4	410	31%	1304	61%

Table 8: New Worshipping Communities

6.8 Congregational Activities

Congregational activities have been greatly affected throughout the COVID-19 pandemic with some congregations unable to open their buildings to large groups or offer in person activities. This data was not reported upon in 2020 due to this disruption.

Congregations are asked whether they engage in activities relating to:

- School chaplaincy
- Youth work
- Community development
- International links
- Environmental issues
- Political issues
- Health issues
- Economic inequality
- Food Poverty

Data was received from all but two Presbyteries, resulting in the following summary graph:

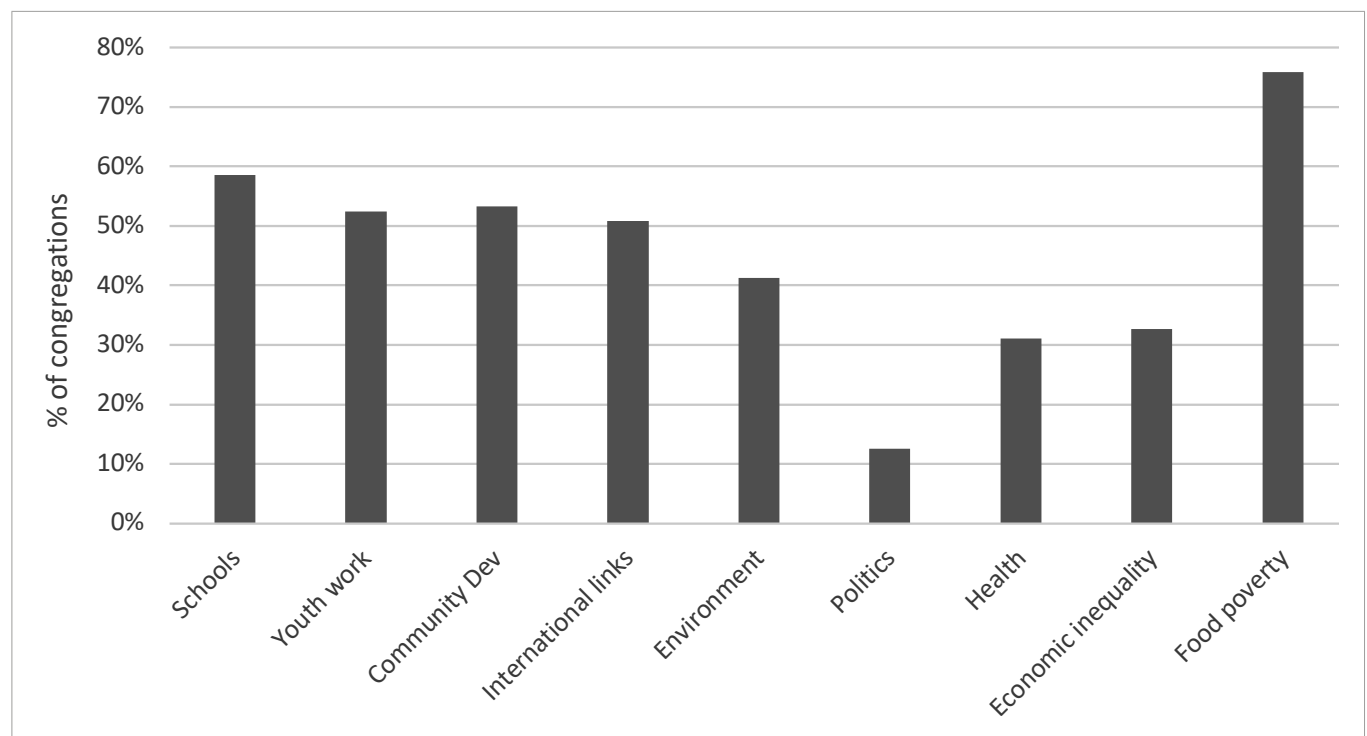


Figure 2: Congregational activities

Alleviating food poverty (76%) and School chaplaincy (59%) were the most common activities in congregations of the Church of Scotland. Engagement with political issues was the least common with only 13% of congregations.

Since 2019, there has been a marked fall in engagement with young people, with school chaplaincy levels and youth work levels falling from pre-pandemic levels of 77% and 66% to 59% and 52% respectively. Community development has also suffered, falling from 67% to today's 53%, and alleviating food poverty from 83% to 76%.

Presbyteries	Schools	Youth work	Community development	International links	Environment	Politics	Health	Economic inequality	Food p'rtly
EDINBURGH	71%	67%	67%	66%	64%	29%	47%	56%	89%
WEST LOTHIAN	58%	73%	50%	58%	42%	19%	50%	35%	85%
LOTHIAN	65%	65%	72%	59%	57%	11%	39%	39%	87%
MELROSE AND PEEBLES	43%	18%	43%	46%	39%	4%	14%	21%	57%
DUNS	55%	36%	55%	45%	55%	9%	36%	18%	100%
JEDBURGH	56%	50%	31%	31%	31%	6%	25%	13%	81%
ANNANDALE AND ESKDALE	63%	42%	63%	58%	42%	11%	37%	32%	74%
DUMFRIES AND KIRKCUDBRIGHT	44%	9%	22%	50%	16%	3%	13%	13%	41%
WIGTOWN AND STRANRAER	44%	39%	28%	28%	28%	0%	0%	11%	94%
AYR	71%	44%	42%	38%	29%	6%	23%	33%	69%
IRVINE AND KILMARNOCK	61%	57%	39%	43%	39%	18%	46%	25%	68%
ARDROSSAN	41%	56%	52%	52%	26%	0%	15%	30%	89%
LANARK	85%	70%	75%	65%	30%	15%	35%	50%	85%
CLYDE	73%	71%	62%	51%	40%	13%	44%	36%	84%
GLASGOW	70%	64%	64%	59%	50%	25%	41%	43%	67%
HAMILTON	65%	62%	62%	54%	43%	15%	41%	36%	85%
ARGYLL	33%	35%	31%	29%	37%	6%	25%	15%	60%
FALKIRK	59%	52%	45%	59%	45%	3%	28%	38%	83%
STIRLING	44%	51%	60%	53%	44%	16%	29%	33%	82%
FIFE	61%	44%	58%	66%	49%	15%	33%	33%	85%
DUNKELD AND MEIGLE	37%	37%	47%	37%	26%	5%	16%	37%	63%
PERTH	57%	69%	57%	29%	40%	3%	34%	40%	83%
DUNDEE	60%	54%	49%	60%	46%	9%	37%	49%	86%
ANGUS	65%	48%	55%	45%	42%	10%	23%	32%	74%
ABERDEEN AND SHETLAND	55%	48%	58%	36%	36%	12%	30%	24%	82%
KINCARDINE AND DEESIDE	79%	58%	68%	58%	42%	5%	32%	21%	68%
GORDON	86%	64%	61%	54%	54%	14%	21%	39%	75%
BUCHAN	41%	50%	21%	41%	9%	0%	12%	18%	62%
MORAY	57%	57%	48%	52%	29%	19%	19%	24%	81%
ABERNETHY	70%	70%	70%	90%	80%	30%	60%	50%	90%
INVERNESS	33%	30%	30%	33%	33%	0%	17%	10%	57%
LOCHABER	71%	36%	64%	50%	43%	7%	14%	21%	86%
ROSS	50%	63%	63%	63%	25%	6%	19%	19%	75%
SUTHERLAND	57%	21%	57%	29%	50%	14%	14%	21%	86%
CAITHNESS	33%	22%	33%	22%	22%	11%	22%	11%	67%
LOCHCARRON-SKYE	33%	67%	33%	33%	0%	0%	33%	0%	100%
UIST	80%	80%	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	40%	40%
LEWIS									
ORKNEY	33%	38%	43%	52%	29%	14%	10%	19%	48%
ENGLAND	29%	14%	71%	57%	57%	14%	29%	57%	86%
INTERNATIONAL CHARGES	17%	42%	67%	67%	42%	25%	42%	42%	58%
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND	59%	52%	53%	51%	41%	13%	31%	33%	76%

Table 9: Congregational activities

In the name of the Committee

JOHN CHALMERS, *Convener*
DAVID HARRISON, *Vice-Convener*
JAMES MCNEILL, *Administrative Trustee*

Appendix 1

CONGREGATIONAL INCOME ANALYSIS

CONGREGATIONAL INCOME

	2019 Actual £'000	2020 Actual £'000	2020 Increase/ (Decrease) %	2021 Provisional £'000	2021 Increase/ (Decrease) %	2022 Projected £'000	2022 Increase/ (Decrease) %	2023 Projected £'000	2023 Increase/ (Decrease) %
Offerings	60,851	52,852	(13.1%)	54,707	3.5%	55,000	0.5%	58,000	5.5%
Tax Recovery on Offerings	10,212	10,246	0.3%	9,611	(6.2%)	10,000	4.1%	10,500	5.0%
Total Offerings	71,063	63,098	(11.2%)	64,318	1.9%	65,000	1.1%	68,500	5.4%
Other Ordinary Income	15,945	8,492	(46.7%)	8,213	(3.3%)	10,500	27.8%	13,800	31.4%
Total Ordinary Income	87,008	71,590	(17.7%)	72,531	1.3%	75,500	4.1%	82,300	9.0%

Note: Excludes income which is not assessable as well as endowment, glebe and consolidated fabric fund income

Appendix 2**Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities****Budget 2023-2027****National Budget Income**

	Budget 2023 £000s	Indicative Budgets			
		2024 £000s	2025 £000s	2026 £000s	2027 £000s
Congregational Contributions	39,269	37,490	35,117	33,396	32,210
Stipend Endowment Income (and Glebe Rent)	3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640	3,640
Investment Income	1,801	1,801	1,801	1,801	1,801
Other Income	3,577	3,592	3,640	3,661	3,704
Total Income	48,287	46,523	44,198	42,499	41,355

National Budget Expenditure

Parish Ministries direct costs	35,811	33,492	32,000	30,700	29,673
Faith Nurture Forum other costs	4,406	4,395	4,375	4,355	4,365
Faith Impact Forum costs	1,873	1,689	1,689	1,689	1,689
Office of the General Assembly	1,249	1,270	1,276	1,289	1,298
Support and Services Departments:					
Office of Assembly Trustees	821	826	829	832	834
Safeguarding	388	385	385	385	385
Stewardship and Finance	1,506	1,454	1,470	1,477	1,482
Law	998	1,004	1,008	1,012	1,012
Information and Communications Technology	952	1,010	1,064	1,125	1,191
Facilities Management	1,008	1,021	1,036	1,052	1,070
Central Properties Department, Health and Safety	-	-	-	-	-
Human Resources	433	434	434	434	434
Media and Communications	584	587	592	597	602
	6,690	6,720	6,818	6,913	7,010

National Budget Operational Net Expenditure

Presbytery Funding	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440
Transition Funding	638	571	485	-	-
Strategic Projects	1,953	2,213	1,048	959	1,001
Net Expenditure	(5,773)	(5,268)	(4,933)	(4,847)	(5,121)

Other Funds including Housing and Loan Fund

Net income	497	497	497	497	497
Property improvement programme	(1,020)	(1,020)	(1,020)	(1,020)	(1,020)
Other Funds net expenditure	(523)	(523)	(523)	(523)	(523)

Overall Net Costs National Budget**CrossReach**

Operational Income	47,581	48,228	48,880	49,512	50,098
Operational Expenditure	(49,502)	(49,993)	(50,490)	(50,991)	(51,497)
Property improvement programme	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)
Total Net Costs	(2,421)	(2,265)	(2,110)	(1,979)	(1,899)

Unincorporated Entities Overall net costs to be met from reserves**Before Gains/Losses on Properties and Investments**

	(8,717)	(8,056)	(7,566)	(7,349)	(7,543)
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Appendix 3

'SEEDS for GROWTH' FUND REGULATIONS (REGS XX2022)

'Seeds for Growth' Fund Regulations

1. The Church of Scotland *Seeds for Growth Fund* ("the Fund") shall be established from 1 January 2023.
2. Responsibility for the Fund shall rest with the Assembly Trustees who act as the Trustees of the Unincorporated Entities Scottish Charity Number 011353 ("The Trustees"). The Trustees may establish a body to oversee the Fund on their behalf.
3. The purposes of the Fund are to support the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping communities through (i) the planting of new worshipping communities; (ii) work focused on the development of new forms and fresh expressions of church life; (iii) creative engagement with all sectors of society in particular with those aged 40 and under, in every case promoting the advancement of religion and the overarching purpose of the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church; and (iv) The enablement of community transformation motivated by Christian service. In the initial three years (2023 – 2026) the Fund shall prioritise the support of: (i) the planting of new worshipping communities and (ii) work with people aged 40 and under.
4. The Fund shall operate for a 7-year period until 31st December 2029. A review conducted by the Trustees shall take place after the first three years of operation and shall measure the success of the Fund against previously agreed criteria to determine future direction and investment.
5. The Fund shall replace the *Go For It* Fund. Administration of grants already awarded out of the *Go For It* Fund shall become the responsibility of the Fund. Monies already committed in the *Go For It Fund* at 31 December 2019 shall be transferred to the Fund.
6. An application to the Fund may be made by a Presbytery or a group of Presbyteries.
7. Applicants to the Fund should be able to show that they have worked diligently to: (i) raise funds from local sources (including the Presbytery/ies and congregation(s) making or involved in the application); and, (ii) raise funds from appropriate external sources. Funding, up to 100%, will not necessarily be contingent on funding being provided by any other body.
8. The Trustees shall provide core funding from the unrestricted funds held on behalf of the Unincorporated Entities. This money shall cover both grants to be paid from the Fund and the administration of the Fund.
9. The Fund may be supplemented by other funds raised within and beyond the Church.
10. The Terms of Reference for use of the Fund set out in the Schedule below shall be developed and monitored by the Trustees and any amendments shall be approved by the General Assembly as part of the annual reporting on the operation of the Fund. The Trustees may also fund grants from restricted funds held by the Unincorporated Entities if the purpose is consistent with donor restrictions.
11. The Trustees shall be responsible for monitoring the ongoing effectiveness of the Fund. The Trustees shall report annually on the work of the Fund to the General Assembly with a focus on how the Fund is achieving its primary aims as set out in section 3 of these Regulations.
12. If the General Assembly decides that the Fund shall be closed before 31st December 2029 any monies remaining in the Fund shall be transferred back to the General Fund.

Schedule

The *Seeds for Growth Fund* Implementation Group Terms of Reference

Committee

1. The *Seeds for Growth Fund* Implementation Group (the "Committee") is a Committee of the Assembly Trustees.
2. The purpose for which the Committee is established is to oversee the operation of the *Seeds for Growth Fund* on behalf of the Assembly Trustees. In carrying out those duties the Committee shall adhere to the relevant Regulations issued by the General Assembly and to the guidelines, criteria and governance requirements approved by the Assembly Trustees.
3. The size of individual grants, guidelines, criteria and governance requirements shall be reviewed annually by the Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Committee. Grants in excess of £75,000.00 shall require individual approval by the Assembly Trustees.

Purpose

- (a) the purpose of the Fund is to seek the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping communities through:
 - (i) the planting of new worshipping communities;
 - (ii) work focussed on the development of new forms and fresh expressions of church life; and
 - (iii) creative engagement with all sectors of society in particular with those aged 40 and under; and
 - (iv) the enablement of community transformation motivated by Christian service
- (b) the Committee shall, in all its determinations, promote the advancement of religion and the overarching purpose of the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church.

Criteria

The Committee shall assess applications in accordance with the following criteria.

1. Applications must come from Presbyteries or groups of Presbyteries. Collaboration with other partners, specifically including ecumenical co-operation, will be encouraged where such collaboration furthers either numerical or spiritual growth within the Church or community transformation motivated by Christian service.
2. Applications must demonstrate a visionary approach to church growth, church planting and pioneer mission and must set out the anticipated effect of the project at a congregational or Presbytery level and include a clear plan and measurable targets.
3. Applications must provide a realistic assessment of how the project will continue beyond the period of funding and whether it will generate growth elsewhere within the Church.
4. Applications must include means of developing and sharing related experiences and good practice across the Church.
5. Applications must be focused on a defined project.
6. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the following prioritisation:
 - Developing mission through new ecclesial communities and church planting
 - Engaging in intergenerational approaches to and participation in worship

Governance

1. The operation of the *Seeds for Growth Fund* shall be overseen by a Committee of nine persons, two of whom will be Assembly Trustees. The other members shall be appointed by the Assembly Trustees working in collaboration with the Nomination Committee. Members so appointed shall serve a three-year term, renewable unless otherwise determined by the Assembly Trustees. Of those first appointed, four shall serve three years renewable and three shall serve two years, renewable for a three-year term. Trustee members shall serve during their appointed term as an Assembly Trustee.
2. The Committee shall meet at least five times per year to consider strategy and applications. On special cause shown the Committee may consider an application outwith those times; but in so doing the Committee must determine both that there is an urgency as to the application which requires a special meeting and also that the application is of such importance that to consider it without comparison with other applications would not improperly disadvantage such potential applications.
3. In carrying out their duties the Committee will engage with applicants through regional teams and carry out the process of assessment in partnership with local Presbytery representatives. Each team shall be convened by a member of the Committee and shall comprise two members of the Committee, in addition to two other persons with local knowledge chosen by the Presbytery. Each team shall be appointed to work within the life-cycle of the purpose for which the grant application is being considered. Once a grant application has been approved by the Committee, a team shall report to the Committee both in respect of the terms of the grant and also for determinations on any matter requiring consideration outwith the terms of the grant.
4. A quorum of the Committee shall be five, whether attending in person or by electronic means. One attendee must be an Assembly Trustee and one must be the Convener or another trustee specifically nominated by the Convener for the purpose of the meeting in question. If meeting by electronic means, the Committee shall comply in all respects with the provisions of GA Act VI 2018 (Virtual Attendance at Meetings Act).
5. The Committee shall maintain Minutes of their meetings, duly approved by all members attending within two weeks of the meeting. The Minutes shall include a full account of the work of the regional "team" with a synopsis of all applications received and the reasoning for recommendations made to the Committee.
6. In respect that the Assembly Trustees are the Charity Trustees for the assets to be used by the *Seeds for Growth Fund*:
 - (i) the Minutes of meetings of the Committee shall be sent to the Assembly Trustees within one month of the meeting

- (ii) in carrying out their duties the Committee shall submit quarterly reports to the Assembly Trustees as to their administration of the assets of the Fund and any proposed strategy for future operation, such report to be in terms of a template to be provided by the Assembly Trustees
- (iii) the Committee shall maintain such accounts as the Assembly Trustees require
- (iv) the work of the Committee in considering and granting applications shall be carried out in accordance with a budgetary framework, agreed with the Assembly Trustees and
- (v) any liability arising out of the acting of a Committee member in good faith shall be borne as if the acting of an Assembly Trustee.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Supplementary Report.

Report

1. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS FOR THE HYBRID GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

1.1 Proposed amendments to Standing Orders for the General Assembly 2022 which will be held in a hybrid format (ie with some people present in person and others attending online) are set out after the Standing Orders in the Order of Proceedings. The section of deliverance to move these amendments has been anticipated in the Report of the Legal Questions Committee (section 2).

In the name of the Committee

DONALD G B MCCORKINDALE, *Convener*
SUSAN J PYM, *Vice-Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Secretary*

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE FAITH NURTURE FORUM MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Supplementary Report.
2. Agree the amended corrected ministries allocations for the Presbyteries of Annandale & Eskdale and Aberdeen & Shetland (*Appendix 1*)
3. Note the weightings applied to each Presbytery for the purpose of allocating ministries set out in *Appendix 1*. (*Appendix 1*)

Report**1. ALLOCATIONS AND WEIGHTINGS****1.1.** Decisions of the General Assembly of 2021

1.1. The General Assembly of 2021 agreed that *"Presbyteries should seek to implement by 2025 Presbytery Plans based around 600 fulltime equivalent ministries and a target of no more than 60 further charges vacant at any one time"* (Assembly Trustees, section 7 of their deliverance). The 2021 Assembly further agreed that 661 ministries should be allocated among the Presbyteries as set out in *Appendix 4* to the Forum's Supplementary Report. These allocations took account of population density and the weightings agreed by the 2011 Assembly, which the 2021 Assembly agreed to retain pending future review (Section 7). The Forum asked the Assembly to recognise that further work on weightings and allocations would take place in the coming year (Section 7.1.10).

1.2 Further Work

1.2.1 The Forum has carried out further work on weightings and allocations. Questions about the allocation for the Presbyteries of England, Annandale and Eskdale, and Duns, were raised on the floor of the General Assembly last year, and these have been adjusted. Consequently, two corrections to the allocations as agreed in *Appendix 4* of the Forum's Supplementary Report of 2021, are required.

1.2.2 An increased allocation of 0.5 ministries (from 8 to 8.5) for the Presbytery of Annandale & Eskdale; this was due to a rounding error.

1.2.3 An increased allocation of 4 ministries (from 24 to 28) for the Presbytery of Aberdeen & Shetland, as in the main Report; this arose because Aberdeen and Shetland Presbyteries had united before the preparation of the Report to the General Assembly of 2021, and the weighting for Shetland had not been fully recognised.

1.2.4 The Forum believes that it would be inequitable to reduce already-agreed allocations to other Presbyteries in order to accommodate these corrections. Therefore, the Assembly is asked to agree the corrected allocations for the Presbyteries of Annandale & Eskdale and Aberdeen & Shetland, with a consequent increase in the cap on fulltime equivalent ministries from 661 to 665.5 as set out in *Appendix 1*. The Assembly Trustees have been advised of these corrections and funding is available.

1.2.5 The Forum apologises to the General Assembly and to the two Presbyteries. The Forum presented *Appendix 4* to the 2021 Assembly in good faith, having taken expert technical advice and having carefully considered the issues. Nevertheless, the Forum regrets that these corrections are necessary.

1.2.6 The Forum believes that weightings and allocations set out in *Appendix 1* are now accurate.

2 LEGACY WORK ON WEIGHTINGS

2.1 In 2017, when work was being done by the Ministries Council on Advisory Figures, information relating to digitised parish boundaries was used to identify accurate values for presbytery areas. This work indicated that three Presbyteries were clearly mis-classified. Gordon and Jedburgh had much higher population densities than the other Presbyteries which had a weighting of 2, and

Lothian was also anomalous. The weightings for Gordon and Jedburgh were changed to 1.5 and Lothian to 1.25. The Forum was unaware in 2021 that these changes in weightings had not been noted by the Ministries Council in its Report to the General Assembly of 2018, and the Forum did not advise either the 2021 Assembly or the Presbyteries that their correct weightings differed from the 2011 weightings.

2.2 Although the allocations are correct, the Forum apologises to the Assembly and to the three Presbyteries. The Assembly is asked to note the weightings used to allocate ministries in the table attached as Appendix 1.

3 The weightings for the new Presbyteries are a population-weighted average of the constituent Presbyteries. As mentioned in our report, the Forum will undertake additional work on the allocation of ministries reflecting the new shape of Presbyteries and the findings of the 2022 Scottish Census (8.1.12). It is anticipated that statistics from the Census relating to religious affiliation will become available in the second half of 2023, allowing for more accurate analysis which will be a significant part of reporting into the General Assembly of 2024.

In the name of the Faith Nurture Forum

ROSEMARY FREW, *Convener*
KAREN CAMPBELL, *Vice Convener*
SCOTT SHACKLETON, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

Presbytery Number	Name	Allocation	Weighting
1.	Edinburgh & West Lothian	65.5	1
3.	Lothian	25	1.25
4.	Melrose and Peebles	9	1.5
5.	Duns	4.5	2
6.	Jedburgh	5.5	1.5
7.	Annandale and Eskdale	8.5	2
8.	Dumfries and Kirkcudbright	12.5	1.5
9.	Wigtown and Stranraer	6	2
10.	Ayr	24	1.5
11.	Irvine and Kilmarnock	13.5	1
12.	Ardrossan	13.5	1.5
	<i>South West Total</i>	78	
13.	Forth Valley and Clydesdale	44	<i>see note</i>
14.	Clyde	40	1
16.	Glasgow (inc. Cumbernauld)	84	1
19.	Argyll	18	3
22.	Falkirk (excl. Cumbernauld)	15.5	1
23.	Stirling	21.5	1.5
24.	Fife	44.5	1.17
27.	Dunkeld and Meikle	6.5	2
28.	Perth	16.5	1.5
29.	Dundee	18	1
30.	Angus	15.5	1.5
31.	Aberdeen and Shetland	28	1.18
32.	Kincardine and Deeside	10.5	1.5
33.	Gordon	16	1.5
34.	Buchan	14	1.5
35.	Moray	11.5	1.5
36.	Abernethy	4.5	3
37.	Inverness	16.5	1.5
38.	Lochaber	5.5	3
39.	Ross	10	2
40.	Sutherland	4	3
41.	Caithness	5.5	2
42.	Lochcarron-Skye	5	3
43.	Uist	2	3
44.	Lewis	5	3
45.	Orkney	7	3
47.	England	4	n/a
48.	International	5	n/a
		665.5	

Note: Hamilton and Lanark had previous weightings of 1 and 1.5 respectively, retained in these allocations.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE FAITH IMPACT FORUM MAY 2022

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Supplementary Report.
2.
 - a) Condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
 - b) Call for an immediate ceasefire and urge all parties, supported by the international community, to negotiate a just and peaceful solution which respects human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
 - c) Urge prayer across the Church of Scotland:
 - for the people of Ukraine suffering under war.
 - for wisdom among the leaders of the nations and all who work for justice and truth, and who keep open the horizon of reconciliation and peace.
 - for the generosity of the Church in supporting the spiritual and humanitarian efforts of the local partner churches for those afflicted by war.
 - to strengthen all those working in response to human need in Ukraine and other places around the world afflicted by war and violence, and for those working to welcome refugees.
 - d) Condemn any Russophobia and discrimination against Russian citizens living and working in Scotland.
 - e) Encourage members of the Church who wish to host refugees to register with the Homes for Ukraine scheme run by the UK Government, under the aegis of the Scottish Government as a 'super sponsor'.
 - f) Instruct the Faith Impact Forum to continue to respond to developments in the war in Ukraine, and to raise issues with the Scottish and UK Governments, with ecumenical partners, and with Reformed church partners around the world.

Report

1. The illegal invasion of Ukraine which began on 24 February has shocked the world. The war is a barbaric violation of international norms. The Government of Russia has disregarded respect for sovereignty; the appalling reports of war crimes and deliberate attacks on civilians are harrowing. Bringing the parties to the negotiating table to agree a ceasefire, and then pursuing a diplomatic solution, should be the key aim of the international instruments and their members.
2. The moving stories of human fortitude, survival and bravery, as well as fear, horror and distress that have been relayed via social media, in our newspapers and on television screens have given a great sense of empathy. We might have foolishly hoped that such devastating invasion of a democratic country on the continent of Europe was something that was only to be read about in history books. It is a reminder of the fragility of our world and of the international order designed to maintain peace and security, and the hearts and prayers of the whole Church go out to the innocent people of Ukraine.
3. We are also learning that the war will have a catastrophic impact on global food supply over the coming months as the impact on Ukrainian wheat production will cause prices to rise. The United Nations has begun to warn of a looming global hunger crisis for the world's poorest people, including the 125 million people supported by the World Food Programme.
4. Russian citizens living in Scotland who have had no role to play in the war are innocent too, and we must utterly reject any racism or discrimination aimed at them because of their nationality.
5. We know that congregations across Scotland will have been praying for peace, for the people of Ukraine, for those offering aid, and for world leaders. The response of the Church of Scotland has included raising more than £330,000 since February for humanitarian work undertaken by our partners, the Reformed Churches in Hungary and Transcarpathia. In Transcarpathia, the Churches have remained open offering prayer and worship for any to join, and pastors and families have remained in place to support their congregations. The Church also uses funds from international partners to support ministry in this context as people have lost their incomes and there is a lack of access to banks and cash. In addition, they have increased production at their bakery, opening churches, halls, and diaconal homes to refugees from further east who have fled for safety. Additional funds have been raised as part of the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal, which is supported by Christian Aid.
6. The Church of Scotland led partnership, Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, has been offering advice and support to congregations and individuals interested in integration work, including through the provision of accommodation to refugees arriving in Scotland. The Church has also been represented at meetings with the Scottish Government and UK Department for Levelling Up (which manages the Homes for Ukraine scheme). Under this scheme the Scottish Government is operating as a 'super sponsor' and we encourage anyone thinking of taking part in this programme to do so under this umbrella. We have also been in contact with the Home Office to offer assistance and encourage speedier

processing of visas and parity of treatment for Ukrainian refugees in the UK regardless of the route they have travelled to be here.

7. Information about the Church's response is available on a special webpage which is updated regularly. This includes information about how to donate money to the work of the Reformed Churches in the region through the Church of Scotland, guidance from the Church of Scotland on hosting refugees, prayers and worship resources, and other news and information.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/the-church-response-to-the-ukraine-crisis?fbclid=IwAR3rK7RgJJESrXjO9b-rgPwWdWW0RYc3XQwkMdlPeTv3uJJIA7QPKLwfhf4>.

In the name of the Faith Impact Forum

SUSAN BROWN, *Convener*
ALAN MILLER, *Vice Convener*
SCOTT SHACKLETON, *Secretary*

**MINUTE OF THE APPEAL HEARING
BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COMMISSION
IN THE MATTER OF AN APPEAL AGAINST A DECISION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF
MELROSE AND PEEBLES GIVEN ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2019
HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 10 JUNE 2021 AT 10AM**

Sederunt: Ms Morag Ross QC, Convener of the Judicial Commission
The Very Rev Bill Hewitt, Vice-Convener of the Judicial Commission
Rev Dr George J Whyte, Principal Clerk
Ms Christine Paterson, Depute Clerk
And eleven members of the Judicial Commission ("the Commission") as follows:
Rev Catherine Beattie
Rev Jan Mathieson
Rev Dr Gordon McCracken
Rev Dr Ian McLean
Mr Alan Cox
Mr Chris Dunn
Mr William Imlay
Mr David McClements
Mr Robert McDougall
Mr Leslie Moffat
Mrs Pauline Weibye
Appellant: An elder
Respondent: the Special Committee of the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles

The Commission took the view, in relation to the first ground of complaint, that there was a breach of the principles of natural justice or material irregularity of process on the part of the Special Committee of Presbytery, in particular in not establishing the full factual circumstances around the complaint.

On the third and fourth grounds of complaint, the Commission took the view that these were time-barred.

The Commission noted that further expansion of these reasons will be given in the written decision.

These decisions were taken unanimously.

It was confirmed that written reasons for these decisions would follow within 21 days.

The Commission was grateful to the Parties for the care and attention given to the preparation for this Hearing, which was regrettably held after a lapse of time due to circumstances outwith anyone's control.

The Convener thanked everyone present for their attendance. The Hearing was closed at 2.01pm with prayer and the decisions of the Commission were intimated to the Parties by email.

The Hearing was opened with prayer.

The Convener made some preliminary remarks confirming the procedure to be followed.

The Parties withdrew in order for the Commission to discuss some procedural matters and then they re-joined the appeal hearing.

In terms of Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure set out in Schedule 2 to the Appeals Act (Act 1 2014) ("the Act"), the appeal then proceeded as follows:

- each Party made comment supplementary to their written submissions and was given the opportunity to make response to the written submissions lodged by the other Party;
- each Party answered questions put to them by members of the Commission; and
- each Party was given the opportunity to make final comments, with the Appellant being given the last word.

It was agreed that the Commission's decision would be intimated to the Parties by email.

Parties withdrew and the Commission discussed its decision, including a short suspension for a brief lunch.

The decision of the Commission was in the following terms:

The Commission decided that it was able to reach a decision without the need to see or obtain further documents.

The Commission decided to uphold the appeal and quash the decision of the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles taken on 3 September 2019.

**MINUTE OF THE APPEAL HEARING
BEFORE THE SAFEGUARDING APPEAL GROUP
IN THE MATTER OF AN APPEAL AGAINST A DECISION OF THE RECRUITMENT
SUB-COMMITTEE GIVEN ON 1 MARCH 2021
HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON FRIDAY 11 JUNE 2021 AT 10AM**

Sederunt: Sheriff Alan Miller, Convener of the Appeal Group
The Very Rev John Christie, member of the Appeal Group
Mrs Sheena-Jane Clark, member of the Appeal Group

Rev Dr George J Whyte, Principal Clerk
Ms Christine Paterson, Depute Clerk

Appellant accompanied by a supporter

Respondent: the Recruitment Sub-Committee of the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Committee, represented by David Stihler, a solicitor in the Law Dept with the Rev Adam Dillon, Convener of the Safeguarding Committee and Mrs Julie Main, the Safeguarding Manager, also in attendance

The Hearing was opened with prayer. Introductions were made.

The Convener made some preliminary remarks and confirmed the procedure to be followed.

The appeal proceeded as follows:

- each Party made comment supplementary to their written submissions and was given the opportunity to make response to the written submissions lodged by the other Party;
- each Party answered questions put to them by members of the Appeal Group; and
- each Party was given the opportunity to make final comments, with the Appellant being given the last word.

It was agreed that the Appeal Group's decision would be intimated to the Parties by email.

The Parties withdrew and the Appeal Group discussed its decision.

The decision of the Appeal Group was to allow the appeal and to recommend the Appellant for appointment to regulated work, subject to conditions of training and mentoring.

The Hearing was closed with prayer and the decision of the Appeal Group was thereafter intimated to the Parties by email.

COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**23 March 2022****CONCERNING (1) THE COMPETENCY OF DECISIONS MADE DURING THIS MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY WHERE SOME MEMBERS ARE ATTENDING ONLINE AND (2) VARIANCE
OF THE MEETING FORMAT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 2022 SO THAT SOME COMMISSIONERS
AND OTHERS MAY ATTEND THE ASSEMBLY ONLINE**

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 23rd day of March 2022 at 12.00noon.

This being a National Day of Reflection, marking the second anniversary of the first UK lockdown due to Covid-19, a one minute's silence was held.

The Commission of the General Assembly was constituted with prayer by the Moderator, the Lord Wallace of Tankerness.

The List of Commissioners was laid on the Table.

The Commission called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

The Commission took up consideration of a Report of the Legal Questions Committee which was given in by the Rev Dr Grant Barclay, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The Commission of the General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Agree that this meeting of the Commission of Assembly where some members are attending online is a properly constituted meeting of the Commission and that decisions made during this session of the Commission are competent in terms of Act VI 1997.
3. Agree that, notwithstanding the decision of the General Assembly of 2021 to call the next General Assembly to meet in Edinburgh on 21 May 2022, it would be competent for the Commission to vary the meeting format of the General Assembly of 2022 to the extent that some commissioners and others may attend the Assembly through an online platform.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 1, there voted For 67 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2, there voted For 66 and Against 1.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 3, there voted For 67 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against the Deliverance as a whole, there voted For 64 and Against 1.

The Commission took up consideration of a Report of the Assembly Business Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The Commission of the General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Agree that at the General Assembly to be held in Edinburgh from 21st May 2022, some commissioners may participate online rather than in person.
3. Instruct Presbyteries that when appointing commissioners to the 2022 General Assembly they shall identify those who will participate in person and those who will be online as recommended in Appendix 1 and shall advise the Principal Clerk by 1st April 2022.

4. Agree that corresponding members, delegates and youth representatives may participate online in the 2022 General Assembly by advising the Principal Clerk of their wish to do so by 15th April 2022, failing which they shall be assumed to be attending in person.
5. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee to bring forward a set of Standing Orders appropriate for use at the 2022 General Assembly in light of decisions made by this Commission.
6. Note that the Assembly Business Committee has prepared a Risk Assessment and that this will be kept under regular review up to the opening of, and during, the 2022 General Assembly.
7. Agree that the Assembly Business Committee, in consultation and with the concurrence of the Legal Questions Committee, may alter the arrangements agreed by this Commission for the 2022 General Assembly in line with any Covid-19 Regulations which are subsequently re-imposed, or reasonably anticipated to be imposed, by the Scottish Government.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 1, there voted For 65 and Against 1.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2, there voted For 64 and Against 0.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 3: Remove the words "as recommended in Appendix 1".

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment, there voted For 52 and Against 13.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 3: Change "1st April" to "8th April".

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment, there voted For 63 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amended section 3, there voted For 63 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 4, there voted For 64 and Against 1.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 5, there voted For 64 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 6, there voted For 61 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 7, there voted For 64 and Against 0.

On a vote being taken For or Against the Deliverance as a whole as amended, there voted For 64 and Against 0.

The Moderator thanked everyone who had been involved in the Commission of Assembly.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

Appoint the Clerks as a Committee to Prepare the Minute.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

Instruct the Legal Questions Committee to report the proceedings and decisions of the Commission of Assembly to the next General Assembly in terms of sections 15 and 16 of the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997).

The Commission of Assembly concluded at 13.38pm with the Benediction pronounced by the Moderator.

ASSEMBLY HALL, EDINBURGH
and online via video-conference
23 March 2022,13.38pm

MINUTES OF MINISTRIES APPEAL PANEL

Minute - 14 September 2021, 11am

On the fourteenth day of September 2021 at 11am the Ministries Appeal Panel met via Microsoft Teams and was duly constituted with prayer.

Sederunt: Mr Robin Stimpson (Convener), Mr Andrew Gibb, Rev Leslie Milton, Mrs Isabell Montgomerie

The Appellant appeared via video conference.

For the Faith Nurture Forum: Rev John McMahon, Director of the Assessment Conference, and Rev Dr Lezley Stewart, Recruitment and Support Secretary

In attendance: Rev Dr George J Whyte, Principal Clerk and Ms Christine Paterson, Depute Clerk

Introductions were made and the Convener explained the purpose of the hearing.

The Ministries Appeal Panel took up consideration of an Appeal in terms of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), section 6, against a decision of the National Assessment Conference on 24 April 2021 not to accept the Appellant as a Candidate in training for Full-Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland.

Parties were heard.

Questions were asked.

Parties made closing statements.

It was noted that the Panel's decision would be intimated to the parties by email.

Parties withdrew.

Following deliberation the Ministries Appeal Panel resolved unanimously to dismiss the appeal and to uphold the decision of the Assessment Conference not to accept the Appellant as a Candidate in training for Full-Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland.

The Ministries Appeal Panel did not identify any incorrect material fact which influenced the decision, nor did the Ministries Appeal Panel identify any irregularities in the process or breach of the principles of natural justice which affected the decision reached.

The Grace was said.

The hearing was closed.

ROBIN STIMPSON, *Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Clerk*

Minute - 14 September 2021, 2pm

On the fourteenth day of September 2021 at 2pm the Ministries Appeal Panel met via Microsoft Teams and was duly constituted with prayer.

Sederunt: Mr Robin Stimpson (Convener), Mr Andrew Gibb, Rev Dr Leslie Milton, Mrs Isabell Montgomerie.

The Appellant appeared via video conference and was accompanied.

For the Faith Nurture Forum: Rev Alastair Duncan, Director of the Assessment Conference, and Rev Dr Lezley Stewart, Recruitment and Support Secretary.

In attendance: Rev Dr George J Whyte, Principal Clerk.

Introductions were made and the Convener explained the purpose of the hearing.

The Ministries Appeal Panel took up consideration of an Appeal in terms of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), section 6, against a decision of the National Assessment Conference on 27 May 2021 not to accept the Appellant as a Candidate in training for Full-Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland.

Parties were heard.

Questions were asked.

Parties made closing statements.

It was noted that the Panel's decision would be intimated to the parties by email.

Parties withdrew.

Following deliberation the Ministries Appeal Panel resolved unanimously to dismiss the appeal and to uphold the decision of the Assessment Conference not to accept the Appellant as a Candidate in training for Full-Time Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Church of Scotland.

The Ministries Appeal Panel did not identify any incorrect material fact which influenced the decision, nor did the Ministries Appeal Panel identify any irregularities in the process or breach of the principles of natural justice which affected the decision reached.

The Grace was said.

The hearing was closed.

ROBIN STIMPSON, *Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Clerk*

Minute - 7 December 2021, 11am

On the seventh day of December 2021 at 11am the Ministries Appeal Panel met via Microsoft Teams and was duly constituted with prayer.

Sederunt: Mr Robin Stimpson (Convener), Rev Leslie Milton (Vice-Convener), Mr Andrew Gibb, Mrs Isabell Montgomerie

Panel member observing: Rev Dr Amos Chewachong

The Appellant appeared via video conference and was accompanied.

For the Faith Nurture Forum: Rev Donald Campbell, Admissions Conference Director, and Rev Dr Lezley Stewart, Recruitment and Support Secretary

In attendance: Rev Dr George J Whyte, Principal Clerk and Ms Christine Paterson, Depute Clerk

Introductions were made and the Convener explained the purpose of the hearing.

The Ministries Appeal Panel took up consideration of an Appeal in terms of the Admission and Re-Admission of Ministers Act (Act IX 2002) against a decision of the Admissions Conference on 3 September 2021 not to accept the Appellant as an Admissions Candidate for Ministry in the Church of Scotland.

Parties were heard.

Questions were asked.

Parties made closing statements.

The Convener advised that the Panel's decision would be intimated to the parties by email.

Parties withdrew.

Following deliberation the Ministries Appeal Panel resolved unanimously to dismiss the appeal and to uphold the decision of the Admissions Conference not to accept the Appellant as an Admissions Candidate for Ministry in the Church of Scotland.

The Ministries Appeal Panel did not identify any incorrect material fact which influenced the decision, nor did the Ministries Appeal Panel identify any breach of the principles of natural justice which affected the decision reached.

The Grace was said.

The hearing was closed.

ROBIN STIMPSON, *Convener*
GEORGE J WHYTE, *Clerk*



The Church of Scotland

PART III –
DELIVERANCES, ACTS,
REGULATIONS
AND MEMBERS OF
STANDING COMMITTEES

SEE, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW



General Assembly 2022

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/ga

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

Deliverances of the General Assembly

- 31/1.....Assembly Business Committee
- 31/1.....Assembly Trustees
- 31/3.....Committee on Overtures and Cases
- 31/3.....Legal Questions Committee
- 31/4.....Ecumenical Relations Committee
- 31/4.....Theological Forum
- 31/4.....Church of Scotland Investors Trust
- 31/5.....Church of Scotland Pension Trustees
- 31/5.....The Church of Scotland Trust
- 31/5.....Church Hymnary Trustees
- 31/5.....Delegation of the General Assembly
- 31/5.....Faith Impact Forum
- 31/6.....Faith Nurture Forum
- 31/8.....Registration of Ministries Committee
- 31/8.....Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces
- 31/8.....Social Care Council
- 31/8.....Church of Scotland Guild
- 31/9.....Iona Community Board
- 31/9.....General Trustees
- 31/9.....Safeguarding Committee
- 31/10.....Trustees of the Church of Scotland Housing and Loan Fund for Retired Ministers
and Widows and Widowers of Ministers
- 31/10.....Nomination Committee
- 31/10.....Selection Committee

Acts, Regulations and Members

- 32/1.....A – Legislative Acts of the General Assembly
- 33/1.....B – Regulations of the General Assembly
- 34/1.....C – List of Members of Standing Committees

Deliverances of the General Assembly 2022**ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE****The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and the Supplementary Report.
2. Approve the order of business for the first two days.
3. Appoint Rev Colin Renwick to be Precentor until May 2023.
4. Appoint Mr Roy Pinkerton to index the verbatim record.
5. Invite Commissioners to submit to the Procedure Committee via email: pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk by Monday 23 May at 12pm, nominations for consideration to serve on the Selection Committee.
6. Note the expenses levels for those attending at least 12 of the 15 General Assembly sessions in person.
7. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles to form the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.
8. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meikle, Perth and Stirling to form the Presbytery of Perth as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.
9. Note that subsequent to the General Assembly passing of Act I 2021 the Presbyteries of Hamilton and Lanark voted to amend the name of the united Presbytery in both the Act and Basis and Plan of Union from the 'Presbytery of Lanarkshire' to the 'Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale'.
10. Pass an Act anent the union of the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk, as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.
11. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney to form The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles as set out in the Appendix to the Overture received from the Presbyteries.
12. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Assembly Trustees, in consultation with the Assembly and Presbytery Clerks Forum and involving the Law Dept and HR Department in the National Offices, to bring proposals to the General Assembly of 2023 which would ensure consistency of terms and conditions across Presbyteries and which would align the pay and grading of Presbytery Staff with the pay and grading of staff employed by the Central Services Committee and this consultation process shall include consideration of whether the Central Services Committee might be the preferred employing agent for Presbytery staff.
13. Invite the Assembly Business Committee and Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Law Dept and HR Dept in the National Offices to work with the Assembly and Clerks Forum to advise the General Assembly of 2023 what steps have been taken to ensure that there is appropriate support and training in place for Presbytery Clerks and provide advice, guidelines and training for those undertaking the line-management of Presbytery Clerks.

14. Invite the Assembly Business Committee together with the Assembly and Clerks Forum to lead the development of a code of practice and capability process for Presbytery Clerks and report progress to the General Assembly of 2023.
15. Note the proposed timetable of Moderator's visits to Presbyteries.
16. Acknowledge the consultation work undertaken by the Committee in the area of General Assembly Reform as reported in section 8 of the Report and instruct the Committee to bring in-depth proposals to the General Assembly of 2023.
17. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Legal Questions Committee jointly to determine appropriate arrangements for the meeting of the General Assembly from Saturday 20 May 2023, to be held in Edinburgh in person and with online participation.

Scottish Bible Society

18. Give thanks for the ongoing work of the Scottish Bible Society and:-
 - a) urge the Scottish Bible Society to pursue its ongoing efforts to address the challenge of global Bible translation and distribution;
 - b) support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to improve people's experience of the Bible and its impact on their life;
 - c) endorse the Society in its efforts to encourage confidence in the gospel and in providing Scripture resources for mission purposes; and
 - d) commend the Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and the Supplementary Report.
2. Acknowledge with gratitude the continuing work and ministry of the Church at all levels during the enduring Covid-19 pandemic. (*Section 1*)
3. Receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities. (*Section 2*)
4. Affirm the overriding priority in budget planning to support the maintenance and growth of the local Church and note the continuance of the challenging financial situation facing the Church as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. (*Section 5*)
5. In recognition of the challenges facing many Parish Ministers who live in manses where they have no control in respect of energy efficiency or upgrades and recognising that the remuneration of a Parish Ministers is a stipend plus manse, instruct the Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees urgently to develop a scheme to support Parish Ministers who find themselves facing hardship with the rise in costs of heating and electricity, using existing funds where possible, to enable them to continue to provide ministry to the Parish to which God has called them; and renew the commitment of the Church to continue to fight poverty in all its many guises wherever it is found and felt.

6. Note and acknowledge the differing needs and valued contribution to the Church of Scotland of the Presbyteries of Scotland and urge the Assembly Trustees to consider providing an appropriate allowance in the National budget annually for 5 years for the Presbyteries of England and International Charges and report to the General Assembly of 2023.
7. Agree to implement the Giving to Grow scheme from 1st January 2023 (*Section 9*) and approve the proposed Regulations. (*Appendix A*).
8. Repeal the Parish Ministries Fund Regulations (Regs IV 2016). (*Section 9.4*)
9. Approve the amendments to the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016) and the Regulations for Allocations in Local Ecumenical Partnerships (2007) (*Appendix C*) for use from the 1st January 2023, and in the case of the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016), also by adding the following additional amendments:
 - 1) In paragraph 1 replace "Ministries & Mission Contribution" with "a Contribution under the Congregational Contributions 'Giving to Grow' Regulations (Regs ZZ 2022)".
 - 2) Amend paragraph 2 by replacing "Stewardship and Finance Department" with "Presbytery" and by adding at the end "and Presbytery shall pay the total Contribution to the Stewardship and Finance Department in ten or twelve equal monthly instalments during the financial year by bank standing order."
 - 3) Delete paragraph 8(e) and substitute "Half of all gross income in excess of £10,000 received from outside agencies for the use of premises."
 - 4) Insert new paragraph 8(f) in the following terms: "Net income raised through giving online or through other digital means" and renumber paragraph 8(f) as 8(g).
 - 5) Amend the paragraph at the end of paragraph 8 by adding before the words "grants from the Salvesen Trust", the words "all grant income, including".
 - 6) In paragraph 10 delete the words "Ministries and Mission".
 - 7) In paragraph 11 delete the words "Council of Assembly" and substitute "Assembly Trustees".
 - 8) Delete paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 and substitute the following, renumbering thereafter:
"Appeals"
The Governance Group of the Assembly Trustees shall appoint a Panel to adjudicate on any appeals from Congregations relating to the application of paragraph 8 above. Appeals on any other grounds shall not be permitted. (Full details of the appeals process are available from the Church of Scotland website.)"
 - 9) Delete the first sentence of paragraph 17.
 - 10) Delete paragraph 18.
- 11) Add the following two paragraphs at the end:
"Transition Funding"
1. The sum total of increases in Contributions for Congregations within a Presbytery between the last year of the previous Contribution system (2022) and that current year's requirement, will be made available as Transition Funding to Presbytery. This will be communicated when the list of proposed Contributions is issued to Presbytery. This funding will be available annually, for the first three years (i.e. in the years 2023 – 2025) of this Giving to Grow contribution system.
2. This transition funding may be used by the Presbytery to reduce the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations before these are finalised for the following year. This will be charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund." (*Section 9.3*)
10. Repeal the Pilot Presbytery Staffing Fund Regulations (Regs V 2011). (*Section 9.4*)
11. Encourage Kirk Sessions to engage with the Christian Aid, CrossReach and ecumenical partners' promotion of legacy giving in September 2022. (*Section 12.4*)
12. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to use the National Stewardship Team as a resource to help congregations steward their resources in line with their vision and mission plans. (*Section 12.5*)
13. Instruct the Assembly Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Section 13 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed descriptions and remits and finalised titles for an Active Faith Leadership Team and the following Programme Groups:- (*Section 13*)
 - a. Mission
 - b. People & Training
 - c. Public Life & Global Justice
 - d. Resource & Presence
14. Instruct the Trustees to work with the Nomination Committee and Presbyteries to enable the Nomination Committee to bring names of nominees for the leaders and members of the Active Faith Leadership Team and each of the Programme Groups to the General Assembly of 2023. (*Section 13*)
15. Affirm the faithful and dedicated work of the Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum since their inception in January 2020, the leadership of those Forums and the commitment of their members and commend their continuing involvement in the development of the Faith Action Programme. (*Section 13*)
16. Instruct the Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Appendix E, Section 9 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed proposals for the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum in relation to the structural arrangements for the Faith Action Programme, whilst retaining their direct accountability to the General Assembly. (*Appendix E, Section 9*).

17. Note the Vision Statement which frames the discussion around the Review of Initial Training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament (*Appendix D*), agree the principles for ministerial education and training outlined in Section 14 of the Report and authorise the Faith Nurture Forum to take further the initial engagement with current academic providers and others as necessary in order to ensure the best possible infrastructure and curriculum for ministry formation. (*Section 14*)
18. Instruct the General Trustees, jointly with the Assembly Trustees, the Legal Questions Committee and the Faith Nurture Forum, to review current law and practice with a view to bringing legislation to General Assembly 2023 that would allow greater flexibility in relation to the allocation of the sale proceeds of properties found to be surplus to requirements following the dissolution of a congregation or the union of one or more congregations and exploring with the encouragement and support of Presbytery whether some monies might be released for mission, and provide a transparent process with adequate criteria by which decisions on the use of such funds are made. (*Section 22*)
19. Approve the amended remit of the Audit Committee. (*Section 23.5*)
20. Approve the amended Constitution and Remit of the Assembly Trustees. (*Section 23.6*)
21. Note the revised Job Description for the post of Principal Clerk as set out in recruitment pack <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/redirects/principal-clerk-recruitment-pack>, ratify the appointment of Rev Fiona Smith as Associate Principal Clerk from the 19th April and appoint her as Principal Clerk to the General Assembly with effect from 1st July 2022. (*Section 24*)
22. Approve the change in membership numbers for the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces. (*Section 25*)
23. Approve the appointment of Ian Forrester QC, Gillian Paterson, minister of Wellesley Parish Church and Norman Smith, minister of Granton Parish Church, as Assembly Trustees for full terms; also approve the appointment of Jennifer MacDonald as an Assembly Trustee for an initial term of one year to complete the term of Linda Irvine, renewable thereafter for a full term.
24. Note the budget for 2023 and the indicative budgets for 2024 to 2027. (*Section 2 and Appendices 1 and 2*)
25. Approve the arrangements proposed in respect of the Pioneer Mission Fund. (*Section 5*)
26. Repeal the Growth Fund Regulations (Regulations I 2019) and pass the Seeds for Growth Fund Regulations set out in Appendix 3.
27. Discharge with thanks the members of the Seeds for Change Committee.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

COMMITTEE ON OVERTURES AND CASES

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Overture Amending the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) as printed in Appendix C.
3. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Solemnisation of Same-Sex Marriage Overture as printed at Appendix D.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Amend Standing Orders as detailed in (i) section 2 and Appendix A of this Report, (ii) section 4 and Appendix B of the Report of the Assembly Business Committee and (iii) the Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee. (*Section 2 – Amendments to Standing Orders*)
3. Agree to send the draft Church Courts Act as set out in Appendix B to Presbyteries for consultation and direct that comments be sent to the Principal Clerk by 31 December 2022. (*Section 3 – Draft Church Courts Act & Appendix B*)
4. Instruct the Committee, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to explore whether Readers be permitted to apply for permission to officiate at marriage ceremonies and report to the General Assembly of 2023 with proposals as required.
5. Instruct the Committee, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to undertake a review of the Ministers and Deacons in Same Sex Marriages and Civil Partnerships Act (Act I 2015) and to report to a future General Assembly. (*Section 4 – Same Sex Marriage*)
6. Instruct the Committee to continue with the development of Presbytery Review, bringing the principles of Presbytery Review to the General Assembly of 2023 for approval before bringing a Presbytery Review Act to the General Assembly of 2024. (*Section 5 – Presbytery Review*)
7. Pass an Act amending the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) as set out in Appendix D. (*Section 7 – Aspects of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act*)
8. Pass an Act amending the Appeals Act (Act I 2014) as set out in Appendix E. (*Section 8 – Appeals Act drafting*)
9. Pass an Act amending the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act VI 2004) as set out in Appendix F. (*Section 8 – Appeals Act drafting*)
10. Pass an Act amending the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997) as set out in Appendix G. (*Section 9 – Assembly Online*)
11. Note that the following arrangements have proved useful:-
 - (a) the Vacancy Protocol and the arrangements for Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to meet and vote by video- conferencing or audio-conferencing, agreed by the Commission of Assembly on 7 July 2020,

- (b) the three Protocols agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020 (the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, the Congregational Meetings for Adopting the Unitary Constitution Protocol and the Congregational Meetings on Sale or Disposal of Church Buildings Protocol),
- (c) the arrangements for Financial Boards to meet and vote by video-conferencing or audio-conferencing agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020, and
- (d) the arrangements agreed by the General Assembly of 2021 in relation to appointments and elections to Congregational Boards;

and, therefore, continue all of these arrangements as required until the General Assembly of 2023, provided that in the case of the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, this shall be read as relating to section 10.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021). (*Section 10 – Covid-19 Protocols*)

- 12. Pass an Act amending the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) as set out in Appendix H. (*Section 11 – The Discipline Act*)
- 13. Repeal the Licensing of Probationers Act (Act XI 1932), the Trials for Licence Act (Act VIII 1936) and the Ministerial Staffing in the Presbytery of Shetland Regulations (Regs VI 2007). (*Section 12 – Repeal of legislation*)
- 14. Instruct Kirk Sessions to take steps to adopt a conflict of interest policy in the form prepared by the Law department (with any future changes which may be made to the style policy to reflect changing guidance or best practice) as soon as may be practicable and in any event by 31 December 2022. (*Section 13 – Conflict of interest policy*)
- 15. Instruct the Committee in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum to review Standing Order 35 on youth representatives in light of General Assembly Reform and also Presbytery Reform and to bring proposals as to an amended Standing Order 35 to the General Assembly of 2023.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly:

- 1. Receive the Report.
- 2. Commend *Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling*, the report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue, to the wider Church and, in particular, to the *Columba Declaration* Contact Group and the *Saint Andrew Declaration* Working Group (*Section 2*).
- 3. Approve the *Declaration of Friendship* between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland (*Section 3, 3.5.2*).
- 4. Subject to the approval of the Scottish Catholic Bishops' Conference, name the Declaration of Friendship 'The Saint Margaret Declaration'.
- 5. Welcome the participation of an increasing number of churches in the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum and other ecumenical bodies in Scotland, and encourage the further development of an effective and coherent ecumenical network (*Section 6*).

- 6. Thank Mr Bob Fyffe, former General Secretary of CTBI, and Rev Dr Paul Goodliff, former General Secretary of CTE for their service, and welcome Dr Nicola Brady and Bishop Mike Royal as their respective successors (*Sections 8 and 9*).
- 7. Approve the delegates to Assemblies, Synods and Conferences of other Churches, and the appointment of representatives to Ecumenical Bodies, as detailed in Appendix 2.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

THEOLOGICAL FORUM

The General Assembly:

- 1. Receive the Report.
- 2. Commend the Report "The Earth is the Lord's: A Theological Account of Creation Care" to congregations for study and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to provide opportunities and resources to aid reflection, conversation and response. (*Section 3; Appendix 2*)
- 3. Receive the Report "The Confessional Position of the Church of Scotland: Proposals for Reform" as a response to the instruction given by the General Assembly of 2021. (*Section 2; Appendix 1*)
- 4. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum to introduce teaching on the confessional position of the Church and the vows of office holders for those entering into recognised ministries and eldership. (*Appendix 1, Section 4.3*)
- 5. Approve in principle the proposals for creating a Book of Confessions and corresponding changes to the vows and subscription of office holders, and instruct the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee to bring an Overture effecting these changes to the General Assembly of 2023. (*Appendix 1, Sections 4.4 & 4.6*)
- 6. Instruct the Theological Forum, in consultation with other relevant parties, to prepare a Report with recommendations for a future General Assembly on a theological and missiological understanding and practice of church membership,

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND INVESTORS TRUST

The General Assembly:

- 1. Receive the Report.
- 2. Appoint Mr R D Burgon as Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
- 3. Reappoint Ms E Crichton as a member and as Vice-Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
- 4. Approve the reappointment of Mr M G S Yuille and Mr J G Wilson as members of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
- 5. Approve the appointment of Mr I Blair and Mr A Richmond as members from 1 June 2022.
- 6. Receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Investors Trust for 2021.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PENSION TRUSTEES**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the appointment of Gillian Graham and Gordon Taylor as Employer Nominated Trustees of all three Schemes.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and thank the members of the Trust for their diligence.
2. Appoint Mr Leon Marshall as Chairman from 1 June 2022.
3. Appoint Mrs Morag Angus as Vice-Chairman from 1 June 2022.
4. Re-appoint Mr Angus Bethune and the Very Rev Dr John P Chalmers as members of the Trust from 1 June 2022.
5. Thank Mr W F Stuart Lynch for his 26 years' service to the Trust and Rev Iain Cunningham for his 6 years' service to the Trust.
6. Appoint Mrs Valerie Macniven as a member of the Trust from 1 June 2022.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and thank the Delegation for its work.
2. Continue the appointment of the Delegation with the same powers as hitherto – the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly to be Chair, the Depute Clerk of the General Assembly to be Vice-Chair and the Solicitor of the Church to act as Secretary.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

FAITH IMPACT FORUM**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and the Supplementary Report.

Safeguarding the Integrity of Creation

2. Instruct the Forum, in partnership with the Assembly Trustees, General Trustees, Social Care Council and Eco- Congregation Scotland, to continue to develop plans and activities towards meeting a 'Net Zero by 2030 Strategy' and to report to the General Assembly in 2023. (*Section 3*)
3. Call upon the UK Government to levy urgently a windfall tax on oil and gas companies in order to address the crisis of fuel poverty across the UK.
4. In view of the call from the UN and International Energy Agency to recognise that there can be no new oil and gas developments if we are to limit

global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius, call upon the UK Government to grant no further licenses for new fossil fuel exploration or extraction.

5. Instruct the Forum to work with congregations (particularly in Priority Areas) and with partner organisations on advocacy and practical action to address the growing crises of fuel poverty and energy insecurity.

Global Justice and International Partnerships

6. Give thanks for the life and witness of Mission Partners who have died, acknowledge with gratitude those who have completed their period of service overseas, and uphold in prayer all who continue to serve. (*Section 4*)
7. Urge the UK Government to do more to ensure Covid-19 vaccines are available throughout the world, particularly in resource poor countries, and instruct the Forum to make representations and to promote this campaign with church members. (*Section 4.1*)
8. Instruct the Forum to share with congregations and Presbyteries the work of Mediterranean Hope and other international partners providing humanitarian and integration support to displaced people, and promote opportunities for local churches to respond with prayer, action and giving. (*Section 4.2*)
9. Instruct the Forum to continue to support work with asylum seekers and refugees, alongside Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, and encourage congregations to participate in the 'Faithful Welcome' project and to explore Community Sponsorship so that they may be directly involved in refugee resettlement. (*Section 4.6*)
10. Commend the Korea Peace Appeal and instruct the Forum to promote the appeal to church members and congregations for them to sign as part of the effort to bring an end to the Korean War. (*Section 4.8*)
11. Note the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Pakistani Minorities: Abductions, Forced Conversions, and Forced Marriages of Religious Minority Women and Girls in Pakistan; instruct the Forum to continue to engage with ecumenical and international partners on the issue and to provide resources to encourage church members to write to MPs urging the UK Government to implement the Report's recommendations. (*Section 4.9*)
12. Commend to congregations this year's Stamp Appeal which will support the Church in Lebanon in its ministry. (*Section 4.10*)
13. Commend to the prayers of the church the members, ministers and leaders of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar who continue to worship and witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a context of conflict and danger and instruct the Forum to write to Her Majesty's Government urging the use of diplomacy and sanctions in order that the elected government of Myanmar be reinstated.

Interfaith Relations

14. Commend the ongoing dialogue and collaborative effort with the Office of the Chief Rabbi to produce a Jewish-Christian glossary to shed light on divergent uses and understandings of theological and political terms that relate to the Holy Land. (*Section 5.1*)

15. Note with concern that Islamophobia remains widespread in the UK, and in line with other faith-based, social, political and governmental organisations, adopt for internal use the All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) definition of Islamophobia, and its guidelines, to aid the Church of Scotland in challenging Islamophobia. (*Section 5.2*)

Societal and Political Issues

16. Endorse the definition of Conversion Therapy as outlined in the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK', noting that the Methodist Conference have supported and adopted this definition and the Church of England General Synod have endorsed a similar statement; urge the Scottish Government to ban Conversion Therapy and instruct the Forum to make representations to the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament. (*Section 7.3*)
17. Instruct the Forum, in consultation with CrossReach and others, to report to the General Assembly of 2023 on issues relating to drugs and substance use. (*Section 7.4*)
18. Instruct the Forum to convene a cross-Church group to explore the benefits and opportunities afforded to the Church of Scotland by digital technologies and to support congregations in their utilisation of these. (*Section 7.8*)
19. Following the publication of the paper 'Apologising for Historic Wrongs' produced by the Theological Forum, acknowledge and regret the terrible harm caused to all those who suffered from accusations and prosecutions under Scotland's historic witchcraft laws, the majority of whom were women, and apologise for the role of the Church of Scotland and the General Assembly in such historical persecution.

Ukraine

20. a) Condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
b) Call for an immediate ceasefire and urge all parties, supported by the international community, to negotiate a just and peaceful solution which respects human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
c) Urge prayer across the Church of Scotland:
• for the people of Ukraine suffering under war.
• for wisdom among the leaders of the nations and all who work for justice and truth, and who keep open the horizon of reconciliation and peace.
• for the generosity of the Church in supporting the spiritual and humanitarian efforts of the local partner churches for those afflicted by war.
• to strengthen all those working in response to human need in Ukraine and other places around the world afflicted by war and violence, and for those working to welcome refugees.
d) Condemn any Russophobia and discrimination against Russian citizens living and working in Scotland.
e) Encourage members of the Church who wish to host refugees to register with the Homes for Ukraine scheme run by the UK Government, under the aegis of the Scottish Government as a 'super sponsor'.

f) Instruct the Forum to continue to respond to developments in the war in Ukraine, and to raise issues with the Scottish and UK Governments, with ecumenical partners, and with Reformed church partners around the world.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

FAITH NURTURE FORUM

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and the Supplementary Report.
2. Instruct the Forum to continue work on the Capability framework (*Section 2.1*) (*Appendix 1*).
3. Adopt the Code of Professional Practice and Good Conduct for the Ministries of the Church of Scotland as a standard to which all those involved in the recognised ministries of the Church should be expected to adhere (*Section 2.2*) (*Appendix 2*).
4. Instruct the Forum to update the relevant Handbooks with the revised Code of Conduct at the earliest opportunity, make an electronic copy available on the Ascend website, and alert all those engaged in the recognised ministries of the Church to the revised Code by email.
5. Invite comment on the working of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003) with submissions being emailed to **VacancyAct@churchofscotland.org.uk** (*Section 2.6*).
6. Pass the Act amending the International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016), as amended, as set out in the Appendix, subject to amending the proposed paragraph 1(2) in Schedule 2 of the Act to insert after "denomination of origin" the words "or where the minister is judicially suspended for a period of six months or more".
7. Call the Church to pray, recognising:
 - Our complete dependence on God;
 - The many problems, questions and issues raised throughout the Church by the Presbytery Mission Planning Process; and
 - The deep fears and anxieties that are being felt by people across the Church;

And instruct the Forum to produce prayer resources to encourage and equip people to pray for the future well-being, peace and revival of the Church.
8. Instruct Presbyteries to engage with the young adults within their boundaries as part of their mission planning process.
9. Pass an Act amending the terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) as set out in Appendix 3 but subject to deletion of the proposed amendment to section 7.0(1) in section 3 of the amending Act.
10. Urge Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries when planning the union of congregations to consider the numerical size and composition of the united Kirk Session and also whether use might be made of fixed term appointments, bearing in mind the efficient operation of that court.
11. Recognise that the implementation of certain parts of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act is having unintended consequences where there is not consensus among the involved parties and strongly

- urge congregations, “hubs”, groups of churches, “clusters”, to meet together monthly over the coming years for corporate prayer and seek the power of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of God and invite Presbyteries to consider using the resources of the interim and transition ministry team in these changing circumstances.
12. In order to reduce the uncertainty and anxiety for existing probationers, ministry students, potential ministry candidates and those in familiarisation and reviewable tenure, instruct the Forum to publish by September 2022 full ministries numbers and projections of expected vacancies during the latter half of 2022 and 2023; full ministries numbers would entail
 - a. ministers of FTWS currently in charges,
 - b. number of MDS staff counted towards the 600 fulltime ministries target figure by end of 2025,
 - c. number of ministers in reviewable tenures,
 - d. number of ministers in familiarisation,
 - e. number of probationers (already normally included in the Faith Nurture Forum Report), and
 - f. number of ministers expected to retire that year;
 with similar ministries numbers and vacancy projections to be included in subsequent Faith Nurture Forum (or its successor) Reports to the General Assembly.
 13. Instruct Presbyteries to ensure that, in the period up to the General Assembly of 2025, where a weighting of resources is allocated to part or parts of the area of a Presbytery, the allocation of ministry in the Presbytery Mission Plan is demonstrably distributed so as to fulfil the spirit and purpose of the weighting; and instruct the Forum to take this principle into account in approving Presbytery Mission Plans.
 14. Pass the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (*Appendix 4*).
 15. Pass an Act amending the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004) (*Appendix 5*).
 16. Pass an Act amending the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992) (*Appendix 6*).
 17. Pass an Act amending the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011) (*Appendix 7*).
 18. Commend the Presbytery of Glasgow’s commitment to ‘Recharging the Eldership for the 21st Century’ and instruct the Forum to listen to and, where appropriate, to share and develop the outcomes of the Presbytery’s conference held on 05 March 2022.
 19. Instruct the Forum to take time to reflect on the lower than anticipated uptake of Ordained Local Ministers, who were to play a pivotal role in previous Presbytery plans and report to the General Assembly of 2023.
 20. Instruct the Forum, in conjunction with the Theological Forum, approved Education partners and any other relevant committees to investigate the possibility of creating an accelerated training course, similar or identical to the Church of England’s ‘Caleb Stream’, which would allow Elders within a congregation to be trained and subsequently authorised by Presbytery to administer the Sacraments within their own congregations, and report to the General Assembly of 2023.
 21. Instruct the Forum to commission a video series resource, telling the stories of churches who are thriving in the area of making new disciples, in an effort to provide ‘real-life role models’ of how congregations in different parish contexts can grow.
 22. Express thanks for the service given by Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore as Principal of New College, Edinburgh, and affirm the proposal that Rev Dr Alison Jack be appointed as her successor from 1 September 2022 (*Section 5.14*).
 23. Nominate as trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund; (*Section 8*)
 - i. Dr Eilidh Renwick to serve for a second term;
 - ii. Reverend Scott McCarthy.
 24. Affirm the commitment of the Church to place priority for the poorest at the heart of all that it does, recognising the mission of Priority Area congregations in this (*Section 15*).
 25. Instruct the Forum to continue to develop and deliver the key priority of implementing the whole Church strategy of prioritising support for those living in poverty and at the margins within the Faith Action Plan, through the Priority Areas Implementation Group and Priority Areas Team.
 26. Urge congregations to adopt the simple ACORN initiative (*section 15.1.1*) to help members join with others, following God on mission.
 27. Congratulate the congregations of Guernsey St Andrew’s in the Grange and Jersey St Columba’s as they celebrate the 50th anniversary of being Church of Scotland congregations.
 28. Note the changes made to the cap on ‘saving up’ Study Leave allowances and encourage all ministers to use or continue to use the scheme for their Continuing Ministerial Education.
 29. Agree the amended corrected ministries allocations for the Presbyteries of Annandale & Eskdale and Aberdeen & Shetland as set out in Appendix 1 to the Supplementary Report.
 30. Notwithstanding any past errors, instruct the Selection Committee to appoint three persons, to mediate a meeting with Gordon Presbytery, Faith Nurture Forum and the Assembly Trustees to:
 - i. Verify, according to the principles applied across all other Presbyteries, the appropriate weighting and allocation of ministries to Gordon Presbytery;
 - ii. In the light of the outcome of section (i) above assist (if required) the Presbytery of Gordon to complete their Presbytery Mission Plan; and
 - iii. Advise, where appropriate, on opportunities that might exist in:
 - a. Local ecumenical collaboration,
 - b. The shape of ministry allocation within the proposed new Presbytery, and
 - c. Initiatives that might qualify for funding under the newly create Seeds for Growth Fund;
 and report the outcome of their work to the General Assembly of 2023.

31. Agree the weightings applied to each Presbytery for the purpose of allocating ministries set out in Appendix 1 to the Supplementary Report. (*Appendix 1*)
32. Approve the figures contained in Appendix 1 to the Supplementary Report as the total number of ministry posts to be allocated among the Presbyteries, and this to be the basis for the next five years, subject to annual reporting and agreement of the General Assembly as required in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. (*Appendix 1*).

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HM FORCES

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Thank those who serve in Her Majesty's Forces as Chaplains for their service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel, their families and the wider military community.
3. Recognise the particular service of those Chaplains who have served in support of the contribution of the Armed Services to efforts relating to Covid-19 and on operations in Afghanistan in summer 2021.
4. Recognise the contribution of Forces Chaplains to the Church's engagement with many young adults, some of whom might not otherwise come into contact with the ministry of the Church.
5. Commend to the prayers of the Church all Chaplains, their families and all those whom they serve.
6. Encourage eligible ministers of the Church to consider service as a Chaplain to HM Forces, Regular or Reservist.
7. Encourage those eligible to consider service as Chaplains in any of the Cadet organisations and thank all serving Cadet Chaplains.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the staff for their continued efforts throughout the past year in dealing with the challenges of an ongoing pandemic and give thanks for their dedicated service in Christ's name. (*Section 2*)
3. Note the financial impact of Covid-19 as it has affected occupancy, recruitment, service delivery and fundraising. (*Section 2*)
4. Thank all those who have supported CrossReach over the past year and encourage congregations to adopt CrossReach as a charity of choice for the next year and beyond so that services can be maintained and developed. (*Section 3*)
5. Commend the close collaboration between CrossReach and the Faith Impact Forum in responding to areas of concern to the Church as

they impact on wider society and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to continue to work with CrossReach to make representation on issues of national importance including the proposed legislation on a National Care Service; the investment needed to support a net carbon zero target in the care sector; and the policy and funding framework required to tackle Scotland's high level of drugs related deaths. (*Section 3*)

6. Encourage the newly formed Presbyteries to recommit to the Presbytery Pledge at the earliest opportunity and consider how they might work more closely with CrossReach in their congregations and communities as they develop plans for the future. (*Section 3*)
7. Note the concerted efforts already made by CrossReach to deal with the challenges which pose a risk to future operations and endorse the priorities identified by the Board which will help set the conditions for consolidation and growth as part of a missional Church. (*Section 3*)
8. Welcome the investment being made by Scottish Government to ensure that a Living Wage can be paid to all staff within the regulated Adult Care Workforce; thank the Assembly Trustees for their continued commitment to tackling this area of gender inequality and social injustice and encourage the Assembly Trustees and CrossReach Board to continue to push for the necessary resources to ensure parity across the whole workforce. (*Section 3*)
9. Give thanks for the thousands of people who have engaged with CrossReach services over the last year and who have enriched the life of CrossReach by sharing their stories and situations; rejoice in the achievements of those who have worked so hard to overcome personal challenges; commit to hold all who are being supported through the services in prayer. (*Section 4*)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Welcome the Guild's 135th anniversary and acknowledge the significant impact the Guild has had in congregations and in the wider world during that time. (*Section 1.1.1*)
3. Commend the Guild on its efforts to maintain contact with and involvement of its membership as they emerge from pandemic restrictions. (*Section 2.4*)
4. Encourage Presbyteries and Guilds Together Groups to explore ways in which they can work together to support the greater involvement of Guilds in the mission of the Church. (*Section 3.6.2*)
5. Commend the further exploration of hybrid methods of meeting to enable wider participation in the national decision-making of the Guild. (*Section 3.7.2*)
6. Celebrate the significant number of new members who have joined this year and welcome the establishment of two new Guild branches. (*Section 5.1.2*)

7. Welcome new branches where Guilds have come together to provide a vibrant, sustainable local group and commend this approach as a model for future development. (Section 5.1.4)
8. Congratulate the Guild on the work of its Project Partnership Scheme 2021-24 and recognise the important issues tackled and vital monies raised. (Section 4.3)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

IONA COMMUNITY BOARD

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Unlocked programme to congregations, ecumenical partners and other agencies as a model for supporting those in poverty, and call on local and national church leaders to resist those proposed increases in fuel and National Insurance Contributions which most affect those in poverty. (Sections 3.2 – 3.5)
3. Urge congregations and all people of goodwill to remember the people of Israel / Palestine in their prayers and to press HM Government and MPs to persuade the international community and the Israeli Government in particular to bring about change in the pursuit of human rights, justice and peace for all in the Holy Land. (Sections 4.4/4.5)
4. Call upon all people of goodwill to raise awareness of the historical legacy of slavery, and to support congregations and faith communities in their endeavours to research the historical legacy of slavery in their own areas, particularly in relation to local religious buildings. (Sections 4.8/4.9)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

GENERAL TRUSTEES

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and 2021 Accounts of the General Trustees. (Section 1.2)
2. Welcome progress on the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021). (Section 2.1)
3. Welcome:-
 - (a) the decision to provide 50% of the cost of centrally employed Presbytery Buildings Officers for reformed Presbyteries for three years, and (Section 3.5.2)
 - (b) the appointments of Presbytery Buildings Officers in Fife and Clyde. (Section 3.5.3)
4. Remind Financial Boards of their duty to provide a habitable manse and to keep it in a good state of repair and decoration and remind Presbyteries of their oversight obligations in terms of Regulations VII 2007. (Section 4.3.8)
5. Instruct Congregations a) to provide a valid Energy Performance Certificate with the Manse Condition Schedule when this is submitted for inspection to Presbytery from December 31st 2022 and b) to ensure the Energy Performance Certificate Rating for the Manse is within Categories A – C by 31st December 2025 as a target date through carrying out any necessary improvements to the building or through the sale and purchase of an approved Manse by that date.

6. Instruct the General Trustees and Faith Nurture Forum to work with Presbyteries to help them audit and assess the current stock of manses and other residential properties across the Church in such areas as energy efficiency, provision of services, maintenance to a good standard and future sustainability and to remind Presbyteries of their ongoing responsibility to ensure that where there are concerns around the condition of a manse they should consider what action should be taken, which may include working with the congregation to upgrade or replace said manse.

7. Welcome the proposed Consolidating Act for General Assembly 2023. (Section 6.1.3)
8. Note that the appointment of the Chair and the Vice-Chair has been delayed due to resignation of the Chair in March 2022. (Section 6.2.1)
9. Authorise payment of £1,900 to each of Mr Ian Townsend as the Chair and Rev Fiona Mathieson as the Vice-Chair for their services over the past year (Section 6.2.2).
10. Note and endorse the position of the General Trustees in relation to ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government about the significant adverse impact on the Church of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (Register of Persons Holding Controlled Interest in Land) Regulations 2021. (Section 7.2)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Note the Safeguarding Service Annual Statistical Report and thank all Safeguarding Co-ordinators for their continued commitment to safeguarding in the Church. (Section 2)
3. Note the work being undertaken by the Safeguarding Committee to manage those who pose a risk in Church communities and thank congregational Safeguarding Panels for their work in this area. (Section 3)
4. Instruct Ministers (for this purpose to include parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, Associate Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OLM, readers, locums, and Armed Forces chaplains), to undertake safeguarding training as prescribed by the Safeguarding Service. (Section 4.1.3)
5. Instruct Presbyteries to maintain a Presbytery Safeguarding Register and to ensure compliance with the recommended safeguarding training in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 1 to the Report. (Section 4.1.5)
6. Note the change of title from Kirk Session Safeguarding Training to Trustee Safeguarding Training and instruct all active charity trustees to attend. (Section 4.3)
7. Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to ensure that all those doing regulated work (paid or voluntary) and charity trustees attend refresher Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role no less frequently than every five years. (Section 4.4)

8. Encourage congregations to mark 'Safeguarding Sunday' on Sunday 19th June 2022, or any other suitable Sunday in June. (Section 5.1)
9. Instruct Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to put in place a Whistleblowing Policy as soon as practicable. (Section 6)
10. Note the collaborative work with the Communications Department to bring an online Safeguarding Handbook to the Church of Scotland website. (Section 7.1.2)
11. Note the work of the Survivor Working Group. (Section 8)
12. Note the work to bring an online solution to SG7 and SG11. (Section 9)
13. Note the updated position in relation to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020. (Section 10)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND HOUSING AND LOAN FUND FOR RETIRED MINISTERS AND WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS OF MINISTERS MAY 2022

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mrs Barbara Finlayson as a Trustee of the Fund.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Encourage the Standing Committees and each of the Presbyteries to invite members of Standing Committees to speak to Presbytery about the benefits of serving the wider Church with a view to generating nominations. (Section 1.2)
3. Make alterations to the Standing Committees of the General Assembly as set forth in the Report (Section 7), subject to the following further alterations:

Add

Chaplains to HM Forces Committee

Vice-Convenor Appointed Andrew Tait (London Crown Court)

Minister resigned Alen McCulloch May 2022

Member resigning Andrew Tait

Faith Impact Forum

Minister resigned Peter Nimmo Apr 2022

Member Appointed Tom Burnham Apr 2022 (Earlston)

Appointment to Legal Bodies

- Mission Plan Review Group

Member Appointed David Watt (Airdrie New Wellwynd)

Member Appointed Grant Gordon (Edinburgh: Currie)

Theological Forum

Member Appointed Pamela Kennedy (Peebles St Andrew's Leckie)

4. Appoint David Di Paola and John Wilson, both solicitors in the Law Department, as Assessors in terms of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019). (Section 7.1)
5. Reappoint Roddy John MacLeod as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal. (Section 7.2)
6. Reappoint Ian Miller as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal. (Section 7.2)
7. Reappoint Richard McFarlane as a Convener of the Judicial Commission. (Section 7.2)
8. Reappoint Morag Ross as a Convener of the Judicial Commission. (Section 7.2)
9. Appoint Kenneth Baldwin as Convener of the Audit Committee. (Section 7.4)
10. Appoint Scott Brown as Convener of the Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces Committee. (Section 7.4)
11. Appoint Ross Blackman as Convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee. (Section 7.4)
12. Approve the appointment of the Rev Dr Karen Campbell as a member of the Faith Nurture Forum until the General Assembly of 2023.

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

SELECTION COMMITTEE

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint the following three persons to serve in terms of the group appointed under the new section 3 in the Supplementary Report of the Faith Nurture Forum (now section 30 in the collated deliverance of the Faith Nurture Forum):

Rev Richard Baxter, Transition Minister (Glasgow: Wellington)

Ms Sheena MacFarlane OBE, Elder (Port Glasgow: New)

Mr David Watt, Elder (Airdrie: New Wellwynd)

GEORGE J WHYTE
CI Eccl Scot

A – Legislative Acts of The General Assembly 2022**I ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF DUNS, JEDBURGH, LOTHIAN, AND MELROSE & PEEBLES***Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 2*

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January, 2023 the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, known as 'Presbytery of Lothian and Borders'.
3. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery.
4. All Presbytery elders of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles, whether commissioned by Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall be members of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery.
5. The Presbytery shall be a charity registered with OSCR and shall retain the existing Charity Number of the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Jedburgh, Scottish Charity Number SC040976.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall belong to the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders. Any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining legal advice on any question as may arise.

II ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ANGUS, DUNDEE, DUNKELD & MEIGLE, PERTH, AND STIRLING*Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 2*

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January 2023 the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Presbytery of Perth.
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC014528 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of the Presbytery of Perth.

4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth and Stirling in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Presbytery of Perth.
5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by a Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall, so long as their commission or appointment runs, be members of the Presbytery of Perth.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling shall belong to the Presbytery of Perth. Any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to the obtaining of legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise.

III ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE AND FALKIRK*Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 2*

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1st June 2022 the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale Church of Scotland', known as 'Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery' or 'Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale'.
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC048680 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale Church of Scotland.
4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery.
5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall so long as their commission or appointment run be members of the Forth Valley & Clydesdale Presbytery.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale or the Presbytery of Falkirk shall belong to the Forth Valley & Clydesdale Presbytery. Any trust or other special funds held by either Presbytery shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining of legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise.

IV ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ABERDEEN & SHETLAND, BUCHAN, GORDON, KINCARDINE & DEESIDE, MORAY AND ORKNEY

Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 2

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January 2023 the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all, which Basis of Union shall come into effect from the date of the passing of this Act.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles Church of Scotland, known as The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC013064 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles Church of Scotland.
4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney in terms of Act III 2000 (as Amended) shall be members of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.
5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by a Kirk Session or appointed by Presbytery shall, so long as their commission or appointment runs, be members of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.
6. All property or funds belonging to the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall belong to the Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles. From the date of union, any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise.

V ACT AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT III 2000)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly, with the consent of a majority of Presbyteries, hereby enact and ordain that the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. In section 2, delete the words "one in every four or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".
2. In section 4, delete the words "one in every four, or part of four" where they appear in the second line and substitute "one in every five or part of five".
3. Delete sections 6(c) and (d) and substitute: "(c) The five most recent past Moderators who are (i) eligible to receive a Commission, and (ii) not members of the Assembly by virtue of section 6(b)

or otherwise members *ex officiis*, shall be members of the General Assembly *ex officiis*. They shall be appointed in addition to their Presbytery's number of Commissions in terms of section 2 but no equalizing minister or elder shall be appointed. Their Presbytery shall remain entitled to give Commissions from amongst their allocation in terms of section 2 above to any other former Moderators eligible to be commissioned."

VI SOLEMNISATION OF SAME SEX MARRIAGE ACT

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly, with consent of a majority of Presbyteries, hereby enact and ordain as follows:

Definitions and Interpretation

1. (a) "Parish Minister" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018);
- (b) "Minister of Word and Sacrament" shall have the meaning ascribed to it in the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018);
- (c) "same sex marriage" shall mean the process described in the MSA;
- (d) "the MSA" shall mean the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977 as it exists at 24 May 2021;
- (e) "Deacon" shall mean a person holding the office of Deacon in terms of the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010);
- (f) "Authorised Celebrant" for the purposes of this Act means a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon who is empowered to solemnise same sex marriage in terms of the MSA;
- (g) "Principal Clerk" includes a person deputising for the Principal Clerk.

General provisions

2. A Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon may apply in terms of this Act to become an Authorised Celebrant for same sex marriage.
3. No person shall be required by this Act to participate in the solemnisation of, or be involved in the arrangements for, a same sex marriage.
4. In all matters referred to in this Act, including but not limited to making application to become an Authorised Celebrant, permitting or granting consent for use of buildings, arranging for the participation of others in the solemnisation of a same sex marriage, and making practical arrangements for same sex weddings, a Minister of Word and Sacrament or a Deacon, as the case may be, shall take account of the peace and unity and pastoral needs of the congregation and of any parish or other grouping of which it is a part.

Becoming an Authorised Celebrant for same sex marriage

5. The process for becoming an Authorised Celebrant shall be:
 - (i) Application shall be made initially to the Principal Clerk's Office on a form prescribed by the Principal Clerk.
 - (ii) The Principal Clerk will make application to the Registrar General for Scotland on behalf of the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon, as the case may be, in terms of section 9(1A) of the MSA.

- (iii) The Principal Clerk will liaise with and advise the Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon, as the case may be, of the outcome of the application.
- 6. The Principal Clerk shall maintain an up to date record of Authorised Celebrants.
- 7. Authorised Celebrants shall be responsible for initiating their own three yearly renewal of their status in terms of the MSA, although the actual process will be administered through the Principal Clerk's Office.

Use of buildings

- 8. Only a Parish Minister who has become an Authorised Celebrant in terms of sections 5 to 7 above may, in accordance with and subject to the terms of sections 12 to 15 of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018):
 - (i) permit the use of a Church building in their charge for the solemnisation of same sex marriage, and
 - (ii) grant consent for other Authorised Celebrants to use such a building for the solemnisation of same sex marriage. For the avoidance of doubt, any specific permission or consent for an individual same sex marriage granted by a Parish Minister in terms of this section 8 shall endure notwithstanding that such Parish Minister subsequently departs from the charge in respect of which such permission or consent was granted.
- 9. An Interim Moderator who is a Minister of Word and Sacrament shall, for the purposes of this Act, have the same rights and obligations as a Parish Minister under section 8 of this Act in relation to use of buildings.

Minister's or Deacon's discretion

- 10. Nothing in this Act shall contravene the general principle of Church law that any Minister of Word and Sacrament or Deacon has the right to determine at any time whether or not to conduct the marriage of any persons.

Territorial extent

- 11. This Act makes provision for same sex marriage conducted in accordance with the MSA.

Consequential amendments

- 12. The Recognition of Marriage Services Act (Act I 1977) shall be amended as follows:
 - (i) Section 2 shall be deleted and the following shall be substituted: "Solemnisation of marriage in the Church of Scotland is effected by an ordained minister or deacon in a religious ceremony wherein, before God, and in the presence of the minister or deacon and at least two competent witnesses, the parties covenant together to take each other in marriage as long as they both shall live, and the minister or deacon declares the parties to be married."
 - (ii) In section 3, the words "or deacon" shall be inserted after the word "minister".
 - (iii) Section 4 shall be deleted.
- 13. The Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) shall be amended as follows: Add a new sub-paragraph (5) as follows to section 4: "(5) where a Minister of Word and Sacrament who is an Authorised Celebrant in terms of the Solemnisation of Same Sex Marriage

Act (Act VI 2022), enters the bounds of the Charge of an existing Parish Minister who is not such an Authorised Celebrant, to solemnise a same sex marriage."

Guidance

- 14. The Legal Questions Committee shall produce Guidance to accompany this Act, which Guidance shall be reviewed by it from time to time. Such Guidance shall be taken into account by all those using or affected by this Act.

VII ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) shall be amended as follows:

- 1. *In the Schedule, section A, paragraph 1 (Composition), in the second paragraph, delete "drawn" and substitute "selected by the Clerks of Assembly" and add a final sentence at the end of section A: "The Clerks of Assembly shall act as Clerks to Mission Plan Review Panels". Also add a final sentence at the end of the first paragraph: "The members of the Panel shall initially be appointed for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years."*

VIII ACT AMENDING THE APPEALS ACT (ACT I 2014) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Appeals Act (Act I 2014), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

- 1. *Delete the existing definition of "Court" and substitute: "'Court' means a Presbytery or the Discipline Tribunal."*
- 2. *Amend section 2(4) to read "The right of appeal conferred in section 2(1) does not apply where the Acts and Regulations, or a decision, of the General Assembly specifically provide another appeal procedure and in particular this Act does not apply to appeals delegated to the Ministries Appeal Panel in accordance with Act VI 2007, to the Mission Plan Review Group in terms of Act VIII 2021, to the Safeguarding Appeal Panel in terms of Act XVI 2018 or to the Personnel Appeal Group in terms of decisions of the General Assembly."*
- 3. *Amend section 4(2)(i) to read "all appeals in terms of section 2(1), apart from those delegated to the Judicial Commission in accordance with section 4(3) below;"*
- 4. *Delete sections 4(2)(ii) and 4(2)(iv).*
- 5. *Amend section 4(2)(iii) by deleting "or to the Ministries Appeal Panel in accordance with Act VI 2007".*
- 6. *Amend section 4(3)(i) to read "Appeals under the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), being appeals against the decisions of Discipline Tribunals in discipline cases, except in matters of doctrine;"*
- 7. *Delete the sentence at the end of section 4(3) beginning "For the avoidance of doubt..."*
- 8. *Delete the existing section 10 (Quorum) and substitute:*

- “With the exception of decisions that one or more Grounds of Appeal is incompetent or irrelevant, which decisions may be taken by the Convener and Vice Convener as provided for in Rule 5.8 of Schedule 2, the quorum of the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly shall be eleven persons.”
9. *In section 14(2) delete “ministers, elders and deacons” and substitute “ministers, elders, deacons and Church members”.*
 10. *Delete the existing section 17 (Quorum) and substitute:*
 “With the exception of decisions that one or more Grounds of Appeal is incompetent or irrelevant, which decisions may be taken by the Convener and Vice Convener as provided for in Rule 5.8 of Schedule 2, the quorum of the Judicial Commission shall be three persons.”
 11. *In Schedule 2 (Rules of Procedure),*
 - (i) *In Rule 2.1, delete “or the Secretary of the Presbyterian Commission, as the case may be”.*
 - (ii) *Delete the existing Rule 3 and substitute:*
“3. Lodging of Answers by Respondent
 3.1 Within four weeks of being requested to do so by the Principal Clerk, the Respondent shall lodge Answers to the Grounds of Appeal with the Principal Clerk, and intimate a copy of those Answers to (i) the Clerk of the Court against whose decision the appeal is being taken, and (ii) the Appellant in the Appeal.
 3.2 The Answers shall consist of brief responses to the Appellant’s numbered Grounds of Appeal. The basis of any challenge to the competency or relevancy of any of the Grounds of Appeal shall be explained in the Answers.
 3.3 If the Respondent does not lodge Answers, the appeal shall not be dismissed but shall continue to an Appeal Management Hearing.”
 - (iii) *In Rule 4.1, delete “or the Secretary of the Presbyterian Commission, as the case may be” and after “decision” add “the appeal”.*
 - (iv) *Delete the existing Rule 5 and substitute the following:*
“5. Appeal Management Hearings
 5.1 In any appeal, once the Appellant’s Grounds of Appeal have been lodged and the Respondent has been given an opportunity to lodge Answers, and save where the Convener and the Vice-Convener with the agreement of the Parties decide to dispense with an Appeal Management Hearing, the Principal Clerk shall fix a date for a first Appeal Management Hearing.
 5.2 The date of the first Appeal Management Hearing shall be at least 28 days after the date upon which the Respondent’s Answers are lodged (or, where none are lodged, at least 14 days after the date by which the Respondent was requested to lodge Answers). The Principal Clerk shall intimate the date of the first Appeal Management Hearing to both Parties, giving at least 14 days’ prior written notice of the date.
 5.3 More than one Appeal Management Hearing may be held, as determined by the Convener and Vice-Convener.
- 5.4 The purpose of the Appeal Management Hearing(s) shall be to determine whether the Parties are ready to proceed to a hearing of the appeal, and to consider other legal, procedural and practical matters in respect of the appeal.
 - 5.5 The Appeal Management Hearing(s) shall be conducted by the Convener and the Vice-Convener of the Commission which is to hear the appeal. The Clerks of Assembly shall act as clerks to the Appeal Management Hearing(s).
 - 5.6 The following matters shall be considered at Appeal Management Hearing(s):
 - a) any issue(s) of competency and/or relevancy of the Grounds of Appeal;
 - b) the Parties’ state of preparation for the Appeal Hearing;
 - c) setting of a date and duration for the Appeal Hearing;
 - d) productions required, with the presumption that the productions at the Appeal Hearing shall be those which were before the Court against whose decision the appeal is being taken, unless a Party is allowed to lodge additional material on cause shown;
 - e) whether the Parties may agree certain productions and evidence, and whether a Joint Minute agreeing any facts may be lodged;
 - f) whether the timetable for the lodging of the Written Arguments (as defined below) is apt, or requires to be varied in any way, for example to provide that Parties will exchange drafts of their Written Arguments by a certain date;
 - g) whether or not the Appeal Hearing should be held in private;
 - h) whether or not a factual investigation of any points is necessary or appropriate, in which case a committee or reporter may be appointed by the Principal Clerk for this purpose;
 - i) whether there should be evidence led at the Appeal Hearing, the presumption being that this will not occur;
 - j) whether the Procurator should attend the Appeal Hearing;
 - k) whether any Party has any objection to any person in the pool for the Commission sitting when the appeal is being heard, which objection may only be made on cause shown and, if sustained, shall disqualify the person or persons objected to from sitting in that appeal; and
 - l) any other matter concerning the Appeal Hearing, the decision of the Convener and the Vice-Convener as to what should be considered being final.
 - 5.7 The Parties or their representatives shall wherever possible attend an Appeal Management Hearing in person, provided that if the Convener and the Vice-Convener so agree, an Appeal Management Hearing may take place by video conference or other appropriate medium.

- 5.8 At any Appeal Management Hearing the Convener and the Vice-Convener may determine that one or more Grounds of Appeal is/are irrelevant and/or incompetent and, where no competent and relevant Grounds of Appeal have been identified, may dismiss the appeal on that basis. The Convener and Vice-Convener shall also have power at an Appeal Management Hearing to make any order or determination relating to the appeal which is just and reasonable. All orders or determinations made under this Rule 5.8 shall be final."

IX ACT AMENDING THE INTIMATION OF APPEALS ACT (ACT V 2004) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act V 2004), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *In section 1:*
 - (a) *in the second line, delete the word "court" and substitute "Kirk Session or Financial Board";*
 - (b) *in the third line delete "seven" and substitute "fourteen"; and*
 - (c) *add at the end "and the Presbytery Clerk".*
2. *In section 6 delete the existing wording and substitute: "Financial Board" means the body responsible for managing the finances of a congregation, including a Congregational Board, Deacons' Court, Committee of Management or Kirk Session."*

X ACT AMENDING THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY ACT (ACT VI 1997)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Amend section 4 by numbering the existing wording sub-section (1) and adding the following:*
 - (2) Meetings of the Commission may be held in-person, online or in hybrid form, i.e. with some members present in-person and others simultaneously present online. Each of in-person, online or in hybrid form is hereinafter referred to as a "format". The Legal Questions Committee shall in calling a meeting of the Commission decide in which format the Commission shall meet.
2. *Amend section 5(1) by adding a new sub-paragraph (h) as follows:*
 - (h) having received the Report of the Assembly Business Committee, to decide on the date, meeting place and format of the next General Assembly, in circumstances where it subsequently becomes apparent that the date, meeting place and/or format specified by one Assembly for the next Assembly should be reconsidered.
3. *In section 9, before "to legislate", add ", save as specified in section 5(1)(h),".*
4. *Amend section 11 by adding at the start: "Subject to section 5(1)(h),".*

XI ACT AMENDING THE DISCIPLINE ACT (ACT I 2019) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 4

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *In section 23, at the end of the first sentence add ", in which case the Assessor shall continue to investigate the Disciplinary Complaint in terms of section 22(1)(c)".*

XII ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)

Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) shall be amended as follows:

1. *Add a new section 4.2:*
"A minister inducted to a charge on a Basis of Unrestricted Tenure, whose charge is one where the Approved Mission Plan anticipates adjustment at the next vacancy, shall, if so requested, participate in a review conducted by the Presbytery, to consider if any revised arrangements can be agreed with the minister to facilitate the implementation of the Approved Mission Plan."
2. *Consequently, delete section 18(2) of the Parish Ministry Act (Act II 2018) and amend cross-references within the said section 18 accordingly.*

XIII ADMISSION AND READMISSION OF MINISTERS ACT

Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain as follows:

PART A – DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Definitions

1. In this Act the following definitions apply:
 - (a) "Admission" means the process of making an application to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from a person who has not previously held a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (b) "Admissions Applicant" means a person who is seeking to be recognised as an Admissions Candidate.
 - (c) "Admissions Candidate" means a person who has been accepted at an Admissions Conference or Admissions Panel.
 - (d) "Admissions Conference" means a conference of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the fitness of applicants for Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (e) "Admissions Panel" means a panel of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess transfer from Temporary to Standard Certificates.
 - (f) "Certificate of Eligibility" means one of the Certificates referred to in section 12 below.
 - (g) "Certificate Holder" means a person who has received a Certificate of Eligibility.
 - (h) "Familiarisation Placement" means a placement as described in section 11 below.

- (i) “the Forum” means the General Assembly’s Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for Ministry.
 - (j) “Ministry” means a post which is commensurate with the requirements for Category O in the Registration of Ministry Act (Act II 2017).
 - (k) “Ordinand” means a person who has completed all requirements for training for ministry in their own denomination and who is eligible for ordination in that denomination but who has not yet been ordained there.
 - (l) “Readmission” means the process of making an application to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from a person who has previously held a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (m) “Readmissions Panel” means a panel of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess Readmission.
 - (n) “UK State Pension Age” means the age at which a person, had they been a UK citizen, would reach UK State Pension Age as determined at the relevant time by the UK Government’s calculations.¹
2. Wherever a matter referred to in this Act is within the discretion of the Forum, that decision may be delegated, whether to staff or suitably qualified persons, as the Forum sees fit.

Part B – ADMISSION

Pre assessment of eligibility

3. (1) A person wishing to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland from another denomination shall submit to the Forum a Pre Assessment Form (supplied for completion on initial contact with the Forum), together with their current curriculum vitae and academic transcripts of subjects studied in their theological degree, to enable the Forum to assess their suitability and equivalency of academic qualification.
- (2) In addition:
- (a) a person who has been ordained in their own denomination shall supply their Ordination Certificate to enable assessment of whether or not their ordination is recognised by the Church of Scotland for the purpose of Admission, and
 - (b) a person who is an Ordinand in their own denomination shall supply information to verify the completion of their academic training, their Church completed placements/probation and their current eligibility for ordination in their own denomination.
- (3) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not they are eligible to make an Application in terms of sections 4 & 5. The Forum’s decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

Denominational and age limits

4. (1) The Forum will accept applications from ordained ministers and Ordinands from denominations belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) or the Church of England (in terms of the Columba Declaration). Applications from those in other denominations may be considered on an exceptional basis.
- (2) The Forum will not consider an application for a Standard Certificate of Eligibility from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the requirements for a Certificate of Eligibility before 31 December in the year which is ten years before the calendar year in which that person will reach the age which would be their UK State Pension Age.
- (3) In the case of a Temporary or Restricted Certificate of Eligibility, an application will not be considered from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the requirements for such a Certificate of Eligibility before 31 December in the year which is three years before the calendar year in which that person will reach the age which would be their UK State Pension Age.

Application for Admission

5. (1) If the person satisfies the requirements of sections 3 & 4, the person may then make an application to the Forum for Admission.
- (2) Such a person shall complete the application form prescribed by the Forum, including any self-declaration(s) and shall send it to the Forum along with the required accompanying documentation and payment of the appropriate fee(s), all by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (3) The application shall give full particulars as to the person’s age, present Church connection, educational curriculum, ministerial career and other employment, together with a statement indicating the reasons for the person’s wish to be admitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The application shall be accompanied by all the documents (originals, extracts or copies) necessary in the opinion of the Forum to substantiate the facts set forth, and shall include the names of three referees.
- (4) If English is not the person’s first language, he or she shall also complete such evaluation(s) as the Forum may require as to their linguistic proficiency.
- (5) If the necessary visa to exercise Ministry in the Church of Scotland cannot be obtained at any time, the application may not proceed. All visa fees shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- (6) All persons making application shall also be subject to a criminal record check.
- (7) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not their application can proceed to the next stage under section 6. The Forum’s decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

¹ Ascertained currently by the calculator found on the gov.uk website

Initial Online Assessment

6. (1) Following application under section 5, a person who is accepted by the Forum to proceed to the stage of Initial Online Assessment shall be known as an Admissions Applicant.
- (2) An Admissions Applicant shall take part in an Initial Online Assessment arranged by the Forum.
- (3) The Initial Online Assessment shall take place on a date supplied to the Admissions Applicant and shall assess the Admissions Applicant's Call, doctrine and gifts. Following the Initial Online Assessment, a decision shall be made by the Forum as to whether or not the Admissions Applicant may proceed in terms of section 7 to Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference in Scotland.
- (4) An Admissions Applicant who is not accepted at Initial Online Assessment must wait a minimum period of one year, as notified to that person by the Forum, before they may again participate in an Initial Online Assessment under this section 6.
- (5) The outcome of each Initial Online Assessment shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal, save as set out in section 9 below.

Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference

7. (1) A person who is deemed ready to proceed after an Initial Online Assessment may undertake Full Assessment at an Admissions Conference.
- (2) An Admissions Conference shall normally be a residential in-person conference held in Scotland, but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Admissions Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable.
- (3) A fee shall be payable by the Admissions Applicant in order to reserve a place at an Admissions Conference, and this fee shall be refundable on attendance. Travel costs are payable by the Admissions Applicant.
- (4) At an Admissions Conference there shall be careful consideration of the Admissions Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability. Following the Admissions Conference, a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Admissions Applicant should be accepted as an Admissions Candidate.
- (5) All Admissions Applicants who attend an Admissions Conference shall receive notification of the decision taken at the Admissions Conference in terms of sub-section (4) and feedback on the reasons for the decision.

Opportunities to become an Admissions Candidate

8. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Online Assessment and Admissions Conference to become an Admissions Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one "non-accept" decision. Once a total of three "non-accept" decisions have occurred, no further entry into

the Admission process, at any stage, will be possible for that person. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 9 below.

- (2) Following a "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Admission process shall start again at section 3, ie at the stage of Pre-assessment of eligibility.

Appeals

9. (1) An Admissions Applicant shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel as follows:
 - (a) following a third "non-accept" decision, whether that is at Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, or
 - (b) following a first or second "non-accept" decision where the person would thereafter be age-barred in terms of section 4(3) from pursuing a fresh application for Admission.

For the avoidance of doubt, in no other circumstances shall an appeal shall be possible after a first or second "non-accept" decision.

- (2) Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or of the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, was intimated to the Admissions Applicant.
- (3) At the Appeal Hearing the Admissions Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Admissions Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Initial Online Assessment and/or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be.
- (4) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (5) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (6) and (7) below will apply.

- (6) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Initial Online Assessment or Admissions Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Admission process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Initial Online Assessment (and, if accepted there, one further Admissions Conference) or Admissions Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision and shall be permitted notwithstanding the terms of sections 4(2) and 4(3) of this Act. Any further “non-accept” decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person’s eligibility to enter the Admission process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (7) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Initial Online Assessment or the Admissions Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Admission process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Medical Assessment

10. (1) A person who is accepted as an Admissions Candidate shall, following Admissions Conference, undergo a medical assessment in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as an Admissions Candidate if that assessment is, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. The Forum’s decision shall be final.
- (2) If the medical assessment is unsatisfactory, the Admissions Candidate shall lose their status as such. The person may choose to apply again under this Act, in which event they shall commence at section 3, and subject always to the provisions of section 8, and provided always that the person must wait for the period prescribed by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year. In this situation the person must consent to undergoing a further medical assessment prior to making the new application at section 3 and that assessment must be satisfactory in the opinion of the Forum in order for the application to proceed. An unsatisfactory medical assessment on that occasion shall mean that no further entry into the Admission process is possible for that person.

Familiarisation Placement/Probationary placement

11. (1) Following a satisfactory medical assessment in terms of section 10(1) above, the Admissions Candidate will enter a Familiarisation Placement assigned by the Forum, or in the case of an Admissions Candidate who is an Ordinand, shall enter into a fifteen-month full-time probationary placement undertaken according to the provisions of section 17 to 22 of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004).
- (2) An Admissions Candidate must commence their Familiarisation Placement within three years of becoming an Admissions Candidate,

failing which their status as an Admissions Candidate shall cease. If a matter which would constitute a material breach of the Terms and Conditions document referred to in section 11(4), had that been signed, comes to the attention of the Forum in the period between acceptance as an Admissions Candidate and commencement of the Familiarisation Placement, the Forum may advise the Admissions Candidate that they have been removed from the Admissions process under this Act and shall not be entitled to reapply. There shall be no right of appeal against such a decision.

- (3) During a Familiarisation Placement, the Admissions Candidate will work under the supervision of a Supervisor. The Familiarisation Placement shall last for a period of twelve months, subject always to sub-section 11(12) below. A proportion of minimum stipend will be payable during the Familiarisation Placement, but the Admissions Candidate will be responsible for locating and funding their own accommodation during this time.
- (4) At the start of the Familiarisation Placement the Admissions Candidate shall enter into a Terms and Conditions document in the form prescribed by the Forum.
- (5) The Supervisor for the Familiarisation Placement will be chosen by the Forum. The Supervisor shall undertake such training for the role as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Supervisor shall be responsible for supervising the Familiarisation Placement according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum.
- (6) During the Familiarisation Placement the Admissions Candidate shall undertake such courses as may be prescribed by the Forum in Scottish Church History, Church Law and Safeguarding.
- (7) During the Familiarisation Placement an Admissions Candidate may be invited by the Presbytery within which lies the charge or appointment where his or her Familiarisation Placement is proceeding, to become a corresponding member of that Presbytery.
- (8) After six months, the Forum shall undertake an interim review of the Admissions Candidate according to the Terms and Conditions document.
- (9) After nine months the Forum shall undertake a final review of the Admissions Candidate according to the Terms and Conditions document. At that point a decision shall be made as to sustain, extend or not sustain the Familiarisation Placement.
- (10) If the Familiarisation Placement is sustained and provided the Admissions Candidate has completed the necessary courses in terms of section 11(6), the Admissions Candidate may commence applying for charges or appointments. At the completion of the full Familiarisation Placement, the candidate shall be entitled to receive a Certificate of

Eligibility of the type determined by the Forum. Such a person shall thereafter be known as a Certificate Holder.

- (11) It shall be competent for the Forum to refuse to sustain a Familiarisation Placement, or to terminate a Familiarisation Placement in the event of a material breach of the Terms and Conditions document which was entered into between the Admissions Candidate and the Forum in terms of section 11(4). There shall be no appeal against such a decision but a written explanation shall be provided to the Admissions Candidate in question. Such a person shall be removed from the Admission process under this Act and shall not be entitled to reapply.
- (12) Exceptionally a Familiarisation Placement may be extended at the instigation of the Forum, on a month by month basis, for a maximum period of up to three months to allow the Admissions Candidate to be inducted to a charge or take up an appointment.
- (13) Exceptionally, where in the opinion of the Forum there is sufficient evidence of rooted and recent experience of ministry in the Church of Scotland, the Forum may decide that an Admissions Candidate need not complete a Familiarisation Placement and the Forum may instead immediately grant to that person a Certificate of Eligibility of the type determined by the Forum subject to a mentoring arrangement, such mentoring arrangement to be put in place by the relevant Presbytery.

Certificates of Eligibility

12. The types of certificate which may be issued by the Forum under this Act are:

- (a) a "Standard Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for charges and appointments in Ministry in the Church of Scotland. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall take effect at the point of admission to membership of Presbytery, which, in the case of an Ordinand, shall involve ordination. Certificates of Eligibility shall be valid for three years from the date of issue.
- (b) a "Temporary Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for charges and appointments in Ministry in the Church of Scotland, but to hold any such post for an initial period of three years only. The following shall also apply to the holder of such a Certificate:
 - (i) The Certificate shall entitle the holder to hold a post for period of three years provided that post commences within three years of the date on which the Temporary Certificate of Eligibility is granted.
 - (ii) At the request of the Kirk Session/ employer, and with the concurrence of the Presbytery and the Forum, the initial period of three years may be extended for one further period of not more than three years.

- (iii) The holder, if inducted to a charge, shall be granted a seat in Presbytery.
 - (iv) The holder shall retain status as a minister in their denomination of origin. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall only take effect if the holder makes application to the Forum for such status. The age limit specified in section 5(3) shall apply save that an allowance shall be made for service already rendered. Such an application shall be considered at an Admissions Panel and the paperwork considered shall be as specified by the Forum, to include an application form and references. At least one reference shall be provided from a person with knowledge of the holder's current post.
 - (v) Any employment contract which the holder enters into shall have a condition that it is an essential requirement for the person to hold a Temporary Certificate of Eligibility and without it the employment shall cease.
 - (vi) The holder of a Temporary Certificate of Eligibility whose Certificate expires without him or her having successfully applied to be admitted to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall have no further right to apply for or be inducted to a charge or appointed to a post in Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
- (c) a "Restricted Certificate of Eligibility" entitles the holder to apply for a specified charge within the Presbytery of International Charges and that on the basis of the holder being introduced to the charge for an initial period of three years only, subject to the following provisions:
- (i) The Certificate shall entitle the holder to hold a post for a period of three years provided that post commences within six months of the date on which the Restricted Certificate of Eligibility is granted.
 - (ii) At the request of the Kirk Session and with the concurrence of the Presbytery of International Charges and the Forum, the initial period of three years may be extended for one further period of not more than three years.
 - (iii) The holder shall sign the Formula upon being introduced to the post and shall thereafter be granted a seat in Presbytery.
 - (iv) The holder shall retain status as a minister in their denomination of origin. Admission to the status of minister of the Church of Scotland shall only take effect if the holder makes application to the Forum for such status under the Church's normal process of admission in terms of this Act and satisfactorily completes same, though the applicant's service in the Presbytery of International Charges shall be taken into account in determining what Familiarisation Placement might be required. The age limit specified in section

4(3) shall apply save that an allowance shall be made for service already rendered.

- (v) Any contract which the holder enters into in the Presbytery of International Charges shall have a condition that it is an essential requirement for the person to hold a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility and without it the contract shall cease.
- (d) An “OLM Certificate of Eligibility” entitles the holder to serve in the Church of Scotland in accordance with the provisions of the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011).

PART C – READMISSION

Application for Readmission

13. (1) A person wishing to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland shall complete the application form prescribed by the Forum, including any self-declaration(s) and shall send it to the Forum along with the required accompanying documentation, their current curriculum vitae, their ordination certificates for the Church of Scotland and for their current denomination (if any), and proof of status in their current denomination (if any), all by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (2) The application shall give full particulars as to the person's age, present Church connection, educational curriculum, ministerial career and other employment, together with a statement indicating the reasons for the person having demitted status in the Church of Scotland and the reasons for their wish to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The application shall be accompanied by all the documents (originals, extracts or copies) necessary in the opinion of the Forum to substantiate the facts set forth, and shall include the names of three referees.
- (3) If the person requires a visa in order to exercise Ministry in the Church of Scotland and this cannot be obtained at any time, the application may not proceed. All visa fees shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- (4) All persons making application shall also be subject to a criminal record check.
- (5) The person shall thereafter be advised by the Forum whether or not their application can proceed to a Readmissions Panel under section 14. The Forum's decision on this is final and there is no right of appeal.

Readmissions Panel

14. (1) Following application under section 13, a person who is accepted by the Forum to proceed to a Readmissions Panel arranged by the Forum shall be known as a Readmissions Applicant.
- (2) A Readmissions Panel shall normally be held in person in Scotland, but the Forum reserves the right to hold a Readmissions Panel online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable.
- (3) The Readmissions Panel shall take place on a date supplied to the Readmissions Applicant

and shall assess the Readmissions Applicant's Call, doctrine and gifts/character and beliefs, vocation, motivation, general suitability, together with their reasons for having demitted status in the Church of Scotland and the reasons for their wish to be readmitted. The Readmissions Panel shall make a decision as to whether or not the Readmissions Applicant may be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland.

- (4) All Readmissions Applicants who attend a Readmissions Panel shall receive notification of the decision taken by the Readmissions Panel in terms of sub-section 14(3) and feedback on the reasons for the decision.
- (5) If the decision of the Readmissions Panel is that the Readmissions Applicant is to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland, the Panel may additionally determine as follows:
 - (a) that the Readmissions Applicant will require to undergo a Familiarisation Placement and that the granting of a Certificate of Eligibility will be subject to satisfactory completion of that Placement, in which case section 11 shall apply amended as appropriate, or
 - (b) that the Readmissions Applicant will be granted a Certificate of Eligibility subject to a mentoring arrangement to be put in place by the relevant Presbytery;
 and declaring that both such decisions will be subject to a medical assessment in terms of section 17 below.
- (6) A Readmissions Applicant who is not accepted at a Readmissions Panel must wait a minimum period of one year, as notified to that person by the Forum, before they may again participate in a Readmissions Panel.

Opportunities to be accepted by a Readmissions Panel

15. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to be accepted by a Readmissions Panel. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one “non-accept” decision. Once a total of three “non-accept” decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Readmission process, at any stage, will be possible for that person. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 16 below.
- (2) Following a “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before making application for Readmission again.
- (3) After a “non-accept” decision at a Readmissions Panel, a person who chooses to re-enter the Readmission process shall start again at section 13, ie at application stage.

Appeals

16. (1) A Readmissions Applicant shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel following a third “non-accept” decision at Readmissions Panel. For the avoidance of doubt, no appeal shall be possible after a first or second “non-accept” decision.

- (2) Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision of the Readmissions Panel was intimated to the Readmissions Applicant.
- (3) At the Appeal Hearing the Readmissions Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Readmissions Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the documents from the Readmissions Panel.
- (4) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Readmissions Panel there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Readmissions Panel was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Readmissions Panel acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (5) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Readmissions Panel, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (6) and (7) below will apply.
- (6) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision of the Readmissions Panel the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Readmissions Panel and shall be entitled to attend only one further Readmission Panel and that within one year of the appeal decision. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next attendance shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Readmission process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (7) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Readmissions Panel, that shall terminate the Readmission process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Medical Assessment

17. (1) A person who is accepted by a Readmissions Panel shall undergo a medical assessment in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed to enter Ministry in the Church of Scotland (subject to section 14(5)) if that assessment is, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. The Forum's decision shall be final.
- (2) If the medical assessment is unsatisfactory, the person may choose to apply again for Readmission under this Act, provided always that the person must wait for the period prescribed by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year. In this situation the person must consent to undergoing a further medical assessment prior to making the new application and that assessment must be satisfactory in the opinion of the Forum in order for the application to proceed. An

unsatisfactory medical assessment on that occasion shall mean that no further entry into the Readmission process is possible for that person.

Type of Certificate

18. (1) A person who is readmitted into Ministry in the Church of Scotland following acceptance at a Readmissions Panel and subject always to sections 14(5) and 17(1) above, shall be granted a Standard Certificate of Eligibility.

Additional requirements where the person applying for Readmission has been previously judicially deprived of status

19. If a person has been previously judicially deprived of status as a Church of Scotland minister in terms of Act VII 1935, Act III 2001 or Act I 2019, all as amended, the following additional provisions shall apply in the Readmission process:
 - (1) At the application stage, the person must submit a statement as to why they were judicially deprived of status, how they have resolved the issues around their deprivation of status and why they wish to be readmitted to Ministry in the Church of Scotland.
 - (2) The Readmissions Panel shall be entitled to see and take account of the judicial documents relating to the deprivation of status.
 - (3) The Forum shall forward to the Presbytery of residence, or, in the case of an applicant who has not resided in Scotland for three months prior to the date of the application, to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and also to any Presbytery within whose bounds the applicant was previously appointed as a minister, such documents as are reasonably required (which may include (a) a copy of the application in full and (b) copies of any documents obtained by the Forum) to enable the Presbytery or Presbyteries, as the case may be, to provide the Readmissions Panel with its/their opinion of the application.
 - (4) The Readmissions Panel shall then make its decision on the application in terms of section 14 and sections 15 to 18 may thereafter apply.

PART D – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Confidentiality

20. Each application and all procedure under this Act shall be taken in private by the Forum and by Presbyteries.

The Diaconate

21. The provisions of this Act shall apply, with necessary changes, to members of the diaconal ministry of the Church of Scotland and other Churches. The Forum shall be responsible for determining the interpretation of this Act consistently with the provisions of Act VIII 2010.

Repeals and Amendments

22. The Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act IX 2002) shall be repealed on the date this Act comes into force, subject to section 24 below. Any references to Act IX 2002 in other Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly shall from that date be read as references to this Act.

Commencement date and transitional arrangements

23. This Act shall come into force on 24 May 2022.
24. Where a person is in a Familiarisation Placement as at 24 May 2022, such a person shall continue to be subject to the provisions of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act IX 2002) until they have been granted a Certificate of Eligibility, or their application expires, whether due to refusal by the Forum to sustain their Familiarisation Placement or otherwise. All other applications for Admission or Readmission to Ministry in the Church of Scotland, whether new or ongoing, and whether such applications commence before or after 24 May 2022, shall from 24 May 2022 be dealt with under the provisions of this Act. Any disputes as to what that shall mean in practice for any particular person shall be resolved by the Forum and its decision as notified to the individual shall be final and not subject to any right of appeal.

XIV ACT AMENDING THE SELECTION AND TRAINING FOR FULL-TIME MINISTRY ACT (ACT X 2004) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing sections 1 to 6 and substitute the following sections 1 to 6 and in addition 6A and 6B:*

“Definitions

1. In this Act the following definitions apply:
- (a) “The Forum” is the General Assembly’s Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for the full-time ministry.
 - (b) *This definition was repealed by Act XIV 2022.*
 - (c) “The Assessment Conference” is the body of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the calling and fitness of applicants for all forms of ministry (in terms of 6(1)), and to accept as Prospective Candidates those deemed appropriate.
 - (d) “Ministry” is the full-time ministry of inducted parish ministers, and other posts requiring the same training and qualifications.
 - (e) *This definition was repealed by Act XI 2014.*
 - (f) “Applicants” are persons who are seeking to be recognised as Candidates for the ministry.
 - (g) “Prospective Candidates” are persons who have been accepted by the Forum at an Assessment Conference and who are awaiting the outcome of their application to Presbytery for nomination.
 - (h) “Candidates” are persons who have been both accepted by the Forum and nominated by their Presbytery. The term “Candidate” may not be used of or by any person who has yet to be, or who has failed to be, nominated by Presbytery.
 - (i) “Probationers” are persons currently undertaking the full-time probationary placement of fifteen months described in section 17(1).
 - (j) “Graduate Candidates” are those who have completed their training and received Exit

Certificates in terms of section 22, but who have not yet been ordained. The term is to be applied without limit of time to anyone in this situation.

- (k) “Accredited institutions” are academic institutions accredited by the Forum for the academic formation of Candidates”
- (l) “Recognised institutions” are academic institutions recognised by the Forum for the purposes of section 12(1)(c) and sub-section 12(1)(f)(ii) below.
- (m) “UK State Pension Age” means a person’s UK State Pension Age as determined at the relevant time by the UK Government’s calculations.²

Discernment conversation and Initial Screening process

2. (1) A person wishing to apply for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall have a discernment conversation with a staff member of the Forum’s Recruitment Team to determine how they will proceed, and should they subsequently make application, this will be followed by an Initial Screening process arranged by the Forum.
- (2) A person deemed ready to proceed after that screening process shall be entitled to apply in terms of section 4 to be recognised as a Candidate for the Ministry. Any person who makes such an application shall be known as an Applicant.
- (3) A person who is not deemed ready to proceed after that screening process must wait a period of between one and three years, as notified to that person by the Forum in writing, before they may again participate in an Initial Screening process.
- (4) The outcome of each Initial Screening process shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal.
- (5) The provisions of this section are subject to those of section 3.

Age, Time and Membership Limits for Applicants

3. (1) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who has not attained the age of eighteen years by the date on which the Forum receives the application.
- (2) The Forum will not normally consider an application from any person who has not been either a member or adherent of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been actively involved in a congregation of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been a member of a denomination belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), in any case for a period of 3 years immediately prior to receipt of the application.
- (3) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the prescribed course before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that person will reach UK State Pension Age. The acceptance of a Candidate

² Ascertained currently by the calculator found on the gov.uk website.

who has delayed commencement of the prescribed course will be discontinued if in all normal circumstances that course could not be completed before 31 December in the year which is 10 years before the calendar year in which that Candidate will reach UK State Pension Age.

- (4) The acceptance of a Candidate may be reviewed by the Forum if the prescribed course has not been commenced within three years of acceptance.

Submission of Application

4. (1) The Forum will, on request, issue to each Applicant who has fulfilled the requirements as set out in sub-section 2(2) and section 3 the relevant application, which shall be completed by the Applicant and sent to the Forum by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (2) The Forum will inform Presbyteries of Applicants within their bounds, the appropriate Presbytery being determined according to section 8 of this Act.

Period of Discernment and Local Review

5. (1) Following the Forum's receipt of their application, the Applicant will enter a period of discernment with a Mentor. During the period of discernment, the Applicant and the Mentor shall explore together the nature of the Applicant's call and gifting. The period of discernment shall last for three to six months. The Mentor will be chosen by the Forum and shall undertake such training as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Mentor shall be responsible for supervising the period of discernment according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum, and shall produce assessment materials as required using such *Indicators for Assessment* document as may be from time to time in use by the Forum. During the period of discernment the Applicant shall also meet regularly with a representative (or representatives) of Presbytery.
- (2) At the end of the period of discernment the Applicant shall proceed to a Local Review. The Local Review will be undertaken by a group consisting of a National Assessor appointed by the Forum, the Mentor and a representative appointed by the Presbytery. In the event that one of the three individuals undertaking the Local Review cannot attend the Local Review, it may still proceed if the Applicant consents.
- (3) In addition, before the end of a period of discernment, the Presbytery or the Forum may require that an early Local Review takes place. Such a Review shall be undertaken by the same group as specified in section 5(2) but may only reach a decision in terms of section 5(4) (ii), (iii) or (iv). Sections 5(5) and 5(6) shall still apply.
- (4) Subject to the provisions of section 5(3), arising out of the Local Review, one of the following written decisions shall be reported by the Review to the Forum:
 - (i) That the Applicant is ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6 (or in the case of the Readership, to proceed to training for the Readership);

- (ii) That the Applicant should undergo a further period of discernment of such length as may be determined by the Local Review before a decision to proceed to National Assessment can be made;
- (iii) That the Applicant is not yet ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of Section 6;
- (iv) That the Applicant is not suitable to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 6.

- (5) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iii) shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.
- (6) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 5(4)(iv) may have a right of appeal in terms of section 6 below, subject to the terms of section 6B.
- (7) (i) All materials received by the Forum from the Local Review in terms of sub-section 5(4) shall be available to those making consideration in terms of sub-section 6(1).
- (ii) No individual shall serve as an Assessor for the same Applicant more than once.

National Assessment

6. (1) National Assessment shall consist of a conference at which there shall be careful consideration of the Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for ministry in the Church of Scotland. The conference shall normally be an in-person residential event but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Assessment Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable. At the Assessment Conference a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Applicant shall be accepted as a Prospective Candidate for the Ministry and the Presbytery shall be informed of the decision.
- (2) All Applicants who attend an Assessment Conference shall receive, as part of their training and development, feedback in the form of a report.
- (3) An Applicant who is accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall, following Assessment Conference, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as a Prospective Candidate if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum's decisions on these matters.
- (4) An Applicant who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall be subject to the terms of section 6A below.
- (5) An Applicant who has not been accepted at Local Review in terms of a decision under section 5(4)(iii) or (iv) or who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate by an Assessment Conference may have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel, subject to the provisions of section 6B. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Local Review or

the Assessment Conference's decision, as the case may be, was intimated to the Applicant. At the Appeal Hearing the Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Local Review and/or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be.

- (6) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Local Review or Assessment Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Local Review or Assessment Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Local Review or Assessment Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
- (7) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (8) and (9) below will apply.
- (8) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Local Review or Assessment Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Local Review or Assessment Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Assessment process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Local Review (and, if accepted there, one further Assessment Conference) or one further Assessment Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision and shall be permitted notwithstanding the terms of section 3(3) of this Act. Any further "non-accept" decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person's eligibility to enter the Assessment process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.
- (9) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Assessment process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate

- 6A. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Screening, Local Review and Assessment Conference to become a Prospective Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one "non-accept" decision. Once a total of three "non-accept" decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Assessment process, at any stage, will be possible for that person, save that a fourth application may be submitted only with the prior approval of the Forum. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 6 above, subject to the terms of section 6B.

- (2) Following a "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any "non-accept" decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Assessment process shall start again at section 2 ie at the stage of discernment conversation and Initial Screening.
- (4) For the purpose of this section, a decision at Local Review in terms of section 5(4)(iii) and also section 5(4)(iv) would each count as a "non-accept" decision.

Appeal at third "non-accept" decision only unless age-barred

- 6B. A person shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel as follows:

- (a) following a third "non-accept" decision, whether that is at Initial Screening, Local Review or Assessment Conference, or
- (b) following a first or second "non-accept" decision where the person would thereafter be age-barred in terms of section 3(3) from pursuing a fresh application for Assessment,

For the avoidance of doubt, in no other circumstances shall an appeal shall be possible after a first or second "non-accept" decision."

2. *Wherever the word "Committee" appears, substitute "Forum".*

3. *Delete the existing section 10(2) and substitute the following:*

"(2) Notification of the intention to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery's decision was made. At the Appeal Hearing the Prospective Candidate shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Prospective Candidate. Such an appeal can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Presbytery acted contrary to the principles of natural justice."

4. *In section 13(e) delete "child protection" and substitute "safeguarding".*

XV ACT AMENDING THE READERSHIP ACT (ACT XVII 1992) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. *Delete the existing section 1 and substitute:*

"Application and acceptance as a candidate

- (a) The provisions of sections 2, 4, 5(1), 5(2) and 5(3), 6A and 6B and 7-10 of the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004), and (in respect of decisions in terms of

- (c)(iv) below) the appeals process referred to therein, shall be followed *mutatis mutandis* by any person wishing to apply for recognition as a candidate for the readership.
- (b) An application cannot be accepted from any person less than 18 years old. No upper age limit shall apply to application for acceptance for training.
- (c) A Local Review, established as described in section 5(4) of Act X 2004 *mutatis mutandis*, will arrive at one of the following written determinations:
- That the applicant is suitable to commence training as a candidate for the readership;
 - That the applicant should undergo a further period of discernment before a decision in terms of sub-paragraph (i) can be made;
 - That the applicant is not ready to commence training as a candidate for the readership; or
 - That the applicant is not suitable to be a candidate for the readership.
- (d) An individual whose application is successful will be known as a candidate for the readership.
- (e) An applicant who is accepted as a candidate for the readership shall, following Local Review, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum's decisions on these matters.
- (f) A decision in terms of section 1(c)(iii) or (iv) shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10 of this Act and section 6B of Act X 2004."
2. *Delete the existing section 8 and substitute:*
- "Admission of Readers from other Churches**
Readers, and individuals with equivalent status in other Churches, may be admitted to the readership of the Church of Scotland upon becoming communicant members of this Church, and the following procedure shall be followed:
- The person wishing to transfer ("the applicant") shall intimate to the Presbytery in which he or she resides, and to the Faith Nurture Forum, his or her intention to apply for recognition as a reader.
 - The Faith Nurture Forum shall determine whether the applicant's status is recognised by the Church of Scotland, and may use only that ground to refuse to accept an application. The Faith Nurture Forum's decision on this is final.
 - The Faith Nurture Forum shall specify in each case what written materials are required in support of the application: these shall always include an application form; a criminal record check and declaration; and references (including one from the minister of the Church of Scotland congregation of which the applicant is a member, and one from the previous denomination confirming status and whether the applicant is in good standing).
- (d) The Faith Nurture Forum shall establish an Assessment Panel and that Panel shall carry out an assessment in the form of (i) an interview with a psychologist and (ii) an interview with two national assessors.
- (e) A report from the Panel shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum, and shall contain recommendations relating to approval of the application and any training requirements to be imposed. The Faith Nurture Forum shall make a final determination of the training requirements that shall be imposed, and convey that determination and its overall recommendation to the Presbytery and to the applicant.
- (f) The Presbytery shall resolve whether to admit the applicant to the status of reader in the Church of Scotland, adopting without amendment the training requirements determined by the Faith Nurture Forum. The Presbytery shall arrange for a service of admission of the reader as soon as any requirements have been completed to the satisfaction of the Faith Nurture Forum.
- (g) These decisions shall be subject to the right of appeal set out in section 10 of this Act and section 6B of Act X 2004."
3. *Delete the existing section 10 and substitute:*
- "Appeals**
An appeal in terms of section 1, 2, 6 or 8 of this Act shall be heard by the Ministries Appeal Panel in terms of the Ministries Appeal Panel Act (Act VI 2007) and may be taken on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the process was conducted contrary to the principles of natural justice. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be sent to the Faith Nurture Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the decision was intimated to the applicant or candidate, as the case may be ("the appellant"). At the Appeal Hearing the appellant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Faith Nurture Forum, and to address the Panel. The appellant may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the appellant."
- XVI ACT AMENDING THE ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTRY ACT (ACT IX 2011) (AS AMENDED)**
Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8
- The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:
1. *Delete the existing sections 1 to 8 and substitute the following sections 1 to 8 and in addition 8A and 8B:*
- "1. Definitions**
In this Act the following definitions apply:
- "The Forum" is the General Assembly's Faith Nurture Forum responsible for recruitment, selection and training for the ministries of the Church.

- (b) *This definition was repealed by Act XVI 2022.*
- (c) "The Assessment Conference" is the body of trained Assessors to which the Forum delegates authority to assess the calling and fitness of applicants for Ordained Local Ministry, and to accept as Prospective Candidates those deemed appropriate.
- (d) *This definition was repealed by Act XIII 2014.*
- (e) "Applicants" are persons who are seeking to be recognised as Candidates for the Ordained Local Ministry.
- (f) "Prospective Candidates" are persons who have been accepted by the Forum at an Assessment Conference and who are awaiting the outcome of their application to Presbytery for nomination.
- (g) "Candidates" are persons who have been both accepted by the Forum and nominated by their Presbytery. The term "Candidate" may not be used of or by any person who has yet to be, or who has failed to be, nominated by Presbytery.
- (h) "Presbytery of the bounds" is the Presbytery containing the larger or largest part of the area of the Ordained Local Minister's responsibilities.

2. General

- (1) An Ordained Local Minister is a person who has been ordained for life to a Ministry of Word and Sacrament exercisable on a non-stipendiary and normally a part-time basis, supporting the Ordained National Ministry of the Church.
- (2) Except insofar as qualified by the terms of this Act, an Ordained Local Minister is hereby declared to be a Minister of the Church of Scotland. An appointment to a designated appointment is to an office of the Church of Scotland.
- (3) No person by virtue of his or her status as an Ordained Local Minister shall be eligible for induction to a Charge.

3. Entrance Qualifications

- (1) Applicants must be persons:
 - (i) who are possessed of such professional, vocational or educational experience as shall be acceptable to the Forum, and
 - (ii) who have demonstrated the potential to cope with and benefit from the academic course involved in training for the Ordained Local Ministry.
- (2) Proficiency in spoken and written English will be required.

4. Discernment conversation and Initial Screening process

- (1) A person wishing to apply for the Ordained Local Ministry of the Church of Scotland shall have a discernment conversation with a staff member of the Forum's Recruitment Team to determine how they will proceed, and should they subsequently make application, this will be followed by an Initial Screening process arranged by the Forum.

- (2) A person deemed ready to proceed after that screening process shall be entitled to apply in terms of section 6 to be recognised as a Candidate for the Ordained Local Ministry. Any person who makes such an application shall be known as an Applicant.
- (3) A person who is not deemed ready to proceed after that screening process must wait a period of between one and three years, as notified to that person by the Forum in writing, before they may again participate in an Initial Screening process. Forum.
- (4) The outcome of each Initial Screening process shall be final and not subject to any form of review or appeal.
- (5) The provisions of this section are subject to those of section 5.

5. Age, Time and Membership Limits

- (1) The Forum will not consider an application from any person who has not attained the age of eighteen years by the date on which the Forum receives the application. No upper age limit shall apply to application for acceptance for training.
- (2) The acceptance of a person as a Candidate may be reviewed by the Forum if that person's prescribed course of training has not been begun within three years of that acceptance.
- (3) The Forum will not normally consider an application from any person who has not been either a member or adherent of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been actively involved in a congregation of the Church of Scotland, or who has not been a member of a denomination belonging to the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), in any case for a period of three years immediately prior to receipt of the application.

6. Submission of Application

- (1) The Forum will, on request, issue to each Applicant who has fulfilled the requirements as set out in sub-section 4(2) and section 5 the relevant application, which shall be completed by the Applicant and sent to the Forum by the date determined and supplied by the Forum.
- (2) The Forum will inform Presbyteries of Applicants within their bounds, the appropriate Presbytery being determined according to section 9(2) of this Act.

7. Period of discernment and Local Review

- (1) Following the Forum's receipt of their application, the Applicant will enter a period of discernment with a Mentor. During the period of discernment, the Applicant and the Mentor shall explore together the nature of the Applicant's call and gifting. The period of discernment shall last for three to six months. The Mentor will be chosen by the Forum and shall undertake such training as may from time to time be specified by the Forum. The Mentor shall be responsible for supervising the period of discernment according to the guidelines and standards established by the Forum, and shall

produce assessment materials as required using such *Indicators for Assessment* document as may be from time to time in use by the Forum. During the period of discernment the Applicant shall also meet regularly with a representative (or representatives) of Presbytery.

- (2) At the end of the period of discernment the Applicant shall proceed to a Local Review. The Local Review will be undertaken by a group consisting of a National Assessor appointed by the Forum, the Mentor and a representative appointed by the Presbytery. In the event that one of the three individuals undertaking the Local Review cannot attend the Local Review, it may still proceed if the Applicant consents.
 - (3) In addition, before the end of a period of discernment, the Presbytery or the Forum may require that an early Local Review takes place. Such a Review shall be undertaken by the same group as specified in section 7(2) but may only reach a decision in terms of section 7(4) (ii), (iii) or (iv). Sections 7(5) and 7(6) shall still apply.
 - (4) Subject to the provisions of section 7(3), arising out of the Local Review, one of the following written decisions shall be reported by the Review to the Forum:
 - (i) That the Applicant is ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8;
 - (ii) That the Applicant should undergo a further period of discernment of such length as may be determined by the Local Review before a decision to proceed to National Assessment can be made;
 - (iii) That the Applicant is not yet ready to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8;
 - (iv) That the Applicant is not suitable to proceed to National Assessment in terms of section 8.
 - (5) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of paragraph 7(4)(iii) shall be subject to the terms of section 8A below.
 - (6) Applicants in respect of whom a decision is made in terms of section 7(4)(iv) may have a right of appeal in terms of section 8 below, subject to the terms of section 8B.
 - (7)
 - (i) All materials received by the Forum from the Local Review in terms of sub-section 7(4) shall be available to those making consideration in terms of sub-section 8(1).
 - (ii) No individual shall serve as an Assessor for the same Applicant more than once.
8. **National Assessment**
- (1) National Assessment shall consist of a conference at which there shall be careful consideration of the Applicant's character and beliefs, vocation, motivation and general suitability for Ordained Local Ministry in the Church of Scotland. The conference shall normally be an in-person residential event but the Forum reserves the right to hold an Assessment Conference online should circumstances make this necessary or desirable. At the Assessment Conference a decision shall be made as to whether or not the Applicant shall be accepted as a Prospective Candidate for the Ordained Local Ministry and the Presbytery shall be informed of the decision.
 - (2) All Applicants who attend an Assessment Conference shall receive, as part of their training and development, feedback in the form of a report.
 - (3) An Applicant who is accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall, following Assessment Conference, undergo a medical check and a Disclosure Scotland check in the form prescribed by the Forum and may only proceed as a Prospective Candidate if these checks are, in the opinion of the Forum, satisfactory. There shall be no appeal against the Forum's decisions on these matters.
 - (4) An Applicant who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate shall be subject to the terms of section 8A below.
 - (5) An Applicant who has not been accepted at Local Review in terms of a decision under section 7(4)(iii) or (iv) or who has not been accepted as a Prospective Candidate by an Assessment Conference may have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel, subject to the provisions of section 8B. Notification of the intention to appeal shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which Local Review or the Assessment Conference's decision, as the case may be, was intimated to the Applicant. At the Appeal Hearing the Applicant shall be entitled to appear either online or in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Applicant. A representative of the Forum shall also appear to present the case for the decision under appeal. All parties will be in possession of the reports from the Local Review and/or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be.
 - (6) An appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that in the course of the Local Review or Assessment Conference there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision of the Local Review or Assessment Conference was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Local Review or Assessment Conference acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.
 - (7) The outcome of an appeal shall be either to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, or to annul that decision, in which case sub-sections (8) and (9) below will apply.
 - (8) If the outcome of the appeal is to annul a decision, whether at Local Review or

Assessment Conference, the person shall be treated as if they had not attended that Local Review or Assessment Conference, as the case may be, and shall be entitled to enter the Assessment process again on one occasion only at the stage of attending one further Local Review (and, if accepted there, one further Assessment Conference) or one further Assessment Conference, as the case may be. Such re-entry into the process must commence within one year of the appeal decision. Any further “non-accept” decision on that next occasion at either stage shall terminate that person’s eligibility to enter the Assessment process under this Act and there shall be no further right of appeal.

- (9) If the outcome of the appeal is to uphold the decision of the Local Review or the Assessment Conference, as the case may be, that shall terminate the Assessment process for that person and they may not re-enter into it at any time.

Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate

- 8A. (1) A person applying under this Act shall have three opportunities in total to progress through Initial Screening, Local Review and Assessment Conference to become a Prospective Candidate. Each time the person is not accepted shall count as one “non-accept” decision. Once a total of three “non-accept” decisions have occurred, no further entry into the Assessment process, at any stage, will be possible for that person, save that a fourth application may be submitted only with the prior approval of the Forum. A person will however have rights of appeal as set out in section 8 above, subject to the terms of section 8B.
- (2) Following a “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person must wait for the period specified by the Forum, being a minimum period of one year, before being assessed again.
- (3) After any “non-accept” decision at any stage, a person who chooses to re-enter the Assessment process shall start again at section 4 ie at the stage of discernment conversation and Initial Screening.
- (4) For the purpose of this section, a decision at Local Review in terms of section 7(4)(iii) and also section 7(4)(iv) would each count as a “non-accept” decision.

Appeal at third “non-accept” decision only

- 8B. A person shall have the right to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel following a third “non-accept” decision, whether that is at Initial Screening, Local Review or Assessment Conference.”
2. *Wherever the word “Committee” appears, substitute “Forum”.*
3. *Delete the existing section 9(4)(b) and substitute the following:*
- “(b) Notification of the intention to appeal to the Ministries Appeal Panel shall be made to the Forum and to the Principal Clerk within 14 days of the date upon which the Presbytery’s decision was made. At the Appeal Hearing the Prospective Candidate

shall be entitled to appear either online in person, as determined by the Forum, and to address the Panel. He or she may be accompanied by a companion, who shall not be entitled to speak to the Panel, but who may confer with the Prospective Candidate. Such an appeal can only be brought on one or more of the following grounds: (a) that there were irregularities in the process, (b) that the final decision was influenced by incorrect material fact, or (c) that the Presbytery acted contrary to the principles of natural justice.”

4. *Delete the existing section 9(5).*

XVII ACT AMENDING THE INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERY ACT (ACT II 2016) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, 24 May 2022, Session 8

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that The International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. By deleting in Schedule 1 to the Act the Charge of Costa del Sol.
2. In Schedule 2 of the Act:
 - (a) by inserting a new section 1 as follows and renumbering the following paragraphs:

“1. Appointments to Charges

 - (1) As the concept of “holder of an office” is not one recognised in most jurisdictions in the Presbytery, ministers elected to a Charge shall, while continuing to be holders of an office in Church law, enter into a contract of employment with the Kirk Session in such form as may be required in the relevant legal jurisdiction. It shall be a term of all such contracts that, where the minister is a minister of the Church of Scotland, he or she must retain his or her status as a minister of the Church of Scotland and that, where the minister is the holder of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility under s.12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022), he or she must both retain their status as a minister of their denomination of origin and not have their Restricted Certificate of Eligibility withdrawn by the Church of Scotland.
 - (2) For the avoidance of doubt, all ministers in Charges remain subject to the discipline of Presbytery and the General Assembly and neither the congregation nor the Kirk Session has any power to dismiss the minister save that the Kirk Session shall be required by the Presbytery to terminate a minister’s contract of employment where the minister no longer retains his or her status as a minister of the Church of Scotland or in his or her denomination of origin, or where the minister is judicially suspended for a period of six months or more, or where the minister has been introduced with a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility and this is withdrawn by the Church of Scotland; a Kirk Session may also be required by the Presbytery to terminate a minister’s contract of employment in terms of paragraph 4 of this Schedule 2.”

- (b) by inserting in what is currently paragraph 1.1 after the words “Church of Scotland” the following:
“and holders of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility under section 12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022).”
- (c) by deleting in the first sentences of what are currently paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 the word “inducted” and replacing it with the word “introduced”.
- (d) By inserting a new paragraph 4 as follows:

“4. Termination of employment

If at any time a Kirk Session determines that it will be unable to fulfil the financial commitments it made at the time of introduction regarding payment of the costs of ministry for more than 3 months ahead, it will notify the Presbytery Clerk and the appointment of the minister shall be terminated by the Kirk Session if the Presbytery so instructs, and the Presbytery shall bear the cost of (i) any statutory compensation payable to the minister, (ii) up to a further 3 months’ salary from the date of termination, (iii) the reasonable cost of travel back to Scotland (or other country from which the minister came on taking up the appointment) for the minister and family residing with him or her, and (iv) removal expenses (back to Scotland or the country from which the minister came) for furniture and personal effects up to a maximum of 25 cubic metres.”

- 3. By inserting a new Schedule 5 as follows:

“SCHEDULE 5

Vacancy Procedures

On the occurrence of a vacancy or prospective vacancy in any Charge in the Presbytery, the provisions of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003 as amended) (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Act’) shall apply only in so far as not inconsistent with the following provisions, which following provisions shall in that event prevail:

1. Vacancy Procedure Committee

As soon as the Vacancy Procedure Committee is aware of a vacancy or prospective vacancy, it shall:

- a) determine the release of the minister and the date on which the Charge will become vacant (in terms of s.4 of the Act);
- b) appoint an Interim Moderator for the Charge;
- c) appoint an Advisory Committee; and
- d) issue to the Kirk Session (or, where there is a financial board, to that board) of the vacant congregation, for completion and return, a Vacancy Schedule in a form specific to the Presbytery to set out (i) the details of congregational income, (ii) the proposed arrangements for payment of ministerial costs and expenses, and (iii) the costs and arrangements for the provision of a manse. The provisions of s.10(1) and (2) of the Act shall not apply.

2. Effective Date of Decisions of the Vacancy Procedure Committee

The Presbytery Clerk shall issue notice of the decisions of the Vacancy Procedure Committee in terms of Sch. A of the Act to the congregation and by email to all members of Presbytery, including the provision that these decisions shall become effective 7 days after notice is given, unless the Clerk receives valid notice under s.2(2) of the Act.

3. Vacancy Schedule

The Kirk Session or financial board of the vacant Charge must complete and return the following items to the Presbytery Clerk: (i) the Vacancy Schedule in the form provided by Presbytery, (ii) an Extract Minute of the Kirk Session “making a commitment fully and adequately to financially support the ministry” in the Charge and (iii) a duly completed Manse Condition Schedule.

4. Manse

Following receipt of the completed Manse Condition Schedule, the Fabric Committee of Presbytery shall arrange for the inspection of the manse and shall report to the Vacancy Procedure Committee on what action (if any) requires to be undertaken by the congregation before a date can be set for any introduction of the minister. The decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee on considering that report will be advised to the Kirk Session, along with an instruction to carry out whatever works are required.

5. Permission to Call

- (1) On the Vacancy Procedure Committee being satisfied with the completed Vacancy Schedule, Extract Minute and Manse Condition Schedule and being satisfied that the Charge has no current or accumulated shortfalls in its contributions to central funds, that the Charge can pay the costs of a minister in terms of the Vacancy Schedule and that the provisions of s.5 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) are complied with, it shall consider whether it may give permission to call a minister in terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan approved under Act VIII 2021.
- (2) Any decision to grant permission to call shall be subject to the provisions of s.2 of the Act. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of section 8 of the Act do not apply.

6. Profile

The Kirk Session of the vacant congregation in preparing a draft Profile (once permission to call has been granted) shall include in it details from the Vacancy Schedule, including particularly details of salary level and ministry costs and the congregation’s income, and shall also make reference to the Presbytery’s Guidance for Ministers Taking Up or Demitting a Charge.

7. Eligibility for Election

For Charges in the Presbytery, section 18 of the Act shall include the holder of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility in terms of section 12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022).

8. Sustaining the Call

Once the Presbytery Clerk has received the Call and other required documents (in terms of s.29 of the Act), along with one of the following:

- (i) a Certificate of the minister’s registration under Category O on the Register of Ministry, or
- (ii) a valid certificate of completion of training issued by the Faith Nurture Forum (an Exit Certificate) which has not expired; or
- (iii) confirmation from the Faith Nurture Forum that the minister has been granted a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility in respect of the Charge)

the Vacancy Procedure Committee will consider sustaining the Call and, provided (a) any works required to the manse

have been satisfactorily completed and (b) the following Safeguarding requirements have been met, determine arrangements for the minister's introduction. No call can be sustained until the Presbytery receives evidence of the minister's membership of the PVG Scheme as defined in the Safeguarding Act (Act XVI 2018), or, in the case of a minister who is not a minister of the Church of Scotland, of reasonably equivalent clearance as required by the Safeguarding Service and appropriate to the jurisdictions both where the minister came from and will serve.

9. Guidelines

The Presbytery shall approve Supplementary Guidelines to those referred to in section 34 of the Act to provide details of the vacancy procedures specific to Charges in the Presbytery, in conformity with the provisions of this Schedule 5.

10. Notices

Notices may be given by pulpit intimation or by electronic means or by a combination of these methods."

B – Regulations of the General Assembly 2022**I CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS 'GIVING TO GROW' REGULATIONS (REGS I 2022)***Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 3***General**

1. All Congregations (with registered charity number) within a Charge, with the exception of single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships and Congregations within the Presbytery of International Charges, are required to make a Contribution in terms of these Regulations. For the avoidance of doubt, single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships are required to make an equivalent Contribution in terms of Regulations I 2007. Congregations within the Presbytery of International Charges are required to make a Contribution in terms of Regulations V 2016.
2. Each Congregation shall pay its required Contribution in ten or twelve equal monthly instalments during the financial year by bank standing order, unless permission is granted annually by Presbytery to allow payments to be made under some other arrangement. The Presbytery shall advise the Stewardship and Finance Department annually by Extract Minute of any such individual arrangements.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the Financial Board of each Congregation to inform the members of the Congregation of the required Contribution and the ways in which this Contribution enables the worship, mission and service of the Church.
4. Contributions shall be credited to the Church of Scotland General Fund. Any shortfalls in Contributions shall be borne by that Fund.
5. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall inform each Presbytery, on a monthly basis, of shortfalls in Contributions from Congregations within their bounds. They will also inform them of shortfalls, where applicable, in respect of reimbursement by Congregations of locum and ministers' travelling expenses, both for the latest financial year and any accumulated totals for previous years. Each Presbytery shall record all such shortfalls annually in the Minutes of the Presbytery and shall consult with the office-bearers of the Congregations concerned.

Process of determining Contributions

6. To facilitate the process of calculating the required Contribution for each Congregation, Financial Boards shall be required to submit annually by 31 March to the Stewardship and Finance Department a copy of their Congregational Accounts for the previous financial year. Where the accounts of a Congregation have not been received by 30 June the Department shall be entitled to make an estimate of the income.
7. Where accounts are subsequently received this estimate will only be amended if materially different, as determined by the General Treasurer. Only the Contribution for the current year and subsequent years shall be amended.
8. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall provide to each Presbytery by 30 September each year a list of the proposed Contributions for Congregations within a Charge and the Income Base of each Charge within the bounds of that Presbytery for the following financial year.

9. By 15 November each year, each Presbytery shall (1) notify Congregations within their bounds, with the exception of single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnerships, of their proposed Contributions for the following financial year; and (2) communicate this information by Extract Minute to the Stewardship and Finance Department.
10. Where a Congregation has shortfalls in the current year and previous years, any payment made will be allocated against the oldest debt first.
11. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall issue to Congregational Treasurers by 31 December each year confirmation of the required Contributions for the following financial year.

Income Base Assessment

12. The required Contribution shall be calculated, based on each Charge's Income Base and the total Cost as defined below of all Minister(s) of Word and Sacrament allocated to that Charge. Such Cost is the total of the gross salary, employer's national insurance contribution, employer's pension contribution, death in service benefit cost and cost of income protection. The Income Base is the sum of the assessable income of all of the Congregations within that Charge. The Stewardship and Finance Department shall determine and report annually the Cost of a Minister of Word and Sacrament.
13. In determining Assessable Income for each Congregation, all of the following shall be included:
 - a) General Fund income;
 - b) Income specifically received to meet the cost of ministries (including, but not exclusively, glebe rents, Consolidated Stipend Fund income and local endowment income);
 - c) Fabric Fund and Reserve Fund income (including income in Fabric Funds held by the General Trustees);
 - d) Half of all gross income in excess of £10,000 received from outside agencies for the use of premises;
 - e) Income from a Local Mission Church for which the Charge has responsibility;
 - f) Wedding and funeral income (as disclosed as donations in the annual accounts);
 - g) Any other income which is available to meet the normal purposes of a parish church (which includes income held in restricted and designated funds);
 - h) Net income raised through giving online or through other digital means;
 - i) Net property rental income (including, but not exclusively, locally held manse, shop and garage);
 - j) Net café and charity shop income (which shall be understood as those funds which are transferred to the General Fund of the congregation);
 - k) Net income from telephone masts, electric vehicle charging points, renewable energy sources and all other similar commercial income;
 - l) Net visitor income to the congregations from historic buildings which are open to the public;

- m) In respect only of items (h) – (l) inclusive, expenditure incurred wholly in the provision of the service generating the income may be deducted from gross income calculated from the sources in the preceding section. All expenditure must be disclosed in the annual accounts as relating to the income and be separately identifiable from other similar expenditure.

14. For the avoidance of doubt the following items (which, if applicable, must be disclosed in the accounts and separately identifiable) shall be **excluded** from the Income Base:
- Legacies;
 - Proceeds from the sale of property or investments;
 - Special collections for other charities;
 - Grant income;
 - Restricted income which cannot be used for normal purposes of a parish church, including funds raised specifically for building projects that fall out with normal fabric works.
15. Where the Income Base has been incorrectly calculated due to the Congregational Accounts not being fully compliant with the Regulations for Congregational Finance (Regs II 2016), only the income of the current year and previous year will be corrected, if material, as determined by the General Treasurer.

Calculation of the Giving to Grow Components

16. The Contribution calculated for each Charge is the sum of the following three components:
- Ministry Here: 50% of the Charge's Income Base, but not exceeding the Cost of the Charge's allocated posts of Minister or Ministers of Word and Sacrament post at the maximum of the stipend scale. This allocation shall be based on the number of full-time equivalent posts of Ministry of Word and Sacrament allocated to that Charge as at 31 August in the year of calculation.
 - Ministry Elsewhere: 35% of the Charge's Excess Income. This component shall not exceed 1.5 times the Cost of the Charge's allocated posts of Ministry of Word and Sacrament
 - Shared Activities: 10% of the Charge's Income Base.
17. The total Contribution for the Charge shall be apportioned among each Congregation in the Charge on a pro-rata income basis, that is in proportion to the contribution of income each congregation makes to the total income of the Charge.
18. All income received from the Consolidated Stipend Fund or Glebe Rent Shall be deducted from the Congregation's Contribution.
19. If the Congregation's Contribution is calculated to be less than its stipend endowment income, the required Contribution shall be increased to equal the amount of the stipend endowment income.

Appeals

20. The Governance Group of the Assembly Trustees shall appoint a Panel to adjudicate on any appeals from Congregations relating to the application of

paragraphs 13 and 14 above. Appeals on any other grounds shall not be permitted. (Full details of the appeals process are available from the Church of Scotland website.)

Transition Funding

21. The sum total of increases in Contributions for Congregations within a Presbytery between the last year of the previous Contribution system (2022) and that current year's requirement, will be made available as Transition Funding to Presbytery. This will be communicated when the list of proposed Contributions is issued to Presbytery. This funding will be available annually, for the first three years (i.e. in the years 2023 – 2025) of this Giving to Grow contribution system.
22. This transition funding may be used by the Presbytery to reduce the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations before these are finalised for the following year. This will be charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund.

Giving Agreements

23. Presbyteries may increase the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations where they deem that there is considerable potential for increased giving by completing a 'Giving Agreement' with the trustees of the Congregation which will indicate the agreed Contributions for the following financial year. As per paragraph 9, Presbyteries shall communicate by Extract Minute the required Contributions for Congregations within their bounds subject to application of a Giving Agreement for the following financial year to the Stewardship and Finance Department not later than 15 November each year. Any agreed increase in the proposed Contribution will be used by Presbytery to fund Presbytery or National Initiatives, as determined by the congregation entering into the Agreement.

Miscellaneous

24. Where a Charge has a ministerial vacancy, an allowance within limits determined by the Faith Nurture Forum shall be given towards extra costs incurred for locum provision during the vacancy. This allowance will be deducted from the Charge's Contribution and charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund.
25. Where a Charge is in Guardianship, an allowance, within limits determined by the Faith Nurture Forum, shall be given towards extra costs incurred for locum provision during the Guardianship. This allowance will be deducted from the Charge's Contribution.
26. Where a Congregation undergoes a form of adjustment (e.g. union) the Contribution due will be recalculated from the effective date of the adjustment, ensuring that the newly adjusted Congregation will not pay more in that financial year under the adjusted form compared to the previous form.
27. Where an adjustment results in a significant reduction in Charge income, the General Treasurer may apply a further decrease to the Contribution.
28. These Regulations will be subject to annual review by the General Assembly, in accordance with proposals submitted by the Assembly Trustees.

Transitional provisions

29. These Regulations shall come into force when passed at the General Assembly, with the effect of enabling the collection of Giving to Grow Contributions from 1 January 2023. The Stewardship & Finance shall calculate the first year's Contributions based on congregational accounts received, or estimates for, the year ending 31 December 2021. The Ministries and Mission Contributions Regulations (Regs I 2012) shall remain in force until 31 December 2022 and then shall be repealed, save for section 15 which shall remain in force until 31 December 2023 and then shall be repealed.

Definitions

30. a) A "Financial Board" shall mean shall mean the body responsible for managing the finances of a congregation, e.g. Kirk Session, Congregational Board, Deacons' Court, Committee of Management, etc.;
- a) A "Local Mission Church" shall be a Christian community whose purpose is to worship, witness and serve in a distinct geographical setting, established in terms of the Local Mission Church Regulations (Regs II 2021);
- b) A "Charge" shall have the meaning given to it in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021);
- c) "outside agencies" shall mean those which are an independent body to the congregation and not an extension of the life of the church;
- d) "Excess Income" shall mean that portion of the Income Base which is over and above twice the cost of the Charge's allocated Minister of Word and Sacrament post(s);
- e) "Shortfalls" shall mean unpaid Contributions, including any contributions outstanding under the Ministries and Mission Contributions Regulations (Regs I 2012).

II REGULATIONS AMENDING THE ALLOCATIONS IN LOCAL ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS REGULATIONS (REGULATIONS I 2007)

Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 3

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Allocations in Local Ecumenical Partnerships Regulations (Regulations I 2007), shall be amended as follows:

1. In section 1, delete the first sentence and substitute: "The allocation will be based on the income of the Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) in the previous financial year."

III REGULATIONS AMENDING THE REGULATIONS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CONGREGATIONS IN THE PRESBYTERY OF INTERNATIONAL CHARGES (REGULATIONS V 2016)

Edinburgh, 21 May 2022, Session 3

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regulations V 2016), shall be amended as follows:

1. In paragraph 1 replace "Ministries & Mission Contribution" with "a Contribution under the Congregational Contributions 'Giving to Grow' Regulations (Regs I 2022)".
2. Amend paragraph 2 by replacing "Stewardship and Finance Department" with "Presbytery" and

by adding at the end "and Presbytery shall pay the total Contribution to the Stewardship and Finance Department in ten or twelve equal monthly instalments during the financial year by bank standing order."

3. Delete section 7 and substitute: "The required Contribution for each congregation shall be calculated by the Stewardship and Finance Department as 10% of the congregation's Income Base."
4. Delete paragraph 8(e) and substitute "Half of all gross income in excess of £10,000 received from outside agencies for the use of premises."
5. Insert new paragraph 8(f) in the following terms: "Net income raised through giving online or through other digital means" and renumber paragraph 8(f) as 8(g).
6. Amend the paragraph at the end of paragraph 8 by adding before the words "grants from the Salvesen Trust", the words "all grant income, including".
7. Delete the first sentence of section 9 and substitute "The Income Base figures for the latest financial year, calculated as specified above in paragraph 8, shall be the base figure for calculating the required Contributions from congregations."
8. In paragraph 10 delete the words "Ministries and Mission".
9. In paragraph 11 delete the words "Council of Assembly" and substitute "Assembly Trustees".
10. Delete paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 and substitute the following, renumbering thereafter:

"Appeals"

The Governance Group of the Assembly Trustees shall appoint a Panel to adjudicate on any appeals from Congregations relating to the application of paragraph 8 above. Appeals on any other grounds shall not be permitted. (Full details of the appeals process are available from the Church of Scotland website.)"

11. Delete the first sentence of paragraph 17.
12. Delete paragraph 18.
13. Add the following two paragraphs at the end:

"Transition Funding"

1. The sum total of increases in Contributions for Congregations within a Presbytery between the last year of the previous Contribution system (2022) and that current year's requirement, will be made available as Transition Funding to Presbytery. This will be communicated when the list of proposed Contributions is issued to Presbytery. This funding will be available annually, for the first three years (i.e. in the years 2023 – 2025) of this Giving to Grow contribution system.
2. This transition funding may be used by the Presbytery to reduce the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations before these are finalised for the following year. This will be charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund."

IV 'SEEDS for GROWTH' FUND REGULATIONS (REGS IV 2022)

Edinburgh, 23 May 2022, Session 6

1. The Church of Scotland *Seeds for Growth Fund* ("the Fund") shall be established from 1 January 2023.
2. Responsibility for the Fund shall rest with the Assembly Trustees who act as the Trustees of the Unincorporated Entities Scottish Charity Number 011353 ("The Trustees"). The Trustees may establish a body to oversee the Fund on their behalf.
3. The purposes of the Fund are to support the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping communities through (i) the planting of new worshipping communities; (ii) work focused on the development of new forms and fresh expressions of church life; (iii) creative engagement with all sectors of society in particular with those aged 40 and under, in every case promoting the advancement of religion and the overarching purpose of the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church; and (iv) The enablement of community transformation motivated by Christian service. In the initial three years (2023 – 2026) the Fund shall prioritise the support of: (i) the planting of new worshipping communities and (ii) work with people aged 40 and under.
4. The Fund shall operate for a 7-year period until 31st December 2029. A review conducted by the Trustees shall take place after the first three years of operation and shall measure the success of the Fund against previously agreed criteria to determine future direction and investment.
5. The Fund shall replace the *Go For It* Fund. Administration of grants already awarded out of the *Go For It* Fund shall become the responsibility of the Fund. Monies already committed in the *Go For It* Fund at 31 December 2019 shall be transferred to the Fund.
6. An application to the Fund may be made by a Presbytery or a group of Presbyteries.
7. Applicants to the Fund should be able to show that they have worked diligently to: (i) raise funds from local sources (including the Presbytery/ies and congregation(s) making or involved in the application); and, (ii) raise funds from appropriate external sources. Funding, up to 100%, will not necessarily be contingent on funding being provided by any other body.
8. The Trustees shall provide core funding from the unrestricted funds held on behalf of the Unincorporated Entities. This money shall cover both grants to be paid from the Fund and the administration of the Fund.
9. The Fund may be supplemented by other funds raised within and beyond the Church.
10. The Terms of Reference for use of the Fund set out in the Schedule below shall be developed and monitored by the Trustees and any amendments shall be approved by the General Assembly as part of the annual reporting on the operation of the Fund. The Trustees may also fund grants from restricted funds held by the Unincorporated Entities if the purpose is consistent with donor restrictions.
11. The Trustees shall be responsible for monitoring the ongoing effectiveness of the Fund. The Trustees shall report annually on the work of the Fund to the General Assembly with a focus on how the Fund is achieving its primary aims as set out in section 3 of these Regulations.
12. If the General Assembly decides that the Fund shall be closed before 31st December 2029 any monies remaining in the Fund shall be transferred back to the General Fund.

SCHEDULE

The *Seeds for Growth Fund* Implementation Group Terms of Reference

Committee

1. The Seeds for Growth Fund Implementation Group (the "Committee") is a Committee of the Assembly Trustees.
2. The purpose for which the Committee is established is to oversee the operation of the Seeds for Growth Fund on behalf of the Assembly Trustees. In carrying out those duties the Committee shall adhere to the relevant Regulations issued by the General Assembly and to the guidelines, criteria and governance requirements approved by the Assembly Trustees.
3. The size of individual grants, guidelines, criteria and governance requirements shall be reviewed annually by the Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Committee. Grants in excess of £75,000.00 shall require individual approval by the Assembly Trustees.

Purpose

- (a) the purpose of the Fund is to seek the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping communities through:
 - (i) the planting of new worshipping communities;
 - (ii) work focussed on the development of new forms and fresh expressions of church life; and
 - (iii) creative engagement with all sectors of society in particular with those aged 40 and under; and
 - (iv) the enablement of community transformation motivated by Christian service.
- (b) the Committee shall, in all its determinations, promote the advancement of religion and the overarching purpose of the numerical and spiritual growth of the Church.

Criteria

The Committee shall assess applications in accordance with the following criteria.

1. Applications must come from Presbyteries or groups of Presbyteries. Collaboration with other partners, specifically including ecumenical co-operation, will be encouraged where such collaboration furthers either numerical or spiritual growth within the Church or community transformation motivated by Christian service.
2. Applications must demonstrate a visionary approach to church growth, church planting and pioneer mission and must set out the anticipated effect of the project at a congregational or Presbytery level and include a clear plan and measurable targets.
3. Applications must provide a realistic assessment of how the project will continue beyond the period of funding and whether it will generate growth elsewhere within the Church.

4. Applications must include means of developing and sharing related experiences and good practice across the Church.

5. Applications must be focused on a defined project.

6. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the following prioritisation:

- Developing mission through new ecclesial communities and church planting
- Engaging in intergenerational approaches to and participation in worship

Governance

1. The operation of the Seeds for Growth Fund shall be overseen by a Committee of nine persons, two of whom will be Assembly Trustees. The other members shall be appointed by the Assembly Trustees working in collaboration with the Nomination Committee. Members so appointed shall serve a three-year term, renewable unless otherwise determined by the Assembly Trustees. Of those first appointed, four shall serve three years renewable and three shall serve two years, renewable for a three-year term. Trustee members shall serve during their appointed term as an Assembly Trustee.

2. The Committee shall meet at least five times per year to consider strategy and applications. On special cause shown the Committee may consider an application outwith those times; but in so doing the Committee must determine both that there is an urgency as to the application which requires a special meeting and also that the application is of such importance that to consider it without comparison with other applications would not improperly disadvantage such potential applications.

3. In carrying out their duties the Committee will engage with applicants through regional teams and carry out the process of assessment in partnership with local Presbytery representatives. Each team shall be convened by a member of the Committee and shall comprise two members of the Committee, in addition to two other persons with local knowledge chosen by the Presbytery. Each team shall be appointed to work within the life-cycle of the purpose for which the grant application is being considered. Once a grant application has been approved by the Committee, a team shall report to the Committee both in respect of the terms of the grant and also for determinations on any matter requiring consideration outwith the terms of the grant.

4. A quorum of the Committee shall be five, whether attending in person or by electronic means. One attendee must be an Assembly Trustee and one must be the Convener or another trustee specifically nominated by the Convener for the purpose of the meeting in question. If meeting by electronic means, the Committee shall comply in all respects with the provisions of GA Act VI 2018 (Virtual Attendance at Meetings Act).

5. The Committee shall maintain Minutes of their meetings, duly approved by all members attending within two weeks of the meeting. The Minutes shall include a full account of the work of the regional "team" with a synopsis of all applications received and the reasoning for recommendations made to the Committee.

6. In respect that the Assembly Trustees are the Charity Trustees for the assets to be used by the Seeds for Growth Fund:

- (i) the Minutes of meetings of the Committee shall be sent to the Assembly Trustees within one month of the meeting,
- (ii) in carrying out their duties the Committee shall submit quarterly reports to the Assembly Trustees as to their administration of the assets of the Fund and any proposed strategy for future operation, such report to be in terms of a template to be provided by the Assembly Trustees,
- (iii) the Committee shall maintain such accounts as the Assembly Trustees require,
- (iv) the work of the Committee in considering and granting applications shall be carried out in accordance with a budgetary framework, agreed with the Assembly Trustees, and
- (v) any liability arising out of the acting of a Committee member in good faith shall be borne as if the acting of an Assembly Trustee.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022**C – List of Members of Standing Committees**

* = Reappointed

APPEALS COMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

Philip Brodie* (2020-2024), William Hewitt (2019-2023), *Conveners*
 Janet Foggie (2020-2023), J G Grahame Lees* (2020-2023), *Vice-Conveners*

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers	Sheila Kirk*	John Ferguson	Sarah Ross
Elders	James Houston		Graeme Barrie Graeme Roberts*
<i>Convener, Vice-Convener, 2 members of the Legal Questions Committee (Convener and another member involved more in judicial matters to be nominated by the Legal Questions Committee), a further 6 members made up of ministers and elders with experience of the General Assembly, with the following members ex officio: the Moderator and the Moderator Designate, the Principal Clerk, the Depute Clerk, the Solicitor, the Procurator and the General Treasurer.</i>			

Donald McCorkindale, *Convener* (2020-2023)
 Michael Mair, *Vice-Convener* (2022-2025)

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

2023	2024	2025
Ministers	Barry Hughes Peter McEnhill	Gillian Paterson Norman Smith
Members Jean Couper Jennifer MacDonald Geoff Miller		Ian Forrester Philip Ziegler*
<i>12 trustees appointed in accordance with the Constitution and Remit approved at the General Assembly of 2019 (from which shall be drawn the Convener, Vice-Convener, and Administrative Trustee), plus 2 ex officio members: the Convener of the Assembly Business Committee and the Chair of the General Trustees.</i>		

David Cameron, *Convener* (2022-2025)
 David Harrison, *Vice-Convener* (2021-2024)
 Ann Nelson*, *Administrative Trustee* (2022-2024)

AUDIT COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers		Graeme Glover*	
Members Douglas Horn			
<i>Convener, who shall not be an Assembly Trustee, three voting members appointed by the General Assembly through the Nomination Committee, all of whom shall be independent of the Unincorporated Entities and at least one of whom shall have recent and relevant financial experience, and two additional voting members be appointed by the Assembly Trustees. The quorum shall be three voting members, at least one of whom is a Trustee member. The Chief Officer and the General Treasurer shall attend without a right to vote or make a motion. In addition, other officials, as required by the Committee, may be in attendance from time to time without a right to vote or make a motion. Representatives of the External and Internal Auditors, shall be entitled to attend all meetings but without a right to vote or make a motion.</i>			

Kenneth Baldwin, *Convener* (2022-2026)

CHAPLAINS TO HER MAJESTY'S FORCES COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers			William McLaren*
Members Alexander Bolland* Colin Hogg*	Jacqueline Thomson DCS		
<i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 8 members appointed by the General Assembly. There are also 2 non-voting members: one representative from and appointed by each of the Faith Nurture and Faith Impact Forums.</i>			

Scott Brown, *Convener (2022-2026)*
Andrew Tait, *Vice-Convener (2022-2025)*

CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

Ministers Neil Gardner Charles Robertson	Members Michael Gibson David Stewart Marjory Williamson
<i>Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.</i>	

Philip Brodie, *Chair*

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND INVESTORS TRUST

Members Robin Black Ivan Blair David D Campbell* Brian Duffin John G L Millar Jean McKeown	Rodger Nisbet* Andrew Richmond Grant Wilson Gordon A Young Michael Yuille
<i>Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.</i>	

Robert Burgon, *Chair*
Elaine Crichton, *Vice-Chair*

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST

Ministers John Chalmers* Lorna Hood George Whyte	Members Angus Bethune* John Hodge Christopher Mackay Valerie Macniven Thomas Watson
<i>Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.</i>	

Leon Marshall, *Chair*
Morag Angus, *Vice-Chair*

COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE THE MODERATOR

Ministers and Deacons Hilary Beresford Keith Blackwood Morag Crawford DCS Karen Hendry Bryan Kerr Angus Morrison Monika Redman	Elders Sally Bonnar Eddie Colliar Frances Heafield Isabella McDerment Robert McQuistan Darren Philip Michael Yuill
<i>Up to 8 ministers and deacons and up to 7 elders appointed by the General Assembly, to create a Committee which is representative of the diversity of the whole Church. The Committee is to be convened by the immediate past-Moderator of the General Assembly, failing which by another former Moderator of the General Assembly.</i>	

Jim Wallace, Convener

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Clerks of Assembly, the Principal Clerk as Chairman, the Procurator and the Solicitor of the Church, ex officiis.

DISCIPLINE TRIBUNAL

David Burns* (2019-2023), Shona Haldane (2021-2025),
Roddy John MacLeod* (2022-2026), Ian Miller* (2022-2026), *Conveners*
Jonathan Brodie* (2022-2026), Andrew Stevenson* (2022-2026), *Vice-Conveners*

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers David Coulter	Nikki Macdonald* Gary Peacock		William McLaren Elisabeth Spence
Members Ian Russell		Gemma King*	Pauline Weibye*
<i>a) 8 members appointed by the General Assembly one to be attached, for the purposes of ecumenical accompaniment, to each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum, the Social Care Council, and the Theological Forum. b) Convener who will act as a personal support for the Ecumenical Officer (EO) and Vice-Convener, appointed by the General Assembly. c) A representative of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland appointed by the Bishops' Conference and 1 representative from each of 3 churches drawn from among the member churches of ACTS and the Baptist Union of Scotland, each to serve for a period of 4 years. d) The Committee shall co-opt Church of Scotland members elected to the central bodies of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE, formerly the Leuenberg Fellowship of Churches). e) The General Secretary of ACTS shall be invited to attend as a corresponding member. f) For the avoidance of doubt, while only those persons appointed under paragraphs a) and b) above shall be entitled to vote, before any vote is taken the views of members representing other churches shall be ascertained. The Convener shall be entitled to call a meeting of the voting members.</i>			

Ross Blackman, Convener (2022-2026)
Eileen Miller, Vice-Convener (2020-2023)

FAITH IMPACT FORUM

2023	2024	2025
Ministers Peter Johnston< Justin Taylor<	Alistair Drummond	Iain Majcher Linda Pollock William Wishart
Members Rebecca Gebauer<	Martin Ashing Tom Burnham Marian Macintyre	Morag Crawford DCS Frances Heafield
<p><i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 13 members nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly.</i></p> <p><i><Initial Members appointed by Commission of the General Assembly May 2020. Members shall serve for three years, renewable for one further term on special cause shown, save that, of the members first appointed, five shall serve until General Assembly 2021, five including the first Vice Convener until General Assembly 2022 and five including the first Convener until General Assembly 2023, in each case non-renewable.</i></p>		

Susan Brown<, Convener (2020-2023)
Karen Hendry, Vice-Convener (2022-2025)

FAITH NURTURE FORUM

2023	2024	2025
Ministers Karen Campbell*	Catherine Beattie Robert Hamilton Grant Maclaughlan Robin McAlpine	Scott Blythe Sheena Orr
Members Lesley-Ann Calvert< Barbara Finlayson< Stefanie Fowler< Murdo Macmillan<		Lynette Jardine Marie Locke
<p><i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 13 members nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly.</i></p> <p><i><Initial Members appointed by Commission of the General Assembly in May 2020. Members shall serve for three years, renewable for one further term on special cause shown, save that, of the members first appointed, five shall serve until General Assembly 2021, five including the first Vice Convener until General Assembly 2022 and five including the first Convener until General Assembly 2023, in each case non-renewable.</i></p>		

Rosemary Frew<, Convener (2020-2023)
Alan Hamilton, Vice-Convener (2022-2025)

GENERAL TRUSTEES

Ministers Sheila Kirk Neil MacGregor Kenneth MacKenzie Scott Rennie	Elders Robert Balfour Walter Barbour Richard Bell Robert Bell Manliffe Goodbody William Hall Nigel Hicks Alan Kennedy Douglas Kerr William Lawrie	John Maddock Robin Stimpson D Stewart Toy Ian Trushell	Advisory Members A Graham Biggerstaff Michael Craig Laura Dunlop Alan Gibson Isobel Gray Chris Johnstone Ian Lochhead Hamish McBean Tom Nelson Michael Norval Iain Ogilvie Bahar Raeisi Dehkordi David Taverner Rosalind Taylor
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Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.

, Chair
, Vice-Chair

HOUSING AND LOAN FUND

Ministers Allan McCafferty Scott McCarthy	Members Walter Barbour James Erskine Harry Findlay Barbara Finlayson Sharon Anne Ho Iain Mowat Eilidh Renwick*
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Up to 3 ministers and 1 member appointed by the Faith Nurture Forum, who having served a term of 4 years shall be eligible for reappointment for a second 4 year term; Up to 4 appointed by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trustees, who having served a term of 4 years shall be eligible for reappointment for a second 4 year term; Up to 3 appointed by the Baird Trust, for a term of office determined by that Trust. Any Trustee (other than one appointed by the Baird Trust) may serve for up to a further two four-year terms if elected also as Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.

Dorothy Anderson, Chair
Bruce Sinclair, Deputy Chair

IONA COMMUNITY BOARD

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers	Willie Strachan		Sarah Brown Alan Miller*
Members Joanna Love DCS* Maggie Mackay			

Convener and 5 members appointed by the General Assembly; 6 members appointed by and from the Iona Community, 2 changing each year; The Leader of the Iona Community; 1 member appointed by and from the Presbytery of Argyll. In addition, the Board will invite 6 member churches of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) to appoint a representative member to the Board, such members being eligible to serve for a maximum period of 4 years.

Tom Gordon, Convener (2019-2023)

JUDICIAL COMMISSION

James Drummond Young (2021-2025), Richard McFarlane* (2022-2026), Morag Ross* (2022-2026), *Conveners*
William Hewitt* (2021-2024), Colin Renwick* (2022-2025), *Vice-Conveners*

JUDICIAL PANEL

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers Marjory McPherson	John Christie* Robin Hill*	Gordon McCracken* Ian McLean Jan Mathieson* MaryAnn Rennie*	Marjory MacLean
Elders and Deacons Tim Edward David McClements Robert McDougal	David Alexander* William Imlay* Leslie Moffat* Sam Scobie*	Fiona Drysdale Chris Dunn* Douglas Hamill* Pauline Weibye*	Alan Cox*
20 people being ministers, elders, deacons and members nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly. All members of the Judicial Panel shall be qualified to practise as lawyers or shall be experienced in the law and practice of the Church. Notwithstanding SOs 114 and 118, the members of the Judicial Panel shall initially be appointed for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years.			

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers Alan Reid*	Marjory McPherson Katherine Taylor	Adam Dillon* Euan Glen	
Members Gilbert Anderson Andrew Gibb*	David McClements	John Ritchie	Robert McDougall
Convener, Vice-Convener and 10 members appointed by the General Assembly, the Clerks of Assembly, the Procurator and the Solicitor of the Church.			

Grant Barclay, *Convener* (2019-2023)
Victoria Linford, *Vice-Convener* (2021-2024)

LIFE AND WORK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers Tina Kemp*	Ewen Gilchrist John Paterson	Jane Barron	
Members		Jane Robson	Darren Philip
Convener and 7 members together with the Principal Clerk as an ex officio member. The members should represent a wide range of theological opinion and perspectives, with an interest and particular gifts to offer the Committee, for example journalism, magazine production, former contributors. The Committee may co-opt members with particular gifts or information.			

James Stewart, *Convener* (2020-2024)

MINISTRIES APPEAL PANEL

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers	Amos Chewachong		
Members	Andrew Gibb	Isabell Montgomerie*	
<i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 3 members appointed by the General Assembly. At least 1 member shall be legally qualified, at least 1 shall be a minister and at least 1 shall be an elder.</i>			

Robin Stimpson (2020-2024), Convener

Leslie Milton (2020-2023), Vice Convener

MISSION PLAN REVIEW GROUP

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers			Neil Glover Graham McWilliams Alison Meikle
Members			David Alexander David Brackenridge Michael Cunliffe Grant Gordon Grahame Lees David Menzies David Robertson Donald Thomas David Watt Raymond Young
<i>From 2021 Act 8 Presbytery Mission Plan Act: The Mission Plan Review Group shall be a group of fifteen persons appointed by the General Assembly on the Report of the Nomination Committee and in line with the process for appointing persons to other judicial bodies. Additionally, the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees shall be entitled to make suggestions to the Legal Questions Committee as to persons who are suitable for appointment to the Group, but the final decision as to nominees shall rest with the Legal Questions Committee. The members of the Group shall be suitably experienced members of the Church.</i>			

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers		Donald Campbell Bryan Kerr	Hilary Beresford
Members Daniel Gunn	Christine Mackenzie Davie Murie	Fiona Blair DCS Jonathan Buchan Connor MacFadyen	Robert McQuistan Mark Taylor
<i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 18 members appointed by the General Assembly. Notwithstanding SO 118, no member of the Committee, having served a term of 4 years, shall be eligible for re-election until after a period of 4 years, except for special cause shown. The Convener of the Committee shall be for 3 years.</i>			

Julie Rennick, Convener (2020-2023)

Andrew Gardner, Vice-Convener (2022-2025)

PENSION TRUSTEES

Trustees Appointed by the General Assembly	Member Nominated Trustees for the Pension Scheme for Staff	Member Nominated Trustees for the Pension Scheme for Ministries Development Staff	Member Nominated Trustees for the Pension Scheme for Ministers and Overseas Missionaries
Adrian Bark Graeme Caughey Gillian Graham Lin Macmillan Raymond Martin Gordon Taylor	Anne-Marie Gillon John Montgomery Stuart Stephen	Christine Bohne Ian Gray Gregor McIntyre	Susan Anderson Alan Garritty Pauline Gordon

Graeme Caughey, *Chair*
Lin Macmillan, *Vice-Chair*

PERSONNEL APPEAL GROUP

John Cowie Mary Haddow William Imlay	Sheilagh Stewart Walter Williamson Eilidh Wiseman
<i>12 members appointed by the General Assembly with the Solicitor of the Church as Secretary. Members shall not include any former or current members of staff of any of the Church's Employing Agencies (including the Social Care Council), nor any current Council or Committee member.</i>	

Solicitor of the Church, *Secretary*

REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers			
Members			Richard Henderson
<i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 3 members. 1 member is appointed by the Legal Questions Committee, 1 member by the Faith Nurture Forum and 3 members by the General Assembly. The Convener and Vice-Convener are appointed by the General Assembly from the General Assembly appointees. One or other of the Clerks to the General Assembly and the Secretary to the Faith Nurture Forum attend the Committee ex officio in an advisory capacity but are not members. The Committee is clerked by a person from the Faith Nurture Forum who is not a member of the Committee.</i>			

Hazel Hastie, *Convener (2021-2025)*
Hilary McDougall, *Vice-Convener (2022-2024)*

SAFEGUARDING APPEAL GROUP

Members Bryce Calder John Christie Sheena-Jane Clark	Hugh McGregor Alan Miller Anne Noble	
<i>A Panel of 6 persons appointed by the General Assembly, being persons with Safeguarding and other relevant experience, and including at least two persons who shall be qualified to practise as lawyers or who are experienced in the law and practice of the Church, and at least two ministers. None of the Panel shall be a current or former employee of any of the Employing Agencies or a current member of the Safeguarding Committee. The Appeal Group will be clerked by the Principal Clerk or the Depute Clerk.</i>		

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers	Elsbeth McKay	Sonia Blakesley Julia Wiley*	Malcolm Kinnear
Members	Robert McCabe*	Judy Wilson	
<p><i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 6 members appointed by the General Assembly, 1 representative (voting member) from and appointed by each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum, the Social Care Council, the Solicitor of the Church, the National Adviser (Head of Safeguarding) as Secretary to the Committee, the Chief Officer and up to 4 members co-opted by the Committee for their expertise. For the avoidance of doubt it is declared that only the following persons will be entitled to vote: Convener, Vice-Convener, the six Assembly appointed members and the three representatives from each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum and the Social Care Council.</i></p>			

Adam Dillon, Convener (2019-2023)
Fiona Reynolds, Vice-Convener (2021-2024)

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers			Keith Blackwood
Members Jo Elliot Christine Johnson	Mike Cantlay Douglas Hamilton Susie Lind	Amy Reid*	John Graham*
<p><i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 9 members appointed by the General Assembly, with the Chief Executive Officer of CrossReach as a non-voting ex officio member. At least one member shall be a Church of Scotland minister.</i></p>			

Thomas Riddell, Convener (2020-2024)
Sarah Wood, Vice-Convener (2020-2023)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ETHICAL INVESTMENT

Ministers Thomas Kisitu	Members Ewan Brown Hannah Dunlop Alasdair Ronald
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Val Brown, Chair

THEOLOGICAL FORUM

2023	2024	2025	2026
Ministers Lynn McChlery Ruth Morrison*	Lance Stone*	John Carswell Paul Middleton*	Hector Morrison*
Members Jennifer Stark	Glen Pettigrove	Joshua Ralston	Pamela Kennedy Andrew Torrance*
<p><i>Convener, Vice-Convener and 11 members appointed by the General Assembly, the membership being selected to provide an appropriate balance of (a) ministers of Word and Sacrament, (b) members of academic staff from the Divinity Schools (or equivalent) of Institutions of Higher Education in Scotland, (c) elders and (d) members drawn from the wider membership of the Church chosen for their particular expertise, experience or provenance.</i></p>			

Liam Fraser, Convener (2021-2025)
Paul Nimmo, Vice-Convener (2022-2025)



The Church of Scotland

PART IV –
A – ROLL OF MEMBERS
B – MINUTES OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
C – OVERTURES FROM
PRESBYTERIES
D – STANDING ORDERS

SEE, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW



General Assembly 2022

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SECTION A – ROLL OF MEMBERS

Roll of Members

35/1.....	Assembly Office-Bearers and Procedure Committee
35/2.....	Index of Presbyteries
35/3.....	Roll of Commissioners
35/10.....	Delegates from other Churches
35/11.....	Delegates from Ecumenical Bodies
35/11.....	Delegates from other Countries
35/11.....	Corresponding Members
35/11.....	Overseas Staff on Leave
35/11.....	Youth Representatives

SECTION A – ROLL OF MEMBERS**Assembly Office-Bearers and Procedure Committee**

ASSEMBLY OFFICE-BEARERS		
Title	Name	No.
Moderator	Lord Wallace of Tankerness	604
Moderator-Designate	Rev Dr Iain Greenshields	599
Chaplains	Rev Allan Morton	601
	Rev Monika Redman	603
Principal Clerk	Rev Dr George J Whyte	605
Depute Clerk	Ms Christine Paterson	602
Procurator	Ms Laura Dunlop QC	598
Law Agent	Miss Mary Macleod	600
Precentor	Rev Colin Renwick	
Chief Steward	Mr Alexander F Gemmill	
Depute Steward	Mr Neil Proven	
Assembly Officer	Mr William Mearns	
Depute Assembly Officer	Mrs Karen McKay	

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE		
Title	Name	No.
Convener	Rev Donald McCorkindale	596
Vice-Convener	Mrs Susan Pym	597

Index of Presbyteries

31	Aberdeen and Shetland	48	International Charges
36	Abernethy	37	Inverness
30	Angus	11	Irvine and Kilmarnock
7	Annandale and Eskdale	6	Jedburgh
12	Ardrossan	49	Jerusalem
19	Argyll	32	Kincardine and Deeside
10	Ayr	44	Lewis
34	Buchan	38	Lochaber
41	Caithness	42	Lochcarron – Skye
14	Clyde	3	Lothian
8	Dumfries and Kirkcudbright	4	Melrose and Peebles
29	Dundee	35	Moray
27	Dunkeld and Meigle	45	Orkney
5	Duns	28	Perth
1	Edinburgh and West Lothian	39	Ross
47	England	23	Stirling
22	Falkirk	40	Sutherland
24	Fife	43	Uist
13	Forth Valley and Clydesdale	9	Wigtown and Stranraer
16	Glasgow		
33	Gordon		

Roll of Commissioners**1. Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian****Minister**

1. Rev James D Aitken, Edinburgh: Corstorphine St Ninian's
2. Very Rev Dr Derek Browning, Edinburgh: Morningside
3. Rev Alan Childs, Edinburgh: Corstorphine Craigsbank
4. Rev David Clarkson, Edinburgh: Barclay Viewforth
5. Rev Fergus M Cook, Edinburgh: Blackhall St Columba's
6. Rev Robert Craig, Breich Valley
7. Rev James S Dewar, Edinburgh: Juniper Green
8. Rev Mark M Foster, Edinburgh: Pilrig St Paul's
9. Rev Dr Jonanda Groenewald, Polbeth Harwood l/w West Kirk of Calder
10. Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore, University of Edinburgh*
11. Rev W. Richard Houston, Linlithgow: St Ninian's Craigmailen
12. Rev Gordon Kennedy, Edinburgh: Craiglockhart*
13. Rev Robert A Mackenzie, Edinburgh: Leith St Andrew's
14. Rev Iain May, Edinburgh: Leith South
15. Rev Alex T McAspurren, Edinburgh: Craigmillar Park l/w Edinburgh: Reid Memorial
16. Rev Angus R Mathieson, Partnership Development Secretary, Faith Action Staff
17. Very Rev Dr Angus Morrison, (Orwell and Portmoak)
18. Rev Scott Raby, Fauldhouse: St Andrew's
19. Rev Thomas S Riddell, Linlithgow St Michael's*
20. Very Rev Colin A M Sinclair, Edinburgh: Palmerston Place
21. Rev Norman A Smith, Edinburgh: Granton
22. Rev Dr Lezley J Stewart, Recruitment and Support Secretary, Faith Action Staff
23. Very Rev Prof Iain R Torrance Kt, (University of Aberdeen)
24. Rev George Vidits, Edinburgh: St Stephen's Comely Bank
25. Rev Dr Stewart G Weaver, Edinburgh: Portobello and Joppa
26. Rev John R Wells, Edinburgh: St Margaret's
27. Rev Julia C Wiley, Armadale
28. Rev Dr John N Young, Edinburgh: Gracemount l/w Edinburgh: Liberton

Elder

29. Ms Katherine L Anderson, Edinburgh: Greenside
30. Mr John M Ballantine, Edinburgh: St Stephen's Comely Bank
31. Mr James Borland, Broxburn
32. Mrs Catherine Campbell, Edinburgh: Murrayfield

33. Mrs Patricia Chapman, Linthgow: St Ninian's Craigmailen
34. Mrs Audrey Downie, Edinburgh: Polwarth
35. Mr Andrew Gibb, Edinburgh: Corstorphine St Ninian's*
36. Mr David Gilchrist, Kirknewton and East Calder*
37. Mr Grant Gordon, Edinburgh: Currie
38. Ms Reeta Griffin, Polbeth Harwood
39. Dr Hazel Hastie, Acting Presbytery Clerk
40. Mrs Margaret Hendrie, Fauldhouse: St Andrew's
41. Mr Nigel Hicks, Edinburgh: Corstorphine St Anne's*
42. Mr Douglas Horn, West Kirk of Calder
43. Prof Herbert A Kerrigan, Edinburgh: Greyfriars Kirk
44. Miss Lizabeth A Mackie, Edinburgh: St John's Colinton Mains
45. Mr Boyd McAdam, Edinburgh: Mayfield Salisbury
46. Mrs Lynne McEwen, Strathbrock
47. Mrs Jeanette McIvor, Edinburgh: Queensferry
48. Mr Jim Mclean, Edinburgh: St Cuthbert's
49. Mr Ian Murray, Edinburgh: Priestfield
50. Mrs Margaret Nimmo, Edinburgh: Willowbrae
51. Miss Maureen Samuel, Edinburgh: St Nicholas' Sighthill
52. Mrs Marie Sneddon, Edinburgh: Liberton Northfield
53. Mr Alan Summers, Edinburgh: Granton
54. Mr Jamie Sutherland, Edinburgh: Greyfriars Kirk
- 55.
56. Mr Rodger Thom, Edinburgh: Carrick Knowe
57. Mr Ross Wilkinson, Edinburgh: Inverleith St Serf's
- 58.

Deacon

59. Mrs Elizabeth Crocker DCS, Edinburgh: Tron Kirk (Gilmerton and Moredun)
60. Mrs Glenda McLaren DCS, Deacon
61. Mr Gordon Pennykid DCS, Prison Chaplain

3. Presbytery of Lothian**Minister**

62. Rev Andrew Don, Newton
63. Rev Dr Neil J Dougall, North Berwick: St Andrew Blackadder
64. Rev Nicola J Frail, Army Chaplain
65. Rev Brian C Hilsley, (Aberlady l/w Gullane)
66. Rev Malcolm Lyon, Musselburgh: St Michael's Inveresk
67. Rev Anikó Schuetz Bradwell, Humbie l/w Yester, Bolton and Saltoun
68. Rev Katherine A Taylor, Tranent
69. Rev John D Vischer, Garvald and Morham l/w Haddington: West*
70. Rev Peter J Wood, Pioneer and New Housing Co-Ordinator

Elder

71. Mr Alex M G Campbell, Humbie
72. Mrs Moira J Cockburn, Spott
73. Mr James F Couper, Longniddry
74. Mr Connor MacFadyen, Tranent
75. Miss Elizabeth W Malcolm, Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old
76. Mr T Finlay Marshall, Yester, Bolton and Saltoun
77. Mr William C F Stevenson, Traprain
78. Mrs Maureen Talac, Musselburgh: St Michael's Inveresk
79. Mrs Jacqueline Waugh, Haddington: West*

Deacon

80. Mrs Marilynn J Steele DCS, Cockenzie and Port Seton: Old

4. Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles

Minister

81. Very Rev David Arnott, (St Andrews: Hope Park with Strathkinness)
82. Rev Dr Tony Foley, West Tweeddale*
83. Rev Malcolm S Jefferson, Lyne and Manor l/w Peebles: St Andrew's Leckie
84. Rev Victoria J Linford, Caddonfoot l/w Stow: St Mary of Wedale and Heriot
85. Very Rev Dr Finlay A Macdonald, (Principal Clerk)

Elder

86. Prof Murray Campbell, Carllops*
87. Mrs Pamela Kennedy, Candidate for Ministry
88. Mrs Elizabeth Parker, Caddonfoot l/w Stow and Heriot
89. Ms Karen Ritchie, Peebles: Old
90. Miss Dorothy Small, Caddonfoot l/w Stow and Heriot

5. Presbytery of Duns

Minister

639. Very Rev Dr Susan M Brown, Greenlaw
91. Rev David Taverner, Coldstream and District Parishes*
92. Rev Norman Whyte, Ayton and District Churches

Elder

93. Mr Michael Rowe, Coldstream and District Parishes*
94. Mr Bill Stewart, Ayton and District Churches
640. Mrs Janice Cossigny, Gordon: St Michael's

6. Presbytery of Jedburgh

Minister

95. Rev Alistair W Cook, Hawick: St Mary's and Old l/w Hawick: Teviot
96. Rev Colin Johnston, Cheviot Churches
97. Rev Lisa-Jane Rankin, Hawick: Wilton l/w Teviothead*

Elder

98. Mr Stuart Kelly, Cheviot Churches*
99. Mrs Moira Land, Oxnam
100. Mrs Morag McKeand, Oxnam

7. Presbytery of Annandale and Eskdale

Minister

101. Rev P. Ruth Harvey, Iona Community
102. Rev Eleanor McMahon, Gretna: Old, St Andrew's, Half Morton and Kirkpatrick Fleming
103. Rev John G Pickles, Annan: St Andrew's l/w Brydekirk*

Elder

104. Mr Donald Walker, Moffat: St Andrew's*
- 105.
- 106.

8. Presbytery of Dumfries and Kirkcudbright

Minister

107. Rev Dr David Bartholomew, Balmaclellan, Kells and Dalry l/w Carsphairn
108. Rev John Notman, Dumfries: Troqueer*
109. Rev Valerie J Ott, Gatehouse and Borgue l/w Tarff and Twynhom
110. Rev Gary J Peacock, Irongray, Lochrutton and Terregles
111. Rev Mark Smith, Dunscore l/w Glencairn and Moniaive

Elder

112. Mrs Mary Bromilow, Penpont, Keir and Tynron
113. Mrs Audrey Brown, Dumfries: St Michael's and South
114. Mr David Dick, Closeburn
115. Mrs Violet Service, Tarff and Twynholm*
116. Mr William Waugh, Sanquhar: St Bride's

9. Presbytery of Wigtown and Stranraer

Minister

117. Rev Eric Boyle, Kirkcowan l/w Wigtown*
118. Rev Edward Lyons, Penninghame

Elder

119. Mrs Gillian Lynn, Portpatrick l/w Stoneykirk
120. Mr Sam Scobie, Presbytery Clerk*

10. Presbytery of Ayr

Minister

121. Rev Theo Corney, Ballantrae l/w St Colmon (Arnshean Barrhill and Colmonell)
122. Rev Kenneth C Elliott, Prestwick: South
123. Rev Stanley Okeke, Ayr: St Andrew's
124. Rev Mandy Ralph, Annbank l/w Tarbolton
- 125.
- 126.
- 127.
128. Rev Rona Young, Ayr: Newton Wallacetown*

Elder

129. Mr John Dunlop, Kirkoswald
130. Mrs Elaine Grant, Ayr: St Columba
131. Mr Gordon MacDonald, Prestwick: Kingcase
132. Mr Andy Mitchell, Prestwick: South
133. Mr George Park, Ayr: St Columba*

134. Mr John Senior, Old Cumnock: Trinity
 135. Mrs Christine Wilson, New Cumnock
 136.

11. Presbytery of Irvine and Kilmarnock

Minister

137. Rev H Taylor Brown, Presbytery Clerk*
 138. Rev David S Cameron, Kilmarnock: New Laigh Kirk
 139. Rev P Jill Clancy, Chaplain: HMP Barlinnie
 140. Very Rev William C Hewitt, (Presbytery Clerk: Glasgow)
 141. Very Rev Dr David W Lacy, (Kilmarnock: Kay Park)
 142. Rev Alison McBrier, Caldwell l/w Dunlop
 143. Rev Neil Urquhart, Irvine: Fullarton

Elder

144. Miss Barbara Graham, Kilmarnock: New Laigh Kirk
 145. Mrs Elizabeth Higton, Darvel
 146. Mrs Jane Johnston, Kilmarnock: St John's Onthank*
 147. Mrs Davina Scrimgeour, Dreghorn and Springside
 148. Mrs Loraine Strang, Caldwell
 149. Mrs Katrina Templeton, Ayrshire Mission to the Deaf
 150.

12. Presbytery of Ardrossan

Minister

151. Rev Hilary Beresford, Kilwinning: Mansefield Trinity*
 152. Rev Nigel Chikanya, Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate
 153. Rev Roderick MacDonald, Beith
 154. Rev Sarah Nicol, Saltcoats: St Cuthbert's

Elder

155. Mrs Jean Hunter, Presbytery Clerk
 156. Mr Colin McKenzie, Brodick
 157. Miss Elaine Ross, Cumbrae
 158. Mrs Christine Thomas, Fairlie*

Deacon

159. Mrs Isobel Beck DCS, Kilwinning: Abbey

14. Presbytery of Clyde

Minister

160. Rev Jonathan Fleming, Greenock: Lyle Kirk*
 161. Rev David Hood, Paisley: South
 162. Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood OBE, (Renfrew: North)
 163. Rev Ann Knox, Inchinnan*
 164. Rev Hanneke Marshall, Bridge of Weir: St Machar's Ranfurly
 165. Rev Ann McCool, Johnstone: High
 166. Rev Dr Ian K McEwan, Bearsden: Baljaffray
 167. Rev Gregor McIntyre, Clydebank: Faifley
 168. Rev Tim Mineard, Barrhead: St Andrew's
 169. Rev John Murning, Paisley: Sherwood Greenlaw
 170. Rev Francis E Murphy, Greenock: East End

171. Rev David Nicolson, Erskine
 172. Rev Matthew Ritchie, Neilston
 173. Rev Stuart Steell, Renfrew: Trinity

Elder

174. Mr James Bain, Renfrew: North
 175. Miss Jennifer Boag, Greenock: Westburn
 176.
 177. Prof Helen Grant, Bearsden: Cross
 178. Mrs Myra Grant, Kilbarchan
 179. Mr Iain Gray, Bearsden: New Kilpatrick
 180. Mr Robert M Kinloch, Lomond
 181. Ms Sheena Macfarlane, Port Glasgow: New*
 182. Mr William A McCulloch, Neilston
 183. Mr James McGrouther, Clydebank: Faifley
 184. Mrs Elizabeth M McKee, Cardross
 185. Mrs Jean Muir, Bearsden: Westerton Fairlie Memorial
 186. Mr James Renfrew, Neilston
 187. Mr Derek Whittle, Houston and Killellan

16. Presbytery of Glasgow

Minister

188. Rev Dr S Grant Barclay, Presbytery Clerk
 189. Rev Catherine J Beattie, Giffnock: South
 190. Rev David R Black, Glasgow: Pollockshields
 191. Rev Sandra Black, Glasgow: Baillieston Mure Memorial l/w Baillieston St Andrew's
 192. Rev Scott Blythe, Netherlee and Stamperland
 193. Rev Dr Richard G Buckley, Glasgow: Trinity Possil and Henry Drummond
 194.
 195. Rev Stuart J Crawford, Newton Mearns
 196. Rev Roy J M Henderson, Glasgow: Pollokshaws
 197. Rev Bob Johnston, Kilsyth: Burns and Old
 198.
 199. Rev Dr Scott R M Kirkland, Maxwell Mearns Castle*
 200. Very Rev Dr David W Lunan, (Presbytery Clerk)
 201. Rev John B MacGregor, Cadder
 202. Rev Mark Malcolm, Chryston
 203. Rev Janet S Mathieson, Williamwood
 204. Rev Louise J E McClements, Lenzie: Old
 205. Rev Gavin McFadyen, Glasgow: Cardonald
 206. Rev Ian M S McInnes, Glasgow: Dennistoun New
 207. Rev Dr John McPake, Ecumenical Officer*
 208. Rev Monica Michelin-Salomon, Glasgow: Causeway (Tollcross)
 209. Rev Thomas Nelson, (Netherlee)
 210. Rev Jeanne N Roddick, Greenbank
 211. Rev Gillian Rooney, Giffnock: Orchardhill
 634. Rev Dr Joan Ross, Glasgow: Carntyne
 212. Rev Christopher J Rowe, Glasgow: Colston Milton
 213. Rev David G Slater, Gartcosh l/w Glenboig

633. Rev Graham Thain, Glasgow: St David's Knightswood*
214. Rev Ben Thorp, Glasgow: Sandyford Henderson Memorial
215. Rev G Melvyn Wood, Glasgow: Blawarthill
641. Rev Prof Roger D Sturrock, Glasgow: Kelvinside Hillhead (OLM)

Elder

216. Mr Gary Bainbridge, Glasgow: Cathcart Trinity
217. Mr Graeme D I Barrie, Glasgow: Easterhouse*
218. Mr Jim Bolton, Fernhill and Cathkin
219. Miss Sheilah E M Bond, Glasgow: Causeway (Tollcross)
220. Mrs Christina L Brownlie, Glasgow: Cardonald
221. Mr Alastair Campbell, Broom
222. Mr Donald Carmichael, Giffnock: Orchardhill
223. Mr Alistair Dobbie, Glasgow: Eastwood
224. Mr Scott P Hamilton, Cambuslang
631. Ms Kirsteen Hart, Glasgow: Drumchapel St Andrew's
225. Miss Fiona Hay, Balshagray: Victoria Park
226. Ms Mhairi Hearle, Glasgow: Carmunnock
227. Mr Iain Johnston, Glasgow: Colston Milton
228. Ms Ann Landels, Cumbernauld: Abrohill*
229. Ms Fiona Macdougall, Glasgow: Castlemilk
230. Mr Gordon J MacFarlane, Glasgow: Clincarthill
231. Mrs Patricia Mackenzie, Broom
232. Mr Donald H Matheson, Glasgow: Croftfoot
233. Mrs Fiona Matheson, Glasgow: Croftfoot
234. Mr John G F McCallum, Kirkintilloch: St Columba's
235. Mr Alexander McColl, Glasgow: Dennistoun New
236. Mrs Isabel McDerment, Glasgow: Scotstoun
237. Mr Robert McFarlane, Glasgow: Knightswood Anniesland Trinity
238. Mr John S Montgomery, Netherlee and Stamperland
239. Mrs Anne Neilson, Glasgow: Cathcart Old
240. Ms Chioma Nwafor, Glasgow: Garthamlock and Craigend
241. Dr Garry K Osbourne, Glasgow: Sandyford Henderson Memorial
242. Mr David W H Smith, Rutherglen: West and Wardlawhill
243. Ms Edith Watt, Glasgow: Bridgeton St Francis in the East
244. Mr Iain Young, Glasgow: Gorbals*
- 631.
- 632.

Deacon

245. Mr J Paul Cathcart DCS, Glasgow: Castlemilk

17. Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale

Minister

247. Rev Ross Blackman, Hamilton: Old
248. Rev Dr W John Carswell, Hamilton: Cadzow

249. Rev Stewart Cutler, Stonehouse: St Ninian's LEP
250. Rev Drew Gebbie, Hamilton South l/w Quarter
251. Rev Sumit Harrison, Carnwath l/w Carstairs
252. Rev Bryan Kerr, Interim Presbytery Clerk*
253. Rev Murdo C Macdonald, Blantyre: Livingstone Memorial
254. Rev Dr Nikki Macdonald, Upper Clyde
255. Rev Ian MacKenzie, (Interim Minister)
256. Rev Kevin MacKenzie, East Kilbride: Westwood
257. Rev Iain M T Majcher, Bothwell
258. Rev Fiona Nicolson, Coatbridge: New St Andrew's
259. Rev Dr Elijah O Obinna, Carluke: St John's
260. Rev Christopher A Rankine, Hamilton: Hillhouse
261. Rev Hanna Rankine, Airdrie: Clarkston
262. Rev Sarah L Ross, East Kilbride: Moncrieff
263. Rev Beverley Stevenson, OLM

Elder

264. Mr David S Alexander, Uddingston: Viewpark*
265. Mr Christopher W Coles, East Kilbride: Greenhills
266. Mr Thomas W Donaldson, Wishaw: Old
267. Mr Colin Gibson, Hamilton: West
268. Mrs Karen Gillon, Carluke: St John's*
269. Mrs Margaret Harley, Upper Clyde
270. Mrs Lynette Jardine, Uddingston: Old
271. Mrs Wendy Kerr, East Kilbride: South
272. Mr Alistair Macrae, Hamilton: Cadzow
273. Mrs Anne McGowan, Cambusnethan: North
274. Mrs Elizabeth Murphy, Larkhall: Trinity
275. Mrs Linda Murray, Airdrie: New Monkland
276. Mr Alexander Nelson, Carstairs
277. Mr Scott M Paget, Lanark: Greyfriars
278. Mr Douglas Pearson, Uddingston: Burnhead
279. Mr Howard J Rennie, Motherwell: St Mary's
280. Mr George Robertson, Hamilton: Old

Deacon

281. Mr Colin Ogilvie DCS, Coatbridge: Calder l/w Coatbridge: Old Monkland Locum*

19. Presbytery of Argyll

Minister

282. Rev Dr Roderick D Campbell, (West Lochfyneside)
283. Rev Jenny Earl, Iona l/w Kilfinichen and Kilvickeon and the Ross of Mull
284. Rev Elizabeth A Gibson, North Mull
285. Rev Janet MacKellar, Cowal Kirk
286. Rev David Mitchell, West Cowal*
287. Rev Tom Telfer, Kilchrennan and Dalavich l/w Muckairn
288. Rev Dorothy M Wallace, West Lochfyneside

Elder

289. Mr Alan Jack, North Mull
290. Miss Maureen M Mackinnon, North and West Islay
291. Miss Catherine T Robb, Ardchattan

292. Mr W Stewart Shaw, Presbytery Clerk*
293. Lord Bruce Weir, South Knapdale
294. Miss Caroline Wood, West Lochfyneside
- 295.

22. Presbytery of Falkirk

Minister

296. Very Rev Albert O Bogle, Sanctuary First
297. Rev Scott Burton, Brightons*
298. Rev Philip Hacking, OLM (Presbytery Transition Support)
299. Rev Monica MacDonald, Slamannan
300. Rev Amanda J MacQuarrie, Bo'ness: Old
301. Rev Andrew Sarle, Falkirk: Bainsford
302. Rev James Todd, Airth
303. Rev Debbie Van Welie, Polmont: Old

Elder

304. Mr Edward Colliar, Grangemouth: Abbotsgrange
305. Mrs Jennifer Esplin, Dunipace
306. Mrs Rosemary Hoskins, Falkirk: Trinity
307. Mrs Catherine Moore, Blackbraes and Sheildhill
308. Mr Thomas Rintoul, Bonnybridge: St Helen's
309. Mr Iain Scoular, Larbert: Old
310. Mr Harry Sergeant, Larbert: West
311. Mrs Margaret Tooth, Larbert: East*

23. Presbytery of Stirling

Minister

312. Rev Gary J Caldwell, Dunblane: St Blane's l/w Lecropt
313. Rev Sang Y Cha, Alloa: St Mungo's
314. Rev Ellen Larson Davidson, Kippen l/w Norrieston
315. Rev Gary J McIntyre, Stirling: St Ninian's Old
316. Rev James N McNeil, Alva
317. Rev Alan F Miller, Presbytery Clerk
318. Rev Colin C Renwick, Dunblane: Cathedral
319. Rev Attie Van Wyk, Stirling: Park*

Elder

320. Mrs Beatrice Campbell, Alloa: St Mungo's
321. Mr Gordon Murphy, Stirling: St Ninian's Old
322. Mrs Anne Paterson, Clackmannan*
323. Mr Ian Ritchie, Stirling: Park
324. Mrs Carolyn Jones, Lecropt
- 325.
- 326.
- 327.

Deacon

328. Mrs Jean T Porter DCS, Stirling: St Mark's

24. Presbytery of Fife

Minister

329. Very Rev Dr Russell Barr, (Edinburgh: Cramond)
330. Rev Carolann Birnie, Dunfermline: St Ninian's

331. Rev Gavin Black, Cupar: St John's and Dairsie United*
332. Rev Gavin Boswell, Largo
333. Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, (Principal Clerk)
334. Rev Amos Chewachong, Newport-on-Tay
335. Prof Dr David Coulter, Presbytery Clerk*
336. Rev Elisabeth Cranfield, Methilhill and Denbeath
337. Rev Conor Fegan, Markinch and Thornton
338. Rev Alan W D Kimmitt, Glenrothes: St Columba's
339. Rev Charles Lines, Carnock and Oakley
340. Rev Robin J McAlpine, Kirkcaldy: Bennoch
341. Rev Zoltan Safrany, Lochgelly and Benarty: St Serf's
342. Rev David Scott, Traprain
343. Rev Alec Shuttleworth, Tulliallan and Kincardine l/w Saline and Blairingone
344. Rev Christine Sime, Dalgety
345. Rev David J Smith, Glenrothes: St Ninian's
346. Rev Justin Taylor, Kirkcaldy: Abbotshall
347. Rev Michael Weaver, Dunfermline: Gillespie Memorial

Elder

348. Mr Philip Black, Saline and Blairingone
349. Mrs Faye Buchan, Dunfermline: St Ninian's
350. Mrs Ella Coates, Cowdenbeath: Trinity
351. Mrs Pauline Craig, Cupar: St John's and Dairsie
352. Mrs Elma Doig, Dalgety
353. Mr George Drummond, Kirkcaldy: Bennoch
354. Mrs Lorraine E Fraser, Dunfermline: Abbey*
355. Mrs Carol Gibson, Glenrothes: St Columba's
356. Mr Andrew Gilmour, Largo
357. Mr William Imlay, Newport-on-Tay
358. Mrs Catherine Johnstone, Dunfermline: Gillespie Memorial
359. Mrs Lauren Jones, Glenrothes: St Columba's
360. Mr Alexander Muirhead, Carnock and Oakley
361. Mrs Nancy Olszok, Lochgelly and Benarty: St Serf's
362. Mrs May N Russell, Methilhill and Denbeath
363. Mrs Margaret Stewart, Lindores
364. Dr Michael J Stewart, St Andrews: Holy Trinity
365. Ms Morag Wilkinson, Inverkeithing
366. Mrs Catherine Wilson, Anstruther and Cellardyke: St Ayle*

Deacon

367. Mrs Jacqueline Thomson DCS, Buckhaven and Wemyss

27. Presbytery of Dunkeld and Meigle

Minister

368. Rev R Fraser Penny, Dunkeld*
369. Rev John Russell, Presbytery Clerk
370. Rev Grace M F Steele, Blair Atholl and Struan l/w Braes of Rannoch l/w Foss

Elder

- 371. Dr David Frame, Pitlochry*
- 372. Mr Andrew D Hodge, Rattray
- 373. Mrs Christine E McNicoll, Dunkeld

28. Presbytery of Perth

Minister

- 374. Rev J Colin Caskie, Presbytery Clerk*
- 375. Rev Craig Dobney, Comrie l/w Dundurn
- 376. Rev Maureen MacDougall, Scone and St Martins
- 377. Rev Robert J Malloch, Almondbank Tibbermore l/w Methven and Logiealmond
- 378. Rev Mairi Perkins, Blackford l/w Ardoch
- 379. Rev Alan D Reid, Kinross
- 380. Rev Susan Thorburn, Errol

Elder

- 381. Mrs Helen May Bayne, Muthill
- 382. Mr Neil Bremner, Mid Strathearn
- 383. Mrs Fiona Bruce, Perth: St Matthew's
- 384. Mrs Donna-Kerri Dobney, Comrie
- 385. Mr Hugh L Mackenzie, Perth: Craigie and Moncreiffe
- 386. Mrs Heather McDonald, Ardoch
- 387. Mr Douglas M Wiseman, Perth: Kinnoull*

Deacon

- 388. Ms Patricia M Munro DCS, Perth: St John's

29. Presbytery of Dundee

Minister

- 389. Rev Dr Roderick J Grahame, Dundee: Lochee
- 390. Rev Dr Jean Kirkwood, Stobswell l/w Trinity*
- 391. Rev Grant MacLaughlan, Dundee: Logie and St John's (Cross)
- 392. Rev Robert Mallinson, Dundee: Menzieshill
- 393. Rev Emma McDonald, Dundee: St David's High Kirk
- 394. Rev Catriona Morrison, Invergowrie
- 395. Rev Fiona J Reynolds, Monifieth

Elder

- 396. Miss Margaret Adamson, Dundee: Meadowside St Paul's
- 397. Miss Yvonne Grant, Dundee: Coldside
- 398. Mr David Inglis, Monifieth*
- 399. Mr J William Joss, Dundee: Strathmartine
- 400. Mr David J B Murie, Dundee: Broughty Ferry St James'
- 401. Miss Catherine Reid, Dundee: Broughty Ferry New Kirk
- 402. Mr Euan Smith, Inchtute and Kinnaird

30. Presbytery of Angus

Minister

- 403. Rev Stephen Blakey, The Isla Parishes
- 404. Very Rev Dr Martin Fair, Arbroath: St Andrew's
- 405. Rev Michael S Goss, Barry l/w Carnoustie
- 406. Rev Heather Gourlay, OLM supporting Rural Ministry

- 407. Rev Maggie Hunt, Forfar: St Margaret's*
- 408. Rev John K Orr, Oathlaw Tannadice l/w The Glens and Kirriemuir United
- 409. Rev Carleen Robertson, Eassie, Nevay and Newtyle

Elder

- 410. Mr James Black, Carmyllie
- 411. Miss Valerie Findlay, Eassie, Nevay and Newtyle
- 412. Mr Manliffe Goodbody, Inverkeilor and Lunan*
- 413. Miss Evelyn McPhee, Forfar: St Margaret's
- 414. Mrs Aileen Scott, Montrose: Old and St Andrew's
- 415.
- 416.

31. Presbytery of Aberdeen & Shetland

Minister

- 417. Rev Sarah Brown, Aberdeen: St Machar's Cathedral
- 418. Rev Irene A Charlton, Shetland
- 419. Rev Jonny Clipston, Newhills
- 420. Rev Duncan C Eddie, Aberdeen: Holburn West
- 421. Rev Dr John A Ferguson, Presbytery Clerk*
- 422. Rev Peter J N Johnston, Aberdeen: Ferryhill
- 423. Rev Tanya J Webster, Aberdeen: Midstocket
- 424. Rev Elizabeth J Youngson, (Aberdeen: Mastrick)

Elder

- 425. Miss Pauline M Alexander, Aberdeen: Woodside
- 426. Mrs Helen M Cruddis, Shetland
- 427. Mr Jim Donald, Shetland
- 428. Mrs Lorna M Graham, Kingswells
- 429. Mrs Eunice McConnach, Aberdeen: Rubislaw*
- 430. Mr George E McLeod, Aberdeen: Bridge of Don Oldmachar
- 431. Mr William Rae, Aberdeen: Ruthrieston West
- 432. Dr James A Repper, Aberdeen: Midstocket

32. Presbytery of Kincardine and Deeside

Minister

- 433. Rev David Galbraith, (Maryculter Trinity)*
- 434. Rev Mark Lowey, Stonehaven: Fetteresso
- 435. Rev Kenneth I Mackenzie, Braemar and Crathie
- 436. Rev Sarah Smith, Stonehaven: Carronside

Elder

- 437. Mrs Jennifer Leighton, Newtonhill
- 438. Mrs Eileen Pascoe, Aboyne – Dinnet
- 439. Mrs Sheila Robertson, (Cromar)*
- 440. Mrs Patricia H Thomson, Braemar and Crathie

33. Presbytery of Gordon

Minister

- 441. Rev Alastair J Bruce, Ellon
- 442. Rev Rhona Cathcart, Inverurie: West
- 443. Rev Dr Paul McKeown, Belhelvie
- 444. Rev Joshua Mikelson, Kemnay
- 445. Rev Sheila Mitchell, Echt and Midmar*
- 446. Rev Dr Alison Swindells, Barthol Chapel l/w Tarves

Elder

447. Mr John Blanksby, New Machar
 448. Miss Ann Brown, Kemnay
 449. Mr W J Hepburn, Barthol Chapel
 450. Mrs Diane Howie, Echt and Midmar*
 451. Mrs Alison Milne, Huntly Strathbogie Drumblade
 452. Mr Allan Ritchie, Belhelvie

34. Presbytery of Buchan**Minister**

453. Rev Robert A Fowlie, Longside*
 454. Rev John Gow, Portsoy
 455. Rev Alison Jaffrey, Fyvie l/w Rothienorman
 456. Rev Sheila M Kirk, Deer
 457. Rev Dr Julia Pizzuto-Pomaco, Peterhead: New

Elder

458. Ms Linda J Clark, Fyvie
 459. Mr Robert M Esson, Cruden
 460. Miss U Ruth R Mackenzie, Peterhead: New*
 461. Ms Ali MacLeod, Deer
 462. Mr William R Michie, Fraserburgh: South

35. Presbytery of Moray**Minister**

463. Rev Amy Bender, Keith: North, Newmill, Boharm and Rothiemay
 464. Rev Jacobus Boonzaaier, Buckie: North l/w Rathven*
 465. Rev Geoffrey D McKee, Lossiemouth: St James'
 466. Rev Seòras Orr, Bellie and Speymouth

Elder

467. Mrs Ann M C Bowie, Bellie and Speymouth
 468. Mr Stuart Foster, Knockando, Elchies and Archiestown
 469. Mrs Suzanne Foster, Knockando, Elchies and Archiestown
 470. Mr Stuart Lynch, Elgin: St Giles' and St Columba's South*

Deacon

471. Miss Margaret R King DCS, Bellie and Speymouth*

36. Presbytery of Abernethy**Minister**

472. Rev Mary Duncanson, OLM*
 473. Rev Mary Ellen Thomson, OLM

Elder

474. Mrs Barbara J Black, Abernethy
 475. Mrs Anne Goodall, Boat of Garten, Carrbridge and Kincardine*

37. Presbytery of Inverness**Minister**

476. Rev Andrew Kuzma, Kiltarlity and Kirkhill
 477. Rev Alison C Mehigan, Nairn: Old
 478. Rev Scott Polworth, Inverness: Kinmylies
 479. Rev Michael Robertson, Hospital Chaplain
 480. Rev Fiona E Smith, Inverness: Ness Bank
 483. Rev Ian A Manson, Kilmorack and Erchless*

Elder

481. Mrs Annie Burtwell, Nairn: Old
 482. Mrs Isobel Freudenthal, Culloden: The Barn
 484. Mr Andrew Ramsay, Culloden: The Barn
 485. Mr David Thompson, Inverness: Kinmylies*
 486.
 487.

38. Presbytery of Lochaber**Minister**

489. Rev Stewart Goudie, North West Lochaber*
 490. Rev Rory N MacLeod, Fort William Kilmallie l/w Kilmonivaig

Elder

491. Mrs Ella Gill, Acharacle*
 492. Mrs Mabel W Wallace, Fort William: Kilmallie

39. Presbytery of Ross**Minister**

493. Rev Terence Burns, Cromarty l/w Resolis and Urquhart
 494. Rev Ronald Gall, Conin l/w Fodderty and Strathpeffer*
 495. Rev Philip Gunn, Rosskeen
 496. Rev Heidi Hercus, Lochbroom and Ullapool

Elder

497. Mrs Sandra Allan, Fodderty and Strathpeffer
 498. Mrs Catherine Chambers, Presbytery Clerk*
 499. Mrs Margaret Kinsman, Resolis and Urquhart
 500. Mr Michael Newman-Horwell, Lochbroom and Ullapool

40. Presbytery of Sutherland**Minister**

501. Rev Iain MacLeod, Assynt and Stoer
 502. Rev Dr John B Sterrett, Golspie
 503. Rev Lorna Tunstall, Clyne l/w Kildonan and Loth Helmsdale*

Elder

504. Mrs Jeanni Hunter, Creich l/w Rosehall
 505. Miss Mhairi Mackay, Dornoch Cathedral
 506. Mrs Elizabeth Manson, Dornoch Cathedral*

41. Presbytery of Caithness**Minister**

507. Rev David Macartney, North Coast
 508. Rev Heather Stewart, Presbytery Clerk OLM*

Elder

509. Mrs Elizabeth Geddes, Pentland
 510. Mrs Lorraine Sinclair, Latheron*

42. Presbytery of Lochcarron – Skye**Minister**

511. Rev Alisdair Macleod-Mair, Snizort
 512. Rev Fred Vincent, Glenelg, Kintail and Lochalsh*

Elder

513. Dr Helen V A Stewart, Applecross, Lochcarron and Torridon*

514.

43. Presbytery of Uist

Minister

515. Rev Gavin Elliott, Presbytery Clerk*

Elder

517.

44. Presbytery of Lewis

Minister

519. Rev Dr Duncan Macaskill, Carloway*

520. Rev John M Nicolson, Cross Ness

521. Rev Dougie Wolf, Barvas

Elder

522. Mr John Hebditch, Cross Ness

523. Mr Donald J Macleod, Carloway*

524. Mr Donald Smith, Barvas

45. Presbytery of Orkney

Minister

525. Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, South Ronaldsay and Burray

526. Rev G Fraser Macnaughton, Kirkwall: St Magnus Cathedral*

527. Rev James Wishart, (Deer)

Elder

528. Miss Margaret Sutherland, Kirkwall: St Magnus Cathedral*

529. Mr James Watson, Kirkwall: East

629.

47. Presbytery of England

Minister

530. Rev Mike Binks, Corby: St Ninian's

531. Rev Alistair Cumming, Presbytery Clerk*

532. Rev William McLaren, London: St Columba's (Associate)

533. Rev Prof Paul Middleton, University Lecturer

534. Rev Scott Rennie, London: Crown Court

Elder

535. Mrs Katie Bennie, Jersey: St Columba's

536. Dr Hilary Boyle, Guernsey: St Andrew's in the Grange*

537. Mr Neil Houston, Guernsey: St Andrews in the Grange

538. Ms Sheila Nicoll, London: St Columba's

539. Mr Ian Russell, London: St Columba's

48. Presbytery of International Charges

Minister

540. Rev Graham Austin, Rotterdam: Scots International Church

541. Rev Derek G Lawson, Presbytery Clerk*

542. Rev Beata (Betsi) Thane, Malta: St Andrew's Scots Church

543. Rev Laurence H Twaddle, Paris: The Scots Kirk

Elder

544. Mrs Esther Abang-Karreman, Rotterdam: Scots International Church

545. Mrs Josephine (Jo) R Austen, Malta: St Andrew's Scots Church*

546. Mr John Barber, Budapest: St Columba's

547. Mrs Valerie Prieur, Paris: The Scots Kirk

49. Jerusalem

Minister

548. Rev Muriel Pearson, Tiberias: St Andrew's*

Elder

549. Ms Heather Dobson, Jerusalem: St Andrew's*

** denotes membership of the Commission of Assembly 2022-2023*

DELEGATES FROM OTHER CHURCHES

UK

The Presbyterian Church of Wales

557. Rev T Evan Morgan, Moderator

The United Reformed Church

554. Rev Clare Downing, Moderator

The United Reformed Church (National Synod of Scotland)

560. Rev Paul Whittle, Moderator

Church of England

563. Rev Canon Dr Jeremy Morris, Ecumenical Adviser

The Baptist Union of Scotland

555. Rev Martin Hodson, General Director

The Methodist Church in Scotland

559. Rev Mark Slaney, Chair

562. Rev James Patron Bell, Ecumenical Officer

Religious Society of Friends – General Meeting for Scotland

550. Elizabeth Allen (Clerk) (Saturday, Monday and Tuesday)

561. Mary Woodward (Wednesday and Thursday)

Scottish Episcopal Church

558. Rt Rev Dr Keith Riglin, Bishop of Argyll and The Isles

The United Free Church of Scotland

608. Rev Dr David Miller, Moderator

Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland

553. Most Rev Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh

The Salvation Army

551. Lt Col Carol Bailey, Secretary for Scotland, Salvation Army (Monday)

552. Major David Cavanagh, Assistant Secretary for Scotland (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)

The Congregational Federation in Scotland

556. Ms Margaret McGuinness, Secretary

DELEGATES FROM ECUMENICAL BODIES**Action of Churches Together in Scotland**

606. Miss Carole Hope, Convener

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

607. Dr Nicola Brady, General Secretary

Conference of European Churches

564. Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen, General Secretary

DELEGATES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES**AFRICA****Presbyterian Church East Africa**

636. Rt Rev Patrick Thegu Mutahi, Moderator

610. Rev Edwin Kabathi, PCEA UK Outreach

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, General Synod

611. Rt Rev Biswick Chambulu K. Nkhoma, Moderator

**Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa
(Presbytery of Zimbabwe)**

612. Rev Lydia Neshangwe, Moderator Elect

AMERICAS**Presbyterian Church in Canada**

613. Rev Dr Daniel Scott, Moderator

Presbyterian Church of the United States of America

623. Dr Y Dianna Wright, Assistant Stated Clerk

ASIA**Pakistan: Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement.**

614. Mr Nasir Saeed, Director

National Council of Churches in Korea

615. Rev Dr Hong-Jun Lee, General Secretary

616. Rev Seung Min Shin, International Team Director

637. Mr Kiran Sharma, Principal

EUROPE**Tavloa Valdese, Italy**

617. Rev Anne Zell

Evangelical Church of Westphalia

618. Dr Albrecht Phillips, Head of the Ecumenical Department

Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

619. Rev Alexandra Jacobea

Hungarian Reformed Church

620. Rev Balazs Odor, General Secretary

PACIFIC**Uniting Church in Australia**

621. Rev Sharon Hollis, President

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS**Assembly Trustees**

568. Mrs Jean Couper

572. Mr David Harrison

574. Rev Barry Hughes

575. Dr Linda Irvine

581. Rev Dr Peter McEnhill

583. Mr James McNeill

585. Mr Geoff Miller

587. Ms Ann Nelson

594. Mr Philip Ziegler

Chief Officer

576. Mr Dave Kendall

Head of the Faith Action Programme

591. Rev Dr Scott Shackleton

Church of Scotland Pension Trustees

609. Miss Lin Macmillan

Deputy Treasurer

592. Ms Leanne Thompson

Ecumenical Relations Committee

573. Rev Alexander Horsburgh

Faith Nurture Forum

571. Rev Rosemary Frew

Faith Impact Forum

565. Rev Ian Alexander

General Treasurer

577. Mrs Anne Macintosh

General Trustees

584. Mr Barri Millar

Head of Communications

578. Ms Ruth MacLeod

Head of Human Resources

580. Mrs Elaine McCloghry

Life and Work Editor

582. Mrs Lynne McNeil

Nomination Committee

588. Rev Julie Rennick

Safeguarding Committee

624. Ms Julie Main

Scottish Churches' Parliamentary Officer

567. Mr David Bradwell

Social Care Council

569. Mrs Viv Dickenson

590. Ms Sarah Wood

The Guild

586. Mrs Margaret Muir

Theological Forum

570. Rev Dr Liam Fraser

Trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund

589. Rev MaryAnn Rennie (Monday and Tuesday)

566. Mrs Hazel Bett (Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday)

OVERSEAS STAFF ON LEAVE**Mission Partner**

638. Mr Gary Brough

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES**PRESBYTERY YOUTH REPRESENTATION****Lothian**

627. Miss Kate MacFadyen

Glasgow

622. Miss Beth Wallace

Kincardine and Deeside

625. Miss Rebekka Read

Buchan

626. Miss Anna Pizzuto-Pomaco

Aberdeen and Shetland

628. Mr Matthew Philip

SECTION B – MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Minutes

36/1.....Convened at Edinburgh, 21 May 2022

36/6.....Convened at Edinburgh, 23 May 2022

36/10.....Convened at Edinburgh, 24 May 2022

36/15.....Convened at Edinburgh, 25 May 2022

36/19.....Convened at Edinburgh, 26 May 2022

SECTION B – MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Convened at Edinburgh, 21 May 2022

At Edinburgh, within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 21st day of May 2022 at 9.30 am.

SESSION 1

After worship conducted by James Robert Wallace, Baron Wallace of Tankerness, PC, QC, FRSE, Moderator of the General Assembly, the Commissioners elected as members of the General Assembly appointed to be held this day convened within the Assembly Hall and via video-conference, and the General Assembly was duly constituted with prayer.

The Roll of Commissioners was laid on the table.

The General Assembly proceeded to the election of a Moderator, when it was unanimously agreed that Rev Dr Iain Macleod Greenshields be appointed Moderator.

The appointment was intimated to Dr Greenshields who was welcomed by the Moderator, and, after the Prayer of Consecration, took the Chair.

Her Majesty's Commission to the Rt Hon Lord Hodge, appointing him to represent Her Royal Person in this Assembly, was then read with all due honour and respect and ordered to be recorded.

Her Majesty's Gracious Letter to the General Assembly was also read with all due honour and respect and ordered to be recorded.

His Grace, The Lord High Commissioner, addressed the General Assembly in a speech via video-conference, and the Moderator made suitable reply.

The Moderator thanked the Retiring Moderator, James Robert Wallace, Baron Wallace of Tankerness, PC, QC, FRSE, for his distinguished and valued service during his year of office. The Retiring Moderator then addressed the General Assembly.

A Committee was appointed to prepare an answer to Her Majesty's Gracious Letter, viz:

Rev Nicola J Frail 64

Mr Gordon J MacFarlane 230

Mrs Aileen Scott 414

The Lord Wallace of Tankerness, *Convener*

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Standing Committee on Commissions, which was given in by the Principal Clerk who reported that all Commissions had been received and were in order.

The Principal Clerk reported that the Standing Orders of the General Assembly were laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

The General Assembly appointed a Procedure Committee to arrange the Order of Business, viz:

Rev Donald McCorkindale, *Convener*

Mrs Susan Pym, *Vice-Convener*

Moderator

Principal Clerk

Associate Principal Clerk

Depute Clerk

Procurator

Law Agent

The General Assembly agreed that the following should serve as the Panel of Tellers.

Rev Maggie Hunt 407

Ms Patricia Munro DCS 388

Rev Gregor McIntyre 167

Rev Alison Mehigan 477

Rev Sarah Ross 262

Ms Sheila Nicol 538

Mrs Lorraine Fraser 354

Mr Iain Scoular 309

Mr George Robertson 280

Mr Sam Scobie 120

The General Assembly appointed a Committee to prepare a Minute on Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons, viz:

The Lord Wallace of Tankerness

Principal Clerk

Depute Clerk

Intimation was given of the arrangements for the Celebration of Holy Communion in the Assembly Hall and online via video-conference on Monday 23 May 2022 at 9.15 am.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.38am until 11.15am.

SESSION 2

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT PRINCIPAL CLERK

Section 19 of the Proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Assembly Trustees was moved, seconded and agreed:

- Note the revised Job Description for the post of Principal Clerk as set out in recruitment pack <https://churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/general-assembly/redirects/principal-clerk-recruitment-pack>, ratify the appointment of Rev Fiona Smith as Associate Principal Clerk from the 19th April and appoint her as Principal Clerk to the General Assembly with effect from 1st July 2022.

The General Assembly received the following Delegates who were introduced by Rev Alexander Horsburgh and Very Rev Dr Susan Brown:

The Presbyterian Church of Wales

Rev T Evan Morgan, Moderator

The United Reformed Church

Rev Clare Downing, Moderator

The United Reformed Church (National Synod of Scotland)

Rev Paul Whittle, Moderator

The Church of England

Rev Canon Dr Jeremy Morris, Ecumenical Adviser

The Baptist Union of Scotland

Rev Martin Hodson, General Director

The Methodist Church in Scotland

Rev Mark Slaney, Chair of the Methodist Church in Scotland; Rev James Patron Bell, Ecumenical Officer

Religious Society of Friends – General Meeting for Scotland

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk (*Saturday. Monday and Tuesday*);

Mary Woodward (*Wednesday and Thursday*)

The Scottish Episcopal Church

Rt Rev Dr Keith Riglin, Bishop of Argyll and The Isles

The United Free Church of Scotland

Rev Dr David Miller, Moderator

Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland

Most Rev Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh

The Salvation Army

Lt Col Carol Bailey, Secretary for Scotland (Monday);
Major David Cavanagh, Assistant Secretary for Scotland (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday)

The Congregational Federation in Scotland

Ms Margaret McGuinness, Secretary

Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Miss Carole Hope, Convener

Conference of European Churches

Dr Jørgen Skov Sørensen, General Secretary

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Dr Nicola Brady, General Secretary

AFRICA

Presbyterian Church of East Africa

Rt Rev Patrick Thegu Mutahi, Moderator; Rev Edwin Kabathi, PCEA UK Outreach

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, General Synod

Rt Rev Biswick Chambulu K. Nkhoma, Moderator

Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (Presbytery of Zimbabwe)

Rev Lydia Neshangwe, Moderator Elect

AMERICAS

Presbyterian Church in Canada

Rev Dr Daniel Scott, Moderator

Presbyterian Church of the United States of America

Dr Y Dianna Wright, Assistant Stated Clerk

ASIA

Pakistan: Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement

Mr Nasir Saeed, Director

National Council of Churches in Korea

Rev Dr Hong-Jung Lee, General Secretary, Rev Seung Min Shin, International Team Director; Mr Kiran Sharma, Principal

EUROPE

Tavloa Valdese, Italy

Rev Anne Zell

Evangelical Church of Westphalia

Dr Albrecht Phillips, Head of the Ecumenical Department

Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

Rev Alexandra Jacobea

Hungarian Reformed Church

Rev Balázs Ódor, General Secretary

PACIFIC

Uniting Church in Australia

Rev Sharon Hollis, President

The reception of the Delegates being completed, the Moderator welcomed them on behalf of the General Assembly.

Rev Mark Slaney addressed the General Assembly in the name of the Ecumenical Delegates and was thanked by the Moderator.

Rev Dr Daniel Scott, Moderator, Presbyterian Church, Canada, addressed the General Assembly in the name of the Overseas Delegates and was thanked by the Moderator.

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee (including Overtures from Presbyteries wishing to unite and section 2 of the proposed deliverance of the Legal Questions Committee) which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Report.

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

Section 2 of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Legal Questions Committee was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

2. Amend Standing Orders as detailed in (i) section 2 and Appendix A of this Report, (ii) section 4 and Appendix B of the Report of the Assembly Business Committee and (iii) the Supplementary Report of the Assembly Business Committee.

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

2. Approve the order of business for the first two days.
3. Appoint Rev Colin Renwick to be Precentor until May 2023.
4. Appoint Mr Roy Pinkerton to index the verbatim record.
5. Invite Commissioners to submit to the Procedure Committee via email: pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk by Monday 23 May at 12pm, nominations for consideration to serve on the Selection Committee.
6. Note the expenses levels for those attending at least 12 of the 15 General Assembly sessions in person.

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERIES OF DUNS, JEDBURGH, LOTHIAN, AND MELROSE & PEEBLES ANENT UNION

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles anent union.

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat section 2 of the proposed Deliverance of the Overture as a proposed new section 7 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee and renumber.

Rev Alistair Cook appeared and Rev Norman Whyte, Rev Victoria Linford and Rev Aniko Schuetz-Bradwell appeared in support. Rev Alistair Cook moved the Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles to form the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.

The General Assembly agreed to receive the Overture.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the Overture, there voted For 280 and Against 2.

The Moderator ruling that the Vote For or Against Section 2 of the Overture be re-taken, *there voted For 320 and Against 6.*

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERIES OF ANGUS, DUNDEE, DUNKELD & MEIGLE, PERTH, AND STIRLING ANENT UNION

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling anent union.

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat section 2 of the proposed

Deliverance of the Overture as a proposed new section 8 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee and renumber.

Rev Fraser Penny appeared and Rev Alan Miller, Rev Catriona Morrison, Rev Craig Dobney and Rev

Mike Goss appeared in support. Rev Fraser Penny moved the Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth and Stirling to form the Presbytery of Perth as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.

The General Assembly agreed to receive the Overture.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the Overture, there voted For 352 and Against 7.

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERIES OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE AND FALKIRK

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk anent union.

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat sections 2 and 3 of the proposed

Deliverance of the Overture as proposed new sections 9 and 10 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee and renumber.

Rev Bryan Kerr appeared and Rev Julie Rennick appeared in support. Rev Bryan Kerr moved the

Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Note that subsequent to the General Assembly passing of Act 1, 2021 the Presbyteries of Hamilton and Lanark voted to amend the name of the united Presbytery in both the Act and Basis and Plan of Union from the 'Presbytery of Lanarkshire' to the 'Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale'.
3. Pass an Act anent the union of the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk, as set out in the Overture.

The General Assembly agreed to receive the Overture and to section 2 of the proposed Overture.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 3 of the Overture, there voted For 378 and Against 4.

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERIES OF ABERDEEN & SHETLAND, GORDON, BUCHAN, KINCARDINE & DEESIDE, ORKNEY AND MORAY

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbyteries of Aberdeen &

Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and Moray anent union.

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat section 2 of the proposed

Deliverance of the Overture as a proposed new section 11 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee and renumber.

Rev Sheila Kirk appeared and Rev David Galbraith, Rev Peter Johnston, Mrs Linda Clark, Mr Allan Ritchie, Rev Geoff McKee and Rev Dr Marjory MacLean appeared in support. The Rev Sheila Kirk moved the Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney to form The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles as set out in the Appendix.

The General Assembly agreed to receive the Overture.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the Overture, there voted For 351 and Against 8.

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Business

Committee starting at section 7 in the print.

It was moved (Rev Bryan Kerr) and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 7 and renumber:

7. Accepting that Presbyteries currently have the right to determine their own staffing structure, instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Assembly Trustees, in consultation with the Assembly and Presbytery Clerks Forum and involving the Law Dept and HR Department in the National Offices, to investigate and develop a template job description and corresponding remuneration package for full-time Presbytery Clerks to help strive for consistency across the Church.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 1.14pm until 2.16pm.

SESSION 3

Rev Bryan Kerr moved and it was seconded that his amendment to add a new section 7 be amended to read as follows:

7. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Assembly Trustees, in consultation with the Assembly and Presbytery Clerks Forum and involving the Law Dept and HR Department in the National Offices, to bring proposals to the General Assembly of 2023 which would ensure consistency of terms and conditions across Presbyteries and which would align the pay and grading of Presbytery Staff

with the pay and grading of staff employed by the Central Services Committee and this consultation process shall include consideration of whether the Central Services Committee might be the preferred employing agent for Presbytery staff.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amended motion, there voted For 218 and Against 164.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add new sections 7 and 8 and renumber:

7. Invite the Assembly Business Committee and Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Law Dept and HR Dept in the National Offices to work with the Assembly and Clerks Forum to advise the General Assembly of 2023 what steps have been taken to ensure that there is appropriate support and training in place for Presbytery Clerks and provide advice, guidelines and training for those undertaking the line-management of Presbytery Clerks.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment of the Deliverance, there voted For 357 and Against 11.

8. Invite the Assembly Business Committee together with the Assembly and Clerks Forum to lead the development of a code of practice and capability process for Presbytery Clerks and report progress to the General Assembly of 2023.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment of the Deliverance, there voted For 347 and Against 12.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

7. Note the proposed timetable of Moderator's visits to Presbyteries.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print to add a new section 8 and renumber:

8. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee through the Principal Clerk to have discussions with the Lord Lyon, expressing the desire of the General Assembly for overly ceremonial elements to be absent from future meetings of the Assembly.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment of the Deliverance, there voted For 171

And Against 209.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

8. Acknowledge the consultation work undertaken by the Committee in the area of General Assembly Reform as reported in section 8 of the Report and instruct the Committee to bring in-depth proposals to the General Assembly of 2023.

SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY

9. Give thanks for the ongoing work of the Scottish Bible Society and -
 - a) urge the Scottish Bible Society to pursue its ongoing efforts to address the challenge of global Bible translation and distribution;
 - b) support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to improve people's experience of the Bible and its impact on their life;
 - c) endorse the Society in its efforts to encourage confidence in the gospel and in providing Scripture resources for mission purposes; and

- d) commend the Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members.

The Moderator welcomed Ms Elaine Duncan, Executive Director, Scottish Bible Society, who addressed the General Assembly. On behalf of the Directors of the Society, Ms Duncan presented a Bible and book, "Joseph and the Triumph of Grace" to the Moderator, who gave thanks for the gifts and the work of the Society, wishing it well for the future.

The Moderator thanked the Convener and members of the Assembly Business Committee for all the work which they had done during the previous year.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report and the Supplementary Report of the Assembly Trustees (except sections 11, 12, 13, 14 of the Deliverance which will be taken during session 10, section 15 which will be taken during session 8, section 19 which was taken during session 2; and including an Overture from the Presbytery of Sutherland) which was given in by the Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly

1. Receive the Report.
2. Acknowledge with gratitude the continuing work and ministry of the Church at all levels during the enduring Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities.
4. Affirm the overriding priority in budget planning to support the maintenance and growth of the local Church and note the continuance of the challenging financial situation facing the Church as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. In recognition of the challenges facing many Parish Ministers who live in manses where they have no control in respect of energy efficiency or upgrades and recognising that the remuneration of a Parish Ministers is a stipend plus manse, instruct the Assembly Trustees in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the General Trustees urgently to develop a scheme to support Parish Ministers who find themselves facing hardship with the rise in costs of heating and electricity, using existing funds where possible, to enable them to continue to provide ministry to the Parish to which God has called them; and renew the commitment of the Church to continue to fight poverty in all its many guises wherever it is found and felt.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment of the Deliverance, there voted For 227 and Against 122.

It was moved (Rev Alistair Cumming) and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. Note and acknowledge the differing needs and valued contribution to the Church of Scotland of the Presbyteries furth of Scotland and urge the

Assembly Trustees to consider providing a budgeted amount of £12,000 allowance in the National budget annually for 5 years for the Presbyteries of England and International Charges and report to the General Assembly of 2023.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the amendment in the name of Rev Alistair Cumming be amended to read as follows:

5. Note and acknowledge the differing needs and valued contribution to the Church of Scotland of the Presbyteries furth of Scotland and urge the Assembly Trustees to consider providing an appropriate allowance in the National budget annually for 5 years for the Presbyteries of England and International Charges and report to the General Assembly of 2023.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

5. Agree to implement the Giving to Grow scheme from 1st January 2023 and approve the proposed Regulations (Appendix A).
6. Repeal the Parish Ministries Fund Regulations (Regs IV 2016).

It was moved and seconded:

7. Approve the amendments to the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016) and the Regulations for Allocations in Local Ecumenical Partnerships (2007) (Appendix C) for use from the 1st January 2023.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that section 7 be amended by adding at the end:

“, and in the case of the Regulations for Contributions from Congregations in the Presbytery of International Charges (Regs V 2016), also by adding the following additional amendments:

1. In paragraph 1 replace “Ministries & Mission Contribution” with “a Contribution under the Congregational Contributions ‘Giving to Grow’ Regulations (Regs ZZ 2022)”.
2. Amend paragraph 2 by replacing “Stewardship and Finance Department” with “Presbytery” and by adding at the end “and Presbytery shall pay the total Contribution to the Stewardship and Finance Department in ten or twelve equal monthly instalments during the financial year by bank standing order.”
3. Delete paragraph 8(e) and substitute “Half of all gross income in excess of £10,000 received from outside agencies for the use of premises.”
4. Insert new paragraph 8(f) in the following terms: “Net income raised through giving online or through other digital means” and renumber paragraph 8(f) as 8(g).
5. Amend the paragraph at the end of paragraph 8 by adding before the words “grants from the Salvesen Trust”, the words “all grant income, including”.
6. In paragraph 10 delete the words “Ministries and Mission”.
7. In paragraph 11 delete the words “Council of Assembly” and substitute “Assembly Trustees”.
8. Delete paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 and substitute the following, renumbering thereafter:

“Appeals

The Governance Group of the Assembly Trustees shall appoint a Panel to adjudicate on any appeals from Congregations relating to the application of paragraph 8 above. Appeals on any other grounds shall not be permitted. (Full details of the appeals process are available from the Church of Scotland website.)”

9. Delete the first sentence of paragraph 17.
10. Delete paragraph 18.
11. Add the following two paragraphs at the end:

“Transition Funding

1. The sum total of increases in Contributions for Congregations within a Presbytery between the last year of the previous Contribution system (2022) and that current year’s requirement, will be made available as Transition Funding to Presbytery. This will be communicated when the list of proposed Contributions is issued to Presbytery. This funding will be available annually, for the first three years (i.e. in the years 2023 – 2025) of this Giving to Grow contribution system.

2. This transition funding may be used by the Presbytery to reduce the proposed Contributions for individual Congregations before these are finalised for the following year. This will be charged to the Church of Scotland General Fund.”

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

8. Repeal the Pilot Presbytery Staffing Fund Regulations (Regs V 2011).

It was moved and seconded:

9. Encourage Kirk Sessions to engage with the Christian Aid and ecumenical partners’ promotion of legacy giving in September 2022.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that section 9 be amended by adding “CrossReach” after “Christian Aid”.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

10. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to use the National Stewardship Team as a resource to help congregations steward their resources in line with their vision and mission plans.

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERY OF SUTHERLAND

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbytery of Sutherland

as to the allocation of ministry posts.

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat section 2 of the proposed

Deliverance of the Overture as a proposed new section 11 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees and renumber.

The Rev Andrea Boyes moved the Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Agree that: a) the allocation of fulltime equivalent ministries posts for the Presbytery of Sutherland should be increased from four to six, and b) the overall number of fulltime equivalent ministries posts by 2025 on which Presbyteries should base their Mission Planning should be increased from 661 to 663.

The General Assembly agreed to receive the Overture.

Standing Order 88 was suspended to allow the Rev Andrea Boyes to reply to the discussion immediately before the Convener of the Assembly Trustees closed the debate.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the Overture, there voted For 126 and Against 203.

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 11 and renumber:

11. Given that Gordon Presbytery and Jedburgh Presbytery may have been prejudiced by an error in the allocation of ministry posts, and other Presbyteries may have benefitted as a result of this, the total number of ministry posts will be increased by 6.5 to ensure that these Presbyteries can receive their correct allocation under weightings agreed by previous General Assemblies and this without further adjustment to the Presbyteries which have benefitted from this error.

It was then agreed that consideration of the proposed new section 11 be deferred until Tuesday 24

May 2022, session 8.

The General Assembly agreed that remaining sections of the proposed Deliverance in the Report of

the Assembly Trustees be taken in later sessions, the agreed summary being as follows:

11. *Consideration of section 11 was deferred until session 10.*
12. *Consideration of section 12 was deferred until session 10.*
13. *Consideration of section 13 was deferred until session 10.*
14. *Consideration of section 14 was deferred until session 10.*
15. *Consideration of section 15 was deferred until session 8.*
16. *Consideration of section 16 was deferred until session 6.*
17. *Consideration of section 17 was deferred until session 6.*
18. *Consideration of section 18 was deferred until session 6.*
19. *Section 19 was taken in session 2.*
20. *Consideration of section 20 was deferred until session 6.*
21. *(1) Consideration of section 21 (1) was deferred until session 6.*
22. *(2) Consideration of section 22 (2) was deferred until session 6.*
23. *(3) Consideration of section 23 (3) was deferred until session 6.*
24. *(4) Consideration of section 24 (4) was deferred until session 6.*
25. *(5) Consideration of section 25 (5) was deferred until session 6.*
26. *(6) Consideration of section 26 (6) was deferred until session 6.*

The General Assembly adjourned at 6.00pm to meet again in this Hall, and online via video-conference, on Monday 23 May at 9.15 am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video-conference
EDINBURGH, 21 May 2022, 6.00 pm

Convened at Edinburgh, 23 May 2022

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings on the 23rd day of May 2022 at 9.15 am.

Holy Communion was celebrated in the Assembly Hall. The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 9.50am until 10.29am.

SESSION 4

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

Prof Jason Leitch, National Clinical Director of the Scottish Government, addressed the General Assembly and was thanked by the Moderator.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

Agree the Order of Business for the third to the fifth day.

COMMITTEE ON OVERTURES AND CASES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Overtures and Cases which was given in by the Principal Clerk.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Overture Amending the Church Courts Act (Act III 2000) as printed in Appendix C.
3. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Solemnisation of Same-Sex Marriage Overture as printed at Appendix D.

On a vote being taken For or Against Section 3 of the Deliverance there voted For 274 and Against 136.

The Deliverance as a whole was then agreed.

The following Commissioners entered their dissent with regard to the General Assembly's decision to approve section 3:

Rev Gordon Kennedy	(12)
Rev John Vischer	(69)
Rev Malcolm Jefferson	(83)
Mrs Pamela Kennedy	(87)
Rev Alistair Cook	(95)
Rev Ann McCool	(165)
Rev Francis Murphy	(170)
Rev Stuart Steell	(173)
Rev Dr Richard G Buckley	(193)
Rev Mark Malcolm	(202)
Rev Gavin McFadyen	(205)
Rev David Slater	(213)
Rev Ben Thorp	(214)
Mr Graeme Barrie	(217)
Miss Fiona Hay	(225)
Mr Donald Matheson	(232)
Mrs Fiona Matheson	(233)
Mrs Isabel McDerment	(236)
Rev Scott Burton	(297)
Rev James Todd	(302)
Rev Gary Caldwell	(312)
Rev David Smith	(345)
Rev Michael Weaver	(347)
Rev Grace Steele	(370)

Rev Alan Reid	(379)
Rev Mike Goss	(405)
Mr John Blanksby	(447)
Rev Andrew Kuzma	(476)
Rev Philip Gunn	(495)
Rev Iain MacLeod	(501)
Rev Dr John Sterrett	(502)

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Legal Questions Committee which was given in by the Rev Dr S Grant Barclay, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. *Consideration of section 2 was dealt with in Session 1.*
3. Agree to send the draft Church Courts Act as set out in Appendix B to Presbyteries for consultation and direct that comments be sent to the Principal Clerk by 31 December 2022.
4. Instruct the Committee, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to undertake a review of the Ministers and Deacons in Same Sex Marriages and Civil Partnerships Act (Act I 2015) and to report to a future General Assembly.
5. Instruct the Committee to continue with the development of Presbytery Review and to bring a Presbytery Review Act to the General Assembly of 2024
6. Pass an Act amending the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) as set out in Appendix D.
7. Pass an Act amending the Appeals Act (Act I 2014) as set out in Appendix E.
8. Pass an Act amending the Intimation of Appeals Act (Act VI 2004) as set out in Appendix F.
9. Pass an Act amending the Commission of Assembly Act (Act VI 1997) as set out in Appendix G.
10. Note that the following arrangements have proved useful:
 - (a) the Vacancy Protocol and the arrangements for Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to meet and vote by video- conferencing or audio-conferencing, agreed by the Commission of Assembly on 7 July 2020,
 - (b) the three Protocols agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020 (the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, the Congregational Meetings for Adopting the Unitary Constitution Protocol and the Congregational Meetings on Sale or Disposal of Church Buildings Protocol),
 - (c) the arrangements for Financial Boards to meet and vote by video-conferencing or audio-conferencing agreed by the General Assembly of October 2020, and
 - (d) the arrangements agreed by the General Assembly of 2021 in relation to appointments and elections to Congregational Boards;

and, therefore, continue all of these arrangements as required until the General Assembly of 2023, provided that in the case of the Congregational Meetings on Bases of Adjustment Protocol, this shall be read as relating to section 10.2 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021).

11. Pass an Act amending the Discipline Act (Act I 2019) as set out in Appendix H.
12. Repeal the Licensing of Probationers Act (Act XI 1932), the Trials for Licence Act (Act VIII 1936) and the Ministerial Staffing in the Presbytery of Shetland Regulations (Regs VI 2007).
13. Instruct Kirk Sessions to take steps to adopt a conflict of interest policy in the form prepared by the Law department (with any future changes which may be made to the style policy to reflect changing guidance or best practice) as soon as may be practicable and in any event by 31 December 2022.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 4 and renumber:

4. Instruct the Legal Questions Committee, in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum, to explore whether Readers be permitted to apply for permission to officiate at marriage ceremonies and report to the General Assembly of 2023 with proposals as required.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 5 in the print: Add after "Presbytery Review" the words "bringing the principles of Presbytery Review to the General Assembly of 2023 for Approval before bringing" and delete the words "and to bring".

On a vote being taken For or Against the amended Section 5, there voted For 297 and Against 63.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 14 and renumber:

14. Instruct the Legal Questions Committee in consultation with the Faith Nurture Forum to review Standing Order 35 on youth representatives in light of General Assembly Reform and also Presbytery Reform and to bring proposals as to an amended Standing Order 35 to the General Assembly of 2023.

It was then agreed that remaining notices of motion to amend the proposed Deliverance of the

Report of the Legal Questions Committee be deferred until Wednesday 25 May, session 13.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.29pm until 2.00 pm.

SESSION 5

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Ecumenical Relations Committee which was given in by the Rev Alexander Horsburgh, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend Koinonia: God's Gift and Calling, the report of the International Reformed-Anglican Dialogue, to the wider Church and, in particular, to the Columba Declaration Contact Group and the Saint Andrew Declaration Working Group.
3. Approve the Declaration of Friendship between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland.

4. Welcome the participation of an increasing number of churches in the Scottish Church Leaders' Forum and other ecumenical bodies in Scotland, and encourage the further development of an effective and coherent ecumenical network.
5. Thank Mr Bob Fyffe, former General Secretary of CTBI, and Rev Dr Paul Goodliff, former General Secretary of CTE for their service, and welcome Dr Nicola Brady and Bishop Mike Royal as their respective successors.
6. Approve the delegates to Assemblies, Synods and Conferences of other Churches, and the appointment of representatives to Ecumenical Bodies, as detailed in Appendix 2.

The Most Rev Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, addressed the General Assembly and was thanked by the Moderator.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 3, there voted For 421 and Against 4.

Section 3 was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 4 and renumber:

4. Subject to the approval of the Scottish Catholic Bishops' Conference, name the Declaration of Friendship 'The Saint Margaret Declaration'.

The Deliverance as amended and the Declaration of Friendship were then agreed.

THEOLOGICAL FORUM

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Theological Forum which was given in by the Rev Dr Liam Fraser, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Report "The Earth is the Lord's: A Theological Account of Creation Care" to congregations for study and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to provide opportunities and resources to aid reflection, conversation and response.
3. Receive the Report "The Confessional Position of the Church of Scotland: Proposals for Reform" as a response to the instruction given by the General Assembly of 2021.
4. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum and the Theological Forum to introduce teaching on the confessional position of the Church and the vows of office holders for those entering into recognised ministries and eldership.
5. Approve in principle the proposals for creating a Book of Confessions and corresponding changes to the vows and subscription of office holders, and instruct the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee to bring an Overture effecting these changes to the General Assembly of 2023.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 3.33pm until 3.48pm.

SESSION 6

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Theological Forum.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 5:

Amend section 5 by inserting a full stop after "Book of Confessions" and deleting the rest of the proposed deliverance.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment, there voted For 44 and Against 299 and it carried against.

Section 5 in the print was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 6 and renumber:

6. Instruct the Theological Forum, in consultation with other relevant parties, to prepare a Report with recommendations for a future General Assembly on a theological and missiological understanding and practice of church membership.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND INVESTORS TRUST

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Investors Trust which was given in by Mr Brian Duffin, Chairman.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mr R D Burgon as Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
3. Reappoint Ms E Crichton as a member and as Vice-Chairman of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
4. Approve the reappointment of Mr M G S Yuille and Mr J G Wilson as members of the Investors Trust from 1 June 2022.
5. Approve the appointment of Mr I Blair and Mr A Richmond as members from 1 June 2022.
6. Receive the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Investors Trust for 2021.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PENSION TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Pension Trustees which was given in by Mr Graeme Caghey, Chair.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the appointment of Gillian Graham and Gordon Taylor as Employer Nominated Trustees of all three Schemes.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Trust which was given in by Mr Thomas Watson, Chairman.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mr Leon Marshall as Chairman from 1 June 2022.

3. Appoint Mrs Morag Angus as Vice-Chairman from 1 June 2022.
4. Re-appoint Mr Angus Bethune and the Very Rev Dr John P Chalmers as members of the Trust from 1 June 2022.
5. Thank Mr W F Stuart Lynch for his 26 years' service to the Trust and Rev Iain Cunningham for his 6 years' service to the Trust.
6. Appoint Mrs Valerie Macniven as a member of the Trust from 1 June 2022.

CHURCH HYMNARY TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church Hymnary Trustees which was given in by Rev Neil Gardner in the absence of the Chair.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Delegation of the General Assembly which was given in by the Principal Clerk, Chair.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and thank the Delegation for its work.
2. Continue the appointment of the Delegation with the same powers as hitherto –the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly to be Chair, the Depute Clerk of the General Assembly to be Vice-Chair and the Solicitor of the Church to act as Secretary.

MINUTES OF THE APPEAL HEARINGS BEFORE THE MINISTRIES APPEAL PANEL

The General Assembly called for the Minutes of the first, second and third Appeal Hearings before the Ministries Appeal Panel, two in September 2021 and one in December 2021, which were laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

MINUTE OF THE APPEAL HEARING BEFORE THE JUDICIAL COMMISSION

The General Assembly called for the Minute of the Appeal Hearing before the Judicial Commission in June 2021 which was laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

MINUTE OF THE APPEAL HEARING BEFORE THE SAFEGUARDING APPEAL GROUP

The General Assembly called for the Minute of the Appeal Hearing before the Safeguarding Appeal Group in June 2021 which was laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

MINUTE OF THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for the Minute of the Commission of Assembly in March 2022 which was laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

The General Assembly agreed to note all of the minutes.

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees.

It was moved and seconded:

16. Instruct the General Trustees, jointly with the Assembly Trustees, the Legal Questions Committee and the Faith Nurture Forum, to review current law and practice with a view to proposing legislation that would allow greater flexibility in relation to the allocation of the sale proceeds of properties found to be surplus to requirements following the dissolution of a congregation or the union of one or more congregations and provide a transparent process with adequate criteria by which decisions on the use of such funds are made and report to the General Assembly of 2023.
17. Approve the amended remit of the Audit Committee.
18. Approve the amended Constitution and Remit of the Assembly Trustees.
19. *Consideration of section 19 was dealt with in Session 2.*
20. Approve the change in membership numbers for the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces.
21. (1) Receive the Supplementary Report.
22. (2) Receive the 2021 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities.
23. (3) Note the budget for 2023 and the indicative budgets for 2024 to 2027 (Appendices 1 and 2).
24. (4) Approve the arrangements proposed in respect of the Pioneer Mission Fund.
25. (5) Repeal the Growth Fund Regulations (Regulations I 2019) and pass the Seeds for Growth Fund Regulations set out in Appendix 3.
26. (6) Discharge with thanks the members of the Seeds for Change Committee.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

That section 16 in the print be amended by deleting "proposing legislation" and substituting "bringing legislation to General Assembly 2023", adding after "one or more congregations" the words "and exploring with the encouragement and support of Presbytery whether some monies might be released for mission," and delete at the end "and report to the General Assembly of 2023".

Section 16 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 21 and renumber:

21. Approve the appointment of Ian Forrester QC, Gillian Paterson, minister of Wellesley Parish Church and Norman Smith, minister of Granton Parish Church, as Assembly Trustees for full terms; also approve the appointment of Jennifer MacDonald as an Assembly Trustee for an initial term of one year to complete the term of Linda Irvine, renewable thereafter for a full term.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 5 of the Supplementary Report:

Add at the end:

"subject to the following amendments:

1. In Appendix 3, 'Seeds for Growth' Fund Regulations:
 - 1.1 replace the existing section 3 with:

"The purposes of the Fund are to support the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping

communities through the development of local mission initiatives which give expression to one or more of the Five Marks of Mission, as defined in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021)."

1.2 replace the existing section 6 with:

"An application to the Fund may be made by a Kirk Session, a group of Kirk Sessions, a Presbytery or a group of Presbyteries. Applications from a Kirk Session or a group of Kirk Sessions must be supported by the relevant Presbytery."

2. In Appendix 3, Schedule –The Seeds for Growth Fund Implementation Group Terms of Reference:

2.1 replace the existing 'Purpose' sub-sections (a) and (b) with:

"The purposes of the Fund are to support the numerical and spiritual growth of existing Church of Scotland congregations and of new Church of Scotland worshipping communities through the development of local mission initiatives which give expression to one or more of the Five Marks of Mission, as defined in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021)."

2.2. replace the first sentence of 'Criteria' sub-section 1 with:

"Applications must come from Kirk Sessions, groups of Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries or groups of Presbyteries. Applications from Kirk Sessions or groups of Kirk Sessions must be supported by the relevant Presbytery."

2.3. replace the existing 'Criteria' sub-section 2 with:

"Applications must demonstrate a visionary approach to one or more of the Five Marks of Mission and must set out the anticipated effect of the project at a congregational or Presbytery level and include a clear plan and measurable targets."

2.4. replace the existing 'Criteria' sub-section 6 with:

"Applications will be assessed against one or more of the Five Marks of Mission." "

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment, there voted For 72 and Against 237 and it carried against.

Consideration of sections 11 to 15 of the Deliverance was deferred until session 8.

The General Assembly adjourned at 5.50pm to meet again in this Hall and online via video-conference tomorrow at 9.15am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video-conference
EDINBURGH, 23 May 2022, 5.50pm

Convened at Edinburgh, 24 May 2022

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 24th day of May 2022 at 9.15 am.

SESSION 7

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

The General Assembly agreed that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the Assembly Trustees to introduce the Faith Action Plan and Programme.

The General Assembly agreed to appoint the following Commissioners to the Selection Committee:

Rev Eleanor McMahon (Convener)	102
Rev Fraser Penny (Vice Convener)	368
Mrs Jeanette McIvor	47
Mr Connor McFadyen	74
Rev Victoria Linford	84
Rev Lisa-Jane Rankin	97
Miss Jennifer Boag	175
Mr Graeme Barrie	217
Mrs Patricia McKenzie	231
Mr Paul Cathcart DCS	245
Rev Ross Blackman	247
Ms Pat Munro DCS	388
Mr Stuart Lynch	470
Rev Alison Mehigan	477
Mrs Ella Gill	491
Rev Lorna Tunstall	503
Rev Gavin Elliot	515
Miss Margaret Sutherland	528
Mr Ian Russell	539
Rev Derek Lawson	541

The Minutes of Sessions 1-3, being available in the Assembly Paper, were submitted and approved.

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES –INTRODUCTION TO THE FAITH ACTION PLAN AND PROGRAMME

The General Assembly heard from the Assembly Trustees with an Introduction to the Faith Action Plan and Programme.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.10am until 10.19am and again from 10.51am until 11.16am.

SESSION 8

The suspension of Standing Orders was ended.

FAITH IMPACT FORUM

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Faith Impact Forum, including Report on the Jewish-Church of Scotland Dialogue, which was given in by the Very Rev Dr Susan Brown, Convener.

Rabbi David Mason addressed the General Assembly and the Moderator gave a suitable reply.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

Safeguarding the Integrity of Creation

2. Instruct the Forum, in partnership with the Assembly Trustees, General Trustees, Social Care Council and Eco- Congregation Scotland, to continue to develop plans and activities towards meeting a 'Net Zero by 2030 Strategy' and to report to the General Assembly in 2023.

Global Justice and International Partnerships

3. Give thanks for the life and witness of Mission Partners who have died, acknowledge with gratitude those who have completed their period of service overseas, and uphold in prayer all who continue to serve.

4. Urge the UK Government to do more to ensure Covid-19 vaccines are available throughout the world, particularly in resource poor countries, and instruct the Forum to make representations and to promote this campaign with church members.
 5. Instruct the Forum to share with congregations and Presbyteries the work of Mediterranean Hope and other international partners providing humanitarian and integration support to displaced people, and promote opportunities for local churches to respond with prayer, action and giving.
 6. Instruct the Forum to continue to support work with asylum seekers and refugees, alongside Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, and encourage congregations to participate in the 'Faithful Welcome' project and to explore Community Sponsorship so that they may be directly involved in refugee resettlement.
 7. Commend the Korea Peace Appeal and instruct the Forum to promote the appeal to church members and congregations for them to sign as part of the effort to bring an end to the Korean War.
 8. Note the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Pakistani Minorities: Abductions, Forced Conversions, and Forced Marriages of Religious Minority Women and Girls in Pakistan; instruct the Forum to continue to engage with ecumenical and international partners on the issue and to provide resources to encourage church members to write to MPs urging the UK Government to implement the Report's recommendations.
 9. Commend to congregations this year's Stamp Appeal which will support the Church in Lebanon in its ministry.
- Interfaith Relations**
10. Commend the Jewish-Christian glossary produced this year for study and action particularly by ministers, OLMs, readers and worship leaders, to shed light on divergent uses and understandings of theological and political terms that relate to the Holy Land.
 11. Note with concern that Islamophobia remains widespread in the UK, and in line with other faith-based, social, political and governmental organisations, adopt for internal use the All-Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) definition of Islamophobia, and its guidelines, to aid the Church of Scotland in challenging Islamophobia.
- Societal and Political Issues**
12. Acknowledge that the practice of Conversion Therapy is harmful and endorse the definition of Conversion Therapy as outlined in the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK', noting that the Methodist Conference have supported and adopted this definition and the Church of England General Synod have endorsed a similar statement; urge the Scottish Government to ban Conversion Therapy and instruct the Forum to make representations to the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament.
 13. Instruct the Forum, in consultation with CrossReach and others, to report to the General Assembly of 2023 on issues relating to drugs and substance use.
 14. Instruct the Forum to convene a cross-Church group to explore the benefits and opportunities afforded to the Church of Scotland by digital technologies and to support congregations in their utilisation of these.
 15. (1) Receive the Supplementary Report.
 16. (2) a) Condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
b) Call for an immediate ceasefire and urge all parties, supported by the international community, to negotiate a just and peaceful solution which respects human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
c) Urge prayer across the Church of Scotland:
 - for the people of Ukraine suffering under war.
 - for wisdom among the leaders of the nations and all who work for justice and truth, and who keep open the horizon of reconciliation and peace.
 - for the generosity of the Church in supporting the spiritual and humanitarian efforts of the local partner churches for those afflicted by war.
 - to strengthen all those working in response to human need in Ukraine and other places around the world afflicted by war and violence, and for those working to welcome refugees.
 - d) Condemn any Russophobia and discrimination against Russian citizens living and working in Scotland.
 - e) Encourage members of the Church who wish to host refugees to register with the Homes for Ukraine scheme run by the UK Government, under the aegis of the Scottish Government as a 'super sponsor'.
 - f) Instruct the Faith Impact Forum to continue to respond to developments in the war in Ukraine, and to raise issues with the Scottish and UK Governments, with ecumenical partners, and with Reformed church partners around the world.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add new sections 3, 4 and 5 and renumber:

3. Call upon the UK Government to levy urgently a windfall tax on oil and gas companies in order to address the crisis of fuel poverty across the UK.
4. In view of the call from the UN and International Energy Agency to recognise that there can be no new oil and gas developments if we are to limit global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius, call upon the UK Government to grant no further licenses for new fossil fuel exploration or extraction.
5. Instruct the Faith Impact Forum to work with Priority Areas and with partner organisations on advocacy and practical action to address the growing crises of fuel poverty and energy insecurity.

On a vote being taken For or Against the new section 3 of the Deliverance, there voted For 288 and Against 83.

On a vote being taken For or Against the new section 4 of the Deliverance it carried For.

It was moved and seconded that the new section 5 be amended to read as follows:

5. Instruct the Faith Impact Forum to work with congregations (particularly in Priority Areas) and with partner organisations on advocacy and practical action to address the growing crises of fuel poverty and energy insecurity.

On a vote being taken For or Against the new section 5 of the Deliverance, as amended, there voted For 289 and Against 88.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.30pm until 2.00pm.

SESSION 9

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Faith Impact Forum.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 10 and renumber:

10. Commend to the prayers of the church the members, ministers and leaders of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar who continue to worship and witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in a context of conflict and danger and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to write to Her Majesty's Government urging the use of diplomacy and sanctions in order that the elected government of Myanmar be reinstated.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 10 of the Deliverance in the print:

Delete the words "the Jewish-Christian glossary produced this year for study and action particularly by ministers, OLMs, readers and worship leaders," and substitute: "the ongoing dialogue and collaborative effort with the Office of the Chief Rabbi to produce a Jewish-Christian glossary"

Section 10 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 12 in the print:

Delete the words:

"Acknowledge that the practice of Conversion Therapy is harmful and"

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 12 in the print:

Delete the words "definition of Conversion Therapy as outlined in the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK' and the words "the Methodist Conference have supported and adopted this definition and" and after "endorse the" add the words "statement on conversion therapy by COSCA (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Scotland)" and after the words "to ban Conversion Therapy", add "while reserving issues around gender identity for further legislation".

On a vote being taken For or Against the amended section 12 there voted For 132 and Against 230 and it carried against.

Section 12 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 15 and renumber:

15. Following the publication of the paper 'Apologising for Historic Wrongs' produced by the Theological Forum, acknowledge and regret the terrible harm caused to all those who suffered from accusations and prosecutions under Scotland's historic witchcraft laws, the majority of whom were women, and apologise for the role of the Church of Scotland and the General Assembly in such historical persecution.

Mr Douglas Wiseman (387) entered his dissent with regard to the General Assembly's decision to approve the new section 15.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

FAITH NURTURE FORUM

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Faith Nurture Forum (including section 15 of the proposed Deliverance on the Report of the Assembly Trustees and the Overture from the Presbytery of International Charges) which was given in by the Rev Rosie Frew, Convener.

The General Assembly agreed that Standing Order 95 be amended to limit speeches to three minutes.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum to continue work on the Capability framework (Appendix 1).
3. Adopt the Code of Professional Practice and Good Conduct for the Ministries of the Church of Scotland as a standard to which all those involved in the recognised ministries of the Church should be expected to adhere (Appendix 2).
4. Instruct the Forum to update the relevant Handbooks with the revised Code of Conduct at the earliest opportunity, make an electronic copy available on the Ascend website, and alert all those engaged in the recognised ministries of the Church to the revised Code by email.
5. Invite comment on the working of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII, 2003) with submissions being emailed to VacancyAct@churchofscotland.org.uk
6. Pass an Act amending the terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) (Appendix 3).
7. *This section was not moved.*
8. Pass the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act Act (Appendix 4).
9. Pass an Act amending the Selection and Training for Full-Time Ministry Act [Act X 2004] (Appendix 5).
10. Pass an Act amending the Readership Act (Act XVII 1992) (Appendix 6).
11. Pass an Act amending the Ordained Local Ministry Act (Act IX 2011) (Appendix 7).
12. Express thanks for the service given by Rev Prof Susan Hardman Moore as Principal of New College, Edinburgh, and affirm the proposal that Rev Dr Alison Jack be appointed as her successor from 1 September 2022 (Section 5.14).
13. Nominate as trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund;
 - i. Dr Eilidh Renwick to serve for a second term;
 - ii. The Reverend Scott McCarthy.
14. Affirm the commitment of the Church to place priority for the poorest at the heart of all that it does, recognising the mission of Priority Area congregations in this.
15. Instruct the Forum to continue to develop and deliver the key priority of implementing the whole Church strategy of prioritising support for

those living in poverty and at the margins within the Faith Action Plan, through the Priority Areas Implementation Group and Priority Areas Team.

1. (16) Receive the Supplementary Report.
2. (17) Agree the amended corrected ministries allocations for the Presbyteries of Annandale & Eskdale and Aberdeen & Shetland (Appendix 1)
3. (18) Note the weightings applied to each Presbytery for the purpose of allocating ministries set out in Appendix 1. (Appendix 1)

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 3.36pm until 3.48pm.

SESSION 10

OVERTURE – PRESBYTERY OF INTERNATIONAL CHARGES

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbytery of International

Charges to amend the International Presbytery Act 2016 (Act II 2016) (as amended).

In terms of Standing Order 52 the General Assembly agreed to treat section 2 of the proposed

Deliverance of the Overture as a proposed new section 6 of the Deliverance of the Faith Nurture

Forum and renumber.

The Rev Derek Lawson moved the Deliverance as follows:

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass the Act amending The International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016), as amended, as set out in the Appendix.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 2 of the Proposed Deliverance:

Add at the end:

“subject to amending the proposed paragraph 1(2) in Schedule 2 of the Act to insert after “denomination of origin”, the words “or where the minister is judicially suspended for a period of six months or more,”.

The Deliverance of the Overture as amended was then agreed.

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

The General Assembly took up consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees, section 15.

It was moved and seconded:

15. Note the Vision Statement which frames the discussion around the Review of Initial Training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament (Appendix D), agree the principles for ministerial education and training outlined in Section 14 of the Report and authorise the Faith Nurture Forum to engage with academic providers and others as necessary in order to ensure the best possible infrastructure and curriculum for ministry formation.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 15 in the print:

Delete “to engage with academic providers” and substitute “to take further the initial engagement with current academic providers”.

Section 15 as amended was then agreed.

FAITH NURTURE FORUM

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Faith Nurture Forum.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 6 and renumber:

6. Call the Church to pray, recognising:
 - Our complete dependence on God;
 - The many problems, questions and issues raised throughout the Church by the Presbytery Mission Planning Process; and
 - The deep fears and anxieties that are being felt by people across the Church;

And instruct the Forum to produce prayer resources to encourage and equip people to pray for the future well-being, peace and revival of the Church.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 6 and renumber:

6. To instruct Presbyteries to engage with the young adults within their boundaries as part of their mission planning process.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 6 in the print:

Add at the end “but subject to deletion of the proposed amendment to section 7.0(1) in section 3 of the amending Act.”

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 7 and renumber:

7. Urge Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries when planning the union of congregations to consider the numerical size and composition of the united Kirk Session and also whether use might be made of fixed term appointments, bearing in mind the efficient operation of that court.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 8 and renumber:

8. Recognise that the implementation of certain parts of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act is having unintended consequences where there is not consensus among the involved parties and strongly urge congregations, “hubs”, groups of churches, “clusters”, to meet together monthly over the coming years for corporate prayer and seek the power of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of God.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the new section 8:

Add at the end “and invite Presbyteries to consider using the resources of the interim and transition ministry team in these changing circumstances.”

Section 8, as amended, was then agreed.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 8 and renumber:

8. In order to reduce the uncertainty and anxiety for existing probationers, ministry students, potential ministry candidates and those in familiarisation and reviewable tenure, the Faith Nurture Forum will publish by September 2022 full ministries numbers and projections of expected vacancies during the latter half of 2022 and 2023; full ministries numbers would entail a. ministers of FTWS currently in charges, b. number of MDS staff counted towards the 600 fulltime ministries target figure by end of 2025, c. number of ministers in reviewable tenures, d. number of ministers in familiarisation, e. number of probationers (already normally included in the Faith Nurture Forum Report), and f. number of ministers expected to retire that year; with similar ministries numbers and vacancy projections to be included in subsequent Faith Nurture Forum (or its successor) Reports to the General Assembly.

On a vote being taken For or Against the new section 8 of Deliverance, there voted For 201 and Against 159.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 8 and renumber:

8. Instruct Presbyteries to ensure that, in the period up to the General Assembly of 2025, where a weighting of resources is allocated to part or parts of the area of a Presbytery, the allocation of ministry in the Presbytery Mission Plan is demonstrably distributed so as to fulfil the spirit and purpose of the weighting; and instruct the Faith Nurture Forum to take this principle into account in approving Presbytery Mission Plans.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 12 and renumber:

12. Commend the Presbytery of Glasgow's commitment to 'Recharging the Eldership for the 21st Century' and instruct the Forum to listen to and, where appropriate, to share and develop the outcomes of the Presbytery's conference held on 05 March 2022.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add new sections 13 and 14 and renumber:

13. Instruct the Forum to take time to reflect on the lower than anticipated uptake of Ordained Local Ministers, who were to play a pivotal role in previous Presbytery plans and report to the General Assembly of 2023.
14. Instruct the Forum, in conjunction with the Theological Forum, approved Education partners and any other relevant committees to investigate the possibility of creating an accelerated training course, similar or identical to the Church of England's 'Caleb Stream', which would allow Elders within a congregation to be trained and subsequently authorised by Presbytery to administer the Sacraments within their own congregations, and report to the General Assembly of 2023.

The new Section 13 was agreed and on a vote being taken For or Against the new section 14 of the Deliverance, there voted For 167 and Against 160.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 14 and renumber:

14. Instruct the Faith Nurture Forum to commission a video series resource, telling the stories of churches who are thriving in the area of making new disciples, in an effort to provide 'real-life role models' of how congregations in different parish contexts can grow.

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed new section 14 of the Deliverance, there voted For 184 and Against 159.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 16 and renumber:

16. Urge congregations to adopt the simple ACORN initiative (section 15.1.1) to help members join with others, following God on mission.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 16 and renumber:

16. Congratulate the congregations of Guernsey St Andrews in the Grange and Jersey St Columba's as they celebrate the 50th anniversary of being Church of Scotland congregations.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 16 and renumber:

16. In view of the fact that there are no easily available recordings of performances of many of the hymns and songs in CH4 the General Assembly encourage the trust to commission recorded performances of these hymns that can be made available by the major streaming services and licensed by Christian Copyright Licensing.

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed new section 16 of Deliverance, there voted For 34 and Against 293.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 16 and renumber:

16. Note the changes made to the cap on 'saving up' Study Leave allowances, and encourage all ministers to use or continue to use the scheme for their Continuing Ministerial Education.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 3 of the Supplementary Report and renumber:

3. Notwithstanding any past errors, instruct the Selection Committee to appoint three persons, to mediate a meeting with Gordon Presbytery, Faith Nurture Forum and the Assembly Trustees to:
 - i. Verify, according to the principles applied across all other Presbyteries, the appropriate weighting and allocation of ministries to Gordon Presbytery;
 - ii. In the light of the outcome of section (i) above assist (if required) the Presbytery of Gordon to complete their Presbytery Mission Plan; and

iii. Advise, where appropriate, on opportunities that might exist in:

- a. Local ecumenical collaboration,
- b. The shape of ministry allocation within the proposed new Presbytery, and
- c. Initiatives that might qualify for funding under the newly create Seeds for Growth Fund;

And report the outcome of their work to the General Assembly of 2023.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 3 of the Supplementary Report:

Delete "Note" and substitute "Agree".

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

A counter-motion to section 3 of the Supplementary Report:

3. Instruct the Selection Committee to appoint a committee of five people to examine the accuracy and veracity of the weightings used for the purpose of allocating ministries set out in Appendix 1; and to ensure that no Presbytery has been prejudiced by the weightings and allocation of ministries based on them, and report to the General Assembly of 2023.

On a vote being taken there voted For the motion 211 and For the counter-motion 105 and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

Section 3 as in the print was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 4 and renumber:

4. Approve the figures contained in Appendix 1 to the Supplementary Report as the total number of ministry posts to be allocated among the Presbyteries, and this to be the basis for the next five years, subject to annual reporting and agreement of the General Assembly as required in the Presbytery Mission Plan Act. (Appendix 1).

The Deliverance as amended was agreed.

REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Registration of Ministries Committee which, in the absence of the Convener, was given in by the Rev Dr Alan Hamilton, a member of the Committee.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

1. Receive the Report.

The General Assembly agreed that business be remaindered as follows:

The Report of the Trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund to Thursday 26 May, Session 14.

Sections 11 to 14 of the Report of the Assembly Trustees to Wednesday 25 May, Session 11, after the Report of the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces.

The General Assembly adjourned at 5.53 pm to meet again in this Hall and online via video-conference tomorrow at 9.15 am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video-conference
EDINBURGH, 24 May 2022, 5.53 pm

Convened at Edinburgh, 25 May 2022

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 25th day of May 2022 at 9.15 am.

SESSION 11

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

The General Assembly agreed that the amendment of Standing Order 95 should remain in place so that speeches be limited to three minutes.

The General Assembly agreed that the Clerks be authorised to add to the Minute of Monday 23 May 2022, the names of further Commissioners who enter their dissent timeously with regard to the General Assembly's decision to approve section 3 of the Report of the Committee on Overtures and Cases.

The Minutes of Sessions 4-6, being available in the Assembly Paper, were submitted and approved.

REPLY TO HER MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS LETTER

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare a Reply to the Gracious Letter from Her Majesty the Queen which was given in by the Lord Wallace of Tankerness.

The Reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Letter was submitted and approved for signature and transmission to Her Majesty.

The Reply was in the following terms:

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

May it please Your Majesty We, Your Majesty's loyal subjects convened in General Assembly, have received with pleasure Your Majesty's gracious letter to us.

We greatly value Your Majesty's continuing pledge to maintain the historic rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. In this year when we mark the 70th anniversary of your accession we give thanks for the example of Christian duty and service which your Majesty has given to the nation.

The appointment of the Rt Hon Lord Hodge as Your Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to our General Assembly has been wholeheartedly welcomed. His Grace brings with him a deep knowledge of the Church of Scotland and indeed the General Assembly so he is well equipped to fulfil the duties to which you have called him.

As you have acknowledged, in these last two years the Covid-19 pandemic has done much harm in our communities. We appreciate your Majesty's recognition of how people of faith have responded to the unprecedented challenges of recent times. As we have sought together to be good neighbours to people in need we have found in each other friendship and a sense of common cause. It is as friends and partners that we, as faith communities, have been able to develop new relationships with those in government and council who have had to make so many difficult decisions on our behalf.

We are pleased to receive your Majesty's commendation for the Church's engagement with COP26 and our response to the climate emergency which was highlighted in that gathering. We commit ourselves anew to being good stewards of this planet.

We appreciate your Majesty's understanding of the challenges which the Church of Scotland must face in prioritising the use of our limited sources in our continued commitment to be a national church. There are many difficult choices to be made as we plan our participation in Christ's mission yet we remain hopeful that, with God's guidance, we will find ways to renew the life of our Church.

We share your Majesty's concern for the people of Ukraine and we are grateful for your recognition of the Church's work in supporting both refugees and those who remain in that troubled land. We continue to pray with your Majesty for an end to war and a lasting peace.

Finally, we commend Your Majesty to the unfailing grace and protection of Almighty God, and we pray that God will bestow favour upon Your Majesty, as you continue your long reign over us.

Your Majesty's most faithful and loyal servants.

THE MINISTERS, ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CONVENED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Signed in our name, in our presence and at our appointment by the Right Reverend Dr Iain Greenshields, Moderator of the General Assembly on this 25th day of May 2022.

COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HER MAJESTY'S FORCES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces which was given in by the Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Thank those who serve in Her Majesty's Forces as Chaplains for their service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel, their families and the wider military community.
3. Recognise the particular service of those Chaplains who have served in support of the contribution of the Armed Services to efforts relating to Covid-19 and on operations in Afghanistan in summer 2021.
4. Recognise the contribution of Forces Chaplains to the Church's engagement with many young adults, some of whom might not otherwise come into contact with the ministry of the Church.
5. Commend to the prayers of the Church all Chaplains and all those whom they serve.
6. Encourage eligible ministers of the Church to consider service as a Chaplain to HM Forces, Regular or Reservist.
7. Encourage those eligible to consider service as Chaplains in any of the Cadet organisations and thank all serving Cadet Chaplains.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 5:

After the words "all Chaplains" add a comma and the words 'their families'.

Section 5 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The Moderator thanked the Retiring Convener, the Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, on behalf of the

General Assembly, for her work and service as Convener of the Committee.

Lt General Nichols Borton, Commander of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, was invited by the Moderator to address the General Assembly.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.25pm until 10.52 pm.

SESSION 12

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES –FORUMS/FAITH ACTION PLAN AND PROGRAMME CONTINUED

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

11. Instruct the Assembly Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Section 13 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed descriptions and remits and finalised titles for an Active Faith Leadership Team and the following Programme Groups:
 - i. Mission
 - ii. People & Training
 - iii. Public Life & Global Justice
 - iv. Resource & Presence.
12. Instruct the Trustees to work with the Nomination Committee and Presbyteries to enable the Nomination Committee to bring names of nominees for the leaders and members of the Active Faith Leadership Team and each of the Programme Groups to the General Assembly of 2023.
13. Affirm the faithful and dedicated work of the Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum since their inception in January 2020, the leadership of those Forums and the commitment of their members and commend their continuing involvement in the development of the Faith Action Programme.
14. Instruct the Trustees, working in the terms outlined in Appendix E, Section 9 of the Report, to bring to the General Assembly of 2023 detailed proposals for the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum in relation to the structural arrangements for the Faith Action Programme, whilst retaining their direct accountability to the General Assembly.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The Moderator thanked the retiring Convener, the Very Rev Dr John Chalmers, on behalf of the

General Assembly, for his work and service as Convener of the Assembly Trustees.

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Social Care Council which was given in by the Rev Thomas Riddell, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

2. Commend the staff for their continued efforts throughout the past year in dealing with the challenges of an ongoing pandemic and give thanks for their dedicated service in Christ's name.
3. Note the financial impact of Covid-19 as it has affected occupancy, recruitment, service delivery and fundraising.
4. Thank all those who have supported CrossReach over the past year and encourage congregations to adopt CrossReach as a charity of choice for the next year and beyond so that services can be maintained and developed.
5. Commend the close collaboration between CrossReach and the Faith Impact Forum in responding to areas of concern to the Church as they impact on wider society and instruct the Faith Impact Forum to continue to work with CrossReach to make representation on issues of national importance including the proposed legislation on a National Care Service; the investment needed to support a net carbon zero target in the care sector; and the policy and funding framework required to tackle Scotland's high level of drugs related deaths.
6. Encourage the newly formed Presbyteries to recommit to the Presbytery Pledge at the earliest opportunity and consider how they might work more closely with CrossReach in their congregations and communities as they develop plans for the future.
7. Note the concerted efforts already made by CrossReach to deal with the challenges which pose a risk to future operations and endorse the priorities identified by the Board which will help set the conditions for consolidation and growth as part of a missional Church.
8. Welcome the investment being made by Scottish Government to ensure that a Living Wage can be paid to all staff within the regulated Adult Care Workforce; thank the Assembly Trustees for their continued commitment to tackling this area of gender inequality and social injustice and encourage the Assembly Trustees and CrossReach Board to continue to push for the necessary resources to ensure parity across the whole workforce.
9. Give thanks for the thousands of people who have engaged with CrossReach services over the last year and who have enriched the life of CrossReach by sharing their stories and situations; rejoice in the achievements of those who have worked so hard to overcome personal challenges; commit to hold all who are being supported through the services in prayer.

The Principal Clerk spoke from personal experience about the human and emotional cost to CrossReach staff resulting from their work, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. He also praised the care which CrossReach management exercise for their staff.

The Moderator thanked the Convener, the Rev Thomas Riddell, on behalf of the General Assembly, for his report and for the work and dedication of CrossReach staff, particularly over the past two years.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Guild which was given in by Mrs Margaret Muir, National Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Welcome the Guild's 135th anniversary and acknowledge the significant impact the Guild has had in congregations and in the wider world during that time.
3. Commend the Guild on its efforts to maintain contact with and involvement of its membership as they emerge from pandemic restrictions.
4. Encourage Presbyteries and Guilds Together Groups to explore ways in which they can work together to support the greater involvement of Guilds in the mission of the Church.
5. Commend the further exploration of hybrid methods of meeting to enable wider participation in the national decision-making of the Guild.
6. Celebrate the significant number of new members who have joined this year and welcome the establishment of two new Guild branches.
7. Welcome new branches where Guilds have come together to provide a vibrant, sustainable local group and commend this approach as a model for future development.
8. Congratulate the Guild on the work of its Project Partnership Scheme 2021-24 and recognise the important issues tackled and vital monies raised.

IONA COMMUNITY BOARD

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Iona Community Board which was given in by the Rev Tom Gordon, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Unlocked programme to congregations, ecumenical partners and other agencies as a model for supporting those in poverty, and call on local and national church leaders to resist those proposed increases in fuel and National Insurance Contributions which most affect those in poverty.
3. Urge congregations and all people of goodwill to remember the people of Israel / Palestine in their prayers and to press HM Government and MPs to persuade the international community and the Israeli Government in particular to bring about change in the pursuit of human rights, justice and peace for all in the Holy Land.
4. Call upon all people of goodwill to raise awareness of the historical legacy of slavery, and to support congregations and faith communities in their endeavours to research the historical legacy of slavery in their own areas, particularly in relation to local religious buildings.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.38pm until 2.00pm.

SESSION 13

GENERAL TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the General Trustees which, in the absence of the Pro-Tem Chair, was given in by Mr Grahame Lees, a Trustee.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and 2021 Accounts of the General Trustees.
2. Welcome progress on the Presbytery Mission Plan Act(Act VIII 2021).
3. Welcome:
 - (a) the decision to provide 50% of the cost of centrally employed Presbytery Buildings Officers for reformed Presbyteries for three years; and
 - (b) the appointments of Presbytery Buildings Officers in Fife and Clyde.
4. Remind Financial Boards of their duty to provide a habitable manse and to keep it in a good state of repair and decoration and remind Presbyteries of their oversight obligations in terms of Regulations VII 2007.
5. Welcome the proposed Consolidating Act for General Assembly 2023.
6. Note that the appointment of the Chair and the Vice-Chair has been delayed due to resignation of the Chair in March 2022.
7. Authorise payment of £1,900 to each of Mr Ian Townsend as the Chair and Rev Fiona Mathieson as the Vice-Chair for their services over the past year.
8. Note and endorse the position of the General Trustees in relation to ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government about the significant adverse impact on the Church of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (Register of Persons Holding Controlled Interest in Land) Regulations 2021.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. Instruct Congregations a) to provide a valid Energy Performance Certificate with the Manse Condition Schedule when this is submitted for inspection to Presbytery from December 31st 2022 and b) to ensure the Energy Performance Certificate Rating for the Manse is within Categories A –C by 31st December 2025 as a target date through carrying out any necessary improvements to the building or through the sale and purchase of an approved Manse by that date.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. Instruct the General Trustees and Faith Nurture Forum to work with Presbyteries to help them audit and assess the current stock of manses and other residential properties across the Church in such areas as energy efficiency, provision of services, maintenance to a good standard and future sustainability and to remind Presbyteries of their ongoing responsibility to ensure that where there

are concerns around the condition of a manse they should consider what action should be taken, which may include working with the congregation to upgrade or replace said manse.

It was moved and seconded (Rev Dr Scott Kirkland):

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. Pass an amendment to the Consolidated Fabric Fund Regulations (Regs VII 1995), paragraph C (1), to insert after the words “the income of the Fund” the words “(other than rental income derived from vacant congregational property)”.

The Moderator ruled that the motion (new section 5 (Kirkland)) was not in accordance with Standing

Order 56 and the General Assembly agreed to depart from the matter.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Safeguarding Committee which was given in by the Rev Adam Dillon, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Note the Safeguarding Service Annual Statistical Report and thank all Safeguarding Co-ordinators for their continued commitment to safeguarding in the Church.
3. Note the work being undertaken by the Safeguarding Committee to manage those who pose a risk in Church communities and thank congregational Safeguarding Panels for their work in this area.
4. Instruct Ministers (for this purpose to include parish ministers, Interim Ministers, Transition Ministers, Associate Ministers, auxiliary ministers, probationers, OLM, readers, locums, and Armed Forces chaplains), to undertake safeguarding training as prescribed by the Safeguarding Service.
5. Instruct Presbyteries to maintain a Presbytery Safeguarding Register and to ensure compliance with the recommended safeguarding training in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 1.
6. Note the change of title from Kirk Session Safeguarding Training to Trustee Safeguarding Training and instruct all active charity trustees to attend.
7. Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to ensure that all those doing regulated work (paid or voluntary) and charity trustees attend refresher Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role no less frequently than every five years.
8. Encourage congregations to mark ‘Safeguarding Sunday’ on Sunday 19th June 2022, or any other suitable Sunday in June.
9. Instruct Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to put in place a Whistleblowing Policy as soon as practicable.
10. Note the collaborative work with the Communications Department to bring an online Safeguarding Handbook to the Church of Scotland website.

11. Note the work of the Survivor Working Group.
12. Note the work to bring an online solution to SG7 and SG11.
13. Note the updated position in relation to the Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020.

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Legal Questions Committee.

The Deliverance as amended was agreed.

The General Assembly adjourned at 4.08pm to meet again in this Hall and online via video-conference tomorrow at 9.15am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video-conference
EDINBURGH, 25 May 2022, 4.08pm

Convened at Edinburgh, 26 May 2022

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video-conference using Zoom Meetings on the 26th day of May 2022, at 9.15 am.

SESSION 14

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Donald McCorkindale, Convener.

The Right Rev and the Rt Hon Lord Sentamu addressed the General Assembly and was thanked by the Moderator.

The Minutes of Sessions 7-10, being available in the Assembly Paper, were submitted and approved.

TRUSTEES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND HOUSING AND LOAN FUND FOR RETIRED MINISTERS AND WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS OF MINISTERS

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Trustees of the Church of Scotland Housing and Loan Fund which was given in by the Rev MaryAnn Rennie, Chair.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mrs Barbara Finlayson as a Trustee of the Fund.

The Moderator thanked the retiring Chair, Rev MaryAnn Rennie, on behalf of the General Assembly, for her work and service as Chair of the Housing and Loan Fund.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Nomination Committee which was given in by the Rev Julie Rennick, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. The Standing Committees and each of the Presbyteries are encouraged to invite members of Standing Committees to speak to Presbytery about the benefits of serving the wider Church and subsequently encouraged to generate nominations.

3. Make alterations to the Standing Committees of the General Assembly as set forth in the Report.
4. Appoint David Di Paola and John Wilson, both solicitors in the Law Dept, as Assessors in terms of the Discipline Act (Act I 2019).
5. Reappoint Roddy John MacLeod as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal.
6. Reappoint Ian Miller as a Convener of the Discipline Tribunal.
7. Reappoint Richard McFarlane as a Convener of the Judicial Commission.
8. Reappoint Morag Ross as a Convener of the Judicial Commission.
9. Appoint Kenneth Baldwin as Convener of the Audit Committee.
10. Appoint Scott Brown as Convener of the Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces Committee.
11. Appoint Ross Blackman as Convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee.

The General Assembly agreed that certain Standing Orders should be suspended and/or amended to allow the alterations to Standing Committees of the General Assembly set out in section 3, sections 5-8 and new section 12 of the Deliverance to be made: Theological Forum (Standing Order 118); Appointment to Legal Bodies (Standing Order 122); and special dispensation to allow the appointment proposed in the new section 12.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 3 of the proposed Deliverance:

Add at the end:

subject to the following further alterations:

Add:

Chaplains to HM Forces Committee

Vice-Convener Appointed Andrew Tait (London Crown Court)

Minister resigned Alen McCulloch May 2022

Member resigning Andrew Tait

Faith Impact Forum

Minister resigned Peter Nimmo Apr 2022

Member Appointed Tom Burnham Apr 2022 (Earlston)

Appointment to Legal Bodies

- Mission Plan Review Group

Member Appointed David Watt (Airdrie New Wellwynd)

Member Appointed Grant Gordon (Edinburgh: Currie)

Theological Forum

Member Appointed Pamela Kennedy (Peebles St Andrew's Leckie)

Section 3 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:

Add a new section 12:

12. Approve the appointment of the Rev Dr Karen Campbell as a member of the Faith Nurture Forum until the General Assembly of 2023.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Selection Committee which was given in by the Rev Eleanor McMahon, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint the following three persons to serve in terms of the group appointed under the new section 3 of the Supplementary Report of the Faith Nurture Forum:

Rev Richard Baxter, Transition Minister (Glasgow: Wellington)

Ms Sheena MacFarlane OBE, Elder (Port Glasgow: New)

Mr David Watt, Elder (Airdrie: New Wellwynd)

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.34am until 10.59am.

DECEASED MINISTERS, MISSIONARIES AND DEACONS

The General Assembly called for the Report anent Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons, which was given in by The Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Convener, as follows:

DATE OF DEATH

2020

July	14	Rev Prof Douglas William (Bill) David Shaw, formerly Principal of St Mary's College, St Andrews
December	1	Rev Eric John Wright, formerly of Glasgow: St George's-Tron as Associate Minister

2021

May	29	Rev David James Hebenton, formerly of Ayton & Burnmouth linked with Grantshouse Houndwood & Reston
June	1	Rev William Stuart Dunn, formerly of Motherwell: Crosshill
	12	Rev William Abernethy, formerly of Glenrothes: St Margaret's
	17	Rev John Minto Lloyd, formerly of Glasgow: Croftfoot
July	17	Rev John William Stirling Brown, formerly of Cromar
	22	Rev Robert Stewart Hynd, formerly Senior Chaplain, Army
August	6	Rev James Sharp, latterly Ordained Local Ministry in the International Presbytery
	14	Rev Margaret Alison Muir, formerly of Glencaple linked with Lowther
	24	Rev Stephen Palit, formerly of Dundonnell
September	10	Rev Ewen Sinclair Nicoll, formerly of Arrochar linked with Luss
	11	Rev Kenneth Boath Wood Warner, formerly of Halkirk & Westerdale
	30	Rev Catherine McLaughlin, formerly of Ordained Local Ministry at Glasgow: Kelvinbridge

October	3	Rev James Mitchell Annand, formerly of Lockerbie: Dryfesdale
	8	Miss Marion Nelson Conacher, formerly Missionary in Tilda, India
	10	Rev William Welsh Halliday Baird formerly of Patna linked with Waterside & Lethanhill
	15	Rev John William Morrison Cameron, formerly of Edinburgh: Liberton
	26	Rev John Deas Whiteford, formerly of Newlands: South
November	27	Rev Garden William Murray Ritchie, formerly of Ardersier linked with Petty
December	11	Rev William Grainger Allan, formerly of Kirkcudbright: St Cuthbert's
	12	Miss Sheila Alice Moyes DCS, formerly General Secretary, Scottish Council, YWCA
	21	Rev George Strachan Cowie, latterly Presbytery Clerk of Glasgow
	31	Rev Thomas Legerwood Clark, formerly of Orphir linked with Stenness

2022

January	8	Rev William Shackleton, formerly of Greenock: Wellpark West
	2	Dr Peter Ford Green, formerly of Foreign Mission: Kenya
	9	Rev Professor John Frederick Adam Sawyer, formerly Professor, Religious Studies, Lancaster University
	15	Very Rev Dr John Hedley McIndoe, formerly of London: St Columba's linked with Newcastle: St Andrew's
	15	Rev Ronald Stanley Seaman, formerly of Dornock
	15	Rev David James Ferguson, formerly of Bellie linked with Speymouth
	18	Rev Hamish Kirkpatrick Fleming, formerly of Banchory: Ternan East
	18	Rev Dr Henry Norwell Chisholm, formerly of Grand Bahama with Overseas Council
	19	Rev Alexander Whiteford, formerly of Ardersier linked with Petty
	21	Dr Derek Gavin Doyle, formerly Foreign Missions: South Africa
	25	Rev James Henry Dunn Craig Drysdale, formerly of Blackbraes and Shieldhill
	27	Rev Ian Walker, formerly of Rutherglen: Wardlawhill
	31	Miss Helen Thom DCS, formerly of Tynecastle School, Edinburgh
February	1	Rev Jeffrey Maurice Mead, formerly of Kirkiner linked with Mochrum linked with Sorbie
	5	Rev Laurie Young Gordon, formerly of Aberdeen: John Knox
	7	Rev William Douglas Hamilton, formerly of Greenock: Westburn

- 14 Rev Robert Farrell Duncan, formerly of Lochgelly: St Andrew's
- 15 Rev Alexander Grainger Stoddart formerly of Meldrum and Bourtie
- 22 Mr Robert Trimble DCS, formerly of Kirkcaldy: Templehall
- 23 Rev Thomas Pryde Heggie, formerly of Nairn: Old
- 28 Rev James Alexander Rettie, formerly of Melness & Tongue
- March 4 Rev Dr John Urquhart Cameron, formerly of Dundee: Broughty Ferry St Stephen's and West
- 5 Rev Malcolm MacLeod, formerly of Rutherglen: Old
- 11 Rev Dr Thomas Gracie Macfarlane, formerly of Glasgow: South Shawlands
- 22 Rev Peter Kenneth Elston, formerly of Dalgety
- 28 Rev Peter Mitchell Gordon, formerly of Airdrie: West
- April 5 Rev Isabel Helen Whyte, formerly Chaplain at Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline
- 17 Rev Duncan James McGregor, formerly of Channelkirk linked with Lauder Old
- 20 Mrs Agnes Tait DCS, formerly of East Kilbride: Greenhills and East Kilbride: Moncrieff
- May 5 Rev Eric Gordon Milton, formerly of Blairdaff linked with Chapel of Garioch
- 11 Rev Moira Grace MacCormick, formerly of Buchlyvie linked with Gartmore
- 11 Rev James Forsyth, formerly of Fearn Abbey and Nigg: Chapelhill

The General Assembly, upstanding, were led in prayer by the Lord Wallace of Tankerness.

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance in the print:

Add a new section 9 and renumber:

9. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Legal Questions Committee jointly to determine appropriate arrangements for the meeting of the General Assembly from Saturday 20 May 2023, to be held in Edinburgh in person and with online participation.

It was moved and seconded as a countermotion to the proposed new section 9:

Add a new section 9 and renumber:

9. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee and the Legal Questions Committee jointly to conduct a critical review of the hybrid arrangements for the 2022 General Assembly and report to the General Assembly of 2023, which will meet in person only in Edinburgh on Saturday 20 May 2023.

On a vote being taken there voted For the motion 344 and For the counter-motion 30 and the motion carried.

The new section 9 was then agreed.

It was agreed to treat the motion as an additional section of Deliverance in the Report of the Assembly Business Committee.

Rev Michael Goss requested that thanks be recorded to the Rev Donald McCorkindale, members of the Assembly Business Committee and to the technical teams for their hard work in relation to the running of this year's General Assembly.

The General Assembly passed an Act appointing the next General Assembly to meet on Saturday 20 May 2023.

The General Assembly closed its session with prayer at 12.02pm, subject to intimating that it will meet again in this Hall and online via video-conference this afternoon at 2.00pm.

SESSION 15

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

DECEASED MINISTERS, MISSIONARIES AND DEACONS

The Report anent Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons was given in again by The Lord Wallace of Tankerness, Convener, to ensure that all who wished to hear it had that opportunity.

INTRODUCTION OF NEXT PRINCIPAL CLERK

The next Principal Clerk, the Rev Fiona E Smith, was introduced and she took the oath de fideli. The Moderator offered prayers for Mrs Smith and her ministry.

The Moderator then offered thanks for the work of the outgoing Principal Clerk, the Rev Dr George J Whyte, who addressed the Assembly and was warmly applauded.

The Minutes of Sederunts not yet submitted were held as read and approved.

REPORT ON PRINTING OF ACTS

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Commissions as to the Printing of the Acts of the General Assembly which was given in by the Principal Clerk, and it was remitted to the Committee on Commissions under Standing Order 26 to revise and print the Acts.

PROTESTATIONS

Protestations were called for but none was taken.

The Clerks were appointed a Committee to revise the Minutes.

The General Assembly passed an Act appointing the Commission of Assembly in terms of Act VI 1997.

The following people were presented to the General Assembly:

GENERAL TRUSTEES

New Staff Members:

David Gillan, Presbytery Buildings Officer, Presbytery of Fife
Jamie McNamara, Presbytery Buildings Officer, Presbytery of Clyde

IT DEPARTMENT

New Staff Member:

Richard MacLennan, Head of IT

LAW DEPARTMENT

New Staff Members:

Helen Lapinskie, Senior Administrator

John Wilson, Solicitor

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

New Staff Members:

Suzanne Nolte, Payroll and Accounting Manager

Katherine Southern, Stewardship Consultant

Retiring Staff Member:

Margot Robertson, Stewardship Consultant

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD

Retiring Staff Member:

Iain Whyte, General Secretary

FAITH NURTURE FORUM

Ministers recently inducted and introduced to their first charge or appointment:

Rev Dr Amy Bender, Keith: North Newmill Boharn & Rothiemay

Rev Dr Urzula Glienecke, Associate Chaplain at Edinburgh University

Rev Dewald Louw, Alves & Burghead linked with Kinloss & Findhorn

Rev Timothy Mineard, Barrhead: St Andrews

Rev Sarah Smith, Stonehaven: Carronside

Rev Gillian Rooney Glasgow: Orchardhill

Recently Appointed Ministries Development Staff:

Mrs Shona Barakat, Montrose: Old & St Andrew's

Mrs Sandra Davie, Glenrothes: St Margaret's

Mrs Susan Graham, Glasgow: Sherbrooke Mossbank

Mrs Susan Johnstone, Glasgow: Castlemilk

Mrs Catriona Milligan, Glasgow: Gorbals

Ordained Local Ministers

Rev David Galbraith, Maryculter Trinity

Rev Heather Gourlay, Rural Ministry in Angus Presbytery

Rev Nikki Kirkland, Edinburgh: St Nicholas Sighthill

Recently Retired Ministers:

Rev John Brewster, East Kilbride: Greenhills

Rev Klaus O F Buwert, Muthill l/w Trinity Gask & Kinkell

Rev John A Cowie, Edinburgh: Stockbridge

Rev Howard R Hudson, Glasgow: Bridgeton St Francis in the East

Rev A Scott Marshall, Abercorn l/w Pardovan Kingscavil & Winchburgh

Very Rev Dr Angus Morrison, Orwell & Portmoak

Rev John M Povey, Kirk of Calder

Rev A Malcolm Ramsay, Edinburgh: Willowbrae as

Transition Minister

Rev Eileen M Ross, Linwood

Rev Margaret D J Steele, Ashkirk l/w Selkirk

Recently Retired Ministries Development Staff:

Rev Dorothy Anderson, Associate, Dunblane Cathedral

Recently Retired Deacon

Miss Morag Crawford DCS, Fife: Rosyth

Mrs Jean Porter DCS, Stirling: St Mark's

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

New Staff Members:

Ruth Cardwell Moore, Head of HR Operations

Keeley Craw, Managing Co-ordinator – East Region

Caroline Ewen, Unit Manager – Belfield

Rhona Gardiner, Head of Service – North Region

Jennifer Gibson, Head of Service – Resourcing and Efficiency

Samantha Stephenson, Finance Manager

Gordon Thomson, Quality Compliance HR Business Partner

Fiona Watson, Finance Business Partner

Retiring Staff Members:

Janis Grubb, Unit Manager – Belfield

Mari Rennie, HR Director

Anne Williams, Support Assistant

The Moderator addressed all those who had been presented to the General Assembly, conveying the good wishes of the Assembly to them.

The Moderator addressed the General Assembly.

His Grace addressed the General Assembly and concluded with these words: "Right Reverend and well-beloved, your labours are now at an end and now, in the Queen's name, I bid you farewell".

A verse of the National Anthem was sung.

The Moderator and members of the General Assembly having bowed to His Grace, the Moderator, turning to the General Assembly, said "Right Reverend: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, sole King and Head of the Church, I now dissolve this General Assembly, and appoint the next General Assembly to be held at Edinburgh on the 20th day of May 2023."

The members of the General Assembly, prior to lining the Quadrangle of the College as His Grace passed from the Assembly Hall, concluded their Session at 3.27pm with the Benediction pronounced by the Moderator.

ASSEMBLY HALL, EDINBURGH
and online via video-conference
26 May 2022, 3.27pm

SECTION C – OVERTURES FROM PRESBYTERIES

Overtures from Presbyteries

- 37/1.....Overture to Amend the International Presbytery Act 2016 (ACT II 2016) (as amended)
- 37/4.....Overture Anent the Union of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles
- 37/5.....Overture Anent the Union of the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Perth, Dunkeld & Meigle and Stirling
- 37/6.....Overture Anent the Union of the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk
- 37/7.....Overture Anent the Union of the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and Moray
- 37/8.....Overture from the Presbytery of Sutherland as to the allocation of ministry posts

SECTION C – OVERTURES FROM PRESBYTERIES

Overture

OVERTURE TO AMEND THE INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERY ACT 2016 (ACT II 2016) (AS AMENDED)

From the Presbytery of International Charges

Whereas:

1. It has become evident that certain provisions of The International Presbytery Act 2016 (Act II 2016) (as amended) [hereinafter referred to as 'the Act'] require amendment and that certain new provisions are required to ensure the proper functioning of the Presbytery of International Charges [hereinafter referred to as 'the Presbytery'].
2. The Presbytery has consequently been in discussion with the relevant central bodies of the Church regarding the following main areas of the Act that require amendment:
 - (a) the basis on which ministers are appointed to Charges in the Presbytery; and
 - (b) vacancy procedures in the Presbytery.
3. With regard to the basis on which ministers are appointed, it should be noted that the concept of ministers being "holders of an office" as understood in Scotland has no meaning in most of the legal jurisdictions in the Presbytery and that ministers are therefore required to have contracts of employment. The arrangements contained in s.2 of the draft Act in the Appendix reflect the discussions had with the Office of the General Assembly and the Legal Questions Committee and others on this matter.
4. With regard to vacancy procedures, it has been agreed in discussions with the Office of the General Assembly and the Legal Questions Committee and others that a new structure is required in the Presbytery to take account of the responsibility of congregations to provide for the funding of ministry costs and to ensure procedures that broadly reflect the practice in Scotland but which take account of the different realities of the Presbytery. The relevant procedures are set out in Schedule 5 in the draft Act in the Appendix.

It is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of International Charges to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, that the General Assembly approve the proposed amending Act set out in the Appendix.

Or to do otherwise as to your Venerable Court may seem good.

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass the Act amending The International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016), as amended, as set out in the Appendix.

Appendix

ACT AMENDING THE INTERNATIONAL PRESBYTERY ACT (ACT II 2016) (AS AMENDED)

Edinburgh, [] May 2022, Session []

The General Assembly hereby enact and ordain that The International Presbytery Act (Act II 2016), as amended, shall be further amended as follows:

1. By deleting in Schedule 1 to the Act the Charge of Costa del Sol.
2. In Schedule 2 of the Act:
 - (a) by inserting a new section 1 as follows and renumbering the following paragraphs:

"1. Appointments to Charges

 - (1) As the concept of "holder of an office" is not one recognised in most jurisdictions in the Presbytery, ministers elected to a Charge shall, while continuing to be holders of an office in Church law, enter into a contract of employment with the Kirk Session in such form as may be required in the relevant legal jurisdiction. It shall be a term of all such contracts that, where the minister is a minister of the Church of Scotland, he or she must retain his or her status as a minister of the Church of Scotland and that, where the minister is the holder of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility under s.12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022), he or she must both retain their status as a minister of their denomination of origin and not have their Restricted Certificate of Eligibility withdrawn by the Church of Scotland.
 - (2) For the avoidance of doubt, all ministers in Charges remain subject to the discipline of Presbytery and the General Assembly and neither the congregation nor the Kirk Session has any power to dismiss the minister save that the Kirk Session shall be required by the Presbytery to terminate a minister's contract of employment where the minister no longer retains his or her status as a minister of the Church of Scotland or in his or her denomination of origin, or where the minister has been introduced with a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility and this is withdrawn by the Church of Scotland; a Kirk Session may also be required by the Presbytery to terminate a minister's contract of employment in terms of paragraph 4 of this Schedule 2."
 - (b) by inserting in what is currently paragraph 1.1 after the words "Church of Scotland" the following:

"and holders of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility under section 12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022)."

- (c) by deleting in the first sentences of what are currently paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 the word “inducted” and replacing it with the word “introduced”.

- (d) By inserting a new paragraph 4 as follows:

“4. Termination of employment

If at any time a Kirk Session determines that it will be unable to fulfil the financial commitments it made at the time of introduction regarding payment of the costs of ministry for more than 3 months ahead, it will notify the Presbytery Clerk and the appointment of the minister shall be terminated by the Kirk Session if the Presbytery so instructs, and the Presbytery shall bear the cost of (i) any statutory compensation payable to the minister, (ii) up to a further 3 months’ salary from the date of termination, (iii) the reasonable cost of travel back to Scotland (or other country from which the minister came on taking up the appointment) for the minister and family residing with him or her, and (iv) removal expenses (back to Scotland or the country from which the minister came) for furniture and personal effects up to a maximum of 25 cubic metres.”

- 3. By inserting a new Schedule 5 as follows:

“SCHEDULE 5

Vacancy Procedures

On the occurrence of a vacancy or prospective vacancy in any Charge in the Presbytery, the provisions of the Vacancy Procedure Act (Act VIII 2003 as amended) (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Act’) shall apply only in so far as not inconsistent with the following provisions, which following provisions shall in that event prevail:

1. Vacancy Procedure Committee

As soon as the Vacancy Procedure Committee is aware of a vacancy or prospective vacancy, it shall:

- a) determine the release of the minister and the date on which the Charge will become vacant (in terms of s.4 of the Act);
- b) appoint an Interim Moderator for the Charge;
- c) appoint an Advisory Committee; and
- d) issue to the Kirk Session (or, where there is a financial board, to that board) of the vacant congregation, for completion and return, a Vacancy Schedule in a form specific to the Presbytery to set out (i) the details of congregational income, (ii) the proposed arrangements for payment of ministerial costs and expenses, and (iii) the costs and arrangements for the provision of a manse. The provisions of s.10(1) and (2) of the Act shall not apply.

2. Effective Date of Decisions of the Vacancy Procedure Committee

The Presbytery Clerk shall issue notice of the decisions of the Vacancy Procedure Committee in terms of Sch. A of the Act to the congregation and by email to all members of Presbytery, including the provision that these decisions shall become effective 7 days after notice is given, unless the Clerk receives valid notice under s.2(2) of the Act.

3. Vacancy Schedule

The Kirk Session or financial board of the vacant Charge must complete and return the following items to the Presbytery Clerk: (i) the Vacancy Schedule in the form provided by Presbytery, (ii) an Extract Minute of the Kirk Session “making a commitment fully and adequately to financially support the ministry” in the Charge and (iii) a duly completed Manse Condition Schedule.

4. Manse

Following receipt of the completed Manse Condition Schedule, the Fabric Committee of Presbytery shall arrange for the inspection of the manse and shall report to the Vacancy Procedure Committee on what action (if any) requires to be undertaken by the congregation before a date can be set for any introduction of the minister. The decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee on considering that report will be advised to the Kirk Session, along with an instruction to carry out whatever works are required.

5. Permission to Call

- (1) On the Vacancy Procedure Committee being satisfied with the completed Vacancy Schedule, Extract Minute and Manse Condition Schedule and being satisfied that the Charge has no current or accumulated shortfalls in its contributions to central funds, that the Charge can pay the costs of a minister in terms of the Vacancy Schedule and that the provisions of s.5 of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) are complied with, it shall consider whether it may give permission to call a minister in terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan approved under Act VIII 2021.
- (2) Any decision to grant permission to call shall be subject to the provisions of s.2 of the Act. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of section 8 of the Act do not apply.

6. Profile

The Kirk Session of the vacant congregation in preparing a draft Profile (once permission to call has been granted) shall include in it details from the Vacancy Schedule, including particularly details of salary level and ministry costs and the congregation’s income, and shall also make reference to the Presbytery’s Guidance for Ministers Taking Up or Demitting a Charge.

7. Eligibility for Election

For Charges in the Presbytery, section 18 of the Act shall include the holder of a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility in terms of section 12(c) of the Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act (Act ZZ 2022).

8. Sustaining the Call

Once the Presbytery Clerk has received the Call and other required documents (in terms of s.29 of the Act), along with one of the following:

- (i) a Certificate of the minister’s registration under Category O on the Register of Ministry, or
- (ii) a valid certificate of completion of training issued by the Faith Nurture Forum (an Exit Certificate) which has not expired; or
- (iii) confirmation from the Faith Nurture Forum that the minister has been granted a Restricted Certificate of Eligibility in respect of the Charge

the Vacancy Procedure Committee will consider sustaining the Call and, provided (a) any works required to the manse have been satisfactorily completed and (b) the following Safeguarding requirements have been met, determine arrangements for the minister's introduction. No call can be sustained until the Presbytery receives evidence of the minister's membership of the PVG Scheme as defined in the Safeguarding Act (Act XVI 2018), or, in the case of a minister who is not a minister of the Church of Scotland, of reasonably equivalent clearance as required by the Safeguarding Service and appropriate to the jurisdictions both where the minister came from and will serve.

9. Guidelines

The Presbytery shall approve Supplementary Guidelines to those referred to in section 34 of the Act to provide details of the vacancy procedures specific to Charges in the Presbytery, in conformity with the provisions of this Schedule 5.

10. Notices

Notices may be given by pulpit intimation or by electronic means or by a combination of these methods."

Overture**OVERTURE ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF DUNS, JEDBURGH, LOTHIAN, AND MELROSE & PEEBLES****From the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles**

Whereas the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles have conferred together, and have each come to the view that it is necessary for the effective good government of the Church that they have each other's mutual support and encouragement in a united Presbytery and have agreed the Basis of Union set out in the Appendix to this Overture.

It is humbly overtured by the Reverend the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles to the Venerable the General Assembly to enact and ordain as follows:-

ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF DUNS, JEDBURGH, LOTHIAN, AND MELROSE & PEEBLES

Edinburgh, XX May 2022, Sess. XX

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January, 2023 the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, known as 'Presbytery of Lothian and Borders'.
3. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery.
4. All Presbytery elders of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles, whether commissioned by Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall be members of the Lothian and Borders Presbytery.
5. The Presbytery shall be a charity registered with OSCR and shall retain the existing Charity Number of the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Jedburgh, Scottish Charity Number SC040976.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall belong to the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders. Any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining legal advice on any question as may arise.

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles to form the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.

Appendix**BASIS AND PLAN OF UNION OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PRESBYTERY OF LOTHIAN AND BORDERS**

1. The united Presbytery to be created by uniting the existing Presbyteries of Duns, Jedburgh, Lothian, and Melrose & Peebles, the new Presbytery to comprise the charges as at present or as shall be in place on 31 December 2022.
2. The united Presbytery to be called the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Lothian and Borders, known as the 'Presbytery of Lothian and Borders'
3. The united Presbytery will meet for its first meeting on Saturday, 21st January 2023, in a venue to be confirmed. At this meeting:-
 - a. The Moderator will be appointed, and it will be agreed how long they will serve.
 - b. A clerk will be appointed.
 - c. The pattern of meetings will be agreed.
 - d. The standing orders for the united Presbytery will be approved.
 - e. The committee structure will be agreed.
4. A transition group will meet between May 2022 and the first meeting, January 2023, to finalise the arrangements for the initial structure, including the membership of the committees of the united Presbytery.
5. The united Presbytery may establish office space.
6. The united Presbytery may appoint additional staff, such as mission advisor or administrator.
7. The united Presbytery may establish Mission Areas and such local groups as may be determined by the new Presbytery.

Overture**OVERTURE ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ANGUS, DUNDEE, DUNKELD & MEIGLE, PERTH, AND STIRLING****From the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling**

Whereas the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling have conferred together, and have each come to the view that it is necessary for the effective good government of the Church that they have each other's mutual support and encouragement in a united Presbytery and have agreed the Basis of Union set out in the Appendix to this Overture at meetings of the Presbyteries on the fifteenth day of March 2022:

It is humbly overtured by the Reverend the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling to the Venerable the General Assembly to enact and ordain as follows:-

ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ANGUS, DUNDEE, DUNKELD & MEIGLE, PERTH, AND STIRLING

Edinburgh, XX May 2022, Sess. XX

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January 2023 the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Presbytery of Perth.
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC014528 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of the Presbytery of Perth.
4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth and Stirling in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Presbytery of Perth.
5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by a Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall, so long as their commission or appointment runs, be members of the Presbytery of Perth.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling shall belong to the Presbytery of Perth. Any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to the obtaining of legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise.

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth and Stirling to form the Presbytery of Perth as set out in the Overture received from the Presbyteries.

Appendix**BASIS AND PLAN OF UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ANGUS, DUNDEE, DUNKELD & MEIGLE, PERTH, AND STIRLING**

1. The united Presbytery will be created by uniting the existing Presbyteries of Angus, Dundee, Dunkeld & Meigle, Perth, and Stirling, the new Presbytery to comprise the charges as at present or as shall be in place on 31 December 2022.
2. The united Presbytery will be called the Presbytery of Perth.
3. The united Presbytery will meet for its first meeting in early 2023, on a date to be agreed and in a venue to be determined, when the normal pattern of meetings shall be decided.
4. The united Presbytery will appoint a Moderator to serve from 1 January 2023 until 31 December 2023.
5. The united Presbytery will establish a Presbytery Office with a full time Clerk, part time Depute Clerk and appropriate administrative assistance, together with a Buildings Support Officer, Finance Officer and Mission Co-ordinator, provided such staffing is affordable. The Clerk and Buildings Support Officer will be appointed prior to the commencement of the new Presbytery, to enable arrangements to be in place for the united Presbytery to commence its work on 1 January 2023.
6. The Standing Orders for the united Presbytery shall be approved by the united Presbytery at its first meeting.
7. The united Presbytery will establish committees with remits and appropriate delegation of powers of decision making, to enable a structure which allows for the minimisation of bureaucracy and duplication of effort. In addition, Mission Districts will be established as groupings of local congregations, to provide a means of assisting and encouraging them in implementing the Five Marks of Mission and of working together as appropriate.

Overture**OVERTURE ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE AND FALKIRK****From the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk**

Whereas the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk have conferred together, and have each come to the view that it is necessary for the effective good government of the Church that they have each other's mutual support and encouragement in a united Presbytery and have agreed the Basis of Union set out in the Appendix to this Overture at a meeting of the Presbytery of Falkirk on the seventh day of December 2021 and the Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale on the nineteenth day of February 2022:

It is humbly overtured by the Reverend the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk to the Venerable the General Assembly to enact and ordain as follows:-

ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE AND FALKIRK

Edinburgh, XX May 2022, Sess. XX

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1st June 2022 the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be the Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale Church of Scotland', known as 'Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery' or 'Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale'
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC048680 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale Church of Scotland.
4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk in terms of Act III 2000 (as amended) shall be members of the Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery.
5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by Kirk Session or appointed by the Presbytery, shall so long as their commission or appointment run be members of the Forth Valley & Clydesdale Presbytery.
6. All property or funds belonging to or held on behalf of the Presbytery of Forth Valley & Clydesdale or the Presbytery of Falkirk shall belong to the Forth Valley & Clydesdale Presbytery. Any trust or other special funds held by either Presbytery shall, from the date of the Union, be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining of legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Note that subsequent to the General Assembly passing of Act 1, 2021 the Presbyteries of Hamilton and Lanark voted to amend the name of the united Presbytery in both the Act and Basis and Plan of Union from the 'Presbytery of Lanarkshire' to the 'Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale'.
3. Pass an Act anent the union of the Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk, as set out in the Overture.

Appendix**BASIS AND PLAN OF UNION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF FORTH VALLEY & CLYDESDALE AND FALKIRK**

1. The united Presbytery to be created by uniting the existing Presbyteries of Forth Valley & Clydesdale and Falkirk, the new Presbytery to comprise the ninety-nine charges as at present or as shall be in place on 31 May 2022.
 2. The united Presbytery to be called the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale Church of Scotland', known as 'Forth Valley and Clydesdale Presbytery' or 'Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale'
 3. The united Presbytery to meet for its first meeting in Motherwell on 18 June 2022.
 4. The Moderator of the united Presbytery shall be the Co-Moderators of the existing Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale and will serve until September 2023.
 5. The united Presbytery to continue with a Presbytery Office and a full time Clerk and appropriate administrative assistance along with other staffing which may be appropriate and affordable.
 6. The Standing Orders for the united Presbytery shall be the Standing Orders approved by both Presbyteries on 19 February 2022, or as subsequently amended.
 7. The united Presbytery to establish a structure that commits to a principle of subsidiarity and/ or delegation that allows discussions to take place in the most effective forum.
 8. The objective of the united Presbytery shall be *Supporting congregations to share the Good News of Jesus Christ through working with each other, working for each other and being with each other.*
 - *We work with each other by providing resources, knowledge and training, based on learning and receiving from each other and also being accountable to each other.*
 - *We work for each other by doing the things Presbytery can do in order to free up congregations to do what they are energised to do.*
 - *Being with each other means knowing each other, listening to each other, learning from each other and supporting each other collaboratively.*
- We encourage and support congregations to provide:*
- *Opportunities for worship, fellowship, the teaching of the Christian faith, the enriching of community life, ensuring that the views of the local Church are heard on matters of wider concern;*
 - *Pastoral care, advice and support to people in each parish.*

Overture**OVERTURE ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ABERDEEN & SHETLAND, BUCHAN, GORDON, KINCARDINE & DEESIDE, ORKNEY AND MORAY****From the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Gordon, Buchan, Kincardine & Deeside, Orkney and Moray**

Whereas the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney have conferred together, and have each come to the view that it is necessary for the effective good government of the Church that they have each other's mutual support and encouragement in a united Presbytery and have agreed the Basis of Union set out in the Appendix to this Overture at meetings of the Presbyteries on First and Ninth February and First March all 2022:

It is humbly overtured by the Reverend the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney to the Venerable the General Assembly to enact and ordain in terms of the Act appended to this Overture.

Proposed Deliverance**The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Pass an Act uniting the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney to form The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles as set out in the Appendix.

Appendix**ACT ANENT THE UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ABERDEEN & SHETLAND, BUCHAN, GORDON, KINCARDINE & DEESIDE, MORAY AND ORKNEY**

Edinburgh, XX May 2022, Sess. XX

Notwithstanding the terms of Act II 1975, by which the present overall Presbytery structure of the Church was established, and following the decision of the General Assembly of 2019 to reform the number of Presbyteries, the General Assembly in the exercise of power to readjust the said structure as may be required from time to time enact and ordain that:-

1. With effect from 1 January 2023 the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall be united in terms of the Basis of Union agreed by them all, which Basis of Union shall come into effect from the date of the passing of this Act.
2. The name of the united Presbytery shall be The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles Church of Scotland, known as The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.
3. The Scottish Charity Number SC013064 shall be retained as the Scottish Charity Number of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles Church of Scotland.
4. All ministers and deacons having seats in the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney in terms of Act III 2000 (as Amended) shall be members of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.

5. All Presbytery elders, whether commissioned by a Kirk Session or appointed by Presbytery shall, so long as their commission or appointment runs, be members of The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles.
6. All property or funds belonging to the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall belong to the Presbytery of The North East and the Northern Isles. From the date of union, any trust or other special funds held by any of the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall be dealt with in such a way as is competent and as may be agreed to by the united Presbytery, subject to obtaining legal advice on any question of difficulty which may arise.

BASIS OF UNION OF THE PRESBYTERIES OF ABERDEEN & SHETLAND, BUCHAN, GORDON, KINCARDINE & DEESIDE, MORAY AND ORKNEY

1. The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles shall initially comprise the constituent charges of the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney as existing as at 31 December 2022.
2. The Presbytery shall meet for its first meeting on Tuesday Tenth January 2023 (or on such other date as the Presbytery may decide), in an on-line format, when the normal pattern of meetings shall be set out in the Standing Orders of the Presbytery.
3. Prior to 31 December 2022 the Presbyteries of Aberdeen & Shetland, Buchan, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside, Moray and Orkney shall on the nomination of the North East and Northern Isles Steering Group and the decision of all of the Presbyteries elect a Moderator to serve The Presbytery of the North East and the Northern Isles, and as its first act at its first meeting, the Presbytery shall install the Moderator elect as Moderator of the Presbytery. The Moderator so installed shall serve as Moderator until 30 June 2024. The period of service of succeeding Moderators shall be set out in the Standing Orders of the Presbytery.
4. The Presbytery shall appoint a full time Clerk and shall make appropriate administrative and staffing arrangements.
5. The Standing Orders for the Presbytery shall be approved at the first meeting of the Presbytery.

Overture

OVERTURE AS TO THE ALLOCATION OF MINISTRY POSTS

From the Presbytery of Sutherland

Whereas:

1. Background

1.1 The General Assembly of 2021 agreed:

Assembly Trustees: *Note the work done in projecting both the future availability and affordability of ministries across the Church of Scotland and set as a realistic aim that Presbyteries should seek to implement by 2025 Presbytery Plans based around 600 fulltime equivalent ministries and a target of no more than 60 further charges vacant at any one time.*

Faith Nurture Forum (FNF): *Agree the number of ministry posts allocated to each Presbytery set out in Appendix 4 and instruct that this be the figure used in the forming of any Presbytery Mission Plan.*

2. The Presbytery

2.1 The geography of Sutherland is vast, over 2000sq miles including some of the most remote areas in mainland Scotland (5.3 times the size of Orkney). Sutherland stretches north from Dornoch in the east, sharing a boundary with Caithness, and in the west stretches from Lochinver north to Durness and Cape Wrath. Sutherland has a total population of around 13,000. The population may be in some central areas the size of a large urban parish however rural/remote ministry cannot be considered in the same context or culture. *Rural churches and rural communities are different from those elsewhere. small populations, absence of public services, and travel distances and times all make a difference.* (Resourcing Rural Ministry: Simon Martin).

2.2 There are 13 congregations with extensive mileage to cover pastorally for example the nearest crematorium or hospital is on average a 4–6-hour return journey and in some parishes there are journeys of over 2 hours return between church buildings. A rural ministry in Sutherland has historically had much greater mileage, where travel costs are high. With fewer ministry posts, the cost and driving time for ministry across Presbytery would excessively increase and so too the increased risk of incident/accident during remote rural travel.

2.3 There are poor transport links and reduced internet coverage, both of which lead to increased isolation. There is a majority of single track roads which become congested during the Tourism season from March until October (294,000 visitors: North Coast 500 Economic baseline study 2017). Unlike urban communities where transport services are readily available, any reduction in ministry will impact on missional outreach, the number of services that can be held and deprive many faithful elderly church members who are not computer literate or have poor or no internet access from gaining inclusion to **any** worshipping Christian community and to regular Christian fellowship.

2.4 The main employment for the rural population in Sutherland is of increased Tourism, Fishing and Farming/Crofting. The Presbytery are aware of the pastoral and missional needs in these areas and the need for an **increased** ministry that is pioneering although some of which has already been initiated.

3. The Mission and The Ministry

3.1 As a Presbytery we firmly believe the ministry and mission of the Gospel is relational: to Love God and to

love one another. The Presbytery of Sutherland's efforts to achieve the missional aims of the Faith Action Plan are to establish new worshipping communities from crofters to campers, to engage with the under forties, to reach, teach and baptise. We are deeply concerned this will be unreachable with the reduction to ministry as proposed.

3.2 The Presbytery at present has an allocation of 7 fulltime ministry posts of word and sacrament. The present allocation still does not fully cover the needs of the parishes and congregations. There are presently 2 additional parishes where ministry is covered by an OLM and a Locum.

3.3 Presbytery has considered many configurations of the allocated 4 fulltime equivalent ministry posts. Due thought was given to creating part-time posts. There are continued difficulties of filling part-time ministry posts in the area due to an increased cost of living in food and fuel (there is no supermarket on the North Coast) and lack of accommodation, meaning that a person in a part-time post would be unable to fund themselves and their calling to ministry. Sutherland Presbytery alongside many other rural/remote presbyteries continues to have the need / permission to offer an increased PayScale incentive for newly ordained in rural ministry.

3.4 The Presbytery recognise the need for a ministry reduction as agreed by the General Assembly of 2021 and believe that an effective mission plan would be possible with six posts but not with four. The proposed reduction of three of the existing fulltime ordained posts will reduce the Christian witness in Sutherland especially where other denominations are already stepping back from the area. The reduction in ministry time would also reduce the perception of our Church's value and life as it would cease newly launched initiatives within the rural culture and context in the life, faith and industry of Sutherland, initiatives that are already beginning to deliver on these mission objectives.

3.5 There is also a deep concern for the duty of care to ministers. Consideration needs to be given to the additional responsibilities placed, more extensive travel, increased isolation, and the ending of existing mission projects due to inadequate resources. These factors might lead to additional risks to the mental / physical / spiritual well-being of already stretched ministers within a large rural remote Presbytery.

4. Budgetary implications of this proposal

Once the financial information for the Unincorporated Entities is published in the Assembly Trustees' Supplementary Report, the Presbytery will consider that and will seek to liaise with General Treasurer so as to be in a position to make oral suggestions at the Assembly as to where the money for the additional posts might be found, or where money might be saved elsewhere to release money for the posts, but in view of the deadline in Standing Orders for an Overture (24 April), it is not possible to say more in this Overture.

Therefore:

It is humbly overtured by the Presbytery of Sutherland to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, that the General Assembly should agree to increase the allocation of fulltime equivalent ministry posts for the Presbytery of Sutherland from four to six to enable effective Presbytery Mission Planning that evidences the Five Marks of Mission.

Or to do otherwise as to your Venerable Court may seem good.

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Agree that:
 - a) the allocation of fulltime equivalent ministries posts for the Presbytery of Sutherland should be increased from four to six, and
 - b) the overall number of fulltime equivalent ministries posts by 2025 on which Presbyteries should base their Mission Planning should be increased from 661 to 663.

Note: this Overture was not agreed to by the General Assembly.

SECTION D – STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders

- 38/1.....Commissions
- 38/1.....Conduct of Business
- 38/2.....Members not Commissioners
- 38/4.....Committee Reports and Overtures
- 38/5.....Conduct of Cases
- 38/7.....Order of Debate
- 38/9.....Committees and their Membership
- 38/12.....Alteration and Suspension

SECTION D – STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders

I. COMMISSIONS

1. **Roll of Presbytery.** Each Presbytery Clerk shall, by 15 December of each year, transmit to the Clerks of Assembly the number of charges, appointments and deacons specified in sections 2 and 4 of Act III 2000 (as amended) – all as at 30 November immediately preceding.
2. **Presbyterial Representation.** The Clerks of Assembly will thereafter intimate to Presbyteries what will be their representation in the ensuing Assembly. Any queries shall be settled by the Assembly Business Committee at the request of the Clerks. The decision of the Assembly Business Committee shall be subject to review by the Assembly on Petition by the Presbytery concerned.
3. **Question Arising.** Should there arise between the month of December and the opening of the Assembly any question regarding representation not provided for in these Orders, the Assembly Business Committee shall have power to dispose thereof.
4. **Transmission of names and details of Commissioners.** The names, in alphabetical order, full postal addresses, email addresses, charges and types of commission (ie minister, deacon or elder) of Commissioners from Presbyteries, shall be transmitted by Presbytery Clerks to the Clerks of Assembly not later than 31 January in each year so far as they have been elected by that time. In transmitting the names of Commissioners to the Clerks of Assembly, the Clerk of each Presbytery is certifying that to the best of his or her knowledge the Elders named therein are bona fide ruling Elders and are commissioned by the Presbytery.
5. **Committee on Commissions.** The Committee on Commissions shall consist of the Clerks and the Convener of the Assembly Business Committee; the Principal Clerk shall be Convener. The Committee shall prepare and circulate a list of Commissioners for submission to the Assembly. Along with the said list a copy of the Standing Orders of the General Assembly shall be made available to each member. The Clerks shall arrange to forward to each Commissioner, at least one week before the opening day of the Assembly, an electronic copy of the volume of Reports and Proposed Deliverances and a copy of all Assembly Papers then available.
6. **Objections.** During the sittings of the Assembly, the Committee on Commissions shall, if called upon, or if it shall appear to it necessary or expedient so to do, hear any person whose Commission is objected to in support of his or her Commission, and also any person or persons who may object to such Commission, and the Committee on Commissions shall have power to settle any such matters.
7. **Late Commissions.** It shall be competent at any time prior to the opening of the Assembly to lodge with the Clerks of Assembly Commissions which have not previously been transmitted to them; and the Committee on Commissions shall settle any queries as to whether or not such Commissions are valid. Once the Assembly has opened and the Roll of Commissioners has been laid on the table, no further Commissions may be received.
8. *Number not currently used.*

II. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

(a) OPENING SESSION

9. **Convening.** The Commissioners elected to serve in the Assembly shall convene on the day and at the hour fixed for the meeting of the Assembly, and, after prayer by the Moderator of the preceding Assembly, the List of Commissioners shall be laid on the table.
 10. **Election of Moderator.** The election of a Moderator shall then be made.
 11. **Her Majesty's Commission.** Her Majesty's Commission to the Lord High Commissioner shall then be read and ordered to be recorded.
 12. **Her Majesty's Letter.** Her Majesty's Letter to the Assembly shall then be read and a Committee shall be appointed to prepare an answer thereto.
 13. **Standing Orders.** The Standing Orders shall be laid on the table.
 14. **Committee on Commissions.** The Report of the Committee on Commissions (SO 5) shall be called for and disposed of.
 15. **Order of Business.** The Assembly shall appoint a Procedure Committee, the Convener and Vice-Convener thereof normally to be the Convener and Vice-Convener respectively of the Assembly Business Committee. The Assembly Business Committee shall prepare and circulate electronically before the commencement of the Assembly, a proposed Order of Business for the Assembly.
- ##### (b) PROCEDURE COMMITTEE
16. **The Procedure Committee** shall consist of the Convener and Vice-Convener, plus the Moderator, the Clerks, the Procurator and the Law Agent.
 17. **First Meeting.** The Procedure Committee shall meet on the opening day of the Assembly as intimated and thereafter as business may require. At its first meeting it shall consider the Draft Order of Business which shall have been prepared by the Assembly Business Committee for the business of the Assembly subsequent to the first two days, and shall be wholly responsible therefor.
 18. **Selection Committee.** Commissioners to the General Assembly shall be free to nominate other commissioners to serve on the Selection Committee. The names of those proposed shall be brought before the first meeting of the Procedure Committee which, in turn and without being limited to those names proposed by commissioners who are not among its members, shall nominate a Selection Committee of twenty commissioners, including a Convener and Vice-Convener, whose function it shall be to select and submit to the Assembly for their approval names of persons to serve on all Special Commissions and Committees appointed during the sittings of the Assembly. Such persons need not be commissioners.
 19. **Communications.** All letters addressed to the Moderator for the purpose of being communicated to the Assembly shall, in the first instance, be laid before the Procedure Committee, which shall advise the Moderator as to their disposal.
 20. **Materials for Assembly Members:** Requests for permission to distribute material electronically to Assembly Members shall be submitted to the Assembly

Business Committee before the commencement of the Assembly, and requests received thereafter shall be submitted to the Procedure Committee. Any other Committee concerned should be informed and supplied with electronic copies, if available, of the material to be distributed.

(c) DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES

21. The Lord's Supper. The Assembly shall celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at a time appointed by the General Assembly at its opening session.

22. Acts of Worship. The Moderator shall be responsible to the Assembly for the conduct of all acts of worship, and shall consult the Assembly Business Committee or the Procedure Committee anent any proposed innovation in such conduct.

(d) MISCELLANEOUS

23. Minutes. The minutes of each day's proceedings, if available, together with the Agenda for the following day or days, intimations of meetings of Committees, and Notices of Motion, shall be circulated as the "Assembly Papers", and shall be made available for all members. The Minutes, being taken as read and full opportunity having been given for correction, shall be approved as available. It shall always be in order at the close of any particular item of business to move that the Minute thereanent be adjusted and approved. Before the dissolution of the Assembly a small Committee, appointed for the purpose, shall be authorised to approve the Minutes not already approved by the Assembly.

24. Quorum. The quorum of the Assembly shall be thirty-one, of whom not less than sixteen shall be Ministers. Any Member may at any time call the attention of the Moderator to the fact that there is not a quorum present, and if, on a count being made, it is found that such is the case, it shall be the duty of the Moderator to suspend or adjourn the session.

25. Tellers. The Assembly Business Committee shall submit for the approval of the Assembly at their first session a proposed Panel of Tellers. (See SO 105.)

26. Acts of Assembly. The Committee on Commissions (SO 5) shall arrange for the text of the Acts of Assembly to be finalised and shall include in the Assembly Papers of the penultimate day an Interim Report thereon, which shall be considered on the last day of the Assembly.

27. Examination of Records. Minutes of the Standing Committees of the Assembly shall be examined by the Legal Questions Committee. The Committee shall report thereanent to the General Assembly.

28. Returns to Overtures.

- (a) A Committee on Overtures and Cases, consisting of the Clerks, Procurator and Law Agent of the Church (with the Principal Clerk as Convener) shall advise any Committee or individual on the procedure to be followed in respect of measures requiring process under the Barrier Act.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, measures other than Acts of Assembly may be referred for the consideration of Presbyteries, in which case they shall be presented to the General Assembly in the form of an Overture set out as an Act.
- (c) For the avoidance of doubt, it is open to the General Assembly to decline to consider any motion of

which it believes inadequate notice has been given, considering the nature of its content.

- (d) Measures remitted to Presbyteries by an Overture under the Barrier Act shall be accompanied by a note of the voting figures in the General Assembly, the text of the relevant Report and a note by the Clerks explaining any technical or legal matters contained in the Overture.
- (e) All Presbyteries shall make a return in respect of every Overture sent down under the Barrier Act. The return shall be made upon the schedule sent electronically to the Presbytery Clerk for the purpose, transmitted to the Clerks of Assembly, and then submitted to the Committee on Overtures and Cases. The Committee shall classify the returns and make a report to the next Assembly. It shall be the duty of the Committee to report not only the number of Presbyteries for and against an Overture, but also the numbers voting in the Presbyteries as reported in the schedule.
- (f) The Report of the Committee shall include the text of such Overtures as have been approved by a majority of Presbyteries.
- (g) The Assembly Business Committee shall ensure that the Committee's Report classifying returns is taken by the General Assembly no later than session 2 thereof, and in any case before any debate that in the opinion of the Committee on Overtures and Cases would more usefully follow consideration of the Committee's Report.
- (h) The Report of the Committee shall be given in to the Assembly by the Principal Clerk, with the reply to the debate on the merits of the measure given by the relevant Convener. Both should be available to answer questions, as appropriate.

29. Special Commissions and Committees.

Special Commissions or Committees will only be appointed where the General Assembly has no existing Standing Committee to which the matter under consideration can, in all the circumstances, properly be remitted. In normal circumstances, business proposed by Councils or Committees of the General Assembly or proposed by Commissioners in the course of debate shall be remitted to one or more of the appropriate Standing Committees listed in SO 113. When, from time to time, a Standing Committee requires to co-opt relevant expertise in order to fulfil the work remitted to it by the General Assembly, it should acknowledge the same in its Report to the General Assembly.

30. Closing of Assembly.

When the business set down for the last day of the Assembly has been disposed of, the Assembly shall be closed by addresses by the Moderator to the Assembly and to the Lord High Commissioner, and by an address by the Lord High Commissioner to the Assembly, during an act of worship, and dissolved according to the practice of the Church.

III. MEMBERS NOT COMMISSIONERS

(a) MEMBERS *ex officio*

31. These are the Moderator of the Assembly, on election, and the immediately preceding Moderator, the Clerks, Procurator, and Law Agent, and also the Convener and Vice-Convener of the Procedure Committee upon their election.

They have all the rights and privileges of Commissioners.

(b) CORRESPONDING MEMBERS, DELEGATES AND VISITORS – DEFINITION

32. Corresponding Members. Representatives of Departments and Standing Committees as stated in SO 33.

Delegates from other Churches. Representatives of other Churches who come in response to an invitation from the Principal Clerk sent at the request of the Faith Impact Forum or from the Committee on Ecumenical Relations to their Church to send a delegate or delegates to the General Assembly and who are duly accredited by the Courts or equivalent authority of their Churches.

Visitors. Visitors from other Churches who come with a Letter of Introduction from Assembly or Presbytery Clerks or equivalent officer of their Church.

33. Corresponding Members

1. (a) Each of the following bodies shall have the right to appoint for each day of the General Assembly, one member or staff-member to act as a Corresponding Member: Faith Nurture Forum, Faith Impact Forum, Social Care Council, Ecumenical Relations Committee, General Trustees, Church of Scotland Guild, Trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund, the Legal Questions Committee, the Nomination Committee, Safeguarding Committee, Stewardship and Finance Department, the Church of Scotland Pension Trustees and the Theological Forum.
- (b) Each such body will advise the Assembly Business Committee not less than one week before the commencement of the General Assembly of the name of the Corresponding Member appointed for each day. The names of Corresponding Members appointed under this Standing Order shall be included in the Assembly Papers.
2. The Chief Officer, the Head of Faith Action, the Secretary of the Social Care Council, the Ecumenical Officer, the Editor of Life and Work, the General Treasurer, the Head of Human Resources, the Convener of the Nomination Committee, the Scottish Churches' Parliamentary Officer and the Head of Communications shall be Corresponding Members when not Commissioners.
3. The Assembly Trustees, (including the Chair of the General Trustees as an Assembly Trustee *ex officio*), being the Charity Trustees of the Unincorporated Councils and Committees of the General Assembly, shall also be Corresponding Members when not Commissioners.

34. Status. Corresponding Members of Assembly shall be entitled to attend all sessions of the same and to speak on any matter before the Assembly affecting the interests of their Council or Committee, where applicable, but shall not have the right to vote or make a motion.

(c) YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES

35. Status

- (i) One person between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five on the opening day of the General Assembly shall, if possible, be appointed by each Presbytery to serve as a Youth Representative; each Representative shall be involved in the life of a

congregation within the bounds of the Presbytery and be regularly involved in the life and worship of the Church of Scotland. The minister of the congregation shall provide confirmation of this involvement if asked by the Faith Nurture Forum.

- (ii) A further ten persons between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five on the opening day of the General Assembly shall be appointed as Youth Representatives to each Assembly, such Representatives to be selected by the Faith Nurture Forum in terms of a process prescribed by that Forum and the names passed to the Clerks of Assembly by 31 March each year.
- (iii) Youth Representatives shall be entitled to speak and move motions but not to vote:
during debates on Committee reports
during debates on Overtures
- (iv) Youth Representatives shall not be entitled to speak, move motions or vote:
during debates on Petitions or cases
during debates on matters affecting General Assembly procedure or Standing Orders
- (v) Youth Representatives shall not be members of the Commission of Assembly.

Oversight

- (vi) The Faith Nurture Forum shall take responsibility for Youth Representatives and shall extend to them appropriate hospitality.

(d) DELEGATES AND VISITORS

36. Reception. Delegates from other Churches shall be received and welcomed by the Moderator. The Assembly Business Committee is authorised, after consultation with the Faith Impact Forum and the Ecumenical Relations Committee, to recommend to the Moderator to invite two specified delegates to convey greetings briefly after all the delegates have been received and welcomed by the Moderator.

37. Status.

- (i) Delegates to the Assembly shall have the right to attend all sessions and to speak on all matters before the Assembly, except when the Assembly are exercising judicial functions, but shall not have the right to vote.
- (ii) Visitors shall have the privilege of seats in the Assembly but without the right to speak or vote. As in the case of Delegates, the officials of the Faith Impact Forum, the Ecumenical Relations Committee, or other relevant Council or Committee shall extend appropriate hospitality to Visitors.

38. Oversight. The officials of the Faith Impact Forum, the Ecumenical Relations Committee, and other Councils or Committees which may be interested in Delegates, shall see that Invitations to Assembly functions are procured for the Delegates, and that the Members of Assembly shall do everything in their power to make the visits of all the Delegates pleasant and profitable.

(e) NON-MEMBERS

39. Guest Speakers. Where any Committee wishes that one of its members or staff members, not being a Member of Assembly, should have an opportunity

of addressing the Assembly in connection with the discussion of its Report, the Convener shall seek the permission of the Moderator; for the avoidance of doubt, such permission may be sought during a debate. Where any Committee wishes that a person, not being a Member of Assembly or member or staff member of that Committee, should address the Assembly, the Convener shall submit the name of such person for approval to the Assembly Business Committee before the Assembly opens, or to the Procedure Committee during the sittings of the Assembly, and the decision of the Assembly Business Committee or Procedure Committee shall be final, unless the Assembly themselves shall resolve in terms of SO 129 hereof to dispense with the observance of Standing Orders in respect of that particular matter.

40. Conference Sessions. The Assembly Business Committee, or the Procedure Committee, in consultation with other Councils and Committees as appropriate may invite the General Assembly to meet in conference sessions and arrange for guest speakers to address such sessions. Councils and Committees shall also be free to invite guests, whom they consider to have a particular interest in the matter under discussion, to participate in the debate. When the General Assembly is meeting in conference no resolutions shall be framed or decisions taken. Expert speakers invited to address the conference shall be allowed a maximum time of fifteen minutes. All other speeches shall be limited to five minutes.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OVERTURES

(a) REPORTS

41. Transmission. Reports of all Committees reporting to the Assembly shall be transmitted to the Clerks of Assembly not later than the first Monday after the third Tuesday in February each year provided that, by arrangement with the Clerk of Assembly, a Statement and Proposed Deliverance on the Budget of the Church, report on Congregational Statistics as reported by Kirk Sessions through Presbyteries and report on Statistics of Ministry may be submitted at a later date, but in time to be included and circulated with the Reports. All Reports shall be accompanied by the Deliverance to be proposed to the Assembly, and when the Proposed Deliverance exceeds two sections each section shall be numbered consecutively.

42. Circulation of Reports and Proposed Deliverances. It shall be the duty of the Clerks to arrange for all such Reports and Proposed Deliverances to be circulated in the authorised form to each Member of Assembly at least one week before the day of meeting. All Reports so distributed shall be held as read. Each Committee shall immediately after the rising of the Assembly furnish the publisher of the Reports with the number required for circulation.

43. Oral Reports and Reports of Sub-Committees. Oral Reports shall not be received, and no Sub-Committee shall give any Report to the Assembly.

44. In Retentis. Reports shall not be engrossed in the Minutes, but a copy of each Report certified by one of the Clerks as being that given to the Assembly, shall be kept in retentis; and the Reports thus collected shall be preserved among the other Records of the Assembly.

45. Questions on Reports. After the Deliverance on the Report of any Committee has been moved and seconded the Assembly, before dealing with any other motions or amendments thereon, shall have opportunity

for asking questions on the Report, this being without prejudice to the right of Members to put questions, with the leave of the Assembly, at any subsequent stage.

46. Questions requiring Notice. It shall be in order to ask questions of the Convener regarding any matter in the care of the Committee to which no reference is made in the Report but in such cases timeous notice shall be given to the Convener.

47. Deliverance. The final Deliverance of the Assembly upon the Report of any Committee shall follow immediately after the consideration of that Report, except in the event of a special reason for the contrary having been approved by the Assembly and recorded in the Minutes.

48. Late Reports. Reports of Committees appointed during the sittings of Assembly, if they propose any motion not already circulated to Members, shall be submitted to the Clerks of Assembly at least one day prior to their being considered, and included in the "Assembly Papers".

(b) OVERTURES

49. Transmissions. All Overtures from Presbyteries passed on or before 24 April shall be sent to the Clerks of Assembly not later than that date in each year. Overtures from Commissioners shall be lodged with the Clerks not later than noon on the third last day of the meeting of the Assembly, unless the Assembly for special reason decide otherwise.

50. Circulation of Overtures. The Clerks shall arrange for the circulation of Overtures to Commissioners, at the expense (if any) of those promoting them, either with the papers for Cases or in the "Assembly Papers".

51. Form. Overtures should contain a brief statement of the matter to be brought before the Assembly together with a Proposed Deliverance, of which the first section shall be "The General Assembly receive the Overture".

52. When Taken. Overtures relating to matters under the care of the Committees of the Church whose reports are on the Agenda for one of the first two days of the Assembly shall be assigned by the Assembly Business Committee (unless the Committee on Overtures and Cases decides not to transmit) to the place in the discussion at which they shall be introduced to the Assembly. In other cases this shall be done by the Procedure Committee. When the Proposed Deliverance of an Overture is capable of being treated as a counter-motion or amendment to the Proposed Deliverance of a Committee, or as a new section of such Proposed Deliverance, it shall be so treated.

53. Grouping. Overtures on the same or cognate subjects shall be grouped by the Assembly Business Committee or Procedure Committee of the Assembly and only one speaker shall be heard introducing each group.

54. Introduction. An Overture from a Presbytery may be introduced by any member of that Presbytery, specially appointed for the purpose, at the bar; or by any one of its Commissioners to the Assembly in his or her place as a Commissioner.

(c) GENERAL

55. Matters Relating to Stipend. It shall not be competent for the Assembly, without due notice of motion in the hands of Commissioners in proper form (for example as a Proposed Deliverance, Notice of Motion or Crave of a Petition), to debate any proposal which might

impact directly on or which might bring about binding changes to the terms and conditions of ministers which relate to stipend or stipend scales.

56. Proposals with Budgetary Implications. Prior to making any proposal, Commissioners should give due consideration as to whether this will incur the use of additional resources or affect the incoming resources for the Church's work, ie whether the proposal has budgetary implications. Advice on any proposal can be sought from the General Treasurer. A proposal with budgetary implications must be in the hands of Commissioners in proper form (for example, as a Proposed Deliverance, Notice of Motion, or Crave of a Petition). Specifically, to ensure sensible budget controls:

- (a) Any proposal which involves new or additional expenditure whether of a one-off or recurring nature, must be accompanied by a statement specifying where funding will be found, whether by a reduction of existing costs; funding external to the Church or by an increase in the total amount to be met by congregations.
- (b) Any proposal which results in a potential reduction in income, including a reduction in the total to be met by congregations, must be accompanied by a statement of where replacement funding will be found or expenditure reduced to compensate for the reduction in the income.

The Assembly Trustees shall have the right to comment upon any proposal in category (a) or (b) before any decision is taken.

57. Declaratory or Interim Act. The draft of any proposed Declaratory or Interim Act, as also the draft of any Overture which it is proposed to transmit to Presbyteries in terms of the Barrier Act (other than any Overture circulated in the volume of Reports), shall be circulated to Members and laid on the table of the Assembly at least one day before a Motion for the passing of such Declaratory or Interim Act, or for the transmission of such Overture to Presbyteries, is made in the Assembly.

V. CONDUCT OF CASES

58. Commission of Assembly. The rules of procedure for the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly shall be as set out in Schedule 2 to the Appeals Act (Act I 2014). Standing Orders 59 – 61 apply where a matter is being brought before the Commission of Assembly in terms of those powers of the Commission of Assembly not being exercised by the Appeals Committee, or before the General Assembly, being a petition, a reference or an appeal on a matter of doctrine. In Standing Orders 59– 61 references to the General Assembly shall be taken to refer where appropriate to the Commission of Assembly and all references shall be so construed *mutatis mutandis*.

(a) LODGING OF PAPERS

59. Appeal; Dissent and Complaint; Petition. The papers in all cases intended to be brought before the Assembly, whether Appeals or Dissents and Complaints against the judgement of inferior courts, or Petitions, should be lodged with the Clerks of Assembly not later than 24 April, and must be lodged not less than fourteen days before the opening session of Assembly; except in the case of judgements pronounced within sixteen days of the meeting of Assembly, in which case they shall be lodged within forty-eight hours of the judgement being pronounced.

60. (a). Reference. In the case of Reference of a matter from an inferior court for the judgement of the Assembly the same limits as to time for lodging of papers in the case shall apply as in SO 59.

(b). Reference of Matter Previously Considered. Where the matter of a Reference has previously been under consideration of the Assembly, the Reference shall state the date when the matter was previously before the Assembly and shall narrate the Assembly's Deliverance thereon.

61. Answers. It shall be competent for all parties claiming an interest in the subject matter of an Appeal, Dissent and Complaint or Petition to lodge Answers thereto complying with the requirements of this SO 61. Answers may be lodged any time after the Appeal, Dissent and Complaint or Petition is received by the Clerks, but not later than seven days before the opening meeting of Assembly. Answers shall be in the form of articulate numbered Answers to the narrative contained in the Appeal, Dissent and Complaint or Petition, indicating in particular matters of fact that are admitted and denied, and shall set forth a concise statement of the Respondent's case, together with a crave specifying the action the Assembly are invited to take thereanent.

(b) PROVISION OF PAPERS

62. Circulation. It shall be the duty of the Clerks on receiving papers that are to come before the Assembly in connection with cases to arrange to have these circulated to Members in authorised form.

63. In Private. Papers relating to business dealt with by Presbyteries in private, or which the Committee on Overtures and Cases (SOs 70– 71) consider should be taken in private, shall be circulated separately and may be dealt with by the Assembly in private.

64. Cost of Circulation of Papers. In cases of discipline brought before the Assembly by the Judicial Commission, by Reference from a Presbytery, or by complaint by a minority of the Court, the expense of circulation (if any) shall be borne by the Assembly Business Committee; in other circumstances by the Complainer or Appellant. In all other cases the expenses of circulating papers (if any) for the use of Commissioners shall be borne by the party having interest in the same or desiring a Deliverance from the Assembly.

65. In Retentis. A copy of every circulated paper shall be kept by the Clerks of Assembly to be retained among the Records of Assembly.

(c) CIRCULATION OF PAPERS

66. Date of Dispatch. A copy of all papers transmitted to the Clerks of Assembly not later than 24 April shall be forwarded by them to each Member of Assembly at least one week before the opening day of the Assembly.

67. In Private. The Clerks of Assembly shall not issue in advance to Members the papers in cases which they think require to be conducted in private, until specially instructed by the Assembly so to do; but shall report such cases to the Convener of the Procedure Committee, for the information of that Committee, immediately after its appointment.

(d) INTIMATION TO PARTIES

68. Appeal; Dissent and Complaint. In all cases coming before the Assembly by Appeal or Dissent and Complaint it shall be the duty of the Clerks of Assembly

to inform the parties on both sides as soon as possible of the time at which such case is likely to be taken by the Assembly. Such intimation shall, unless in a specific case the Assembly determine otherwise, be regarded as sufficient notice.

The Clerks shall further be bound, on application made to them for the purpose, to supply a copy of all papers circulated in pursuance of the foregoing Orders to the opposite party or parties in any case, or to his or her or their duly accredited Agents.

69. Petition. In every Petition it shall be the duty of the Petitioner to make such intimation of the Petition as may be necessary having regard to the nature of the Petition. Such intimation shall be made not more than seven days later than the time when the Petition is lodged with the Clerks of Assembly as provided in SO 59 above; and along with the Petition there shall be lodged a certificate signed by the Petitioner or his or her Agent setting forth the names of the parties to whom such intimation has been made or is to be made. The Assembly may refuse to dispose of any Petition if in their opinion sufficient intimation thereof has not been made.

(e) TRANSMISSION TO ASSEMBLY

70. Committee on Overtures and Cases. All papers lodged with the Clerks in cases of every sort in terms of the foregoing Orders shall be laid by them before the Committee on Overtures and Cases, which shall consider the same and report to the Assembly.

71. Decision not to Transmit. If the Committee on Overtures and Cases shall decide not to transmit to the Assembly any papers in cases duly lodged with the Clerks of Assembly it shall report the same to the Assembly at their first Session, or at the Session next after such decision, with its reasons for not transmitting the papers, and parties shall be entitled to be heard thereon at the bar of the Assembly. Intimation of a decision not to transmit papers shall be made to the parties concerned as soon as possible, and in time to allow of their being represented at the bar when the decision not to transmit is reported to the Assembly.

72. In Private. The Procedure Committee shall, in its first Report, specify any case which in its judgement requires to be conducted in private, and any case which does not appear to it to be of that character although the Clerks of Assembly may have reported it as such. The Assembly shall thereupon determine by a special Deliverance, at what stage in the proceedings the papers in such a case shall be issued to the Commissioners. In every case which the Assembly appoint to be conducted in private the instruction to issue the papers shall be accompanied by a special exhortation to the Commissioners to keep them private.

73. Proposed Legislation. All Overtures from Presbyteries or from Commissioners which propose the introduction of new or the amendment of existing Acts (or Regulations) shall contain the precise terms of the legislation which they propose; and the Committee on Overtures and Cases shall not transmit to the Assembly any Overture which is deficient in this respect, provided always that the Clerks and Procurator shall be available to assist with the framing of such proposals

(f) HEARING OF CASES

74. Announcement. Before parties are heard in any contentious case the Clerk shall read the following announcement, viz – “The Commissioners are reminded

that justice requires that all the pleadings at the bar should be heard by all those who vote in this case, and that their judgement should be made solely on the basis of the pleadings.” Immediately before a vote is taken in such a case, the Clerk shall read the following further announcement, viz – “The Commissioners are reminded that only those who have heard all the pleadings at the bar are entitled to vote in this case.”

75. Appeal; Complaint; One Appellant. In cases brought before the Assembly by Appeal, where there is only one appellant (or one set of appellants concurring in the same reasons of Appeal) and only one respondent (or one set of respondents concurring in the same answers to the reasons of Appeal) the case for the appellant (or set of appellants) shall be stated by him or herself or by his or her counsel, who at the same time shall submit such argument upon the case as he or she shall think fit. The party or counsel so stating the Appeal shall be followed by the respondent or his or her counsel who likewise shall submit such arguments upon the case as he or she shall think fit. At the close of the statement for the respondent the appellant shall be entitled to be again heard, and the respondent shall also be entitled to be heard in answer to the second speech for the appellant and if, in his or her final answer, the respondent shall state any fact or submit any argument not adverted to in his or her answer to the opening statement for the appellant, the appellant shall be entitled to a reply upon the new matter introduced in the final answer for the respondent. With the exception of this right of reply, so limited, more than two speeches shall not be allowed to any party at the bar.

76. Appeal; Complaint; More than one Appellant. In such cases as those referred to in SO 75 if there is more than one appellant (or set of appellants) insisting on the Appeal, or more than one respondent (or set of respondents) supporting the judgement appealed against, (a) on different grounds, or (b) in separate reasons or answers, each appellant shall be entitled to open and state his or her separate case, and each respondent shall be entitled to make his or her separate answer, and the debate shall be closed with a reply for the several appellants; provided always that it shall be competent to the parties, with consent of the Assembly to make any arrangement for conducting the debate other than herein prescribed, if it shall have the effect of limiting, further than is herein done, the number of speeches to be made from the bar.

77. Appeal; Complaint; Who may appear. Any Member of an inferior court whose judgement is brought under review of the Assembly may appear at the bar in support of the judgement; but, when Commissioners have been specially appointed by the inferior court to support its judgement, the Assembly shall not hear any Member of such court other than the Commissioners so appointed, unless any Member not so appointed but wishing to be heard can show a separate and peculiar interest to support the judgement; and in all such cases it shall be competent to the Assembly to limit the number of Members of an inferior court who shall be heard in support of the judgement under review.

78. Dissents and Complaints. In SOs 75 to 77, “Appeal” includes “Dissents and Complaints” and “Appellant” includes “Complainer”.

79. Petition. In cases brought before the Assembly as the court of first instance by Petition, the party promoting the application shall be entitled to be heard in support of the same; and the Assembly shall also hear an answer

from any party at the bar claiming to be heard whom it shall consider to be a proper respondent, and the debate at the bar shall be closed with a reply from the person promoting the application.

80. Reference. In cases brought before the Assembly by reference from a Presbytery the reference shall be stated to the Assembly by a Member of the referring court, specially appointed for the purpose, at the bar if not a Commissioner, or in his or her place as a Commissioner if a Commissioner from the Presbytery. The Assembly shall thereafter hear the parties in the case referred in such order as the nature of the case may seem to require, keeping in view the regulations in SOs 74 to 79.

81. Readjustment Cases. In cases arising from Act VII, 2003, when a request for determination follows a decision of the Partnership Development Committee not to concur in the judgement of a Presbytery, the Convener, or other member of the said Committee, shall be heard at the bar if not a Commissioner, or in his or her place as a Commissioner if a Commissioner, immediately after the request for determination has been stated. After the initial statement and the response by the said Committee when applicable, the General Assembly shall hear at the bar such parties in the case as are not represented by Commissioners, in such order as the nature of the case may seem to require.

VI. ORDER OF DEBATE

(a) ORDER OF THE DAY

82. When the Assembly have resolved that a case or other piece of business shall be taken up at a certain hour mentioned in the Order of Business, such case or other piece of business shall be taken not later than the hour fixed and the business before the Assembly, if not finished at the hour named, shall be adjourned, provided that, in the case of an Order of the Day following the Report of the Faith Impact Forum, such unfinished business shall not be taken up. If, in the opinion of the Moderator, it would be in accordance with the general convenience of the Assembly, the Moderator may allow the transaction of the business then actually under discussion to continue for a period of not more than fifteen minutes beyond the specified time, but no fresh business shall be commenced.

(b) MOTIONS

83. Time-bound

On the motion of the Procedure Committee or moved as part of the deliverance of the Assembly Business Committee, the General Assembly may resolve that the Report and draft Deliverance relating to a particular Council or Committee's Report be taken in a time-bound process of debate and decision. Such a motion shall be moved at least 24 hours in advance of the presentation of the Report concerned.

Having so resolved the General Assembly shall operate the following timetable:-

- a) Start times shall be allotted to specified Sections of the Report and to the related sections of the draft Deliverance. Discussion of any Section of the Report shall not commence later than its allotted start time, but may begin earlier if debate of the previous Section has been completed.
- b) If discussion and debate of a particular Section of the Report has not been concluded within its allotted time, then further consideration of associated sections of the draft Deliverance shall be sisted and

the General Assembly shall take up the next Section of the Report.

- c) If, at the close of the debate on the last Section of the Report, there is still time before the Order of the Day requires to be implemented or business is due to conclude, then the General Assembly shall return for further debate of any outstanding sections of the draft Deliverance remaining relative to each Section of the Report.
- d) If the Order of the Day or anticipated close of business is imminent, then any outstanding sections of the draft Deliverance shall be voted upon without debate, except that other motions circulated in the Daily Papers shall also be taken, without debate, the Convener simply having the right to indicate whether or not the Council or Committee is willing to accept the motion.
- e) Where motions appearing in the Daily Papers do not relate directly to the Report and draft Deliverance proposed by the Council or Committee, they will be taken either at the end of the appropriate Section, if there is time available according to the allotted timetable, or at the end of the appropriate Section when the procedure leading to the Order of the Day (or close of business) is being implemented.

84. Right to Move. Any Commissioner to the Assembly may make a motion upon any matter coming regularly before the Assembly; and on rising to do so he or she shall read the terms of the motion having previously handed the same in writing on the form provided to the Assembly Office or other point of collection intimated to the General Assembly. It shall be in order to move a motion regarding any matter in the care of a Committee to which no reference is made in the Report of that Committee, provided that reasonable notice has been given in writing to the Convener before presentation of the Report. The mover of any counter-motion or amendment may reply to the discussion of his or her motion, immediately before the Convener closes the debate.

85. Withdrawal. When a motion has been duly seconded it shall not be competent to withdraw it, or to make any alteration upon it, without the permission of the Assembly.

86. Priority of Deliverance over other motion. The Deliverance on the Report of a Committee shall take precedence of any other motion on that subject.

87. Committee Convener. The Convener of a Committee when a Commissioner, on giving in the Report of that Committee, shall move the Deliverance proposed in terms of SO 41. A Convener, when not a Commissioner, shall be allowed to submit the Report of the Committee, and to give explanations in the subsequent discussion. In such a case the Principal Clerk, whom failing, the Depute Clerk, shall formally move the Deliverance. In all cases the Convener shall have the right of replying to the debate.

88. Introducer of Overture. The Introducer of an Overture, if a Commissioner, shall move the Deliverance; and if he or she is not a Commissioner the Principal Clerk, whom failing the Depute Clerk, shall formally move the Deliverance. The Introducer, whether a Commissioner or not, may answer questions or give explanations in the course of the debate and, if a Commissioner, may reply to, the discussion immediately before the relevant Convener closes the debate.

89. Notice of Motion. Commissioners are encouraged to give advance Notice of motions. Any Commissioner may, during the sittings of the Assembly, give advance notice of Motion on any subject due to come regularly before the Assembly, other than a contentious case. Notices of Motion so given in shall, if received in time to do so, be included in the "Assembly Papers" not later than the day on which the business is to be taken. Such circulated Notice of Motion shall confer no right of priority of moving same, the Moderator being the sole judge of the order in which Members are entitled to address the Assembly.

(c) THE DEBATE

90. The Chair. Every speaker shall address the Assembly through the Moderator, and the correct address is "Moderator".

91. In Support. When a motion or motions have been made and seconded, any Member (including a formal seconder in terms of SO 95) may take part in subsequent debate.

92. Speeches. (1) Except as provided in SOs 84 and 87, no Member may speak twice on the same question except in explanation, and then only by special permission of the Assembly. (2) Members shall make relevant declarations of interest where the topic of debate makes it appropriate to do so.

93. Point of Order. Any Member may rise to speak to a Point of Order. A speaker is not to be interrupted unless upon a call to order. When so interrupted he or she shall cease speaking, and shall resume his or her seat until the Point of Order is decided. The Member calling to order shall state the grounds for so doing; and the speaker who has been interrupted may briefly reply in explanation, to show that he or she is not out of order, but no other Member may speak to the Point of Order unless with the permission or at the request of the Moderator, with whom the decision of the point rests, though the Moderator may put the point to a vote of the Assembly.

94. There shall be no right of reply to a debate except as provided for by SOs 84 and 87.

95. Limits. All speeches shall be limited to 5 minutes, with the following exceptions:

(i) COMMITTEES	
Convener giving in the Report of his or her Committee and moving thereon (seconding to be formal)	15 minutes
Convener responding to a question	4 minutes
(ii) OVERTURES	
Introducing an Overture and when the Introducer is a Commissioner, moving thereon	10 minutes
Mover of other Motions in relation to Overture (seconding to be formal)	10 minutes
(iii) PETITIONS	
Speeches of Petitioners	10 minutes

96. No Time Limit. The time limits shall apply, except in the following cases:

- (a) when the Assembly are debating specific proposals for change under Barrier Act procedure;

- (b) when the Assembly are exercising judicial functions;
- (c) in Petitions when, for special reasons, the Committee on Overtures and Cases reports that the circumstances demand an extension, and when the General Assembly adopt that opinion;
- (d) in any other matter when the Assembly Business Committee (in respect of the Order of Business for the first two days) or the Procedure Committee (in respect of the Order of Business for the subsequent days) declares that, in its opinion, such matter is of exceptional importance, and when the Assembly adopt that opinion.

(d) DEALING WITH MOTIONS

97. Character of Motions. Motions shall be considered as belonging to one of the following categories, and shall be dealt with as prescribed, viz:

1. The original Motion.
2. Counter-Motions – being Motions contradictory or negative of the original Motion or of a substantial part of the original Motion.
3. Amendments being Motions not substantially contradictory of the original Motion or Counter-Motion, but for making deletions, alterations, or additions thereto without defeating its main object.
4. Amendments of amendments already moved and seconded.

98. Moderator to Judge. The Moderator shall be judge of the category to which any Motions shall be considered to belong, and the ruling of the Moderator shall be final.

99. Grouping of Amendments. When to any Proposed Deliverance there has been given notice of amendments which differ from each other only slightly in their general tenor, the Moderator shall decide whether or not to permit more than one of such amendments to be moved.

100. Voting on Amendments. When an amendment (Category 3) has been proposed it shall be disposed of by the Assembly before any other counter-motion or amendment is proposed. However, it shall be in order for an amendment of an amendment (Category 4) to be proposed, seconded and debated, after which the Moderator shall take a vote "For" or "Against". When all such Category 4 motions have been so disposed of, the Assembly shall complete its consideration of the original amendment (Category 3) and the Moderator shall take a vote "For" or "Against" the original amendment amended or unamended as the case may be. For the avoidance of doubt, it is affirmed that the order of debate for Category 3 and Category 4 motions shall be the same except as herein provided and that the provisions of SO 87 shall apply to both.

101. Voting on Motions. After all amendments, if any, have been disposed of, the Moderator shall take a vote between all Motions in Categories (1) and (2), and in doing so shall adopt the following procedure. A vote shall be taken in one of the methods provided below, between all the Motions in the order in which they were made, beginning at the first. Each Commissioner may vote for one Motion only. If, on the numbers being announced, one Motion has obtained a clear majority of votes, all the other Motions shall fall; but if no Motion has obtained a clear majority, the Motion having the smallest number of votes shall be struck off and a vote taken between the remaining Motions; and the Assembly may determine.

102. Voting for Appointments. In the case of voting for appointments to vacant offices in the Church, where there are more than two nominations the Assembly shall vote separately on all the names proposed, and, unless there be a majority in favour of one over all the others combined, the one having the lowest number shall be dropped, and the Assembly shall again vote on those that remain.

103. Deliberative Vote. The Moderator or Acting Moderator in the Chair shall have no Deliberative Vote.

104. Casting Vote. If in any division there shall be an equality of votes for two proposals before the Assembly, the Moderator shall have power to give a deciding vote; and if in the course of the voting as provided in SOs 100 and 101 above, there should be an equality of votes for the two Motions having fewest votes, the Moderator shall have power to give a deciding vote and the Motion for which the Moderator shall vote shall be retained for the purpose of the next vote of the Assembly.

(e) TAKING THE VOTE

105. The Moderator may, in any circumstances and at his or her sole discretion, ascertain the mind of the Assembly by asking the Commissioners to stand in their places, and shall intimate to the Assembly on which side there is in his or her opinion a majority. Unless the opinion of the Moderator so intimated is at once challenged, it shall become the decision of the Assembly. If any Commissioner challenges the opinion of the Moderator, the Assembly shall proceed to take an electronic vote using a system approved by the Assembly Business Committee. Alternatively, it shall be open to the Moderator, again at his or her sole discretion and in any circumstances, to ascertain the mind of the Assembly by recourse to the use of electronic voting. After all votes have been counted the Moderator shall intimate the result of the voting which will become the decision of the Assembly. In no circumstances shall a second vote be taken on a matter which has already been the subject of a vote by electronic voting. The Procedure Committee shall ensure that Commissioners are familiar with the method of electronic voting and will appoint Tellers to assist Commissioners, where necessary, with the process of casting votes and to assist the Assembly with the process of voting by paper ballot which shall be a competent alternative to the taking of a vote by electronic means in the event of a failure in the electronic voting system.

(f) DISSENTS

106. Entering. Any Commissioner dissatisfied with a judgement of the Assembly, which has not been unanimous, has the right to enter his or her dissent against it; but no dissent can be given in until the matter to which it refers has, for that session, been disposed of, the Minute adjusted, and the Assembly is ready to proceed to other business.

107. Adhering. When a dissent has been entered, it is in order for any other Commissioner present when that judgement was pronounced to adhere to such dissent. No other's adherence may be entered.

108. Reasons. A person dissenting may do so with or without giving in reasons of dissent. If he or she dissent for reasons given in at the time, or to be afterwards given in, such reasons shall, if received by the Assembly as proper and relevant, and provided they are given in before the close of the next session (or, when made on the last day of the Assembly, before the close of the same

session), be recorded in the Minutes.

109. Answers. If the Assembly appoint a Committee to prepare answers to reasons of dissent, the Report of the Committee shall, except on the last day of the Assembly, be in the "Assembly Papers"; and, as approved by the Assembly, shall be included in the Minutes, if the reasons of dissent have been so circulated.

110. Record of Dissents. Reasons of dissent and answers thereto when not entered in the Minutes, shall be kept in a separate Record of Dissents.

VII. COMMITTEES AND THEIR MEMBERSHIP

(a) COMMITTEES

111. Committees. The Committees of the General Assembly shall be those listed in SO 113 together with such *ad hoc* Committees as the General Assembly may appoint from time to time. Clerical services for the *ad hoc* Committees shall normally be provided by the staff of the Principal Clerk's Department.

112. Quorum. Save for those bodies where provision is already made for a quorum, the quorum of Standing Committees of the General Assembly listed in SO 113 shall be three. When a meeting ceases to be quorate, business must be suspended. The quorum shall apply also to sub-committees and other bodies constituted from the relevant Standing Committees where such sub-committees and other bodies have decision-making powers, but not otherwise.

113. Membership. The Standing Committees of the General Assembly shall have membership as follows, General Assembly appointments being made on the nomination of the Nomination Committee except where otherwise stated.

1. **Assembly Business Committee** 16/17
Convener, Vice-Convener, 2 members of the Legal Questions Committee (Convener and another member involved more in judicial matters to be nominated by the Legal Questions Committee), a further 6 members made up of ministers and elders with experience of the General Assembly, with the following members *ex officio*: the Moderator and the Moderator Designate, the Principal Clerk, the Depute Clerk, the Solicitor, the Procurator and the General Treasurer. The Convener and Vice-Convener are also to serve as Convener and Vice-Convener respectively of the Procedure Committee.
2. **Assembly Trustees** 14
12 trustees appointed in accordance with the Constitution and Remit approved at the General Assembly of 2019 (from which shall be drawn the Convener, Vice-Convener, and Administrative Trustee), plus 2 *ex officio* members: the Convener of the Assembly Business Committee and the Chair of the General Trustees.
3. **Audit Committee** 6
Convener, who shall not be an Assembly Trustee, three voting members appointed by the General Assembly through the Nomination Committee, all of whom shall be independent of the Unincorporated Entities and at least one of whom shall have recent and relevant financial experience, and two additional voting members be appointed by the Assembly Trustees. The quorum shall be three voting members, at least one of whom is a Trustee member. The Chief Officer and the General Treasurer

- shall attend without a right to vote or make a motion. In addition, other officials, as required by the Committee, may be in attendance from time to time without a right to vote or make a motion. Representatives of the External and Internal Auditors, shall be entitled to attend all meetings but without a right to vote or make a motion.
4. **Church of Scotland Investors Trust**
Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.
 5. **Church of Scotland Trust**
Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.
 6. **Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces** 10
Convener, Vice-Convener and eight* members appointed by the General Assembly. There are also 2 non-voting members: one representative from and appointed by each of the Faith Nurture and Faith Impact Forums. *To reduce to six in 2023– 2024 and four from 2024 onwards.
 7. **Delegation of the General Assembly** 4
The Clerks of Assembly, the Principal Clerk as Chair, the Procurator and the Solicitor of the Church, *ex officio*.
 8. **Ecumenical Relations Committee** 10
plus representatives, co-optees and corresponding members
 - a) 8 members appointed by the General Assembly one to be attached, for the purposes of ecumenical accompaniment, to each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum, the Social Care Council, and the Theological Forum.
 - b) Convener who will act as a personal support for the Ecumenical Officer (EO) and Vice-Convener, appointed by the General Assembly.
 - c) A representative of the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland appointed by the Bishops' Conference and 1 representative from each of 3 churches drawn from among the member churches of ACTS and the Baptist Union of Scotland, each to serve for a period of 4 years.
 - d) The Committee shall co-opt Church of Scotland members elected to the central bodies of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), the Conference of European Churches (CEC), the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE, formerly the Leuenberg Fellowship of Churches).
 - e) The General Secretary of ACTS shall be invited to attend as a corresponding member.
 - f) For the avoidance of doubt, while only those persons appointed under paragraphs a) and b) above shall be entitled to vote, before any vote is taken the views of members representing other churches shall be ascertained. The Convener shall be entitled to call a meeting of the voting members.
 9. **Faith Impact Forum** 15
Convener, Vice-Convener and 13 members nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly.
 10. **Faith Nurture Forum** 15
Convener, Vice-Convener and 13 members nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly.
 11. **General Trustees**
Trustees are appointed as required, by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trust.
 12. **Iona Community Board** 20
Convener and 5 members appointed by the General Assembly;
6 members appointed by and from the Iona Community, 2 changing each year;
The Leader of the Iona Community;
1 member appointed by and from the Presbytery of Argyll.
In addition the Board will invite 6 member churches of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) to appoint a representative member to the Board, such members being eligible to serve for a maximum period of 4 years.
 13. **Judicial Panel** 20
20 people being ministers, elders and deacons nominated by the Nomination Committee and appointed by the General Assembly. All members of the Judicial Panel shall be qualified to practise as lawyers or shall be experienced in the law and practice of the Church. Notwithstanding SOs 114 and 118, the members of the Judicial Panel shall initially be appointed for a term of four years, and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years.
 14. **Legal Questions Committee** 16
Convener, Vice-Convener and 10 members appointed by the General Assembly, the Clerks of Assembly, the Procurator and the Solicitor of the Church.
 15. **Life and Work Editorial Advisory Committee** 9
Convener and 7 members together with the Principal Clerk as an *ex officio* member. The members should represent a wide range of theological opinion and perspectives, with an interest and particular gifts to offer the Committee, for example journalism, magazine production, former contributors. The Committee may co-opt members with particular gifts or information.
 16. **Ministries Appeal Panel** 5
Convener, Vice-Convener and 3 members appointed by the General Assembly. At least 1 member shall be legally qualified, at least 1 shall be a minister and at least 1 shall be an elder.
 17. **Nomination Committee** 20
Convener, Vice-Convener and 18 members appointed by the General Assembly. Notwithstanding SO 118, no member of the Committee, having served a term of 4 years, shall be eligible for re-election until after a period of 4 years, except for special cause shown. The Convener of the Committee shall be for 3 years.
 18. **Nomination of the Moderator Committee** . Up to 15
Up to 8 ministers and deacons and up to 7 elders appointed by the General Assembly, to create a Committee which is representative of the diversity of the whole Church. The Committee is to be convened by the immediate past-Moderator of the

- General Assembly, failing which by another former Moderator of the General Assembly.
19. **Personnel Appeal Group** 12
12 members appointed by the General Assembly with the Solicitor of the Church as Secretary, each appointed to serve a four-year term with the option of appointment for a further four-year term. Members shall not include any former or current members of staff of any of the Church's Employing Agencies (including the Social Care Council), nor any current Council or Committee member.
20. **Registration of Ministries Committee** 5
Convener, Vice-Convener and 3 members. 1 member is appointed by the Legal Questions Committee, 1 member by the Faith Nurture Forum and 3 members by the General Assembly. The Convener and Vice-Convener are appointed by the General Assembly from the General Assembly appointees. One or other of the Clerks to the General Assembly and the Secretary to the Faith Nurture Forum attend the Committee *ex officio* in an advisory capacity but are not members. The Committee is clerked by a person from the Faith Nurture Forum who is not a member of the Committee.
21. **Safeguarding Appeal Panel** 6
A Panel of 6 persons appointed by the General Assembly, being persons with Safeguarding and other relevant experience, and including at least two persons who shall be qualified to practise as lawyers or who are experienced in the law and practice of the Church, and at least two ministers. None of the Panel shall be a current or former employee of any of the Employing Agencies or a current member of the Safeguarding Committee.
22. **Safeguarding Committee** 11
Convener, Vice-Convener and 6 members appointed by the General Assembly, 1 representative (voting member) from and appointed by each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum, the Social Care Council, the Solicitor of the Church, the National Adviser (Head of Safeguarding) as Secretary to the Committee, the Chief Officer and up to 4 members co-opted by the Committee for their expertise. For the avoidance of doubt it is declared that only the following persons will be entitled to vote: Convener, Vice-Convener, the six Assembly appointed members and the three representatives from each of the Faith Nurture Forum, the Faith Impact Forum and the Social Care Council.
23. **Social Care Council** 12
Convener, Vice-Convener and 9 members appointed by the General Assembly, with the Chief Executive Officer of CrossReach as a non-voting *ex officio* member. At least one member shall be a Church of Scotland minister.
24. **Theological Forum** 13
Convener, Vice-Convener and 11 members appointed by the General Assembly, the membership being selected to provide an appropriate balance of (a) ministers of Word and Sacrament, (b) members of academic staff from the Divinity Schools (or equivalent) of Institutions of Higher Education in Scotland, (c) elders and (d) members drawn from the wider membership of the Church chosen for their particular expertise, experience or provenance.
25. **Trustees of the Housing and Loan Fund** Up to 11
Up to 3 ministers and 1 member appointed by the Faith Nurture Forum, who having served a term of 4 years shall be eligible for re-appointment for a second 4 year term;

Up to 4 appointed by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Trustees, who having served a term of 4 years shall be eligible for re-appointment for a second 4 year term;

Up to 3 appointed by the Baird Trust, for a term of office determined by that Trust.

Any Trustee (other than one appointed by the Baird Trust) may serve for up to a further two four-year terms if elected also as Chairperson or Depute Chairperson.
- (b) **MEMBERS**
- 114. Period of Service.** All Members of each of the Standing Committees shall retire after serving for four years, save for the Faith Nurture Forum and the Faith Impact Forum where the period is three years.
- 115. Representatives.** Bodies entitled to appoint representatives shall be permitted to make changes in their representation for special reasons in any year.
- 116. Non-attendance.** The name of a Member shall be removed from any Standing or Special Committee which has met three times or oftener between 1 June and 1 March unless he or she has attended one-third of the meetings held within that period. Attendance at meetings of Sub-Committees shall for this purpose be reckoned as equivalent to attendance at the meeting of the Committee itself.
- 117. Replacement.** When a Minister, Elder, or Member of any Standing or Special Committee is unable to accept the appointment, or where from any cause vacancies occur in Committees during the year, that Committee, after consultation with the Convener of the Nomination Committee, may appoint a Member to take the place of the Member whose retirement has caused the vacancy. All such appointments, if for a longer period than one year, shall be reported for confirmation through the Nomination Committee to the General Assembly.
- 118. Re-election.** A Member retiring from a Council or Committee by rotation, or having his or her name removed for non-attendance, shall not be eligible for re-election to that Council or Committee until the expiry of one year thereafter, unless the Assembly are satisfied, on the Report of the Nomination Committee, on information submitted to it by the Council or Committee concerned, that there are circumstances which make re-election desirable; but where more than one member is due to retire then not more than one-half of the retiring members be so re-elected. No Member shall normally serve for more than two consecutive terms of office. (If possible 20 per cent of the Assembly appointed members of Councils or Committees should be under the age of 35 at the time of their appointment). A Member appointed in the room of one deceased, resigned or removed, or of one appointed as Convener or Vice-Convener, shall serve for the remainder of the period for which the person was appointed whose place he or she takes, and on retirement shall be eligible for re-election if he or she has not served for more than two years.
- A retiring Convener shall be eligible for re-election as an additional member of the Council or Committee

concerned to serve for one year only immediately following tenure of office as Convener.

119. Eligibility. No person shall be a Member of more than three Councils or Committees at the same time. Appointments *ex officio* shall not be reckoned in this number. This rule shall not apply to those for whom the Nomination Committee is prepared to give special reason to the Assembly for their appointments to more than three Committees.

The Nomination Committee shall not nominate for Committees any of its own number except in special circumstances which must be stated to the Assembly.

120. Secretaries and Deputies. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of each Council and Committee to attend the meetings thereof, to provide information and advice as requested, and to provide a deputy for any meeting that he or she cannot attend. Members of staff shall not have the right to vote at any meeting.

121. Expenses. Expenses incurred by Members of Committee, consisting of travel charges and a sum for maintenance when required shall be defrayed.

(c) CONVENERS AND VICE-CONVENERS

122. Appointment.

- (i) Conveners and Vice-Conveners of Councils and Committees shall be appointed by the Assembly.
- (ii) Conveners of Standing Committees other than the legal bodies shall hold office for not more than four consecutive years (in the case of the Nomination Committee, Faith Nurture Forum and Faith Impact Forum, three consecutive years) and Vice-Conveners of Standing Committees other than the legal bodies shall hold office for not more than three consecutive years, unless the Assembly are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which make the reappointment of Conveners and Vice-Conveners desirable. The period of reappointment shall be for one year only. If at the time of their appointment they are already members of the Council or Committee another Member shall be appointed in their stead for the remainder of the period of their original appointment.
- (iii) Conveners of the legal bodies (meaning the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly, the Discipline Tribunal, the Judicial Commission, the Judicial Panel, the Ministries Appeal Panel, the Mission Plan Review Group, the Personnel Appeal Group and the Safeguarding Appeal Group) shall initially be appointed for a term of four years and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of four years. Vice-Conveners of the legal bodies shall initially be appointed for a term of three years and shall be eligible for reappointment for further terms of three years.

123. Replacement. In the event of the death, resignation, consistent non-attendance or supervening incapacity of the Convener or Vice-Convener of any Council or Committee, the body concerned, after consultation with the Convener of the Nomination Committee, may appoint an Interim Convener or Interim Vice-Convener, as the case may be. Such appointment shall be reported by the Committee to the General Assembly and the Assembly shall make such order as the situation may require.

(d) NOMINATION COMMITTEE

124. List of Nominations. The Nomination Committee shall include in its Report its list of nominations to be submitted to the Assembly. The Report, so prepared, shall be included in the Volume of Reports issued to Members of Assembly.

125. Nomination of Conveners. When the Convener or Vice-Convener of a Committee or Council is completing his or her term of office the Council or Committee shall be invited by the Convener of the Nomination Committee to suggest the name of one who may be appointed in succession. The Nomination Committee shall satisfy itself that an open and transparent process has been followed in identifying the Convener or Vice-Convener so suggested.

126. Conveners to Attend Meeting. Conveners of Standing Committees shall be entitled to be present at meetings of the Nomination Committee when the composition of their respective Committees is under consideration, but not to vote.

127. Amendment to Report. No amendment to the Report of the Nomination Committee shall be in order of which due notice has not been given.

All notices of proposed amendments on the Report, including such as propose the omission or insertion of any name or names, or the addition of a name or names where the full number eligible has not been nominated by the Committee, must be given in to the Clerks before midday on the third day prior to the closing of the Assembly, signed by the Member or Members giving them.

All such notices of proposed amendment shall, with the names of those signing them, be circulated in the "Assembly Papers" issued on the second day prior to the closing of the General Assembly, and on the morning of the day the Report is to be called for.

VIII. ALTERATION AND SUSPENSION

128. Alteration. Any proposal for alteration of Standing Orders shall be either (a) on the Report of the Legal Questions Committee and included in the volume of Reports or (b) by Overture and the subject of at least one day's notice in the "Assembly Papers". This Standing Order shall not apply to SO 113 which may be amended by the Principal Clerk in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly.

129. Suspension. It shall always be competent for the Assembly, on the Motion of any Commissioner and on cause shown, summarily to dispense with the observance of the Standing Orders, or any part of them, in any particular case: provided that such Motion shall receive the support of not less than two-thirds of those voting on the question when put from the Chair, and that such suspension shall not contravene any Act of Assembly.

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS FOR THE HYBRID GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

The Standing Orders in their current form shall apply save for amendments as follows which shall, where there is any conflict with an existing Standing Order, apply in preference:

Generally: references to "laid on the table" shall include "circulated electronically in advance".

New Standing Order 8– Assembly Hub for online attendees:

All Commissioners, Members *ex officio*, Corresponding Members, Delegates, Visitors (if any) and

Youth Representatives attending the General Assembly online shall require to use the Assembly Hub software application (the “Assembly Hub”) to participate in the General Assembly as set out below. All such persons shall be supplied in advance with login details to the Assembly Hub and training on its use shall be made available. In particular, the Assembly Hub shall be used by online attendees throughout the General Assembly to do the following:

- to follow the business of the General Assembly, read sections of deliverance and vote on them;
- to submit notices of motion (to amend an existing section of deliverance, to propose a counter-motion to an existing section of deliverance, or to propose a new motion);
- to second a notice of motion; and
- to indicate a request to speak (ask a question, make a comment or raise a point of order).

New Standing Order 8A – In Person/Online

Participation: Commissioners, Delegates, Corresponding Members and Youth Representatives may participate in person or online at the General Assembly of 2022. A person shall be designated in advance by the commissioning Presbytery as either an in person or an online attendee for the entire duration of the Assembly. No change to a person’s status as an in person or online attendee shall be possible after 15 April 2022, save only in the following circumstances: if an in person attendee becomes ill and unable to attend the Assembly in person, they shall advise the Office of the General Assembly as soon as possible by emailing pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk. When doing so they may request to change to being an online attendee and the Office of the General Assembly shall enable this if possible.

Amendments to specific Standing Orders

Additional wording: Standing Order 26 – Acts of

Assembly: A list of proposed Acts of Assembly shall be circulated electronically in advance in the Assembly Paper.

Additional wording: Standing Orders 45– Questions on Reports & 46 – Questions requiring Notice

[If attending in person]: If such a person has a device enabling them to do so, they may use the Assembly Hub as in the subsequent paragraph. Alternatively an in person attendee may use one of the stations placed in the Hall to enter a “request to speak” against the relevant section(s) of deliverance.

[If attending online]: Commissioners, Delegates, Youth Representatives and Corresponding Members who wish to ask a question or to make a comment on a Report should use the Assembly Hub to enter a “request to speak” against the relevant section(s) of deliverance.

Additional wording: Standing Order 89 – Notice of Motion

[If attending in person]: If such a person has a device enabling them to do so, they may use the Assembly Hub as in the subsequent paragraph. Alternatively an in person attendee may email a duly completed notice of motion form to the Clerks of Assembly using pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk, or may complete and return to the Clerks at the top table or to the Assembly Office, a paper notice of motion form.

[If attending online]: Commissioners, Members and Youth Representatives should use the Assembly Hub to register a notice of motion in advance in respect of the relevant section(s) of deliverance.

[For all attendees]: All persons entitled to do so are asked to register a notice of motion before the start of the relevant Standing Committee’s business slot, i.e. before debate on the relevant Report starts.

Additional wording: Standing Order 105 Taking the Vote:

[For all attendees] Quick approval of business: The Moderator shall have discretion to gauge approval, without need formally to vote, of any section of deliverance by combining the following indications and forming a view: having taken into account any “requests to speak” which have been registered, they may ask in person commissioners to stamp their feet or stand and at the same time may ask online commissioners to “raise a hand” on Zoom to indicate approval of a section of deliverance. If following use of this procedure any commissioner requests a formal vote, then the Moderator shall call for an electronic vote to take place.

Where an electronic vote is used, it shall proceed as follows:

[If attending in person]: An in person attendee shall vote using a Bluetooth handset supplied to them at the start of the Assembly. Voting for such persons via the Assembly Hub will be disabled.

[If attending online] An online attendee shall use the Assembly Hub to vote. In the event of a failure in the technology operating the Assembly Hub, online attendees shall vote using Zoom Polls or shall use such other voting mechanism as may be prescribed at the time by the Procedure Committee.

[For all attendees]: The votes from both from in-person attendance and the Assembly Hub shall be added together and the result shall be announced by the Moderator. The voting figures shall be minuted where the Moderator, in his or her discretion, specifically requests this, or where the Clerks of Assembly decide that it would be appropriate to do so. In no circumstances shall a second vote be taken on a matter which has already been the subject of a vote by electronic voting.

Additional wording: Standing Orders 106-110 – Dissents

[If attending in person]: If such a person has a device enabling them to do so, they may email their dissent as in the subsequent paragraph. Alternatively, an in person attendee may sign the list provided by the Assembly Office.

[If attending online]: A dissent shall be entered or adhered to by sending an email to: pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk with the subject line stating “Dissent against....[insert name of Standing Committee and number of relevant section of deliverance]”. To be recorded in the minute, any such email must be received by the Clerks by the close of the last session of the Assembly.

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