

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF  
THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 20 MAY 2015

*At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, the 20th day of May 2015 years, at 9.15 am, Session V.*

The General Assembly did again convene and was constituted with prayer.

The minutes of Session III being printed and in the hands of members, were submitted and approved.

**MINISTRIES COUNCIL**

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Ministries Council which were given in by the Rev Neil Dougall, Convener.

*It was moved and seconded-*

**The General Assembly:**

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Reports.</li> <li>2. Commend and encourage action by ministers, congregations and Presbyteries in promoting the discernment of vocation to the ministries of the Church and instruct the Council to continue to resource Vocations Champions in their work.</li> <li>3. Instruct the Council to continue its exploration and development of Pioneer Ministry, including the development of appropriate</li> </ol> | <p>education and training, and report to the General Assembly 2016.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Note the decision of the Council to initiate, monitor and evaluate up to five pilot Pioneer Ministry posts and instruct the Council to report on progress to the General Assembly 2017.</li> <li>5. Pass an Act amending Act X, 2004 on Selection and Training for Full-time Ministry (as amended) as set out in Appendix 3.</li> <li>6. Welcome the 'Ministers in Training' pilot offering further flexibility to candidates in training for the full-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament and instruct the Council to continue its evaluation and development of this option for training.</li> <li>7. Affirm the Council's action in offering additional financial support to Candidates in training and instruct the Council to investigate further ways in which this may be enhanced.</li> <li>8. Instruct the Council to continue its work on resilience in ministry and encourage Ministers and Deacons to participate in the ongoing research.</li> <li>9. Adopt the Regulations on Remuneration and Reimbursement set out in Appendix 1.</li> </ol> |
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10. In the light of the Council's decision to provide Church of Scotland domain-name e-mail addresses for all Ministers, Ordained Local Ministers, Auxiliary Ministers and Ministries Development Staff, instruct all Councils and Committees, as far as is possible, in future to use these addresses as the primary means of communication.
11. *Section 11 was considered under the debate on the Report of the Committee on Classifying Returns to Overtures.*
12. Congratulate Place for Hope on achieving independent status as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation and instruct the Council to maintain its support for and close working relationship with the new body.
13. Instruct Presbyteries to ensure that all Parish Ministers within their bounds respond to requests from the Safeguarding Office to complete PVG checks in accordance with Act VII 2011 (as amended).
14. Affirm the expansion of the work of Chance to Thrive as a joint venture of the Council and the General Trustees and instruct the Council to report to the General Assembly on the ongoing development of the process.
15. Welcome the developing partnership with the PCUSA in the work of Young Adult Volunteers and Volunteering Vocations and instruct the Council to report on its development to the General Assembly 2016.
16. Instruct the Council to complete its work on the development of a Ministerial Development Review process for Parish Ministers and the mapping out of a programme of Continuing Ministerial Development by the General Assembly 2016.
17. Affirm the work on Dementia Friendly Churches offered in conjunction with CrossReach and instruct the Council to continue its delivery and development.
18. Pass an Act on Presbytery Mission Initiatives as set out in Appendix 6.
19. Pass an Act amending Act VII, 2003 on Appraisal and Adjustment (as amended) as set out in Appendix 7 and also to pass an Act amending Act I, 2014 on Appeals (as amended) as set out in Appendix 8.
20. Affirm the work of the Go For It fund and instruct the Council to explore with Presbyteries how congregations within their bounds can further use the fund to support the aims of the Decade for Ministry.
21. Encourage each Kirk Session and congregation to consider how they can use the Go For It fund as a resource in their planning for mission.
22. Instruct Presbyteries whose Presbytery Plans contain Guardianships to ensure that each has an agreed Basis of Guardianship as set out in section 5.5.
23. Instruct the Ministries and Mission and Discipleship Councils to report to the General Assembly of 2016 on the number, diversity, and spread of new ecclesial communities in the Church of Scotland.
24. Instruct the Ministries and Mission and Discipleship Councils to work together with Presbyteries and congregations in exploring the possibility of hosting Fresh Expressions Vision Days, Mission Shaped Introduction, and Mission Shaped Ministry Courses.
25. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions, in publicising such events, to consider making funding available to enable the widest participation.
26. Pass an Act amending Act IX, 2011 on Ordained Local Ministry as set out in Appendix 1.
27. Instruct the Council to prepare a policy for Shared Parental Leave for Parish Ministers and report to the General Assembly 2016.
28. Instruct the Council, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, to review the provision for Ministers

laid out in Act VI, 1984 and report to the General Assembly 2016.

29. Note the pilot work supporting congregations wishing to engage in a path of refocussing and renewal and instruct the Council to work together with the Panel on Review and Reform in implementing and evaluating this project.
30. Pass an Act amending Act IX 2002 on Admission and Re-Admission of Ministers (as amended) as set out in the Appendix.

*It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 3 and renumber:*

Invite ministers to think about wearing their clerical collar more often to act as an advert of the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

*On a vote being taken For or Against it carried For.*

*It was moved and seconded as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 3 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council to review the upper age limit to have completed training for all ordained national ministries and report back to the General Assembly of 2016.

*On a vote being taken For or Against it carried Against.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 5 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council, in partnership with the Mission and Discipleship Council and other appropriate Councils, to find ways that are

creative to release the evangelists within our congregations as part of the Decade of Ministry.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 6:-*

*Add at the end ', taking into account any potential loss of the valuable and wide-ranging experience that can be gained by undertaking training with different supervisors in various settings'.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 7 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council to explore with PCUSA and seminaries eg Princeton, Columbia, Duke etc, the possibility of graduate students filling vacancies in parish ministry with the Church of Scotland, and to report to the General Assembly of 2016.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 7:-*

*Add at the end ', including the prospect of assigning a fractional equivalent of the ministerial stipend to candidates during their training course'.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 10 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council to consider the implications of the Regulations on Remuneration and Reimbursement for those engaging in bi-vocational, post-sharing and/or part-stipendiary Parish Ministry posts and report to the 2016 General Assembly.

*It was moved and seconded as an amendment of Section 10:-*

*Add at the end 'and instruct the Council to investigate the development of the e-mail system to circulate details of vacant charges to all ministers'.*

*On a vote being taken For or Against it carried For.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 11 and renumber:*

Note the ministry carried out by retired ministers in locum situations and explore how locum ministers might be included in all communications from the central Church, including the provision of the Year Book.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 17:-*

*Add at the end 'in consultation with the Church Art and Architecture Committee'.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 19:-*

*Amend to read:*

Pass an Act Amending Act VII, 2003 on Appraisal and Adjustment (as amended) as set out in Appendix 7 with the amendment of section 1 to change "Planning Criteria" to "Planning Principles" and also to pass an Act amending Act I, 2014 on Appeals (as amended) as set out in Appendix 8.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 20 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council to review the reasons why Presbytery Planning decisions come to appeal and consider whether some form of provision for a final determination, by independent party or through some other means, is necessary to facilitate effective

Presbytery Planning, and report to the General Assembly in 2017.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 23 and renumber:*

Instruct the Council to explore increasing the Guardianship Allowance to bring it into line with the Vacancy Allowance.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 23 and renumber:*

Encourage the Council to revise Act XXIII 1969 on Ordination of Missionaries for Work among Deaf People and bring the revised Act to the General Assembly of 2016.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 24 and renumber:*

Welcome the appointment of the Rev Rosie Addis and other recent initiatives in the D/deaf community and encourage the Council, in light of consideration of the British Sign Language (Scotland) Bill, to maintain and extend its commitment to ministry through the medium of British Sign Language, as resources allow.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 30 (Section 6 of the Supplementary Report's Deliverance):*

Recognising that constructive change takes place when all who are involved have ownership of it, instruct the Council in co-operation with the Council of Assembly, the Panel on Review and Reform, the Mission and Discipleship Council and Presbyteries to engage with congregations

to prepare them for the journey of change which the Decade of Ministry will bring.

*The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.*

Mr Dougall on his retiral as Convener was thanked by the Moderator for his noteworthy service to the Council and the General Assembly.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.42 pm until 2 pm.

### **SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL**

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Social Care Council which were given in by Dr Sally Bonnar, Convener.

*It was moved and seconded-*

#### **The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Report.
2. Support and promote the dual role of the Council to-
  - a) resource the Church in the specialist area of social care;
  - b) oversee and govern the work of CrossReach as the Church of Scotland national provider of social care services.
3. Instruct the Council to appoint a Social Care Mission Officer to take forward the work of the Council in resourcing the Church and bring a development plan to the 2016 Assembly in order to re-imagine the social care efforts of the whole Church.
4. Instruct Presbyteries and local churches to engage with CrossReach in two main areas of support; Prayer and Getting Alongside and instruct those presbyteries that do not already do so to include a special focus on

their agendas on the work of the Council.

5. Note the challenges to long term financial planning in complying with the terms of local authority framework agreements and invite the Moderator to write to the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities on this matter.
6. Note the urgent need to implement an Income Generation Strategy and encourage Church of Scotland members, in addition to their normal church giving, to support CrossReach as their chosen charity.
7. Note the importance of CrossReach Week in promoting the social care mission of the church and encourage the whole church to celebrate CrossReach and Social Care Sunday on Sunday 15 November 2015.
8. Welcome the partnership working with other Councils and Committees and urge the Council to continue to identify areas of mutual interest and collaborative working.
9. Note with disappointment that the funding received from funding agencies does not enable the Social Care Council to meet the Scottish Living Wage for all its employees.
10. Welcome the additional funding made available from the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Council of Assembly to address the issue of low pay for CrossReach employees.
11. Support the Council and other agencies of the Church as they encourage funding agencies to continue to recognise the requirement to meet the costs of the Scottish LivingWage in the funding of services commissioned.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 4:-*

*Delete 'instruct' and substitute 'urge' in both instances.*

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the Deliverance:-*

*Add a new Section 9:*

Commend to all in the Church the role of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenants and encourage all who become aware of forthcoming celebrations such as Diamond Wedding anniversaries or 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays to contact their local Lieutenancy Office for assistance with these celebrations.

*The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.*

### **CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD**

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Church of Scotland Guild which were given in by Mrs Kay Keith, Convener.

*It was moved and seconded-*

#### **The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Report.
2. Wish the Guild well as it enters a new three year strategy entitled "Be Bold, Be Strong!"
3. Congratulate the Guild on the success of the Project Partnership Scheme over the 2012-15 period.
4. Offer prayerful support to the Guild and its new Partnership Projects in the three years 2015-18.

5. Welcome the on-going work of the Guild in many areas of the Church's work.
6. Welcome the Guild's Action Plan and commend it to the whole Church.
7. Instruct the Guild to report on the progress of the Action Plan to the General Assembly of 2016.
8. Affirm the place of the Guild of today within the structures of the Church of Scotland and commit to support the work of the Guild at local, regional and national levels.
9. Instruct all Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to discuss the Action Plan and to consider their response to it.

*It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of Section 4:-*

*Add at the end 'and encourage all Presbyteries, Kirk Sessions and congregations to adopt a pro-active approach to their support of this work.'*

*The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.*

Mrs Keith on her retiral as Convener was thanked by the Moderator for her noteworthy service to the Guild and the General Assembly.

The General Assembly adjourned at 3.39 pm to meet again in this Hall tomorrow at 9.15 am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL  
EDINBURGH, 20 May 2015, 3.39 pm