

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

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 21 MAY 2015

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, the 21st day of May 2015 years, at 9.15 am, Session VI.

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

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

BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Business Committee which was given in by the Rev Dr Derek Browning, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The General Assembly:

Appoint the following Committee to Nominate the Moderator:

Name	Votes Cast	
<i>Ministers and Deacons:</i>		
Rev Dr Karen Campbell	(2)	199
Rev James Dewar	(5)	183
Rev Norman Smith	(21)	182
Mr Bill Wishart DCS	(58)	203
Rev Julie Woods	(101)	161
Rev Eleanor McMahon	(156)	250
Rev James Stewart	(505)	188
Rev Dr John Ferguson	(549)	215

Elders:

Dr Hazel Hastie	(38)
Mrs Isobel Hunter	(106)
Mr Ross Hyslop	(208)
Mr David Alexander	(342)
Mr John Haston	(417)
Mrs Ella Gill	(645)
Mr Ian Russell	(709)

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 Gordon Craig, Convener.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Reaffirm the support of the Church of Scotland for all who serve in Her Majesty's Forces as Chaplains, and thank them for their outstanding service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel and their families.
3. Acknowledge with particular gratitude the dedicated service of Chaplains on operations and the immeasurable support shown by their own families.

4. Commend to the prayers of all members of the Church of Scotland not just our Chaplains but all who serve in HM Forces and their families.
5. Commend to eligible ministers of the Church consideration of service as a Chaplain to HM Forces – Regular, Reserve and Cadet Forces.

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

Add a new Section 5 and renumber:

Commend to the prayers of the Church and to the practical support of local congregations, all service personnel and their families in the transition back into civilian life, in the midst of the challenges they may face.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The Moderator addressed those Chaplains to Her Majesty's Forces who were present.

Major-General James Michael Cowan CBE DSO, the General Officer Commanding 3 (UK) Division and Regimental Colonel of Royal Regiment of Scotland, was then invited by the Moderator to address the General Assembly.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Mission and Discipleship Council which was given in by the Rev Colin Sinclair, Convener.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to raise awareness of online mission resources by having

www.resourcingmission.org.uk as a link on their Presbytery and congregational websites.

3. Commend Starters for Sunday and welcome its increased range and resources for special occasions.
4. Encourage congregations to make use of the resources and articles on worship produced by Different Voices.
5. Encourage all congregations to explore the theme of "Living Stones" through the use of the new Pray Now publication.
6. Encourage congregations and Presbyteries to make use of the classical worship streamed events, held at Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh.
7. Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to consider how they might develop training for elders using the Learn: Eldership publication.
8. Instruct Kirk Sessions to consider how their congregations can engage with the upcoming issues of Learn publications relating to Children's Faith, New Communicants and Office-Bearers.
9. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to send a representative to the Learn: Learning Disabilities Conference.
10. Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to study the "Learning Disabilities Fact-Finding Report" and consider an appropriate response.
11. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to send representatives to attend the "Going for Growth" Summer School event.
12. Encourage all congregations to promote "Adventures in Prayer" events.
13. Welcome the report of the "Life and Work" Review group, noting the findings and instructing the Council to implement a business action plan to meet the challenges of a new communications environment, thank and discharge the Review Group.

14. Welcome the actions taken by CARTA to assume a more pro-active role and improve the service it provides, thank and discharge the members of the Review Group.
15. Note the report on the future funding of the National Youth Assembly.
16. Encourage congregations and Presbyteries to send young people aged 17-25 to the National Youth Assembly and to consider supporting them by meeting the cost of attendance and travel.
17. Encourage congregations and Presbyteries to make young people aware of the financial help that can be provided when applying online.
18. Encourage all Presbyteries to fill their allocated place for a youth delegate to the General Assembly.
19. Commend to Presbyteries and congregations the Mission Forum online group study resources focusing on the topic of Mission and Older People.
20. Instruct congregations to consider the use of Future Focus as a helpful tool at appropriate points in their congregational life.
21. Commend to congregations and Presbyteries the new website www.evangelismideas.org.

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

Add a new Section 3 and renumber:

Instruct the Council to develop its engagement with the rural church and bring to the General Assembly of 2016 a report detailing how it will help to resource the rural church to thrive, including the consideration of a rural development worker.

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

Add a new Section 3 and renumber:

Encourage congregations to be equipped "to give a reason for the hope that is in us with gentleness" (1 Peter 3).

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

Add a new Section 6 and renumber:

Instruct the Council of Assembly, in consultation with the Mission and Discipleship Council and the Presbytery Clerks' Forum, to bring to the General Assembly of 2016 an outline of a programme that would allow a Presbytery to review, if it so chose, its structure, function and mission.

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

Add a new Section 9 and renumber:

Urge Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to make use of the Learn publication 'How will our children have faith?' to stimulate conversation about the place of children and young people in our church today.

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

Add a new Section 9 and renumber:

Instruct the Council to pursue ways of encouraging and inspiring congregations to release members into new forms of church, including support of pioneer ministry.

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

Add a new Section 11 and renumber:

Urge the Council to consider with other Councils and Committees the forming of a Disabilities Task Group to support local

churches in the inclusion of people with disabilities and to facilitate networking and sharing of relevant information.

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

Add a new Section 14 and renumber:

Commend the Life and Work Review, and in particular the suggested use of new media, especially YouTube, and encourage the Council, when compiling the business action plan, to consult appropriate groups.

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

Add a new Section 15 and renumber:

Instruct the Council to enter into discussion with the Ministries Council to consider the possibility of recognising Youth Ministry as a strand of the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, and in due course to consider whether the Ministries Council should take responsibility for the assessment, training and ongoing support of Youth Ministers; bringing a report to the General Assembly of 2016.

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

Add a new Section 15 and renumber:

Commend the Congregational Learning Team of the Mission and Discipleship Council for the success of the 'Communities of Faith' conference in February 2015, and urge them to continue to develop provision of training for those that work with children and young people and, in conjunction with this, urge Kirk Sessions to encourage and enable those in their congregations to make full use of such provisions.

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

Add a new Section 15 and renumber:

Instruct the Council to look into ways of raising the profile of children's and youth work such as exploring the possibility of a year of children and young people in connection with the Youth Link Scotland Year of the Young Person 2018.

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

Add a new Section 17 and renumber:

Commend the work of The Faith Mission in communicating the Gospel to young people, especially in the Highlands, noting that next year will mark 130 years since its inception.

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

Add a new Section 19 and renumber:

Instruct the Council to work with the Assembly Arrangements Committee to investigate how the Assembly can accommodate those Presbyteries who have more than one willing Youth Representative to attend the General Assembly, and report back with a proposed solution to the General Assembly in 2016.

It was moved, seconded as an amendment of Section 20:-

Delete 'Instruct congregations' and substitute 'Urge Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions'

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.30 pm until 2 pm.

NATIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for a Report from the 2014 National Youth Assembly which was given in by Miss Rachel Hutcheson, Moderator of the National Youth Assembly.

Questions were addressed to Youth Representatives who had attended the National Youth Assembly.

The Moderator expressed appreciation to Miss Hutcheson for her contribution to the Youth Assembly.

THEOLOGICAL FORUM

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Theological Forum which was given in by the Very Rev Professor Iain Torrance, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

JOINT REPORT OF THE THEOLOGICAL FORUM AND THE LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee to the Committee on Returns to Overtures which was given in by the Very Rev Professor Iain Torrance, Convener, Theological Forum, and the Rev Dr Alan Hamilton, Convener, Legal Questions Committee.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

2. Pass an Act amending the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships Act (Act I 2015) as set out in Appendix 1.

It was moved and seconded as a counter-motion to Section 2:-

Defer consideration of the amending Act and remit consideration of same sex marriage to the Theological Forum and instruct it to report to the General Assembly of 2017.

On a vote being taken there voted for the motion 213 and for the counter-motion 205 and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of Section 2:-

Amend to read:

Approve as an Overture the Act amending the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships Act 2015 as set out in Appendix 1 and transmit the same to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, directing that returns be sent to the Principal Clerk by 31st December 2015.

On a vote being taken For or Against the amendment, there voted For 215 and Against 195, and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

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

Add a new Section 3:

For the avoidance of doubt, agree that, until such time as this issue is considered by a future Assembly, the entitlement of a minister or deacon who was ordained or inducted or appointed before 31 May 2009 to remain as a minister or deacon on the same terms and with the same status as any other minister or deacon shall not be prejudiced because he or she is in a same

sex marriage. Nevertheless he or she may not be inducted or appointed to a congregation the Kirk Session of which has not decided to depart in terms of section 3 of the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnership Act (Act I 2015).'

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

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The General Assembly adjourned at 5.40 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, 21 May 2015, 5.40 pm