

## The Guild



### CONSTITUTION AND GUIDELINES

The Guild constitution was revised and accepted at the meeting of Presbyterian Council National Committee representatives in October 2009. It was approved by the General Assembly of 2010 and came into effect on 1 June 2010.

The constitution is shown here, but is available, along with helpful guidelines, price £1.50. If you would like to order a copy or ask any questions, please [email](#).

### Constitution

#### AIM

The Church of Scotland Guild is a movement within the Church of Scotland which invites and encourages both women and men to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and enables them to express their faith in worship, prayer and action.

### 2 MEMBERSHIP

of the Guild is open to all who accept the Aim.

### 3 STRUCTURE

of the Guild is as follows:

3.1 Congregational Groups.

3.2 Presbyterian Councils which unite local groups within a Presbytery area, and which elect representatives to serve on National Committees.

3.3 National Committees, responsible for policy and final decision-making, subject to section 14 below.

### 4 CONGREGATIONAL GROUPS

4.1 Congregational groups are formed within the family of a local congregation with the agreement of the Minister and Kirk Session and are subject to their jurisdiction and care. Each group elects its own leadership team to run the group in whatever way is appropriate for the members. It is a requirement that there is a majority of Church of Scotland members or adherents on this team. Short periods of leadership are acceptable and no one should be expected to remain on the team for longer than three years. Members may expect to be encouraged by their leadership team to share responsibility for organising meetings, helped by the current themes and resources of the Guild.

4.2 Each group is registered with the Guild's national administration office, which also needs the name and address of a contact member, and of a treasurer, from each group, to whom information can be sent. The group must ensure that the financial regulations (see relevant section of Going for Growth) are observed.

4.3 An annual fee is due from each member and is paid to the Guild's national administration office. This is the main source of operating income for the Guild.

4.4 Congregational groups may wish to adopt a project or projects nominated by the Guild. When such projects are chosen the group would benefit from having a Project Partner (or more than one), who becomes part of the leadership team, to maintain interest in the selected projects, enabling members to receive relevant information and progress reports.

4.5 Congregational groups may choose to raise money for their project(s) and for congregational needs. If money is to be raised for charities or causes outwith the Church of Scotland, this must be made clear *before* the money is collected. (See relevant section of Going for Growth)

## 5 PRESBYTERIAL COUNCILS

5.1 Councils are an important part of the Guild. Not only do they provide inspiration and stimulus to the groups, but from each Council one member will be elected to serve at national level (see 7 below). Normally this person should not be the current Council Convener, but automatically becomes a member of the leadership team (see relevant section of "Going for Growth").

5.2 Each Council is registered with the Guild's national administration office, which also needs the name and address of a contact member, and of a treasurer, from each Council, to whom information can be sent. The Council must ensure that the financial regulations (see relevant section of Going for Growth) are observed.

5.3 All members are welcome to attend Presbyterial Council meetings. Should the Council be required to take a vote on any issue, each local group appoints two voting members.

Councils aim to provide support and encouragement and it is open to them to find the best ways in which to do this. They are encouraged to set up a process of consultation with the groups so that needs, suggestions and ideas may be responded to

a) through local action

b) through representation at national level.

**Councils are free to organise themselves to suit local needs, but should they feel the need of a structure, the following *guidelines* are suggested:**

A leadership team to assist the **Convener** and **Treasurer** to oversee the work of the Council including:

a **Project Co-ordinator**, to promote support for the Guild Projects at local level;

an **Education Representative** and an **Ecumenical Relations Representative**, who are encouraged to promote activities within the Council and with local groups, and to provide a link with the Church of Scotland's work in these fields.

5.4 Each Presbyterian Council member appointed to a particular responsibility should seek an invitation to link with the appropriate committee of Presbytery.

5.5 No member should be expected to serve longer than three years on Presbyterian Council.

## **6 CO-OPTION**

National Executive, National Committees and Presbyterian Councils may co-opt any member or adherent of any branch of the Christian Church, up to a maximum of five, and for one year only, whether a member of the Guild or not, if such a person is willing and able to contribute significantly to any particular aspect of the work undertaken by the Committee or Council. These co-opted members have no vote.

## **7 NATIONAL COMMITTEES**

Each Presbyterian Council elects a member to serve at national level and to encourage consultation through the Councils. These elections take place on a three year rota basis, one third of Councils being invited each year to nominate a representative. At national level there is an Executive Committee and four Committees to advise it and monitor the administration of the Guild. These National Committees are therefore:

- 1 Executive
- 2 Finance and General Purposes
- 3 Marketing and Publicity
- 4 Programmes and Resources
- 5 Projects and Topics

One third of Council representatives serve on the National Executive Committee and the remainder on the National Committees, 2-5 as listed above. An appointments Sub-committee meets annually to allocate newly nominated Council Representatives to the vacancies on the National

Committees 1-5, taking account of relevant qualifications, experience and interests.

In addition, the National Executive Committee may appoint a working group with a particular remit for engaging with younger people.

These Committees elect their own Conveners who also serve on the National Executive. At the end of each year one member from each Committee is appointed to serve on the National Executive for that member's remaining year(s) of office.

Normally no member is expected to serve longer than three years at national level.

## **8 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE**

The National Executive holds responsibility for the policy development of the Guild and has authority for decision-making on its behalf. It must submit an Annual Report, which is presented by the National Convener to the General Assembly, to whose jurisdiction the Guild is ultimately subject. The Guild is invited to appoint a corresponding member to the General Assembly.

The National Executive elects the National Convener and a National Vice-Convenor who shares the work-load with the National Convener. Any current member of National Committees, including any member about to retire, is eligible for election as Vice Convenor. The Vice Convenor and committee Conveners are eligible for election as National Convener.

The office of National Convenor is normally held for only one year.

## **9 ADMINISTRATION**

The National Executive appoints a General Secretary employed to administer its affairs and other office staff as necessary. The General Secretary is a member of the National Executive, *ex officio*.

**10** The Guild shall continue and shall assume the whole responsibilities and the whole rights and assets previously exercised and enjoyed by the Woman's Guild, whose work and functions are incorporated into the work and functions of the Guild. Existing trust funds and all future donations and legacies received in connection with the Woman's Guild or any such work or functions shall be held and applied by the Guild, all according to the terms and conditions applying to them.

## **11 APPOINTMENTS**

All appointments take effect immediately after the General Assembly in any year.

## **12 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

A statement of the accounts of the National Executive of the Guild prepared as at 31 December each year, must be included within the audited Accounts of the Councils and Committees of the General Assembly.

## **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

Any person belonging to a parish or congregation of the Church of Scotland in which there is no local affiliated group may join another convenient group or become an individual member of the Guild by applying to the General Secretary for 13 membership and paying the current annual fee. Names and addresses of such individual members are sent by the General Secretary to the appropriate Presbyterial Council.

## **14 AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution may be amended by the General Assembly following consultation with the members on the recommendation of the National Executive and National Committees.

Proposed changes must be intimated in writing to all the voting members at national level at least one week in advance of a meeting at which they will be considered. Changes may be considered only if two thirds of those eligible to vote are present at the meeting, and must be agreed by two thirds of those present.