

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 16 MAY 2015

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, the 16th day of May 2015 years, at 9.30 am, Session I.

After public worship in the Assembly Hall, conducted by the Right Rev John Pearson Chalmers BD, Moderator of the General Assembly, the Commissioners elected as members of the General Assembly appointed to be held this day convened, 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 the Rev Angus Morrison MA BD PhD be appointed Moderator.

The appointment was intimated to Dr Morrison who was welcomed by the Moderator, and, after the Prayer of Consecration, took the Chair.

Her Majesty's Commission to the Rt Hon Sir James Arthur David Hope, Baron Hope of Craighead, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, 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 from the Throne, and the Moderator made suitable reply.

A Committee was appointed to prepare an answer to Her Majesty's Gracious Letter, viz:

Rev Graham W Beebee	(697)
Miss Anne Mulligan DCS	(57)
Mrs Sheila C Proudfoot	(639)

Very Rev John P Chalmers, *Convener*

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Standing Committee on Commissions, which was given in by the Acting Principal Clerk who reported as follows:-

That all commissions had been received and were in order.

The Standing Orders of the General Assembly were laid on the table.

The General Assembly appointed a Committee for arranging the Order of Business, viz:

Rev Dorothy U Anderson	(517)
Rev Dr Nelu I Balaj	(534)
Mr Bruce Brown	(227)
Rev James M Brown	(711)
Rev Neil Buchanan	(324)
Rev Scott Burton	(498)
Mr Paul Cathcart DCS	(321)
Rev David W Clark	(363)
Rev Alistair Cumming	(699)
Mrs Isabelle Farr	(229)
Rev Sandor Fazakas	(669)
Rev Dr John A Ferguson	(549)
Rev Graham S Finch	(249)
Mrs Ella Gill	(645)
Rev F Derek Gunn	(327)
Rev Mary M Haddow	(490)
Rev William T Hogg	(131)
Rev Joanne C Hood	(328)
Rev Esther M M Jamieson	(679)
Mrs Kay Keith	(139)
Rev Bryan Kerr	(204)
Rev Sheila M Kirk	(598)
Mr William Love	(209)
Rev Gillean P Maclean	(584)
Rev Elaine MacRae	(430)
Rev Dr Peter McEnhill	(220)
Mrs Kay McIntosh DCS	(73)
Mrs Isabell A Montgomerie	(167)
Mrs Libby Muir	(210)
Rev Valerie J Ott	(132)
Mrs Susan Pym	(708)
Mr Ian J A Robb	(546)
Rev Duncan Shaw	(64)
Rev Suzie Stark	(22)
Rev Barbara-Ann Sweetin	(540)
Mr Douglas Taylor	(547)
Mrs Alice Tulloch	(722)
Mrs Marjory Williamson	(420)

Rev Dr Derek Browning, *Convener*
Ms Judith Pearson, *Vice-Convener*

The General Assembly agreed that the members of the Business Committee should serve as the Panel of Tellers.

The General Assembly appointed a Committee to prepare a Minute on Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons, viz:

Very Rev John P Chalmers, *Convener*
Acting Principal Clerk
Acting Depute Clerk

The General Assembly called for a Report anent the Celebration of Holy Communion in the Assembly Hall on Monday 18 May 2015 at 9.15 am.

The General Assembly approved the Report.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.55 am until 11.20 am.

ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

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

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the Order of Business for the first two days.
3. Appoint Mr Roy Pinkerton to index the verbatim record.
4. Invite commissioners to submit to the first meeting of the Business Committee nominees for consideration to serve on the Selection Committee.
5. Instruct the Committee to consider arrangements for the electronic distribution of the volume of Assembly Reports and to bring a report to the 2016 General Assembly.

6. Instruct the Committee to make Long Service Certificates available for presentation to elders for thirty years' service and then at ten year intervals beyond thirty years' service.

SCOTTISH BIBLE SOCIETY

7. Urge the Scottish Bible Society to pursue its current efforts highlighting the Bible's key role in building healthy churches and communities.
8. Support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to improve Bible engagement and its application to everyday life.
9. Endorse the Society in its efforts to encourage confidence in the gospel and in providing Scripture resources for mission purposes.
10. Commend the Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members.
11. Appoint Rev Sandy Gunn and Rev Dr Norman Maciver to the Scottish Bible Society's Council of Church Representatives.

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

After 'elders' add 'and others'.

It was moved and seconded as a counter-motion to Section 6:-

Instruct the Committee to consider abolishing the Long Service Certificates and encourage congregations to explore unique and relevant ways to celebrate good work done by members.

On a vote being taken between the motion and the counter-motion the motion carried and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

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

Add a new Section 7 and renumber:

Appoint the Rev John Cowie to be the Church of Scotland representative on The Esdaile Trust and the Rev Moira McDonald to be the Church of Scotland representative on The Society for the Benefit of the Sons and Daughters of the Clergy of the Church of Scotland.

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 to the Moderator, who gave thanks for the gift and the work of the Society, wishing it well for the future.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

DELEGATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Delegation of Assembly which was given in by the Acting Principal Clerk, Chairman.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report of the Delegation of the General Assembly and thank it 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 Chairman and the Depute Clerk of the General Assembly to be Vice-Chairman.

APPEALS COMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for the Minutes of the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly which were laid on the table.

MINISTRIES APPEAL PANEL

The General Assembly called for the Minutes of the Ministries Appeal Panel which were laid on the table.

COMMITTEE ON OVERTURES AND CASES

This Committee had not met and there was no Report.

RETURNS TO OVERTURES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Classifying Returns to Overtures which was given in by the Acting Principal Clerk, Convener.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Convert into a Standing Law of the Church the Ministers and Deacons in Civil Partnerships Overture as amended, as printed in Appendix B.
3. Agree that the Joint Report received from the Theological Forum and the Legal Questions Committee regarding the effect of the introduction of same sex marriage on the provisions of the Overture should be presented directly to the General Assembly at an appropriate point in the business by the Convener of the Theological Forum.

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

On a vote being taken For or Against Section 2, there voted For 309 and Against 182 and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

Rev John Lochrie (154) entered his dissent to which the following commissioners adhered:

Rev Gordon Kennedy	(12)
Rev Nigel G Watson	(26)
Rev Kevin W Donald	(77)
Rev Keith L Mack	(80)
Rev Marion Clark	(97)
Rev Alexander I Currie	(143)
Rev Tom McWhirter	(145)
Rev Derek Peat	(159)
Mr Frank Potter	(170)
Rev Gavin A Niven	(178)
Rev James J McNay	(191)
Rev James S A Cowan	(214)
Rev Francis E Murphy	(222)
Rev Ian M Barber	(226)
Mr William Mathieson	(233)
Mr James Gemmell	(254)
Rev Margaret H Johnston	(257)
Rev Jonathan Keefe	(258)
Rev Mark Lowey	(261)
Rev Calum D Macdonald	(263)
Rev Murdo MacLean	(264)
Rev James A McIntyre	(268)
Rev David M White	(279)
Mr William Gray	(293)
Miss Anne R Weir	(319)
Rev Leslie N Brunger	(323)
Rev Derek W Hughes	(329)
Rev Gordon Palmer	(335)
Mr Douglas Pearson	(351)
Rev Fergus C Buchanan	(361)
Rev Ramsay B Shields	(369)
Rev Andrew Barrie	(379)
Rev David Carruthers	(380)
Ms Fiona Morrison	(395)
Rev Aftab Gohar	(401)
Rev Joyce A Keyes	(404)
Rev Andrew J Moore	(406)
Rev David J Smith	(409)
Rev James Todd	(410)

Mrs Anne Coulter	(414)
Mr Eric C Smith	(422)
Rev Jerome O'Brien	(432)
Rev Andrew A Morrice	(449)
Rev Allistair D Roy	(465)
Rev Stanley A Brook	(475)
Rev Robert Mallinson	(519)
Rev Scott C Guy	(552)
Mr Brian Fowler	(562)
Mrs Hazel Hewitt	(564)
Rev Colin J Dempster	(574)
Rev Dennis S Rose	(575)
Rev Kevin Gruer	(597)
Rev Dr Alan Macgregor	(599)
Rev Alexander Buchan	(610)
Rev Isabel C Buchan	(611)
Rev Andrew Barrie	(626)
Rev Trevor G Hunt	(627)
Rev Scott A McRoberts	(629)
Rev Dr Hugh F Watt	(631)
Mr Robert A Macintyre	(635)
Mr Alasdair Murray	(638)
Mrs Joyce Mitchell DCS	(640)
Rev Stephen Macdonald	(649)
Rev John Macpherson	(658)
Rev Dr John B Sterrett	(659)
Mr Stuart McClelland	(661)
Mrs Jean Macrae	(672)
Mr Donnie Morrison	(673)
Rev Murdo Smith	(676)
Mr Wilson McKinlay	(678)
Rev Thomas MacNeil	(680)
Rev David Logan	(701)
Rev Kim Hurst	(715)

The General Assembly took up consideration of Section 11 of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Ministries Council as a proposed new Section 3 of the Deliverance of the Report of the Committee on Classifying Returns to Overtures.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

Pass an Act amending Act VIII, 2003 on Vacancy Procedure (as amended) as set out in Appendix 2 of the Report of the Ministries Council.

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the Deliverance of the Report of the Committee on Classifying Returns to Overtures.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

COUNCIL OF ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Council of Assembly which were given in by the Rev Dr Grant Barclay, Convener.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and Supplementary Report.
2. Commend Presbyteries and their congregations for their continuing engagement with the National Stewardship Programme.
3. Urge Presbyteries and congregations to continue their involvement in the three year cycle (Time, Gifts, Money) of the National Stewardship Programme and encourage them to utilise the advice and expertise of the Stewardship Consultants.
4. Note progress of the Joint Working Group on Strategic Funding and Resource Allocation, endorse the direction of travel and note the Council's intention to report more fully in 2016.
5. Note the discussions on the future format of the Yearbook.
6. Approve changes to the membership and remit of the Committee on Church Art and Architecture.
7. Approve a change to the membership of the Audit Committee.
8. Approve the total to be contributed by congregations in 2016 of £46,055,000, based on the projection of congregational income for 2016, and

- its disposition among local congregational expenditure, the Parish Ministries Fund and the Mission and Renewal Fund.
9. Note the Council's proposal to increase the total available for Presbyteries to allocate to individual congregations and for other local purposes from 4% to 5% of the total Ministries and Mission contributions for 2016.
 10. Note the indicative budget for 2016, the five year rolling budget for 2016 – 2020, the summary of operating results for 2014 and the analysis of 2013 congregational accounts.
 11. Note the welcome effect of the expansion of the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme in 2016.
 12. Receive the 2014 Report and Accounts of the Unincorporated Councils and Committees of the General Assembly.
 13. Note the appointment from 27 June 2015 of Anne Frances Macintosh as Acting General Treasurer and confer upon the said Anne Frances Macintosh, Acting General Treasurer of the Church, full power to discharge all legacies, bequests or donations which may have been or may be left, bequeathed or made to the Church of Scotland, or any of the Schemes, Councils, Committees or agencies thereof, or which may have been or may be left, bequeathed or made to the United Free Church of Scotland or to any of the Schemes, Boards or Committees or agencies thereof and which in terms of the Agreement with the continuing United Free Church of Scotland fall to the Church of Scotland or its Schemes, Councils, Committees or agencies, and to sign all Discharges, Agreements, Indemnities, Undertakings, and other Deeds which may be necessary in connection therewith.

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

After 'endorse the direction of travel' add 'and invite Presbyteries to fully discuss the challenges outlined in 4.2.4 and send their responses to the Convener of the Joint Working Group before 31 December 2015,'.

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

Add a new Section 5 and renumber:

Instruct the Joint Working Group on Strategic Funding and Resource Allocation to give consideration to ways in which payments for pastoral services (eg funerals) paid locally to those not in receipt of a stipend may be met by a reallocation of funds towards Presbyteries rather than being met by congregations and investigate ways in which the issue of Ministries and Mission allocations to congregations in long term vacancies can be addressed.

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

Add a new Section 14:

Instruct the Council, in consultation with the Central Services Committee and other appropriate Councils and Committees, to report to the General Assembly of 2016 on the future of the Church Office buildings at 121 George Street, Edinburgh.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

Mr Iain Grimmond, who was retiring from the post of General Treasurer, was thanked by the Moderator for his noteworthy service to the Church.

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Legal Questions Committee which was given in by the Rev Dr Alan Hamilton, Convener.

It was moved and seconded-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Insert a new Standing Order 83 and re-number subsequent Standing Orders accordingly.
3. Delete the existing Standing Order 111(25) and substitute a new Standing Order 111(25).
4. Pass an Act amending the Discipline of Ministry Act (Act III 2001) as set out in Appendix A.
5. Delete the existing Standing Order 111(8) and substitute a new Standing Order 111(8).
6. Note that the minimum period of notice required of intention to marry is now at least 28 clear days.
7. Instruct the Committee, in consultation with the Law Department and the Stewardship and Finance Department, to consider the purpose and timing of a congregation's Stated Annual Meeting and report to the General Assembly of 2016.
8. Amend Standing Order 33 1.(b) as set out in the Report and dispense with the observance of Standing Order 33 1.(b) in so far as it requires one week's notice of the name(s) of the Corresponding Member(s) appointed by The Church of Scotland Pension Trustees.

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

Add a new Section 9:

Urge Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries to ensure that whenever possible a notice of removal is sent when a Certificate of Transference is issued.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

Mr James McNeill QC and Mr Andrew Gibb, on their retirals as Convener and Vice-Convener of the Presbyterial Commission respectively, were thanked by the Moderator for their noteworthy service to the Commission and the Church.

JOINT REPORT ON THE SOLEMNISATION OF MARRIAGE

The General Assembly called for the Joint Report of the Legal Questions Committee, the Ministries Council, the Church and Society Council, the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum on the solemnisation of marriage which was given in by the Rev Dr Alan Hamilton, Convener, Legal Questions Committee.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

Dr Hamilton, on his retiral as Convener of the Legal Questions Committee, was thanked by the Moderator for his noteworthy service to the Committee and the General Assembly.

The General Assembly adjourned at 4.22 pm to meet again in this Hall this evening at 7 pm, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
EDINBURGH, 16 May 2015, 4.22 pm

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 16 MAY 2015

At Edinburgh and within the Assembly Hall, the 16th day of May 2015 years, at 7 pm, Session II.

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

The Very Rev John P Chalmers BD, Retiring Moderator, addressed the General Assembly, and was thanked by the Moderator for his distinguished and valued service during his year of office.

The General Assembly received the following Delegates and Visitors:

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Rt Rev Dr Michael Barry, Moderator; Mrs Esther Barry; Rev Dr Trevor McCormick, Chaplain; Mrs Margaret McCormick; Mr Stanley Bond, Elder

The Presbyterian Church of Wales

Rev Neil Kirkham, Moderator; Mrs Pamela Kirkham

The United Reformed Church

Rev David Grosch-Miller, Moderator; Rev John Humphreys, Moderator of the National Synod of Scotland

The Church of England

Rev Canon Jane Charman, Director of Learning for Discipleship and Ministry, Diocese of Salisbury

The Methodist Church in Scotland

Rev Dr David P Easton, Chair of the Synod
Religious Society of Friends – General Meeting for Scotland

Elizabeth Allen, Assistant Clerk and Elder, South East Scotland Area Meeting

The Roman Catholic Church Bishops' Conference of Scotland

Monsignor Philip Kerr, Vicar General and parish priest

The Salvation Army

Lieut-Col Jonathan Roberts, Assistant to the Secretary for Scotland

The Scottish Episcopal Church

Rt Rev Dr Nigel Peyton, Bishop of Brechin; Mrs Anne Peyton

The United Free Church of Scotland

Rev Gary Barclay, Moderator

The Congregational Federation in Scotland

Rev Susan Durham, Youth and Children Committee Convener; Mr John Durham

Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Rev Matthew Ross, General Secretary

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Rev Graham McGeoch, Deputy Moderator, Board of Trustees

World Council of Churches

Rev Dr Jooseop Keum, Director, Commission on World Mission and Evangelism

Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

Rt Rev Dr Seth Senyo Agidi; Rev Godwin Osiakwa

Presbyterian Church of East Africa

Rt Rev Julius Guantai Mwamba

Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Synod of Blantyre

Rev Peter Kandulu

Presbyterian Church of Nigeria

Rev Ini Ukpuho

Presbyterian Church of South Sudan

Rev John Yor Nyiker Deng

Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

Rt Rev Mukondeleli Ramulandi; Rev Lungile Mpetsheni

Presbyterian Church in Canada

Rev Dr Richard Fee

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Rev Dr Kenneth Kovacs

Church of North India

Rev Swarup Bar

The Presbyterian Church of Korea

Rev Dr Kim Gueon Soo

Nepal Ebenezer Bible College

Rev Ram Kumar Budhathoki

Presbytery of Lanka

Rev Dr Roderick Campbell and Mrs Sue Campbell

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan

Rev CHENG Wen-Jen and Mrs CHENG TU Yu-Chu

Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

Rev Magdaléna Trgalová

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland
 Rev Vesa Häkkinen and Mrs Nina Häkkinen
Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD)
 Rev Michael Mehl
Tavola Valdese
 Mr Massimo Long
Church of Norway
 Ms Beate Fagerli and Mr Thomas Sandnaes
Reformed Church in Romania
(Királyhágómellék District, Oradea)
 Rt Rev István Csűry; Rev János Antal
Synod of the Nile of the Evangelical Church of Egypt
 Rev Dr George S Elyas
Diocese of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East
 Canon Hatem Shehadeh; Dr Emil Shehadeh
National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
 Rev Ibrahim Nseir
The Presbyterian Church of Australia
 Very Rev Dr Bob Thomas

The reception of the Delegates and Visitors being completed, the Moderator welcomed them on behalf of the General Assembly.

The Rev Canon Jane Charman and the Rt Rev Mukondeleli Ramulandi addressed the General Assembly in the name of the Delegates and Visitors and were thanked by the Moderator.

The General Assembly adjourned at 9.11 pm to meet again in this Hall on Monday 18 May at 9.15 am for Holy Communion, and thereafter for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
 EDINBURGH, 16 May 2015, 9.11 pm