

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*