The Church of Scotland
Nomination Committee

INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS IN 2027

NAME OF STANDING COMMITTEE/AGENCY: Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group	
CONVENER/CHAIR:	Sarah Brown
SECRETARY:	David Bradwell

REMIT

• Equipping the Church to pursue God's mission of inclusivity, social justice and care for creation in Scotland and around the world.
• Supporting activities of Presbyteries and congregations in engaging with national and international issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, with a priority for inclusion of those who are marginalised or struggle against poverty.
• Engaging policies which contribute to public life by developing and sharing the witness of the Church with government, parliament, ecumenical partners, faith groups, and civil society, and supporting the exchange of information and opinions between national institutions and Presbyteries and congregations.
• Providing a space in which to explore theologically, reflect, discuss and respond as a Church to important public matters that arise.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE SOUGHT AT THIS TIME:

Experience **(NB we are not expecting people to have experience of all of these)**

- Relevant experiences that support the aims and values of the group
- An understanding of advocacy
- An understanding of the Church's role in politics, society, public service and how theology and experience can be brought to bear on the Church's public witness
- An awareness of social issues that congregations and communities face
- Willingness to speak boldly on matters of importance to church within society

Skills

- Leadership
- Media proficiency
- Collaboration
- Flexibility
- Theological reflection
- Campaigning and advocacy
- Communications
- Active listening
- Diplomacy

EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:
It is hoped that meetings of this group will be characterised by honest, inspiring, passionate and rigorous discussion.

To enable this, there is an emphasis on

- Good preparation (and papers being delivered to members in good time)
- Valuing the presence of each member
- Openness to new ways of thinking
- Commitment to creative approaches

Induction and training are provided.

MEMBERSHIP AND ANTICIPATED VACANCIES:
One Programme Group Leader and six members with co-opting powers.

It is anticipated that there will be two member vacancies to be filled with a start date of June 2027.

FREQUENCY, TIMING AND VENUE OF MEETINGS:
Meeting patterns are discussed and agreed by the group.
The pattern of meetings for 2026-27 has been a mix of in-person day meetings (in central Scotland), half-day hybrid meetings (Edinburgh and online) and shorter online catch-up meetings (45 minutes); allowing the group to connect roughly once a month.

Ad hoc meetings, appointments and contributions to be agreed with members according to availability and willingness to help more.

There may be occasional meetings with other Programme Groups or with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team as required, which will be arranged in consultation with group members.

DETAILS OF SUB-COMMITTEES/GROUPS:
Short-term project groups may be set up to focus on specific elements of the work; participation would be optional, with the practice of co-opting people to support the Programme Group being more normal.

The Programme Group is responsible for a standing task group: Integrity: the Church's task group on gender-based violence.

FURTHER DETAILS:

See details on the Assembly Trustees webpage including:

- Extended version of the Report of the D10 Group, which shows the Group's detailed working (an Appendix to the Trustees' Report to the General Assembly May 2022)
- Faith Action Leadership Team Report to the General Assembly 2024
- Faith Action Leadership Team Report to the General Assembly 2025
- Faith Action Programme Leadership Team - Additional Information

Also see the Faith Action webpage

Principles upon which our vision is grounded upon:

- Reformed teaching should sustain witness and guide the process; constantly renewed and reformed by the Spirit
- Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingdom of God, recognising the inherent value and connectedness of all lives, which compels us to bring good news to the poor and release to the captive. God is active, redeeming creation with acts of justice and mercy. The Spirit gives courage to work with others to transform church and society and develop and protect justice, peace and the integrity of creation.
- We acknowledge the authority of the Word of God as contained in the Scriptures for our faith and life.
- Responsibility of the Church to make a social witness and develop policy which guides that witness – to remain true to our tradition, biblical foundation, theological heritage and contemporary practice we must not fall silent but speak faithfully, truthfully, persuasively, boldly, urgently, and always with a spirit of humility and desire to learn.
- Full priesthood of all believers and that God alone is Lord of the conscience; we can and do live with contradictory convictions, and the manner of how we live in communion with difference is itself a witness to the wider world. Disagreement is not necessarily a mark of sin but a mark of diversity within the body of Christ. Our task is to develop ways of making conflict constructive by developing a collegial, consultative and communal process.
- Presbyterian structure is based on the ancient church traditions of the need for the church to order its common life and gives coherence and direction to the witness of the community; public issue positions emerge from the struggle of people of the church engaged in the world, gathered in governing bodies and open to the Spirit. By vote the body tests the group's discernment of the Spirit's prompting. Presbyterian structures edify and persuade through pastoral care, prophecy, nurturing, teaching, challenging and empowering.
- As the Church of Scotland, we have a particular heritage and contemporary responsibility to the people and nation of Scotland, as expressed in the Articles Declaratory and in many years of active contribution to national and public life – which is still looked for by decision-makers and others whose words and actions have power to influence and inform.