

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 15 MAY 2026

At Edinburgh, within the Assembly Hall, and also via video conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 15th day of May 2026 at 10.00 am.

SESSION 1

After worship conducted by the Right Rev Rosie Frew, MA, BD, Moderator of the General Assembly, the Commissioners elected as members of the General Assembly appointed to be held this day convened within the Assembly Hall and via video conference, and the General Assembly was duly constituted with prayer.

The Principal Clerk reported that the Standing Orders of the General Assembly and the Roll of Commissioners were laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Standing Committee on Commissions, which was given in by the Principal Clerk who reported that all Commissions had been received and were in order.

The General Assembly proceeded to the election of a Moderator, when it was unanimously agreed that the Rev Gordon Kennedy, BSc BD MTh, be appointed Moderator.

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

The General Assembly homologated the appointment of the Rev Dr John Lewis McPake as Acting Principal Clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and also appointed him to be the Principal Clerk of this General Assembly. Dr McPake affirmed the vows which he took at his ordination and took the oath *de fidei*.

The Moderator thanked Dr McPake for his service as Acting Principal Clerk and to the Church as a whole throughout his ministry.

His Majesty's Commission to The Right Honourable Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, LT, DBE, PC, KC, appointing her to represent His Royal Person in this Assembly, was received and ordered to be recorded.

His Majesty's Most Gracious Letter to the General Assembly was read with all due honour and respect and ordered to be recorded.

Her Grace, The Lord High Commissioner, addressed the General Assembly in a speech and the Moderator made suitable reply.

The Moderator thanked the Retiring Moderator, the Very Rev Rosie Frew, MA, BD, for her distinguished and valued service during her year of office.

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

Mrs Ann M C Bowie (321)

Rev Dr David G Coulter (381)

The Very Rev Rosie Frew, *Convener*

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

The Very Rev Rosie Frew, *Convener*

Principal Clerk

Depute Clerk

The General Assembly appointed a Procedure Committee to arrange the Order of Business, viz:

Rev Michael Mair, *Convener*

Rev Sheila Kirk, *Vice-Convener*

Moderator

Principal Clerk

Depute Clerk

Procurator

Law Agent

Intimation was given of the arrangements for the Celebration of Holy Communion in the Assembly Hall and online via video conference on Monday 18 May 2026 at 9.15 am.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 11.03 am until 11.30 am.

SESSION 2

PRESENTATION OF DELEGATES AND VISITORS

The General Assembly received the following Delegates and Visitors who were introduced by the Rev Ross Blackman and the Rev Tommy MacNeil.

Church of England

Rt Rev Rob Saner-Haigh, Bishop of Carlisle

Rev Tim Norwood, National Officer for Local Ecumenism (Visitor)

United Reformed Church

Ms Catriona Wheeler, Moderator

Presbyterian Church of Wales

Miss Glynis Owen, Moderator (online)

Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland

Most Rev Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh

Scottish Episcopal Church

Rt Rev Ian Paton, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane

United Free Church of Scotland

Rev Martin Keane, Moderator and Senior Principal Clerk

United Reformed Church (National Synod of Scotland)

Rev Lindsey Sanderson, Moderator

Methodist Church in Scotland

Rev James Patron-Bell, Ecumenical Officer

Religious Society of Friends – General Meeting for Scotland

Mary Woodward (*in absentia*)

Elizabeth Allen (*in absentia*)

The Salvation Army

Major David Burns, Executive Secretary to Territorial Leadership, Scotland (online)

Major David Cavanagh, Ecumenical & Parliamentary Officer (Scotland) (Visitor)

Congregational Federation in Scotland

Rev Alister G Weighton, Chair

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland

Dr Nicola Brady, General Secretary (online)

AFRICA

Presbyterian Church of Nigeria

His Eminence, Dr Ekpenyong Akpanika, Prelate and Moderator

Presbyterian Church of Ghana

Rev Dr Victor Okoe Abbey, District Minister of South London

Rev Emmanuel Kwame Tettey, PhD candidate, New College (Visitor)

Evangelical Church of Egypt, Synod of the Nile

Rev Ragaai M Ghobrial, Lecturer in Reformed Theology, PhD candidate, New College

CARIBBEAN

United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands

Mrs Rose Wedderburn, General Secretary (*in absentia*)

ASIA

Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK)

Rev Dr Sangdo Choi, General Secretary

Church of Bangladesh

Rev Dr John Probhudan Hira, Synod Secretary

EUROPE

Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, Czechia

Mr Ondřej Titěra, 1st Deputy Synodal Senior (Moderator).

Waldensian Church, Italy

Mr Ulf Koller, Member of Waldensian Board

The Most Rev Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews and Edinburgh, addressed the General Assembly in the name of the Ecumenical Delegates and was thanked by the Moderator.

His Eminence, Dr Ekpenyong Nyong Akpanika, addressed the General Assembly in the name of the Overseas Delegates and was thanked by the Moderator.

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

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

Section 2 of the Proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Legal Questions Committee was moved and seconded:

2. Approve amendments to Standing Orders as set out at section 4.9 of the Report of the Assembly Business Committee.

On a (practice) vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the Deliverance, there voted For 295 and Against 11 and it carried For.

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Assembly Business Committee, which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
 2. Approve the proposed Order of Business set out in the Order of Proceedings.
 3. Appoint Mr David Stewart to prepare and index a summary log of the Assembly.
 4. Appoint the Rev Alan Reid as Precentor for the General Assembly of 2026.
- Scottish Bible Society**
5. Commend the Scottish Bible Society's global outreach to the generosity of congregations and members and support the Society in its desire to work in partnership with congregations to encourage confidence in the Gospel and in sharing the Bible.

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

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, to consider the reporting agenda of the Assembly, in terms of whether (a) all standing committees of the General Assembly (other than the Legal Bodies) as listed in Standing Order E4 require to report to the Assembly each year, and (b) different reporting formats might be adopted, and to bring a report to the General Assembly of 2027 with proposals for amended Standing Orders.

The Moderator welcomed Mr Gregor Innes, Scottish Bible Society Board member, who addressed the General Assembly. On behalf of the Directors of the Society, Mr Innes presented a copy of the English Standard Bible, Single Column Legacy edition, to the Moderator, who thanked Mr Innes.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

MINUTES OF APPEAL HEARINGS BEFORE THE SAFEGUARDING APPEAL GROUP

The General Assembly called for the Minutes of the Appeal Hearings before the Safeguarding Appeal Group, which were laid on the table and had been circulated to Commissioners.

LEGAL QUESTIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report and Supplementary Report of the Legal Questions Committee, which were given in by the Rev Dr Marjory MacLean, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report and the Supplementary Report.
2. *Consideration of section 2 was dealt with earlier in Session 2.*
3. Pass an Act amending the Safeguarding Act (Act XVI 2025), as set out in Appendix A to this Report.
4. Pass an Act amending the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), as set out in Appendix B to this Report.
5. (2) Pass an Act amending the Discipline Act (Act I 2019), as set out in Appendix A to the Supplementary Report.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.31 pm until 2.00 pm.

SESSION 3

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE (INCLUDING PROPOSAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA)

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee, which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

PROPOSAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

The Rev Michael Mair proposed that the following Reports be taken as read and that their Proposed Deliverances agreed to by the General Assembly without being heard in debate:

- Report of the Church Hymnary Trustees (Reports 23/1).
- Report of the Church of Scotland Housing and Loan Fund (Reports 24/1).
- Report of the Church of Scotland Investors' Trust (Reports 25/1).
- Report of the Delegation of the General Assembly (Reports 26/1).
- Report of the Ethical Oversight Committee (Reports 27/1).
- Report of the Theological Forum (Reports 28/1).

Mr Mair advised that all of these Standing Committees have been consulted on the Consent Agenda process and have agreed to be so treated. Mr Mair explained that Commissioners may countermand the Consent Agenda process by intimating by email to pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk by 12 noon on Saturday 16 May which Report(s) they wish to be heard in debate. There will need to be a request by at least five commissioners for a Report to be heard and debated in the normal way. Mr Mair advised that he will announce, at 2.00 pm on Saturday 16 May, which Report(s) will be taken as read and their Proposed Deliverance agreed to and which Report(s) will be heard in debate. Mr Mair advised that the Retiring Moderator, the Very Rev Rosie Frew, MA, BD, will give a talk about her Moderatorial year on Saturday 16 May at 1.30 pm in the Martin Hall.

ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Assembly Trustees which was given in by the Rev David Cameron, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Adopt a Growth Strategy with the Strategic Principles outlined in Sections 1 - 3 as the Strategic Principles of the Assembly Trustees from 2026 to 2031 and commend them to the whole Church.
3. Adopt the statement and associated actions of 'A Short Theological Note on Church and Ministry in the Church of Scotland Today' as a theological underpinning of work on Financing Ministry and commend it to the Church for further study.
4. Receive the 2025 Report and Accounts of the Church of Scotland Unincorporated Entities.
5. Receive the 2026 budget.
6. Instruct the Assembly Trustees to develop a sustainable model of ministry funding based on the principles underpinning Financing Ministry with detailed proposals being brought to the General Assembly of 2027 for approval.
7. Approve Regulations amending the Congregational Finance Regulations (Regs II 2016), as amended, as set out in section 5.6.1 and Appendix 1.
8. Instruct Kirk Sessions to engage with the national stewardship team and its suite of resources and events, particularly the *Bearing Fruit* online financial health-check, to equip congregations for sustainable growth.
9. Thank and discharge the *Life and Work* Advisory Committee.
10. Agree the total number of nationally planned ministry posts for 2027 remains at 600 plus 60 vacancies whilst allowing the Presbytery & Partnership Support Programme Group to authorise Presbyteries to exceed their allocation in respect of a charge meeting full-cost recovery ministry costs.
11. Encourage the Assembly Business Committee, Assembly Trustees, General Trustees, CrossReach, Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and Presbyteries to maintain continual and active engagement amongst their key leadership bodies to ensure mutual recognition, better communication, and improved understanding.
12. Instruct the Assembly Trustees to identify and implement an effective contemporary replacement for what has previously been provided by *Life and Work*, giving serious consideration to how ordinary members of the Church might access different platforms to express their views.
13. Instruct the Assembly Business Committee to propose a reporting mechanism to evidence implementation and outcomes of the decisions and policies of the General Assembly.
14. Instruct the Legal Questions Committee to explore alternative arrangements for charity trusteeship for both congregations and Presbyteries, reporting back to the General Assembly of 2027.
15. Instruct the Assembly Trustees, with the assistance of the Legal Questions Committee, to make available appropriate induction and training for all existing and new charity trustees.
16. Invite Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to alert the Assembly Trustees of any cases of administrative duplication required of them by the Standing Committees and national office departments of the Church, so that simplification of processes can be found by those Committees and departments, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee in any situation where a change of process may have implications in church or civil law.

17. Instruct the Assembly Trustees and CrossReach to implement a structured line management and appraisal process involving 360-degree appraisal addressing areas of role clarity, accountability, and support for staff holding senior positions.
18. Instruct the Assembly Trustees, jointly with the Legal Questions Committee, to make recommendations as to the appointment and support of Presbytery Clerks and Presbytery Business Conveners (or equivalents) to cover induction, resourcing, role description, core competencies, ongoing training, employment arrangements, support, appraisal, and accountability.
19. Thank and discharge the Assembly Trustees Working Group.
20. Agree amended remits for the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, Mission Support Programme Group, Resource and Presence Programme Group and Presbytery & Partnership Support Programme Group.
21. Instruct the Assembly Trustees through its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group:
 1. to work with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to further develop work on neurodivergence in the life of the Church, with particular regard to welcome, discipleship, and participation.
 2. to facilitate collaboration with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, and relevant Church bodies to ensure access to high-quality, theologically informed and faith-sensitive training on matters relating to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
 3. to work with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to develop further theological reflection and practical guidance on welcome as a core, Christ-centred commitment, and to equip congregations to recognise and respond pastorally to those who have experienced exclusion or harm.
 4. to work directly with the General Trustees in relation to reasonable access requirements in churches, halls and manses.
22. Note the appointment from 15th December 2025 of Leanne Thompson as Head of Finance and General Treasurer and confer upon the said Leanne Elizabeth Thompson, Head of Finance and 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 (*Section 12*).
23. Ratify the appointment of Rev Dr John L McPake as Acting Principal Clerk from 20th October 2025 to 18th May 2026 and appoint Rev Dr Alistair May as Principal Clerk to the General Assembly with effect from the close of the General Assembly of 2026.
24. Approve the following appointments to the Assembly Trustees: Elizabeth Ashcroft, Martin Fair, Martin Fairbairn, Nairn Angus-McDonald, Suzanne Stringer and David Watt.

OVERTURE FROM THE PRESBYTERY OF PERTH SUPPORTED BY THE PRESBYTERY OF THE SOUTH WEST ANENT VACANCY ALLOWANCE

The General Assembly took up consideration of an Overture from the Presbytery of Perth supported by the Presbytery of the South West anent vacancy allowance.

In terms of Standing Order C6, section 2 of the Proposed Deliverance of the Overture was treated as a proposed new section 5 of the Deliverance of the Assembly Trustees (meaning that the Proposed Deliverance will be renumbered thereafter).

The Rev Dr John Ferguson appeared and the Proposed Deliverance was moved, seconded and agreed as follows:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Overture.
2. Agree to replace Section 26 of the Congregational Contributions (Giving to Grow) Regulations (Regs I 2022) (as amended) with the following: "An allowance within limits determined by the General Assembly shall be given towards extra costs incurred for locum provision (or pulpit supply) during a ministerial vacancy for all Charges, regardless of whether or not Permission to Call has been granted, unless the Presbytery determines that failure to progress readjustment in terms of the Presbytery Mission Plan Act (Act VIII 2021) (as amended) is the responsibility of the congregation."

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the Report of the Assembly Trustees.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 6 of the Deliverance:

Delete the word "approval" and replace with "further consideration".

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 6 of the Deliverance:

After the words "Financing Ministry", insert:

...and which includes provision for reduced contributions from those congregations whose income is significantly reduced as a direct result of a linkage or union and whose costs of maintaining and insuring redundant buildings have significantly increased due to the implementation of the relevant Presbytery Mission Plan, the General Trustees being consulted as to such costs,...

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed amendment of section 6, there voted For 100 and Against 195 and it carried Against.

Section 6 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 7 of the Deliverance:

Amend section 7 (twice) by deleting "5.6.1" and substituting "5.8.1".

Section 7 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 8 of the Deliverance:

Delete the word "Instruct" and replace with the word "Encourage".

Section 8 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 15 of the Deliverance:

In section 15, following the words "Legal Questions Committee" add the words "and Presbytery Clerks".

Section 15 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 18 of the Deliverance:

In section 18, after the words "Legal Questions Committee", delete the words ", to make recommendations as to" and replace with "and the Clerks Forum, to review processes around", and after the word "accountability" add the words "and to report to the General Assembly of 2027".

Section 18 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 20 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end of section 20:

subject to amending the remit of the Resource & Presence Group in section 10.6.3 of the Report by adding 2 further bullet points as follows: "To contribute to the work of the Israel Palestine Committee, particularly bringing support to Tabeetha School" and "To contribute to the Church of Scotland's communications strategy, providing membership to the Communications Forum and developing the replacement for a membership magazine."

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 20 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end of section 20:

subject to amending the remit of the Presbytery & Partnership Support Group, by removing the text in Bullet 13 [in the original remit] "FAPLT may call in any decision or matter for its own consideration".

Section 20 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 24 of the Deliverance:

Delete the "and" after "Suzanne Stringer" and add at the end "and Alan Hamilton".

Section 24 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The Moderator thanked the retiring Convener, the Rev David Cameron, and his team, on behalf of the General Assembly, for their work in the past year and for Mr Cameron's service as Convener. The Church of Scotland owed a great debt of gratitude to Mr Cameron for his courage in responding to economic challenges, and those of the Covid lockdown, in finding a financially sustainable model for the Church so that it was now in a better place to deal with further challenges which lay ahead.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 3.46 pm until 4.00 pm.

JOINT REPORT AND SUPPLEMENTARY JOINT REPORT OF THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES AND THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST ON THE SCOTS HOTEL, TIBERIAS

The General Assembly called for the Joint Report and the Supplementary Joint Report of the Assembly Trustees and the Church of Scotland Trust which were given in by the Rev David Cameron, Convener, Assembly Trustees.

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Joint Report and the Supplementary Joint Report.
 2. Authorise the Assembly Trustees and The Church of Scotland Trust to take all necessary steps to lease the Scots Hotel to the preferred operator, or to another hotel operator which meets the selection criteria set out in the Joint Report should it not be possible to negotiate satisfactory terms with the preferred operator, for an agreed period and on commercial terms to be agreed by the Trustees in line with professional advice received by them in the UK and in Israel, and with a commitment by the lessee to continue to honour the heritage of the hotel and the ethos of the Church of Scotland.
- (2). Instruct the Assembly Trustees and The Church of Scotland Trust to lease the Scots Hotel to the preferred operator, or to another hotel operator which meets the selection criteria set out in the Joint Report, for a maximum period of 24 years and 11 months and on the commercial terms set out below and to be further agreed by the Assembly Trustees and the Church of Scotland Trust in line with professional advice received by them in the UK and in Israel.

Section 2 of the proposed Deliverance of the Joint Report was withdrawn and instead section 2 of the proposed Deliverance of the Supplementary Joint Report was moved and seconded.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the new section 2:

Add at the end:

provided always that, as a matter of urgency and prior to the conclusion of any lease or contractual agreement with a preferred operator or alternative operator, the Assembly Trustees and the Church of Scotland Trust shall ensure that the proposed operator has been assessed by the Ecumenical Relations Committee and the Theological Forum against the ethical, human rights and reputational values of the Church of Scotland.

On a vote being taken For or Against the new Section 2 as amended, there voted For 267 and Against 36 and it carried For.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND TRUST

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Trust, which was given in by Mr Leon Marshall, Chairman.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Appoint Mr Christopher N Mackay as Chairman of the Trust and Mrs Valerie Macniven as Vice-Chairman of the Trust from 1 June 2026.
3. Re-appoint the Very Rev Dr John Chalmers as a member of the Trust from 1 June 2026.

The Moderator thanked the retiring Chairman, Mr Leon Marshall on behalf of the General Assembly for his work, and that of his team, in managing the work of the Trust in different parts of the world. The Church has benefitted from Mr Marshall's leadership, financial acumen and attention to detail in his role as Chairman and was grateful that he would continue to serve as a member of the Trust.

REPORT OF THE FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM AND THE THEOLOGICAL FORUM ON CHURCH DECLINE: REFLECTING ON THE CAUSES AND BUILDING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Theological Forum on Church Decline: Reflecting on the Causes and Building for a Better Future, which was given in by the Rev Scott McRoberts, a Vice-Convener of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and Convener of the Mission Support Programme Group.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Commend the Report and encourage congregations, Presbyteries, the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Assembly Trustees to study it and act upon its recommendations

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 5.39 pm until 7.00 pm.

SESSION 4

REPORT OF THE FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM AND THE THEOLOGICAL FORUM ON CHURCH DECLINE: REFLECTING ON THE CAUSES AND BUILDING FOR A BETTER FUTURE (CONT.)

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the Proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Theological Forum on Church Decline: Reflecting on the Causes and Building for a Better Future.

The Deliverance as moved was then agreed.

PRESBYTERY REVIEW COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Presbytery Review Committee, which was given in by the Rev Moira McDonald, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Receive the Summary Reports for the Presbytery Reviews of the Presbytery of Clyde and the Presbytery of the South West.
3. Receive the report on the Inspection of Presbytery Records.
4. Note that the Presbyteries to be reviewed in 2026/27 are the Presbytery of Lothian and Borders and the Presbytery of the North East and Northern Isles, and agree that the Presbyteries to be reviewed in 2027/28 are the Presbytery of Fife and the Presbytery of Glasgow, and that the Presbyteries to be reviewed in 2028/29 are the Presbytery of Forth Valley and Clydesdale and Clèir Eilean Ì.

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Safeguarding Committee, which was given in by the Rev Dr Sonia Blakesley, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct the Safeguarding Committee to work in partnership with Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, all relevant departments and external agencies to develop a framework of practical support to enable the spouses of ministers and their children to leave an abusive relationship when they are ready to do so and to report back to the General Assembly of 2027.

The General Assembly adjourned at 8.10 pm to meet again in this Hall, and online via video conference, on Saturday 16 May at 9.15 am for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video conference
EDINBURGH, 15 May 2026, 8.10 pm

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 16 MAY 2026

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 16th day of May 2026 at 9.15 am.

SESSION 5

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

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

The Moderator welcomed and addressed Probationers, Admissions Candidates on Familiarisation and those following the Church of Scotland Apprenticeship Scheme who were present at the Assembly.

FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM (“FAPLT”)

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (“FAPLT”), which was given in by the Rev Tommy MacNeil, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

Faith Action Programme Leadership Team

2. Note the progress of plans for a Resource Church in the Presbytery of Glasgow and commend continued support for developing such plans.
3. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to develop the Good News Collective, a suite of resources and opportunities to strengthen confidence in the good news of the Gospel for our lives, communities, church and world.
4. Thank David Stewart for his service as Yearbook Editor, wishing him well on his retirement from the role, and appoint Rev Angus Mathieson as the new Yearbook Editor.

Mission Support Programme Group

5. Reaffirm the Church’s commitment to maintaining a worshipping, pastoral and missional presence in Scotland’s poorest and most marginalised communities, recognising this as a Gospel imperative and integral to the Church’s calling.

6. Note the publication of updated Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data, together with the availability of new census data, and, recognising the importance of ensuring that the Priority Areas list continues to be informed by the most accurate and current statistics, instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team:
 - i. to report to the General Assembly of 2027 with a proposed methodology for redrawing the Priority Areas list, focusing on levels of population deprivation and the balance of Priority Area designation across the life and work of the whole Church:
 - ii. to report to the General Assembly of 2028 on the implications of the agreed methodology and bring a new Priority Areas list, which will then continue to be reviewed on a seven-year review cycle; and
 - iii. throughout the scoping, review, and reporting phases, to ensure that comparative analysis between Priority Areas and the wider Church is undertaken and informs each stage of the work, and to include such analysis within the Reports brought to the General Assembly.
7. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, working with the Theological Forum, to establish a Task Group to explore liturgical renewal and develop new liturgical resources for the Church and to report back to a future General Assembly.

Public Life & Social Justice Programme Group

8. Urge those involved in public life in Scotland to uphold the values of integrity, compassion, justice and wisdom in their discourse and decisions, and encourage the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team in its work around promoting a positive vision for Christian responsibility in an age of political extremes.
9. Affirm that people have the right to seek sanctuary from danger and persecution and commit to continued advocacy with and for refugees; for an asylum system that is fair, humane, and respectful of human dignity; and for policies and practices that support integration from day one of arrival.
10. Urge congregations to be places of welcome, accompaniment, and practical support for refugees, and to play an active role in facilitating community cohesion by bringing people together, challenging fear and hostility, and nurturing relationships of mutual respect and belonging within our communities.
11. Urge the UK Government to restrict gambling advertisements.

People & Training Programme Group

12. Pass the Selection and Training for National Ministry of Word and Sacrament Act, as set out in Appendix I, following the principles agreed by the General Assembly of 2025, which will be applicable to Candidates entering training from 1st September 2027.
13. Following the instruction of the General Assembly of 2024 to bring a recommendation to the General Assembly of the Lead Academic Partner to provide the delivery of a new 3-year BD degree and 2-year Diploma for national ministry of Word and Sacrament and Diaconate candidates, approve the recommendation of the Selection Panel that Trinity College, University of Glasgow, be the Lead Academic Partner.
14. Approve the outline of the contents of the Minute of Agreement between the Church of Scotland and the University of Glasgow, and of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Church of Scotland and Trinity College, to enable the delivery of a new 3-year BD degree and 2-year Diploma for national ministry of Word and Sacrament and Diaconate candidates.
15. Note that Candidates presently in training will continue in their current training pathway, as designated at the beginning of their training.
16. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to bring a revised Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010) to the General Assembly of 2027 which includes designated training at Trinity College, University of Glasgow, as the Lead Academic Partner.

17. Note the lifting of the pause on recruitment to the Diaconate and instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to consider new ways to deploy those called to Ministry of Word and Service.
18. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team through the People & Training Programme Group to undertake a full review of the apprenticeship pilot scheme, bringing both the learnings and recommendations to the General Assembly of 2027.
19. Approve the appointment of Mrs Alison Fenton as the Senior Director of the National Assessment Team.

Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group

20. Give thanks for the Christian witness of The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL), and The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) in serving the needs of those affected by war and violence and urge the whole Church to stand in solidarity to alleviate human suffering and strengthen hope for a more stable and dignified future for humanity.
21. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, working with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, the Legal Questions Committee and Presbytery Clerks, to undertake further work on the process undertaken by Nominating Committees of vacant charges, with a particular focus on training, guidance, and review, including:
 - i. how applications and supporting materials are assessed and compared;
 - ii. how Interim Moderators and Presbytery Advisory Panels are equipped to assist Nominating Committees;
 - iii. how information is gathered, recorded, and weighed during interviews and decision-making;
 - iv. how feedback is offered to applicants in ways that are appropriate, meaningful, and professional;
 - v. how awareness of unexamined assumptions of bias can be strengthened;
 - vi. how theological reflection on call, discernment, and congregational formation can better inform practice, and
 - vii. which stages of the process may benefit from further clarification or review; and instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to bring a further Report to a future General Assembly.
22. Pass the Capability Procedure for Parish Ministers Act, as set out in Appendix IV.
23. Pass the Ill Health and Income Protection Act as set out in Appendix V.
24. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to reflect on and review the roles of ministry which might be required within the Church going forward, giving consideration to flexible and emerging forms of ministry, and to bring an interim report to the General Assembly of 2027, including identifying where consultation with other standing committees might be required.
25. Pass an Act amending Act XI 2025, on the Call, Election, and Appointment of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, as set out in Appendix VII (Section 46 and Appendix VII).
26. Repeal Regulation VI 2008, on Pulpit Supply.
27. Urge Presbyteries, from 1 June 2026, to implement a Sabbatical scheme as outlined in Appendix VIII.
28. Appoint Elizabeth Fox, Elder, as a Trustee of the Church of Scotland Housing and Loan Fund.
29. Pass Regulations amending the Regulations for Remuneration and Reimbursement of Parish Ministers (Regulations I 2015), as amended, as set out in Appendix IX.

Mission Support Programme Group

The Rev Scott McRoberts, a Vice-Convener of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Convener of the Mission Support Programme Group made a speech.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 11.01 am until 11.17 am.

SESSION 6

FAPLT REPORT (CONTD.)

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team.

Public Life & Social Justice Programme Group

Mrs Sally Sheail, a Vice-Convenor of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Acting Convenor of the Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group, made a speech.

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

Add a new section 11 and renumber:

11. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to consider the causes and impacts of modern day slavery; to explore opportunities for collaboration with relevant partners; to seek to provide information to congregations to help church members recognise the signs of modern slavery and offering ways to respond appropriately with prayer and advocacy; and to report on this issue to the General Assembly of 2028.

People & Training Programme Group

The Rev Dr David Clarkson, a Vice-Convenor of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and the Convenor of the People and Training Programme Group, made a speech.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 12 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending the Act as follows:

1. In section 2(7):

(a) In line five, by deleting the letter 'k' in the phrase 'section 1(k) and substituting the letter 'l'; and

(b) At the end of section 2(7), by inserting the following:

'An exit certificate granted by the Formation Panel will be conditional on the successful completion by the candidate of the final ministry placement then being undertaken, in the assessment of FAPLT; failing which the exit certificate may be withdrawn by FAPLT and a further period of formation then required with specified purposes and duration, before re-consideration of the exit certificate by the Formation Panel.'

2. In section 6, by changing the reference to section 6(4) in sections 6(3), 6(6), 6(7) and 6(8) to be to section 6(5) and the references to sections 6(5) and 6(6) in section 6(3) to be to sections 6(6) and 6(7) respectively.

3. In section 15(2) and 15(3), by deleting the phrase '..., each of one-year duration and running from September to August.'

4. In section 17(1):

(a) In line 2, by deleting the phrase 'of one year duration from September to August'; and

(b) In line 3, after the sentence ending 'and the Formation Panel', by inserting the following:

‘Such placements will normally be of twelve months’ duration from the beginning of September to the end of August in the following year; except for the final placement which will normally be of sixteen months’ duration, from the beginning of September to the end of December in the following year. Placements will be part-time during the academic year of the Lead Academic Partner up to the completion of the final academic assessments for each year, and full-time thereafter to their conclusion.’

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.47 pm until 2.00 pm.

SESSION 7

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE (INCLUDING CONSENT AGENDA)

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee, which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

The Convener reported that no requests had been received from Commissioners that the Reports which were proposed in Session 3 as to be treated under the Consent Agenda should be heard and debated. He therefore confirmed that the Assembly has agreed that these Reports should be taken as read and their proposed Deliverance agreed to.

FAPLT REPORT (CONTD.)

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (People & Training Programme Group).

It was moved and seconded as a counter-motion (in the name of Rev Dr Jock Stein) to sections 12 (as amended) to 16:

12. Given the benefits of geographical diversity and the available national pool of academic and financial resources, compared with the risks and costs of moving to one provider, instruct FAPLT to continue in partnership with all five university providers to deliver where possible key elements of its vision for an integrated scheme of theological education and training, and to bring fully costed proposals to the 2027 General Assembly.

On a vote being taken, there voted for the motion 167 and for the counter-motion 146 and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

Dissent

Rev Murray McCheyne (368) recorded his dissent with regard to the General Assembly’s decision not to approve the counter-motion in relation to sections 12 (as amended) - 16 in the name of the Rev Dr Jock Stein, to which dissent the following Commissioners adhered:

Derek Browning (4) – Sections 12-14
Karen K Campbell (5) – Sections 13 & 14
Moirra McDonald (15) – Sections 13 & 14
William Watt (20) – Sections 13 & 14
Tom Watson (40) – Sections 11-13
Gary J Peacock (84) – Sections 13 & 14
Laura Buist (165) – Sections 11-14
Lynne Semple (178) – Sections 11-13

Lorna I MacDougall (202) – Sections 12 & 13

Michael Weaver (240) – Sections 12 & 13

Drew Kuzma (345) – Sections 13 & 14

Markus Meier (369) – Sections 13 & 14

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 3.06 pm until 3.14 pm.

ORDER OF THE DAY

JOINT REPORT OF THE FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM, THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES AND THE THEOLOGICAL FORUM ON THE LEGACIES OF SLAVERY

The General Assembly called for the Joint Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, The Assembly Trustees and the Theological Forum on the Legacies of Slavery, which was given in by the Very Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Convener of the Legacies of Slavery Group.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Joint Report.
2. Adopt the Apology for the Church of Scotland's historical involvement in transatlantic chattel slavery.
3. Affirm that the Apology forms part of a wider journey of repentance, justice and reconciliation, and that its integrity will be demonstrated through sustained action: work that is intentional, focused, reparative and measurable in its impact.
4. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, in consultation with the Assembly Trustees, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group and the Theological Forum, to establish a working group to identify the appropriate actions arising from this Apology in partnership with those who continue to be affected and bring recommendations to the General Assembly of 2027.
5. Encourage congregations and Presbyteries to continue engaging with this work through education, reflection, and local exploration of historical and contemporary legacies, ensuring that particular attention is given to listening to and supporting those within our Church and communities for whom the legacies of slavery and racism are not historical abstractions but lived realities.
6. Commend the listening, consultation, and ecumenical engagement undertaken since the General Assembly of 2023, including the Ecumenical Pilgrimage to Jamaica in 2024.
7. Record its thanks to the members of the Legacies of Slavery Group for their diligence and faithful service and discharge the Group.

An amendment of section 2 of the Deliverance was moved but not seconded:

Add at the end:

subject to amending the Apology as follows: In section 2.7 of the Apology, delete the last three sentences (i.e. after "unwilling hands.") and substitute with "The influence of the slave trade on Scottish life was pervasive. Industries such as tobacco distribution, sugar refining and distribution, and cotton textile manufacturing depended on crops planted and picked by slaves. The shipbuilding industry produced some vessels used for the transport of goods and people across the Atlantic."

The proposed amendment, therefore, fell.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 2 of the proposed Deliverance, there voted For 266 and Against 25 and it carried For.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 4 of the Deliverance:

Add after the words "...continue to be affected...", the words ", including consideration of existing assets and funds, and how they are utilised and accessed going forward,"....

Section 4 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 4.54 pm until 5.04 pm.

FAPLT REPORT (CONTD.)

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (People & Training Programme Group).

The General Assembly agreed that the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group) be remaindered until Session 11 on Monday 18 May 2026.

The General Assembly agreed, on the advice of the Principal Clerk, that sections 12 to 16 of the Deliverance fell outwith the terms of the Barrier Act.

Section 12 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved as an amendment of section 13 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

on the understanding that a Placement Panel and the work of the Field Education Officer will involve other Colleges.

The motion was withdrawn with the consent of the General Assembly.

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

Add a new section 17 and renumber:

17. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to work with the National Assessors to review their assessment processes for the transfer from the Diaconate to OLM and National Ministry of Word and Sacrament, and to report back to the General Assembly in 2027.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of the new section 17 of the Deliverance:

After the words "Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team" insert the words ", in consultation with the Diaconate Council".

The new Section 17 as amended was then agreed.

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

Add a new section 18 and renumber:

18. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, in consultation with the Legal Questions Committee, to review the requirements on candidates for all ministries to the Church in relation to marital status.

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed new section 18, there voted For 154 and Against 105 and it carried For.

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

Add a new section 19 and renumber:

19. Encourage Presbyteries to develop systems to ensure, as best as is possible, that the learning done by ministers taking study leave is appropriately disseminated to fulfill the aim of section 34.3ii of the Report i.e. that the benefits be available to the wider Church.

Consideration of the remainder of the proposed Deliverance of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group) was then suspended.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD “LET US BUILD A HOUSE”

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Guild, which was given in by, Mrs Kay Coull, National Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Congratulate Wishaw New Kirk on the establishment of their new Guild and encourage other congregations—particularly those entering unions—to consider this as a positive model for forming a new Guild together.
3. Encourage congregations, Presbyteries and the wider Church to engage actively with the Guild as it prepares its five-year Strategic Plan.
4. Encourage Presbyteries to identify and support young people to participate in the LIFT training weekend.
5. Encourage congregations to explore how they might contribute to the Living stones in Livingstonia appeal to equip a maternity unit in Bandawe.

The Moderator thanked the retiring National Convener, Mrs Kay Coull, for her work during her year office which had been characterised by a spirit of cooperation and joint-working and encouraging Guild members to be all that they could be in the service of The Lord.

The General Assembly adjourned at 6.19 pm to meet again in this Hall and online via video conference at 3.00 pm on Sunday 17 May for business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video conference
EDINBURGH, 16 May 2026, 6.19 pm

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 17 MAY 2026

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 17th day of May 2026 at 3.00 pm.

SESSION 8

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

Bee Roy, Head of Tearfund Scotland, addressed the General Assembly and introduced the Moderator's Challenge for the forthcoming year.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Social Care Council, which was given in by Dr Mike Cantlay, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Note the opportunity to take part in CrossReach Sunday on 1st November 2026 and strongly encourage all congregations to commit to remember CrossReach during the course of the next year and consider how best to support and collaborate with this area of the Church's mission.
3. Instruct CrossReach to work alongside the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to produce briefings and resources for Presbyteries and congregations, which will allow them to make representation on the key issues affecting social care.
4. Approve further exploration of growth and development opportunities for CrossReach services, recognising that these are an important part of the Church's mission to the people of Scotland, and instruct the Social Care Council to work with the Assembly Trustees, and others, as appropriate, on financial planning for such growth.

5. Note the findings of the governance review of the Social Care Council and instruct the Council along with the Nomination Committee and Assembly Trustees to review the current situation and bring forward recommendations to General Assembly of 2027.

ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Ecumenical Relations Committee, which was given in by the Rev Ross Blackman, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct the Committee to send copies of the Ecumenical Audit to all Presbyteries, and the Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group.
3. Note the intention of the Committee bringing an amended Local Ecumenical Partnerships Act (Act XI 2012), as per the instruction of General Assembly 2025, to the General Assembly of 2027.
4. Approve the delegates to Assemblies, Synods and Conferences of other Churches, and the appointment of representatives to Ecumenical Bodies.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 3 of the Deliverance:

Delete the existing wording and substitute with the following:

Note the intention of the Committee to bring an amended Local Ecumenical Partnerships Act (Act XI 2012), as per the instruction of General Assembly 2025, to the General Assembly of 2027.

Section 3 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of Registration of Ministries Committee, which was given in by the Rev Robbie Hamilton, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Pass an Act amending the Registration of Ministries Act (Act II 2017, as amended), as set out in Appendix I.

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

Add a new section 3:

3. Given the delay in providing Registration of Ministries data to Presbyteries, determine that during 2026 each date specified in the Registration of Ministries Act (Act II 2017) (as amended) shall be deemed to refer to a date three months later.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

IONA COMMUNITY BOARD

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Iona Community Board, which was given in by the Rev Sigrid Marten, Convener. The Rev Ruth Harvey, Leader of the Iona Community, also addressed the General Assembly.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Urge congregations and Presbyteries to support all who protest peacefully for justice and peace.
3. Encourage congregations to offer 'quiet processes and small places' where groups gather for honest, courageous, truth-telling and enlivening conversations about faith, belief, prayer and actions for justice and peace.
4. Note the Iona Community's updated position paper on Israel-Palestine.
5. Call on members of the Church to join with ecumenical partners and Christian Aid in prayer for peace in the Middle East on the 24th of each month.

The General Assembly adjourned at 5.27 pm to meet again in this Hall, and online via video conference, on Monday 18 May at 9.15 am for Holy Communion and thereafter business, whereof public intimation having been made, the Sederunt was closed with prayer.

ASSEMBLY HALL
and online via video conference
EDINBURGH, 17 May 2026, 5.27 pm

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

CONVENED AT EDINBURGH, 18 MAY 2026

At Edinburgh, and within the Assembly Hall, and also via video conference using Zoom Meetings, on the 18th day of May 2026 at 9.15 am.

Holy Communion was celebrated in the Assembly Hall.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 10.16 am until 10.30 am.

SESSION 9

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

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Procedure Committee which was given in by the Rev Michael Mair, Convener.

REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS LETTER

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee appointed to prepare a Reply to the Gracious Letter from His Majesty the King which was given in by the Very Rev Rosie Frew, Convener.

The Reply to His Majesty's Most Gracious Letter was submitted and approved for signature and transmission to His Majesty.

The Reply was in the following terms:

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

May it please Your Majesty

We, Your Majesty's loyal subjects convened in General Assembly, have received with pleasure Your Majesty's most gracious letter to us.

We greatly value Your Majesty's continuing pledge to maintain the historic rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland. We affirm once more that we regard the rights to consist principally in the right to worship a gracious and merciful God and the privileges to consist principally in that of the privilege of service, and all in and through the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In acknowledging the increasing uncertainty that overshadows our world, Your Majesty is surely right to commend that we turn to that which has shaped us in times past and will do so in times to come. In commending the abiding truths of the Christian faith and recalling the saints of old whose lives have shaped us, Your Majesty directs us to the path of truth and righteousness that we might walk in all His ways.

As Your Majesty has said in another place, the Christian faith is a firm anchor and daily inspiration that guides us not only personally, but together as members of our community.

The saints whose lives have shaped the community of faith serve as an example of that which transcends the divisions that have separated us in times past and Your Majesty's journey to the Vatican City in October past, in the company of the Very Rev Rosie Frew, then Moderator of the General Assembly, most surely demonstrates Your Majesty's personal commitment to transcending those divisions. In kneeling before Almighty God, in the company of His Holiness Pope Leo XIV, and praying in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Majesty lived out the vocation to pray that those who believe may be one in order that the world may believe.

We are glad that Your Majesty was delighted to receive an original copy of the "Saint Margaret Declaration", signed in Dunfermline on Saint Margaret's Day 2022. As Your Majesty rightly says: Whether in Rome, or in Dunfermline, and we presume elsewhere, we are shaped by the journey of prayer.

Your Majesty has journeyed to other places of interest in recent weeks and has crossed oceans in order to do so. May Your Majesty be assured of our support and of our prayers in all that You do to build bridges and to forge relationships between the nations.

The renewed appointment of the Rt Hon Lady Elish Angiolini as Your Majesty's Lord High Commissioner to our General Assembly has been welcomed throughout the Church of Scotland, and within the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland. We regard Lady Elish's willingness to accept Your Majesty's gracious invitation to serve as Lord High Commissioner as a continuing sign that that which unites us today is greater than that which divided us in former years.

Once more, we thank you for Your example of Christian duty and service in this past year and we especially pray for Your Majesty's health at this time and for that of Her Majesty the Queen. We commend Your Majesty and Her Majesty The Queen to the unfailing grace and protection of Almighty God, and we pray that God will bestow favour upon Your Majesty, as you continue to reign over us.

Your Majesty's most faithful and loyal servants.

THE MINISTERS, ELDERS AND DEACONS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND CONVENED IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Signed in our name, in our presence and at our appointment by the Right Reverend Gordon Kennedy, Moderator of the General Assembly, on this 18th day of May 2026.

COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Chaplains to His Majesty's Forces, which was given in by Group Captain Andrew Tait (Ret'd), Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Thank those who serve in His Majesty's Forces as Chaplains for their service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel, their families, and the wider military community, and commend them, and their own families, to the prayers of the Church.

Brigadier Andrew Muddiman, ADC, Royal Marines, Naval Regional Commander Scotland and Northern Ireland, addressed the General Assembly and was thanked by the Convener.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 11.28 am until 11.41 am.

SESSION 10

GENERAL TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the General Trustees which was given in by the Rev Scott Rennie, Chair.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct all congregations to put in place the Manse Memorandum of Understanding with inducted Ministers in post no later than 30 September 2026, or within one month of an induction of all new ministries or new manse provision; and instruct Presbyteries to ensure congregational compliance in the matter and make a report to the General Trustees by 31 December 2026.
3. Pass an Act amending the Church of Scotland General Trustees (Properties, Funds and Endowments) Act (Act V 2024, as amended by Act XV 2025), as set out in Appendix 3 to this Report.
4. Pass the Manse Regulations set out in Appendix 4 to this Report.
5. Appoint Mr D Chris Dunn, Mr Fraser Ellis, Rev Bryan Kerr, Rev Lisa-Jane Rankin, Mr Hugh Campbell-Adamson and Mr David Inglis as members of the General Trustees.
6. Authorise the payment of £2,200 to Rev Dr Scott Rennie as Chair and pro rata for Mr Alan F K Kennedy as former Chair (four months) and Mr Michael Pearson (eight months) as Vice-Chair for their services over the past year.

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

Add a new section 2 and renumber:

2. Invite the General Trustees to consider enhancing the existing grant and funds release forms to require applicants to demonstrate that they have given due consideration to Net Zero implications, including a clear indication of whether the proposed use of funds will increase, maintain, or reduce the congregation's carbon footprint.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 2 of the Deliverance:

Delete:

31 December 2026

And substitute:

30 April 2027 or the date of annual attestation of property records by the Presbytery, whichever is sooner.

Section 2 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 3 of the Deliverance:

Amend section 3 by adding at the end,

, subject to amending the Act as follows:

By amending section 4(ii) to add the words “or Presbytery” after “General Trustees”;

By amending section 4(iii) to add the words “and in consultation with the Presbytery” after “professional advice”;

By deleting the existing section 5 and substituting a new section 5 as follows:

“Where, following Adjustment, funds are held in the Consolidated Fabric Fund for a united congregation, title to any property of the united congregation not already so vested or subject to Assembly Control shall require to be transferred to the General Trustees or a suitable Assembly Control clause inserted prior to any monies being released for works to that property.”

Section 3 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 4 of the Deliverance:

Amend section 4 by adding at the end,

, subject to amending the Regulations by adding the following sentence at the end of section 4 of Appendix 2:

“Any new information or representation put forward on behalf of any party or witness which has not previously been intimated to the Minister shall be put to the Minister in the course of the hearing and he or she shall be given a suitable opportunity to respond to it.”

Section 4 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Nomination Committee which was given in by the Rev Dr Andrew Gardner, Convener.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.

2. Instruct the Assembly Trustees to ensure that any new Standing Committee created by the General Assembly should have staggered terms of membership from the outset (*Section 2.5*).
3. Instruct the Nomination Committee to investigate the processes undertaken by the Standing Committees of the General Assembly for the appointment of Conveners and Vice-Conveners, and to provide a report on such information to the Legal Questions Committee, to enable the Legal Questions Committee thereafter, and following consultation with the Nomination Committee, to report to a future General Assembly with a recommendation on whether or not any amendment to the process for such appointments should be made in the Standing Orders of the General Assembly.
4. Instruct the Nomination Committee and the Assembly Trustees to continue their discussions on the process of making nominations to the Assembly Trustee Sub-Committees.
5. Make alterations to the Standing Committees of the General Assembly as set forth in the Report.
6. Appoint Douglas Horn as Convener of the Audit Committee for one year.
7. Reappoint Andrew Tait as Convener of the Chaplains to His Majesty's Forces Committee for one year.
8. Reappoint Ross Blackman as Convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee for one year.
9. Reappoint Val Brown as Convener of the Ethical Oversight Committee for one year.
10. Appoint Bryan Kerr as Convener of the Nomination Committee.

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

Add a new section 5 and renumber:

5. In relation to recruitment to Standing Committees, instruct the Nomination Committee, working with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group, to: (i) consider whether current recruitment activities are reaching the intended audience, and whether there are any barriers that limit awareness, understanding, or encouragement to apply; (ii) consider whether recruitment efforts might include a positive bias towards reaching under-represented groups and show a clear commitment to inclusion; and to report back to the General Assembly of 2027.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 5 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end of section 5: subject to the following alterations:

Assembly Business Committee

Minister Appointed Nikki Macdonald (Upper Clyde)

Assessors under the Discipline Act (Act I 2019)

Elder Appointed Eunice McConnach (Aberdeen Fountainhall)

Solicitors Appointed Jennifer Campbell, Ross Matthew, Hannah Peebles, Madelaine Sproule

Solicitors Resigned Emma Anstead, Gordon Barclay, David Di Paola, John Wilson

Audit Committee

Member Appointed Gordon Coupar (Dundee: Broughty Ferry) (1yr)

Nomination Committee

Member Appointed Gavin Berry (Dundee: Westgait) (2yrs)

Section 5 as amended was then agreed.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

The Moderator thanked the retiring Convener, Rev Dr Andrew Gardner for all he and members of the Nomination Committee do to encourage people to serve on the Standing Committees of the Church. The Moderator noted the gifts and skills brought to the role by Mr Gardner and his passion for both the local and national Church. His kindness to members of the Committee and to applicants were notable and commendable. Mr Gardner had graciously led the Nomination Committee through its own strategic review and the Assembly wished him well in his ongoing ministry.

The General Assembly agreed that the Reports of the Church of Scotland Pension Trustees and the Chalmers Lectureship Trust be taken during Session 10.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND PENSION TRUSTEES

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Church of Scotland Pension Trustees, which was given in by Miss Lin Macmillan, Joint Chair.

It was moved, seconded and agreed:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Approve the appointment of Gary Yeaman as Employer Nominated Trustee (ENT) of the Staff Scheme and Anne-Marie Gillon as ENT of the MDS and Ministers' Schemes.
3. Approve the re-appointment of Lin Macmillan as ENT of all three Schemes.
4. Note the transfer of the Schemes' administration to XPS Group and the move towards winding up the Schemes.

CHALMERS LECTURESHIP TRUST

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Chalmers Lectureship Trust, which was given in by the Principal Clerk, Chair.

It was moved and seconded:

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Instruct the Trustees to bring before the General Assembly of 2027 detailed proposals for the Lectureship Cycle 2027-2031.

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

Add a new section 3:

3. Appoint or reappoint, as specified, the following ministers and elders as Trustees of the Chalmers Lectureship Trust for the terms stated in each case, from June 2026: Rev Dr John McPake (reappointment, 2 years), Rev Dr Scott McKenna (reappointment, 4 years), Rev Jan Mathieson (reappointment, 2 years), Rev Dr Ruth Morrison (reappointment, 4 years), Mrs Kay Keith (reappointment, 2 years) and Mr Jamie Sutherland (reappointment, 4 years) and note the resignation of the following trustees: Mrs Isobel Hunter and Mr Roy Pinkerton.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

Mr Mair invited Commissioners who wished to record their dissent in relation to the counter-motion in respect of sections 12 -18 (or part thereof) of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, heard on Saturday 16 May 2026, to intimate this, in accordance with Standing Order 65, by sending an email to pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk or by signing the list placed beneath the portrait of Queen Victoria's Chaplains in the Hall.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 12.44 pm until 2.00 pm.

SESSION 11

FAPLT REPORT (CONTD.)

The General Assembly resumed their consideration of the proposed Deliverance of the Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team.

Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group

The Rev Jonathan Fleming, a Vice-Convener of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team and Convener of the Presbytery and Partnership Support Programme Group, made a speech.

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

Add a new section 21 and renumber:

21. Give thanks for the sustained and resilient witness of Christians across the Middle East in the face of disadvantage and persecution and urge the whole Church to stand in solidarity with them.

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

Add a new section 21 and renumber:

21. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to establish a focus group to understand and learn from the lessons of those who have entered ministry in the Church of Scotland from a country outside of the UK and to bring a report to General Assembly of 2027, including any recommendations on further practical steps that may be taken to offer support to our colleagues in ministry.

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

Add a new section 21 and renumber:

21. Instruct the Faith Action Leadership Programme Team and the Assembly Trustees to provide a rationale for a sufficient level of National Stipend Levels as the base line to be adjusted using the appropriate measure of inflation each year and report to the General Assembly of 2027.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 22 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending the Appendix to the Act as follows: (a) in paragraph 7.10, changing “paragraph 8.9” to “paragraph 7.9” and (b) in paragraph 8.6, changing “paragraph 9.5” to “paragraph 8.5”.

Section 22 as amended was then agreed.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as a further amendment of section 22 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending the Appendix to the Act as follows: deleting the existing paragraph 9.3 and substituting the following:

9.3 The Appointed Person should give reasonable notice of the date of the hearing. The Minister should also be given:

- information about the alleged incapability including copies of any documents which will be produced at the hearing;
- details of the membership of the Committee;
- details of any witnesses which the Appointed Person intends to call; and
- an invitation to the Minister to call relevant witnesses at the hearing provided that advance notice is given.

It was moved and seconded as a counter-motion to section 22:

22. Welcome the development of the Capability Procedure to date and invite FAPLT to bring a revised Act to the Assembly of 2027.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment to the counter-motion to section 22:

Add at the end:

, having ensured that consultation and engagement with Presbyteries is first undertaken.

On a vote being taken, there voted for the motion in the print, as amended, 47 and for the counter-motion, as amended, 135, so the counter-motion, as amended, carried and the General Assembly resolved accordingly.

The new section 22 as amended was then agreed.

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

Add a new section 23 and renumber:

23. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to continue to develop the Capability Procedure for Parish Ministers, whether through changes to a 2026 Act or as an Act to be brought to the Assembly of 2027 for approval, including a mechanism for self-referral, and report to the General Assembly of 2027.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment to the new section 23 of the Deliverance:

Amend the proposed new section 23 by adding after 'self-referral,' the words ", and considering the possibility of introducing a Capability Procedure for those in eldership and other offices of the local church,".

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed amendment of the new section 23, there voted For 33 and Against 153 and it carried Against.

The new section 23 was then agreed.

It was moved and seconded as an amendment of section 23 of the proposed Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending section 9 of the Act to provide that a minister's stipend shall be paid at full rate for the duration of their period of ill health absence from work as is currently the case under the Income Protection & Ill-Health Act (Act VI 2019), for a maximum period of twelve or fifteen months, as applicable, the specific amendments to the Act being as follows:

In section 9(1)(a), by deleting the words "full rate for six months, half rate for the next six months and one third rate for a further three months (if applicable)" and substituting "full rate for twelve or fifteen months, as applicable".

In section 9(2) by deleting the words "full rate for six months, half rate for the next six months and one third rate for a further three months" and substituting "full rate for fifteen months".

In section 9(4) by deleting the words "full rate for six months, half rate for six months and one third rate for three months" and substituting "full rate for fifteen months".

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposed amendment of section 23, there voted For 33 and Against 69 and it carried Against.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as an amendment of section 23 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending the Act by inserting a new section 8C as follows:

8C. Unrelated Illnesses and Reset of Absence Periods

(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act, where a minister returns to work following a period of absence and subsequently becomes absent due to a health condition which is clinically unrelated to the previous condition, the provisions of this section shall apply.

(2) If the subsequent absence begins within the twenty-four month rolling period referred to in section 8B, any calculation of: (a) continuous absence; (b) cumulative absence within any rolling period; and (c) the Trigger Date, shall be reset so as to run from the first day of absence attributable to the later condition.

(3) Any absence attributable to the earlier condition shall not be taken into account in calculating periods referred to in subsection (2).

(4) For the purposes of this section, whether two conditions are clinically unrelated shall be determined by FAPLT on the basis of medical evidence, which may include a Medical Assessment or OHP Report.

(5) For the avoidance of doubt, only one reset shall be possible and intermittent or recurring symptoms of the same or a related underlying condition shall not constitute a new unrelated condition for the purposes of this section.

(6) Where a minister is absent for a total of more than 600 days in any rolling three-year period, whether or not Trigger Date(s) have been reached and whether or not process has occurred to any extent under sections 7 or 8 of this Act, but the minister is still inducted to the charge, the Presbytery, after consulting with the Ill Health Committee and the minister's congregation, may decide to sever the pastoral tie at any time thereafter. The provisions of section 9 as to overall stipend payments shall apply, and the minister may remain in the manse for a further period of up to three months after the tie is severed under the General Trustees' Standard Conditions for Occupation of a Manse on a Caretaker basis; if this happens, the minister shall be responsible for any payments due to HMRC in respect of his or her occupation of the manse other than any National Insurance contributions due, payment of which shall be made by the Presbytery.

It was moved, seconded and agreed as a further amendment of section 23 of the Deliverance:

Add at the end:

, subject to amending the Act by deleting the existing section 9(4) and substituting the following wording:

Save as specified in section 9(3), and subject to the discretion of FAPLT, after appropriate consultation, no minister shall be entitled to receive, in any rolling twenty two month period, overall payments equivalent to stipend, during period(s) of absence, of more than full rate for six months, half rate for six months and one third rate for three months.

It was moved and seconded that the General Assembly should depart from the matter of consideration of section 23 of the proposed Deliverance. The Principal Clerk explained that a vote to depart would not mean that the matter would be considered by a Commission of Assembly; rather it would come to the next General Assembly.

On a vote being taken For or Against the proposal to depart from the matter of consideration of section 23, there voted For 103 and Against 79 and it carried For. The General Assembly therefore agreed to depart from the matter.

The General Assembly resumed consideration of the proposed Deliverance.

The Rev Bryce Calder had submitted notice of motion as to a new section 24 but in light of the decision to depart from section 23, the General Assembly agreed that this proposed new section would fall.

On a vote being taken For or Against section 26 of the proposed Deliverance in the print, there voted For 74 and Against 78 and it carried Against.

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

Add a new section 30 and renumber:

30. Instruct the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team to consider bringing the Guardianship Allowance in line with the standard Vacancy Allowance and report to the General Assembly of 2027.

The Deliverance as amended was then agreed.

DRAFT MINUTES OF SEDERUNTS NOT YET SUBMITTED

The Minutes of Sederunts not yet submitted were held as read and approved.

APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL CLERK

The next Principal Clerk, the Rev Dr Alistair S May, was introduced. He affirmed the vows which he took at his ordination and took the oath *de fideli*. The Moderator offered prayers for Dr May and his ministry. Dr May briefly addressed the Assembly. He expressed thanks for the trust placed in him and noted his wish to work at national level for the local Church.

The Moderator then offered thanks for the work of the Acting Principal Clerk, and Principal Clerk for this Assembly, the Rev Dr John L McPake, who was warmly applauded.

REPORT ON PRINTING OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS

The General Assembly called for the Report of the Committee on Commissions as to the Printing of the Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly which was given in by the Principal Clerk, and it was remitted to the Committee on Commissions under Standing Order 21 to revise and print the Acts and Regulations.

PROTESTATIONS

Protestations were called for but none was taken.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE TO PREPARE MINUTES

The Clerks were appointed a Committee to revise the Minutes.

ACT APPOINTING THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly passed an Act appointing the Commission of Assembly in terms of Act VI 1997.

DATE OF NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly passed an Act appointing the Commission of Assembly to meet in Autumn 2026 to determine the date, duration and format for the next General Assembly, which Assembly will meet in Edinburgh in May 2027.

The General Assembly suspended their sitting at 4.11 pm until 4.30 pm.

SESSION 12

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

DECEASED MINISTERS, MISSIONARIES AND DEACONS

The General Assembly called for the Report anent Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons, which was given in by the Very Rev Rosie Frew, Convener, as follows:

DATE OF DEATH

2025

January	1	Rev Mark Wilson formerly Mission Partner, Nagpur, Church of India
May	13	Rev Robert J Watt formerly of Dumbarton: Riverside
	16	Rev Roderick Morrison formerly of Glasgow: Gardner Street
	24	Dr John Kirkwood Knowles formerly Overseas Council: Malawi
	28	Rev Robert J Ramsay formerly of Invergowrie
June	6	Rev Dr Keith Burton-MacLeod formerly of Noth
	7	Rev Alan Charles David Cartwright formerly of Fogo and Swinton I/w Ladykirk and Whitsome I/w Leitholm
	8	Rev Allan G McIntyre formerly of Greenock: St Ninian's
	9	Rev Andrew S Taylor formerly of Greenock: The Union
	10	Rev A Gordon McGillivray former Clerk, Presbytery of Edinburgh
July	2	Rev John C Beck formerly of Alves and Burghead I/w Kinloss and Findhorn
	7	Rev H Stanley C Hood formerly of London: Crown Court
	11	Rev Graeme M Bruce formerly Chaplain to Dundee University
	19	Rev Gordon McLean formerly of Contin
	30	Rev George Fairlie formerly of Crail I/w Kingsbarns
August	4	Dr W Clyne Shepherd formerly Foreign Missions: Calabar
	8	Rev Raymond Thomson formerly of Slamannan
	18	Rev Dr W Graham Monteith formerly of Flotta and Fara, I/w Hoy and Walls
	26	Rev Dr Kathryn (Kathy) J Galloway formerly Co-Leader, Iona Community
	28	Rev Malcolm M Rew formerly of Edinburgh: Albany Deaf Church
	28	Rev Alexander Tait formerly of Glasgow: St Enoch's Hogganfield
September	24	Rev Derek Haley formerly Chaplain, Glasgow: Gartnavel Royal Hospital
	25	Rev Donald Pirie formerly Bolton and Saltoun I/w Humber I/w Yester
	28	Rev John Spencer formerly Dumfries: Lincluden I/w Holywood
	29	Very Rev Dr Alan D McDonald formerly of Cameron I/w St Andrews: St Leonard's
October	2	Rev Evan J Ross formerly Cowdenbeath: West I/w Mossgreen and Crossgates
November	6	Rev John L Waugh formerly Ardclach I/w Auldearn and Dalmore
	6	Rev Dr Hugh C Cairns formerly of Kirkcaldy: Victoria Road
	8	Rev Dr Charles E Stewart formerly Chaplain to the Fleet, Royal Navy Chaplains
December	4	Rev Dr Margaret Stewart formerly Depute Leader of the Iona Community
	9	Rev William B Ferguson formerly of Glasgow: Broomhill
	11	Rev Gilbert L Thomson formerly Glenrothes: Christ's Kirk
	16	Rev Angus Smith formerly Chaplain to the Oil and Gas Industry
	29	Rev Alastair F McCormick formerly of Creich I/w Rosehall
2026		
January	4	Rev William Buchan formerly of Kilwinning: Abbey

	11	Rev Mary B Morrison formerly Edinburgh: Stenhouse St Adian's
	18	Rev Mary G Spowart formerly of Papa Westray I/w Westray
	26	Rev Dr Gordon F C Jenkins formerly of Dunfermline: North
	27	Rev Thomas C Pitkeathly formerly of Brussels: St Andrew's
	28	Rev Calthorpe Emslie formerly of Calderbank
February	5	Rev Samuel M McNaught formerly of Kirkcaldy: St John's
	12	Rev James Black formerly Associate at Paisley: St Ninian's Ferguslie
	16	Rev Ian M P Davidson formerly of Stirling: Allan Park South I/w Church of the Holy Rude
	18	Rev Ian J Elston formerly of Kirkcaldy: Torbain
March	5	Rev Iain M Roy formerly of Stevenston: Livingstone
	8	Rev Richard Baxter lately of Glasgow: Kelvin West
	12	Rev Alexander Douglas Lamb formerly of Dalry: St Margaret's
	16	Rev Mary O McKenzie formerly of Richmond: Craigmillar
	17	Rev Gordon W Craig formerly of Carnbee and Pittenweem
April	1	Rev John D Rennie formerly of Broughton, Glenholm and Kilbucho I/w Skirling I/w Stobo and Drumelzier
	3	Rev Robert W M Johnston formerly of Glasgow: Temple Anniesland
	4	Rev Freda Marshall formerly of Colonsay and Oronsay I/w Kilbrandon and Kilchattan
	8	Rev Thomas C Bogle formerly of Fisherton I/w Maybole: West
	30	Rev Maria A G Plate formerly of South Ronaldsay and Burray

The General Assembly, upstanding, were led in prayer by the Right Rev Gordon Kennedy.

PRESENTATIONS TO THE MODERATOR

The following people were presented to the General Assembly:

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

New Staff Members:

Edd McCracken, Head of Communications

Graeme Smith, Senior Communications Officer

ESTATES DEPARTMENT

New Staff Member:

Kara McMaster, Support Assistant

GENERAL TRUSTEES

New Staff Members:

Maria Badra, Business Support Assistant

Paul Baker, Presbytery Buildings Officer

Mark Shanks, Presbytery Buildings Officer

Lewis Wilson, Business Support Assistant

Sarah Poujade, Business Support Assistant

HOUSING AND LOAN FUND

New Staff Members:

Lynsey Orbegozo, Secretary to the Housing and Loan Fund
Sausan Cameron, Property Administrator
Tom Hall, Building and Energy Efficiency Supervisor

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

New Staff Member:

Jeanny Bassett, learning and Development Specialist

IT DEPARTMENT

New Staff Member:

Pav Stachowiak, Senior IT Systems Engineer

LAW DEPARTMENT

New Staff Members:

Ross Matthew, Solicitor

Hannah Peebles, Solicitor

OFFICE OF THE ASSEMBLY TRUSTEES

New Staff Member:

Norman Smith, Chief Officer

SAFEGUARDING SERVICE

New Staff Member:

Ross Anderson, Safeguarding Officer

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

New Staff Members:

Adeola Adeniyi, Finance Assistant

Leanne Thompson, new Head of Finance and General Treasurer

FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME

New Staff Members:

Lyndsay Cameron-Ross, Digital Ministries Development Worker

Sandy Forsyth, Director of Studies

Julie Harty, Training Officer

Darren Philip, incoming Faith Action Presbytery Support Manager

Heather Pomphrett, Training Development Worker

Kay Treadwell-Heath, Clinical Support Officer

Erin Watt, Senior Administration Officer

Staff Member Retiring:

Angus Mathieson, Presbytery and Partnership Support Manager

Ministers inducted to their first Charge:

Rev Christopher Barlas, Dundee: Craigowl

Rev Karlien Becker, North Carrick

Rev Shahrukh Gill, Edinburgh: Inverleith St Serf's

Rev Andrew R Johnstone, Prestwick: St Nicholas

Rev Peter Kaela, Dundee Law

Rev Alan D McKay, Bearsden: Baljaffray

Rev Michael McMullin, Blairgowrie

Rev Mike R Newlands, Fraserburgh and District
Rev Michael Okpara, Fife: Eden Tay
Rev Alistair Stark, Belhaven and Spott
Rev Cleopas Takavada, East Caithness

Minister inducted to their first Charge in the Church of Scotland:

Rev Marius Louw, Amsterdam

Ordained Local Ministers Ordained and Appointed:

Rev Katrina M Blackwood, Senior Healthcare Chaplain, NHS Grampian
Rev Elaine Hogan, Edinburgh: South East Edinburgh
Rev David M Lloyd, Brussels: St Andrew's
Rev Katrona Templeton, Ardrossan and Saltcoats: Kirkgate

Recently appointed Ministries Development Staff:

Mrs Marie Claire Dungavell, Glasgow: Carntyne and Cranhill
Mr Stewart Mason, Congregational Digital Ministry Worker at Bellshill and Bothwell
Mr Jack McGinnigal, as Presbytery Youth Worker, Cowal Team Leader, Clèir Eilean`

Recently retired Ministers:

Rev Norman M Grant, Cairneyhill I/w Limekilns
Rev Donna M Hays, Sidlaw
Rev I Scott McCarthy, Associate, Corby
Rev James Ford Todd, Airth

SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

New Staff Members:

Heather Broadley, Service Leader at Nevis House, an abstinence based residential recovery service in Inverness
Susie Chandramohan, Finance Business Partner for Older People Services based at Charis House in Edinburgh
Anne Currie, Director of Children and Families
Clare Lynch, Peripatetic and Development Manager for Older People Services
Morvern McDowell, Service Leader at Cale House, move on accommodation following completion of substance use rehabilitation recovery programme, based in Inverness
Debbie Phillips, Co-ordinator at Threshold Edinburgh, a support at home and day opportunities service for adults with learning disabilities
John Robertson, Counselling Manager for the Counselling and Recovery Service based in Edinburgh's Simpson House

Retiring Staff Members:

Malcolm Cobb, Support Worker at Threshold Community and Residential Services for adults with learning difficulties, based in Lanarkshire
Sheila Gordon, Director of Children and Families
Anne McFadyen, Senior Children's Worker at The Mallard, a short break service for children and young people with disabilities based in Glasgow
Joyce McFarlane, Housekeeping Assistant at Threshold Glasgow, a learning and disability service for adults in Glasgow
Kim McLeod, Housekeeping Assistant at the South Beach House Care Home in Ayrshire
Alexandria Rorrison, Team Leader at Threshold Community and Residential services for adults with learning difficulties, based in Lanarkshire

Clint Stevenson, Support Worker at Threshold Edinburgh, a support at home and day opportunities service for adults with learning disabilities
Viv Dickenson, Chief Executive Officer

The Moderator addressed all those who had been presented to the General Assembly, conveying the good wishes of the Assembly to them.

The Rev Dr John L McPake, outgoing Principal Clerk, addressed the General Assembly.

The Moderator addressed the General Assembly.

Her Grace addressed the General Assembly and concluded with these words: "Right Reverend and well-beloved, your labours are now at an end and now, in the King's name, I bid you farewell".

A verse of the National Anthem was sung.

The Moderator and members of the General Assembly having bowed to Her Grace, the Moderator, turning to the General Assembly, said "Right Reverend: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, sole King and Head of the Church, I now dissolve this General Assembly, and appoint the next General Assembly to be held at Edinburgh on a day in May 2027 to be decided by a Commission of Assembly."

The members of the General Assembly, prior to lining the Quadrangle of the College as Her Grace passed from the Assembly Hall, concluded their Session at 5.47 pm with the Benediction pronounced by the Moderator.

ASSEMBLY HALL, EDINBURGH
and online via video conference
18 May 2026, 5.47 pm