INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS IN 2027

NAME OF STANDING COMMITTEE/AGENCY: Theological Forum	
CONVENER/CHAIR:	Prof Paul T Nimmo
VICE-CONVENER(S):	Rev Dr Lynn McChlery
SECRETARY:	Dr Nicola Whyte

REMIT:

The remit of the Theological Forum is:

a) to articulate and develop the doctrinal understanding of the Church in accordance with Holy Scripture and with reference to the confessional standards of the Church of Scotland;
b) to express the theological vision of the Church in its worship, fellowship, witness and mission in and beyond contemporary Scotland;
c) to respond to particular theological requests as and when these arise from the General Assembly, the Council of Assembly and the ecumenical partners of the Church;
d) to draw to the attention of the General Assembly theological matters which the Theological Forum considers to be of pressing contemporary relevance;
e) to stimulate wider theological reflection throughout the Church on key doctrinal, ethical and apologetic matters through the provision of appropriate materials and other activities.

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE SOUGHT AT THIS TIME:

The Forum would be particularly keen to have people from the church who are not ordained ministers, and who have an interest in contemporary issues which intersect with theology.

EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS:

Capacity for theological reflection and comment; diligence in reading papers and attending meetings; willingness to research and prepare written materials for discussion and for reports.

MEMBERSHIP AND ANTICIPATED VACANCIES:

Convener, Vice-Convener and 11 members appointed by the General Assembly, the membership being selected to provide an appropriate balance of (a) ministers of Word and Sacrament, (b) members of academic staff from the Divinity Schools (or equivalent) of Institutions of Higher Education in Scotland, (c) elders and (d) members drawn from the wider membership of the Church chosen for their particular expertise, experience or provenance.

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

FREQUENCY, TIMING AND VENUE OF MEETINGS:
Meetings are held remotely via Microsoft Teams, with one in-person meeting for a study / retreat day in early autumn each year at a hired venue. Regular meetings last a maximum of two hours, and are scheduled so that as many as possible are able to attend each one.

DETAILS OF SUB-COMMITTEES/GROUPS:
The Forum regularly has members involved in one or more Working Groups looking at particular topics. This is always done on a voluntary basis and work varies accordingly.

FURTHER DETAILS:
The Theological Forum's web page can be found here:

https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/departments/faith-action-programme-committees-and-departments/committees/theological-forum

As of 2026, the Forum seeks to fulfil the following General Assembly instructions:

- To work with the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team 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.
- To serve the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team in a consultative capacity to establish a working group to identify the appropriate actions arising from Apology for Slavery in partnership with those who continue to be affected, including consideration of existing assets and funds, and how they are utilised and accessed going forward, and bring recommendations to the General Assembly of 2027.

Members of the Forum are also engaged in the following items of work:

- Kairos Palestine II Working Group
- Christian responsibility in a time of extremism
- Nicaea Conference on 9th October 2026
- Theology of Welcome