



INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS IN 2024

NAME OF STANDING COMMITTEE/AGENCY: Theological Forum	
CONVENER/CHAIR:	Rev Dr Liam Fraser
VICE-CONVENER(S):	Prof Paul T Nimmo
SECRETARY:	Ms Nathalie Mares MacCallum (on maternity leave) Dr Alasdair J Macleod (Acting until 01/2024)
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. Interest/expertise in ecclesiology and the theology of ministry would also be particularly beneficial at this time.	
EXPECTATIONS OF MEMBERS: Diligence in reading papers and attending meetings; capacity for theological reflection and comment.	



MEMBERSHIP AND ANTICIPATED VACANCIES:

NB: a completed Nomination Form must be submitted by all proposed nominees including anyone wishing to be put forward for proposed re-appointment

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.

Two full-term (4 year) vacancies for one member and one minister in 2024.

FREQUENCY, TIMING AND VENUE OF MEETINGS:

include mention of any particular day(s) of the week when meetings would fall and whether meetings will be attended online and/or in person

Normally, the Theological Forum's meetings are held in the Church Offices, 121 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4YN. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, meetings have been held remotely via Microsoft Teams since March 2020, with one in-person meeting for a study day in early autumn each year at a hired venue.

The meetings last a total of two hours, and the days of the week vary so that as many members as possible are able to attend.

The Theological Forum met on 9 occasions throughout the year 2021/22.

DETAILS OF SUB-COMMITTEES/GROUPS:

include frequency, timings, venue and any particular day(s) of the week when meetings would fall
Occasionally the Forum will have a Working Group looking at a particular topic. This is always done on a voluntary basis and varies accordingly.



FURTHER DETAILS:

Include any useful web links

The Theological Forum's web page can be found [here](#).

The Forum seek to fulfil instructions from the General Assembly of 2023 as follows:

- To prepare a report into the theology of transgender identities, and to consider and (jointly with Faith Action) respond to proposals for civil legislation banning conversion therapy;
- To reflect on the decline of the Church of Scotland and offer guidance on how to address it (jointly with Faith Action);
- To prepare a statement of apology for the Church's historical involvement with slavery (jointly with Faith Action and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group);
- To explore the views in the Church on assisted dying and report back to the General Assembly (jointly with Faith Action);
- To explore options for widening access to ordained sacramental ministries within the Church (jointly with Faith Action and Ecumenical Relations);
- To investigate the production of pastoral guidance on situations where a minister or congregation's sense of call is not affirmed by the Presbytery during its planning processes (jointly with Faith Action).