



THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2025

ASSEMBLY PAPER

SATURDAY 17 MAY – THURSDAY 22 MAY

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Note: This Paper will be amended/expanded on each of Tuesday 20 May, Wednesday 21 May and Thursday 22 May so please check back on the mornings of those days for the latest version.

Scottish Charity Number: SC011353

WORSHIP AND ORDER OF BUSINESS

DAY 1 - SATURDAY 17 MAY 2025 – OPENING DAY

SESSION 1: 10.00 AM

1. Constitution of Assembly

Prayer

Hymn CH 352: O for a thousand tongues to sing; to the tune Lyngham (verses 1, 2, 4 & 6)

O for a thou - sand tongues, to sing my
great Re - dee - mer's praise, my great Re - dee - mer's praise,
the glo - ries of my God and King,
the tri - umphs of his grace, the tri - umphs of his
tri - umphs of his grace, the tri - umphs of his grace,
the tri - umphs of his grace, the tri - umphs of his grace!

1. O for a thousand tongues, to sing
my great Redeemer's praise, (x 2)
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace! (x 5)

2. Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
and bids our sorrows cease; (x 2)
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace. (x 5)

4. He speaks, and, listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive, (x 2)
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe. (x 5)

6. My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim, (x 2)
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of thy name. (x 5)

Charles Wesley 1707-1788
Music Thomas Jarman (1782-1862)

Readings: 1 Corinthians 3: 6-11 and Matthew 5: 13-16
Reader: Rev Fiona Smith, Principal Clerk

Reflection

Prayer

2. Submission of Roll of Commissioners.
3. Election and installation of Moderator.
4. His Majesty's Commission to the Lord High Commissioner.
5. His Majesty's Most Gracious Letter to be read and order given for recording it.
6. Address by the Lord High Commissioner and reply by the Moderator.
7. Address by Retiring Moderator.
8. Appointment of the Committee to Prepare Answer to His Majesty's Most Gracious Letter.
9. Report of the Standing Committee on Commissions.
10. Submission of the Standing Orders.
11. Appointment of the Procedure Committee.
12. Appointment of Committee to prepare a minute on Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons.
13. Intimation of arrangements for a celebration of Holy Communion on Monday 19 May, at 9.15 am in the Assembly Hall and online.

Circulation Break

SESSION 2

1. Presentation of Delegates and Visitors.
2. Section 2 of the Report of the Legal Questions Committee regarding proposed changes to Standing Orders.
3. Report of the Assembly Business Committee (Reports 1/1).
4. Report of the Scottish Bible Society and Presentation of Bible to Moderator (Reports 1/5).

Lunch

SESSION 3: 2.00 PM

1. Report of the Procedure Committee – Proposal of the Consent Agenda (see pages 22 and 45 below).
2. Report of the Legal Questions Committee (Reports 2/1).
3. Report of the Presbytery Review Committee (Reports 3/1).
4. Section 3 of the Report of the Legal Questions Committee regarding the proposed Presbytery Review Act.

Circulation Break

SESSION 4

1. Report of the Committee on Overtures and Cases – Returns to Overtures (Reports 4/1).
2. Report of the Theological Forum (Reports 5/1).
3. Report of the Church of Scotland Investors' Trust (Reports 6/1).
4. Report of the Ethical Oversight Committee (Reports 7/1).

Hymn GWA 85: May the Lord bless you

1. May the Lord bless you, may the Lord keep you,
may the Lord make his face to shine up - on you.
- on you and give you peace,
and give you peace.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The first staff contains the first line of the hymn. The second staff contains the second line, with a first ending bracket over the final two measures. The third staff contains the second line, with a second ending bracket over the final two measures. The fourth staff contains the third line, with a first ending bracket over the final two measures. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures.

May the Lord bless you,
may the Lord keep you,
may the Lord make
his face to shine upon you.
May the Lord bless you,
may the Lord keep you,
may the Lord make
his face to shine upon you
and give you peace,
and give you peace.

Words and Music: Yvonne Lyon (b.1977, Scotland)

Words and Music © 2010 Yvonne Lyon

Benediction

DAY 2 - MONDAY 19 MAY 2025

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION: 9.15 AM

Call to worship:

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

his love endures for ever.

For he satisfies the thirsty

and fills the hungry with good things. (Psalm 107:1,9)

Prayer

Hymn CH 656: I come with joy, a child of God

1. I come with joy, a child of God, for - gi - ven, loved and free, the life of Je - sus to re - call, in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.

1. I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.

2. I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.

3. As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.

4. The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.

5. Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.

Brian Wren (b. 1936)

Music: Southern Harmony, 1835

adapted Compilers

Reading: Matthew 22:1-10
Reader: Ms Christine Paterson, Depute Clerk

Address: We come with joy

Invitation to the Lord's table

Hymn CH 19: Ye gates, lift up your heads on high

7. Ye gates, lift up your heads on high; ye doors that last for aye, be

lift-ed up that so the King of glo-ry en-ter may. 8. But who of

glo-ry is the King? The migh-ty Lord is this; even

that same Lord that great in might and strong in bat-tle is; even

that same Lord that great in might and strong in bat-tle is.

Al - le-lu - ia! al - le-lu - ia! al - le-lu - ia! al - le-lu - ia!

al - le-lu - ia! A - men, a - men, a - men.

Lower voices

Full

7. Ye gates, lift up your heads on high;
ye doors that last for aye,
be lifted up, that so the King
of glory enter may.

8. But who of glory is the King?
The mighty Lord is this;
even that same Lord that great in might
even that same Lord that great in might
and strong in battle is.

9. Ye gates, lift up your heads; ye doors,
doors that do last for aye,
be lifted up, that so the King
of glory enter may.

10. But who is he that is the King,
the King of glory? who is this?
The Lord of hosts, and none but he,
The Lord of hosts, and none but he,
the King of glory is.

Alleluia! alleluia! alleluia! alleluia! alleluia!
Amen, amen, amen.

*Psalm 24, verses 7-10, The Scottish Psalter, 1929
Music Andrew Michell Thomson (1778-1831)*

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

The Lord be with you.

AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Lift up your hearts.

WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY,
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT,
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY,
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES
IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.**

Jesus, lamb of God,

HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, bearer of our sins,

HAVE MERCY ON US.

Jesus, redeemer of the world,

GRANT US PEACE

(Music as bread and wine are shared)

Hymn CH 676: Shout for joy!

1. Shout for joy! The Lord has let us feast;
heaven's own fare has fed the last and least;
Christ's own peace is shared a - gain on earth;
God the Spi - rit fills us with new worth.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: '1. Shout for joy! The Lord has let us feast;'. The second staff continues: 'heaven's own fare has fed the last and least;'. The third staff continues: 'Christ's own peace is shared a - gain on earth;'. The fourth staff concludes: 'God the Spi - rit fills us with new worth.'.

1. Shout for joy! The Lord has let us feast;
Heaven's own fare has fed the last and least;
Christ's own peace is shared again on earth;
God the Spirit fills us with new worth.

3. Celebrate with saints who dine on high;
witnesses that love can never die.
'Hallelujah!' – thus their voices ring:
nothing less in gratitude we bring.

2. No more doubting, no more senseless dread:
God's good self has graced our wine and bread;
all the wonder heaven has kept in store
now is ours to keep for evermore.

4. Praise the Maker, praise the Maker's Son,
praise the Spirit – three yet ever one;
praise the God whose food and friends avow
heaven starts here! The kingdom beckons now!

*John L Bell (b. 1949)
And Graham Maule (b. 1958)*

Circulation Break

SESSION 5: 10.30 AM

1. Report of the Procedure Committee.
2. Report and Supplementary Report of the Assembly Trustees (Reports 8/1 and Order of Proceedings p30) and Overture from the Presbytery of Glasgow (Order of Proceedings p28).
3. Report of the Church of Scotland Pension Trustees (Reports 9/1).

Lunch

SESSION 6: 2.00 PM

1. Report of the Ecumenical Relations Committee (Reports 10/1).
3. Report of the Safeguarding Committee (Reports 11/1).
4. Report of the Registration of Ministries Committee (Reports 12/1).

Circulation Break

SESSION 7:

1. Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying (Reports 13/1).

Hymn GWA 85: May the Lord bless you

DAY 3 - TUESDAY 20 MAY 2025

SESSION 8: 9.15 AM

1. Constitution of Assembly

Call to worship:

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;

let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving

and extol him with music and song. (Psalm 95:1,2)

Hymn CH 63: All people that on earth do dwell

1. All peo-ple that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with
5 cheer - ful voice. Him serve with mirth, his praise forth
9 tell, come ye be - fore him and re - joice.

1. All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him and rejoice.

2. Know that the Lord is God indeed;
without our aid he did us make;
we are his folk, he doth us feed,
and for his sheep he doth us take.

3. Oh, enter then his gates with praise,
approach with joy his courts unto:
praise, laud, and bless his name always,
for it is seemly so to do.

4. For why? the Lord our God is good,
his mercy is for ever sure;
his truth at all times firmly stood,
and shall from age to age endure.

Psalm 100

The Scottish Psalter, 1929

Melody from Genevan Psalter, 1551

Prayer

Reading: Ephesians 3:14-21 (to be read in Gaelic)

Reader: Rev Hugh Stewart, Lochs-in-Bernera l/w Uig, Presbytery of Lewis

The reading is from Paul's letter to the Ephesians; Chapter 3, verses 14 to 21

Hear the Word of God

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family^[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Amen, and thanks be to God for this reading from his Word.

Reflection: Paul's prayer, our prayer

Prayer

Hymn GWA 138: Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King

1. Hear the call of the king-dom, lift youreyes to the King; let his
 song rise with-in you as a fra-grant of - fer - ing of how God, rich in mer-cy, came in
 Christ to re-deem all whotrust in his un-fail-ing grace. 2. Hear the us. King of
 hea-ven we will ans-wer the call. We will fol-low, bring-ing hope to the world, filled with
 pas - sion, filled with po - wer to pro - claim sal -
 va - tion in Je - sus' name. 3. Hear the name.

1. Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King;
 let his song rise within you as a fragrant offering
 of how God, rich in mercy, came in Christ to redeem
 all who trust in his unfailing grace.

2. Hear the call of the kingdom to be children of light
 with the mercy of heaven, the humility of Christ;
 walking justly before him, loving all that is right,
 that the life of Christ may shine through us.

*King of heaven, we will answer the call.
 We will follow, bringing hope to the world,
 filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim
 salvation in Jesus' name.*

3. Hear the call of the kingdom, to reach out to the lost
 with the Father's compassion in the wonder of the cross,
 bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope yet to come:
 let the nations put their trust in him.

*King of heaven, we will answer the call.
 We will follow, bringing hope to the world,
 filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim
 salvation in Jesus' name.*

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Words and Music: Keith Getty (b.1974, Northern Ireland),
 Kristyn Getty (b.1980 Northern Ireland) and Stuart Townend
 (b.1963, Scotland)

2. Minutes.
3. Report of the Procedure Committee.
4. Report and Supplementary Report of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team ("FAPLT") (Reports 14/1 and Assembly Paper p25), Joint Supplementary Report of FAPLT and the Assembly Trustees (Order of Proceedings p32) and Petition from the Rev Donald Michael MacInnes and Answers thereto (Assembly Paper pp 37-39).

Circulation Break

SESSION 9

1. FAPLT Report, Supplementary Report, Joint Supplementary Report and Petition and Answers thereto contd.

Lunch

SESSION 10: 2.00 PM

1. Order of Day: 2pm: Nick Georgiadis, Director of Fundraising & Supporter Engagement, Christian Aid.
2. FAPLT Report, Supplementary Report, Joint Supplementary Report and Petition and Answers thereto contd.

Circulation Break

SESSION 11

1. FAPLT Report, Supplementary Report, Joint Supplementary Report and Petition and Answers thereto contd.
2. Joint Report of FAPLT and the Legal Questions Committee (Reports 15/1).

Hymn GWA 85: May the Lord bless you.

DAY 4 - WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2025

SESSION 12: 9.15 AM

1. Constitution of Assembly

Call to worship:

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
His love endures for ever.

Give thanks to the God of gods,

His love endures for ever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords,

His love endures for ever.

Give thanks to the God of heaven,

His love endures for ever.

(Psalm 136:1-3,36)

Hymn CH 123: God is love, let heaven adore him

1. God is Love: let heaven adore him; God is Love: let
earth rejoice; let creation sing before him, and ex -
alt him with one voice. He who laid the earth's foun - da - tion,
he who spread the hea - ven's a - bove, he who breathes through
all cre - a - tion: God is Love, e - ter - nal Love.

1. God is Love: let heaven adore him;
God is Love: let earth rejoice;
let creation sing before him,
and exalt him with one voice.
He who laid the earth's foundation,
he who spread the heavens above,
he who breathes through all creation:
God is Love, eternal Love.

2. God is Love: and is enfolding
all the world in one embrace;
with unfailing grasp is holding
every child of every race.
And when human hearts are breaking
under sorrow's iron rod,
then they find that selfsame aching
deep within the heart of God.

3. God is Love: and though with blindness
sin afflicts the souls of all,
God's eternal loving-kindness
holds and guides us when we fall.
Sin and death and hell shall never
o'er us final triumph gain;
God is Love, so Love for ever
o'er the universe must reign.

Timothy Rees (1874-1939)

Music: Alfred Victor Fedak (b.1953)

Prayer

Reading: 1 John 4:7-21

Reader: Rev Andrew C Donald, Kirkcaldy: Pathhead

Reflection: Know this love, show this love

Hymn GWA 202: God, may our church reflect your grace

1. God, may our church re - flect your grace to all who en - ter here. May
we ex - tend a wide em - brace, a wel - come that's sin - cere. May
our in - clu - sion be as broad as your com - pas - sion's scope. For
we would be your peo - ple, God, a home, a help, a hope!

1. God, may our church reflect your grace
to all who enter here.
May we extend a wide embrace,
a welcome that's sincere.
May our inclusion be as broad
as your compassion's scope.
For we would be your people, God,
a home, a help, a hope!

2. Here in this space each child is free
to move, explore, and speak.
There's room to question or agree,
to grieve, to laugh, to seek.
That we by grace may share your love
across each deep divide
with hearts as gentle as a dove,
O Spirit, be our guide!

3. Like Christ, with arms outstretched to all,
help us to live each day,
to build a bridge and not a wall
at church, at work, at play.
May justice lead us as we go,
embracing what is right,
reflecting grace, that we may show
your glory burning bright!

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Words: Ruth Duck (b.1947, USA)

*Music: German melody, 18th century, as adapted in
Mainz Gesangbuch, 1833, harmonised by St Gall
Gesangbuch, 1863*

2. Minutes.
3. Report of the Procedure Committee.
4. Report of the Committee to draft a reply to His Majesty's Most Gracious Letter.
5. Report of the Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces (Reports 16/1)

Circulation Break

SESSION 13

1. Report of the Church of Scotland Guild (Reports 17/1).
2. Report of the Social Care Council (Reports 18/1).
3. Report of the Church of Scotland Trust (Reports 19/1).
4. Report of the Iona Community Board (Reports 20/1).

Lunch

SESSION 14: 2.00 PM

1. FAPLT CONFERENCE SESSION – 1 HOUR

Circulation Break

SESSION 15:

1. Report of the the General Trustees (Reports 21/1).
2. Report of the Report of the Church of Scotland Housing and Loan Fund (Reports 22/1).

Hymn GWA 85: May the Lord bless you.

DAY 5 - THURSDAY 22 MAY 2025

SESSION 16: 9.15 AM

1. Constitution of Assembly.

Call to worship:

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;

make known among the nations what he has done.

Sing to him, sing praise to him;

tell of all his wonderful acts.

Glory in his holy name;

let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. (Psalm 105:1-3)

Hymn GWA 44: Come people of the risen King

1. Come, peo-ple of the ri - sen King, who de-light to bring him
 praise; come all, and tune your hearts to sing to the mor - ning star of grace. From the
 shi - fting sha-dows of the earth we will lift our eyes to him, where stea - dy arms of
 mer - cy reach to ga - ther chil-dren in. *Re-joice! Re-joice! Let ev-ery tongue re-*
joice! One heart, one voice, O Church of Christ, re-joice! Church of Christ, re-joice!

1. Come, people of the risen King,
 who delight to bring him praise;
 come all, and tune your hearts to sing
 to the morning star of grace.
 From the shifting shadows of the earth
 we will lift our eyes to him,
 where steady arms of mercy reach
 to gather children in.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!

2. Come, those whose joy is morning sun
 and those weeping through the night;
 come, those who tell of battles won,
 and those struggling in the fight.
 For his perfect love will never change,
 and his mercies never cease,
 but follow us through all our days, with
 the certain hope of peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!

3. Come, young and old from every land,
 men and women of the faith;
 come, those with full or empty hands,
 find the riches of his grace.
 Over all the world, his people sing,
 shore to shore we hear them call
 the truth that cries through every age;
 'Our God is all in all!'
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Let every tongue rejoice!
One heart, one voice,
O Church of Christ, rejoice!

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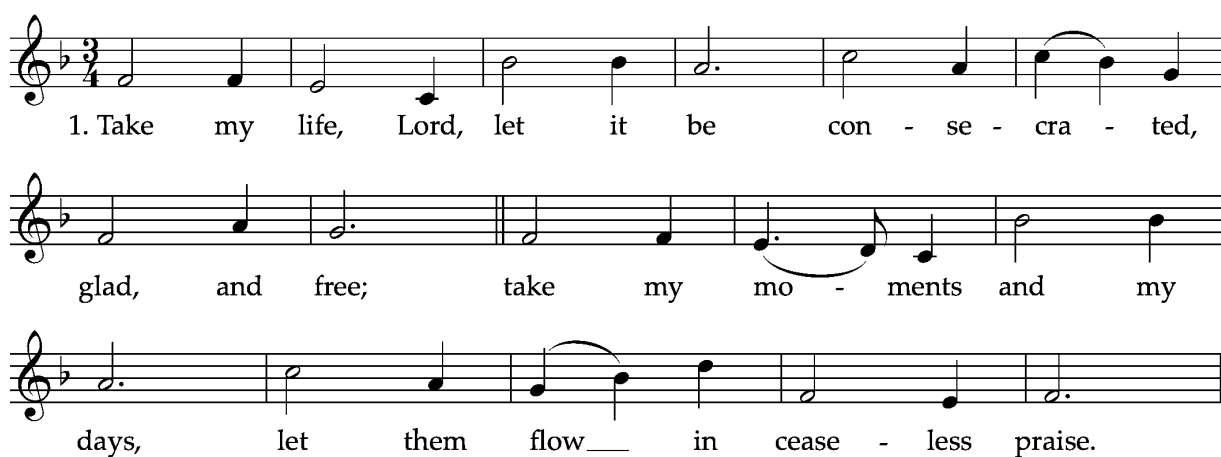
Prayer

Readings: Luke 21:1-4, The widow's offering
Reader: Miss Christine Meyer, Youth Representative, Presbytery of the North East
& the Northern Isles
Mark 14:1-9, Jesus anointed at Bethany
Reader: Mr Joe Clark, Youth Representative, Presbytery of the of the North East
& the Northern Isles

Reflection: Extravagant love

Prayer

Hymn: CH 502: Take my life, Lord let it be



1. Take my life, Lord, let it be
consecrated, glad, and free;
take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2. Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of your love;
take my feet, that I may run
bearing news of Christ your Son.

3. Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King;
take my intellect and use
every power as you shall choose.

4. Take my will – your will be done,
may my will and yours be one;
take my heart – it is your own,
it shall be your royal throne.

5. Take my love – my Lord, I pour
at your feet its treasure-store;
take myself, and I will be
all for you, eternally.

Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879) (alt.)
Music: Wenzel Müller (1747-1835)

2. Minutes.
3. Report of the Procedure Committee.
4. Report of the Nomination Committee (Reports 23/1).
5. Report of the Selection Committee if required.
6. Remaindered business if required.
7. Draft Minutes of Sederunts not yet submitted to be read if required.
8. Report on the Printing of Acts.
9. Protestations called for.
10. Appointment of Committee to Prepare Minutes.
11. Act appointing the Commission of Assembly.
12. Act appointing the next General Assembly to meet in Edinburgh and online on XXX May 2026.

Lunch

SESSION 17: 2.00 PM

1. Constitution of Assembly.

Call to worship

Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;

his greatness no one can fathom.

One generation commends your works to another;

they tell of your mighty acts.

They speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty –

and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

They tell of the power of your awesome works –

and I will proclaim your great deeds.

They celebrate your abundant goodness

and joyfully sing of your righteousness. (Psalm 145:3-7)

Hymn GWA 82: Here and now we're bound together

1. Here and now we're bound to - ge - ther: held in one di -
Help us see, in one an - o - ther, dif - ference as a
- vine em - brace. As each pass - ing ge - ne - ra - tion
gift of grace.
wor - ships you in fresh new ways, join our songs with
all cre - a - tion, lift our voice to sing your praise.

1. Here and now we're bound together:
held in one divine embrace.
Help us see, in one another,
difference as a gift of grace.
As each passing generation
worships you in fresh new ways,
join our songs with all creation,
lift our voice to sing your praise.

2. Lord, affirm our shared vocation:
may we bring your plans to birth,
build your Church on sure foundations,
fit to serve a troubled earth.
Growing, praying, sharing, learning,
deep in wisdom, broad in scope,
love-revealing, truth-discerning,
living out the gospel hope.

3. In your work of transformation
you are making all things new.
Stir our hearts' imagination,
call us now to work with you.
Send us out to share your mission;
show us each our part to play
as we live the Great Commission
joyful in the world today.

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Words: Ally Barrett (b.1975, England)
Music: Melody by Rowland Hugh Pritchard
(1811-1887, Wales) harmonised by David Evans
(1874-1948, Wales)


Prayer

Reading: Matthew 28:16-20
Reader: Rev Fiona Smith, Principal Clerk

Reflection – Shared vocation

2. Report anent Deceased Ministers, Missionaries and Deacons.
3. Presentations to the Moderator.
4. Moderator addresses the General Assembly.

Hymn CH 81: I to the hills will lift mine eyes



1. I to the hills will lift mine eyes. From whence doth come mine aid?

My safe-ty com-eth from the Lord, who heaven and earth hath made.

1. I to the hills will lift mine eyes.
From whence doth come mine aid?
My safety cometh from the Lord,
who heaven and earth hath made.

2. Thy foot he'll not let slide, nor will
he slumber that thee keeps.
Behold, he that keeps Israel,
he slumbers not, nor sleeps.

3. The Lord thee keeps, the Lord thy shade
on thy right hand doth stay:
the moon by night thee shall not smite,
nor yet the sun by day.

4. The Lord shall keep thy soul: he shall
preserve thee from all ill.
Henceforth thy going out and in
God keep for ever will.

Words: Psalm 121, The Scottish Psalter, 1929
Music (FRENCH / DUNDEE): Melody from Scottish
Psalter, 1615

5. The Lord High Commissioner addresses the General Assembly.
6. National Anthem.
**God save our gracious King,
long live our noble King,
God save The King!
Send him victorious,
happy and glorious,
long to reign over us,
God save The King!**
7. Dissolution.

THE BENEDICTION

Note

It is hoped that this timetable will be adhered to but items could arise earlier or later than the times specified.

CONSENT AGENDA REPORTS – proposer Procedure Committee

Delegation of the General Assembly (Reports 24/1).

Chalmers Lectureship Trust (Reports 25/1).

Church Hymnary Trustees (Reports 26/1).

ADDITIONAL SONG

Hymn GWA 130: Holy Spirit breath of heaven

1. Ho - ly Spi - rit, breath of hea - ven, Ho - ly
6 Spi - rit, breathe on us. Breathe us to a qui - et
12 still - ness where we trust your love for us.

1. Holy Spirit, breath of heaven,
Holy Spirit, breathe on us.
Breathe us to a quiet stillness
where we trust your love for us.

2. Holy Spirit, breath of heaven,
Holy Spirit, breathe on us.
Breathe us to a quiet stillness
where we find your place for us.

3. Holy Spirit, breath of heaven,
Holy Spirit, breathe on us.
Breathe us to a quiet stillness
where we know that you are God.

*Words and Music: Geraldine Latty (b.1963, England)
Words and Music © 2004 Thankyou Music. Admin. by
Integrity Music Ltd.*

COMMISSION

CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories KING, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith, to all whom these presents may concern.

GREETING! WHEREAS We taking into Our Royal consideration that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was appointed to meet on the seventeenth day of May and seeing We by reason of Our other weighty affairs cannot in Person be present in the said Assembly.

AND WE being desirous that Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Counsellor, Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, Lady Knight of Our Most Noble and Most Ancient Order of the Thistle, Dame Commander of Our Most Excellent Order of The British Empire, One of our counsel learned in the law, shall discharge the great trust of Our High Commissioner to the General Assembly: WE ordain a Commission to be made and passed in due form under the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and made use of in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, nominating, constituting and appointing like as We by these presents do nominate, constitute and appoint the said Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, to be Our High Commissioner to the said General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

GIVING AND GRANTING unto the said Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, power commission and warrant to represent Our Sacred Person and Royal Authority and supply His Presence and hold His Place in the said ensuing General Assembly as Our High Commissioner specially appointed for that effect, and to do all and everything belonging to the power and place of a High Commissioner to a General Assembly as fully and freely in all respects as any other in that High Station hath done or might have done in any time heretofore and as We Ourselves might do if Personally present, We hereby ratifying and approving all and whatsoever things the said Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, shall in the discharge of this Commission lawfully do or cause to be done:

WE HEREBY require and command all the Ministers, the Diaconate and Elders of the said Assembly and Church with all other of Our good subjects in Scotland of whatsoever degree or quality to acknowledge reverence, honour and obey the said Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini, as Our High Commissioner to the effect and manner above mentioned, and We declare that this Commission shall commence and be in force from the sixteenth day of May and from thence forward to continue during the ensuing session of the said General Assembly or until this Commission be by Us revoked and discharged:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF We have ordered the Seal appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and made use of in place of the Great Seal of Scotland to be appended hereto. Given at Our Court at Balmoral Castle this Fifteenth of April in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Five in the Third Year of Our Reign.

PER SIGNATURAM MANU S.D.N. REGIS SUPRA SCRIPTAM

Commission
In favour of
Lady Elish Frances Margaret Angiolini
to be
High Commissioner
to the General Assembly
of the Church of Scotland

Written to the Seal and Registered and Sealed at
Edinburgh on the 13th of May in the year
Two thousand and twenty-five

Keeper for the Registers of Scotland and Substitute Keeper of the Seal

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM MAY 2025

Proposed Deliverance

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Supplementary Report.
2. Instruct that the following provisions will be included in a new Training Act for FTWAS Ministers to be brought to the General Assembly of 2026:
 - (i) Ministry formation and training for FTWAS Ministers and Deacons will be shaped by (a) an academic core of related subjects, (b) contextualised assessed placements with a missional emphasis, and (c) focused reflective practice integrating theology with practice through both academic study and assessed placements, all as specified in more detail in section 6 of the Supplementary Report (*Section 6*);
 - (ii) a Formation Committee will be set up that will report to the People and Training Programme Group of FAPLT with the remit set out in section 7 of the Supplementary Report (*Section 7*);
 - (iii) the routes of training for FTWAS Ministers and the Diaconate will be as set out in sections 8 and 9 of the Supplementary Report (*Sections 8 & 9*);
 - (iv) anyone applying to become a FTWAS Minister or a Deacon will require in all normal circumstances to complete the prescribed course before 31 December in the year in which they turn 60 (*Section 10*); and
 - (v) a process of appraisal for Candidates and Probationers which is largely similar to the present system will remain in place with appropriate updates to documentation (*Section 12*).
3. Instruct FAPLT to bring to the General Assembly of 2026 proposed amendments to the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010) which reflect the terms of the Supplementary Report (*Sections 15 & 18*).
4. Approve the intention to introduce Compulsory Additional Training for FTWAS Ministers in a new First Five Year programme and instruct FAPLT to bring to the General Assembly of 2026 for approval, an outline of the compulsory and elective courses that would form a programme of Compulsory Additional Training (*Section 16*).

Report

1. PEOPLE AND TRAINING

- 1.1 The Board of Ministry's General Assembly 2000 *Ministers of the Gospel* report affirmed the theological, biblical and doctrinal foundation of the Church as the body of Christ. It envisioned a Church where its members would exercise a ministry as an expression of the one ministry of Jesus Christ, with the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament ordering the life of the Church and equipping God's people for service.
 - 1.2 In exploring how this ministry should be carried out, the report initiated a journey that has risen and fallen through the existence of the Ministries Council, Faith Nurture Forum and now the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, where Initial Ministerial Education (IME) has sought to affirm the integration of the person within ministry with their practice. This ensures that they are not only educated and trained for that ministry but engage in a continuing process of formation that is fed and sustained through the constant of a theological reflective practice that brings together their worship, study, prayer and everyday experience of life and community.
 - 1.3 Against this backdrop, we are now working towards naming a Lead Academic Partner who will partner the Church and share this journey of training and formation.
-

2. THE JOURNEY TO ONE LEAD ACADEMIC PARTNER (LAP)

- 2.1 The General Assembly 2024 approved the principle of context-based formation for IME for fulltime Ministry of Word and Sacrament and the Diaconate. This reduces the current pattern of three

years plus probation to three full years, with a view to achieving a clearer integration of practice and theory.

- 2.2 The present Selection and Training for Full-time Ministry (Act X 2004, as amended) outlines the initial discernment and assessment processes for those entering Full-time Ministry of Word and Sacrament. Once an applicant is accepted as a Candidate for Ministry, they must undertake one of five prescribed courses (Course A- E). The course taken is determined by a Candidate's previous educational experience, and is presently undertaken at one of our five Academic Providers, namely Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Highland Theological College or St Andrews.
- 2.3 In essence the Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010) adopts the discernment and assessment principles within Act X 2004, together with Presbytery Supervision of a Candidate, the initial course preparations, and appraisal during candidature. By contrast it does not name any institution of higher education, except that approved by Faith Nurture Forum (now FAPLT) for the training of Deacons.
- 2.4 The academic study offered by each university has ensured that ministry education is rooted in Holy Scripture, the history of the Church (including the development of the Church of Scotland), the principal doctrines of the Christian faith and their application to preaching and pastoral work, Christian Ethics, Church, Ministry, Worship, Preaching and Sacraments; and Pastoral Care and Theology, in accordance with the Training Act.
- 2.5 This academic core is complemented by a Church-led programme of four practical placements, an annual conference programme, monthly seminars, and additional training covering a variety of topics ranging from speech training, EDI, Safeguarding, Church Law, and School Chaplaincy, among many.
- 2.6 The Blake Stevenson Report to the General Assembly in 2018 highlighted that while Candidates enjoyed and appreciated their academic training, many feel unprepared as they entered their first Charge or appointment. Two further developments have affected this situation.
- 2.7 First, with diminishing numbers of people entering ministry training, each Academic Provider reported a reduction in the number of applicants. This has spread the Candidate cohort over five universities thinning out the peer group experience and support for many.
- 2.8 For the Church led programme, challenges have arisen when designing a conference and seminar programme that complements and supplements the academic core. Those subjects have been covered in different ways, and to different depths by each of our universities, leading to inconsistencies in the training programme.
- 2.9 Second, theological education internationally now recognises the benefits of theological reflective practice, that, integrating theology with the practical application of ministry, provides formational benefits for both Ministers and their congregations.
- 2.10 As the Church sought to understand what was required of its IME programme, it developed and presented to the General Assembly of 2018 the Formation Framework. This brought together the context, layers and dimensions of formation required by ministry training to ensure that training remains rooted in the call from God to ministry and mission, inspiring a vision for Ministry within the wider Church. <https://ascend.churchofscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/FNF-Formation-Framework-HANDBOOK-UPDATES.pdf>
- 2.11 The General Assembly affirmed the need for this training and formation to be Christ-centred and Student-focused, ensuring that these values are present at all points of training. The integration with both the Discernment Process and Continuing Ministerial Development must be clearer, enabling a new IME curriculum with different levels of competency to be achieved by key points in the formation process.
- 2.12 Following the approval of the Formation Framework, it was anticipated that a new IME programme would be developed quickly. However, the consultation process and proposed tendering by Academic Providers proved difficult, and with the onset of the first period of lockdown, it was agreed to pause the process.

- 2.13 The Assembly Trustees, at this stage, undertook a review of the work undertaken by the Training Task Group, who had led the IME development work. Their report to the General Assembly of 2022 affirmed the centrality of formation in the training process, and the need to ensure that ministers are trained within a community of learning that is organic, relational and collaborative. This approach enables ministers to work confidently with others in their differing ministries, promoting the growth and mission of the Church, and the flourishing of the gospel of Jesus Christ in all communities.
- 2.14 In the post-Covid Church, faced with Presbytery Mission Planning, the amalgamation of Presbyteries, the re-organisation of the central governance structure and reduced central budgets and staffing, there has been a growing realisation that what was once imagined as recently as 2020, required to be rethought. After recalibrating our approach, the General Assembly of 2024 agreed to select one Lead Academic Partner to offer a new 3-year IME BD/MDIV programme, with a 2-year diploma option available for those who meet agreed criteria. The new degree course will provide accredited placements, with a contextual focus, preparing Candidates within the context of the Formation Framework, with theological reflective practice at the heart of their formation and training.

3 THE PROCESS OF SELECTING ONE LEAD ACADEMIC PARTNER

- 3.1 Following the General Assembly of 2024, consultation took place with several groups including the Theological Forum, the Diaconate, the Registration of Ministries Committee, and the Ecumenical Relations Committee. At both separate and combined meetings, we met with our existing Academic Providers. From these consultations we gathered valuable insights to guide the selection process for the LAP.

4. THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE LEAD ACADEMIC PARTNER

- 4.1 The selection process consists of two stages. Each existing Academic Provider was invited to make an initial Stage One proposal to ensure that they could meet the key requirements for the new three-year BD/MDIV degree programme.
- 4.2 The essential requirements for this degree were:
- an academic core of relevant subjects
 - contextualised, assessed placements with a missional emphasis
 - focused reflective practice, integrating theology with practice through both academic study and the assessed placements
- 4.3 Submissions were also requested to explain how their proposal aligns with the Formation Framework and how it might meet the criteria for SAAS funding for many Candidates.
- 4.4 We sought reassurances regarding the academic rigour and financial stability of the institution, the nature of the proposed online, hybrid, and in-person provision of study.
- 4.5 We asked for information about the fairness of access protocols of entry to study (age, gender, socio-economic), and the background inclusiveness of the theology and gender of staff and management board.
- 4.6 Submissions were also requested to include the following information:
- The provision of additional pastoral and educational support for Candidates
 - The outline structure of their academic and calendar year
 - Non-assessed study, reflection, and formation activities such as study days, retreats and conferences
 - Their ability to build Candidate peer group and support
 - Areas of anticipated partnerships with the other Academic Providers
 - How they anticipated working in partnership with the Church of Scotland Training Team
- 4.7 Submissions for Stage One were received from Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Highland Theological College. St Andrews intimated that while they continued to value their connection to the Church of Scotland, they were unable to proceed with a submission.

- 4.8 These initial submissions provided us with an overview of what each Academic Provider has proposed. While we were disappointed that we were not able to pursue a 'Hub' model to bring our Academic Providers together, we acknowledge however, the complexity that this model would have brought, together with stretching the budget of the Church beyond what was affordable.
- 4.9 It also allowed the People and Training Programme Group to confirm the areas that should remain solely within the realm of Church provision. We had intimated that some areas, like Safeguarding and Church Law, would continue to be provided by the Church, but we had been open to considering if there were other specific areas that could be provided by the LAP or the Church.
- 4.10 With the need to highlight areas of partnership between the LAP and the Church in the Stage Two submission, this would be addressed through the role of the Director of Studies, a position for which we are currently recruiting. This role would oversee the communication and decision-making processes required by each party.
- 4.11 Additionally, the People and Training Programme Group felt that the Church's experience in organising Candidate placements and Supervisor training would serve the new IME programme better. This partnership would allow the accreditation of placements to proceed smoothly, ensuring the programme's success.
- 4.12 The People and Training Programme Group reviewed each submission, ensuring it met the outlined needs of the new IME programme. They then prepared feedback for each submission, giving further direction and asking for clarification where necessary. No comparison was made between the submissions, and a second invitation to enter the Stage Two process was extended to all.

5. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF THE LEAD ACADEMIC PARTNER

- 5.1 The Selection Panel consisted of four people:
- Rev David Rankin (Parish Minister and a Presbytery-appointed member of FAPLT)
 - Rev Professor Paul Middleton (Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity in Theology and Religious Studies, University of Chester).
 - Dr Heather Major (Research Fellow in New Places for New People, Evangelism & Growth, Cliff College, Bristol)
 - Mr Geoff Miller (Assembly Trustees)
- 5.2 They were asked to consider applications against the following criteria:
- Sharing the Vivid Vision for the new IME programme
 - Willingness and ability to partner with the Church of Scotland Training Team
 - The academic core subjects and content of their proposed courses
 - How their course outline and content align with the Formation Framework
 - Their definition and provision of theological reflection and practice
 - The use of the whole academic year
 - The extent of their hybrid provision
 - The Provision of a Diploma Course
 - Their use of existing courses
 - The number and costs of commissioning new courses
 - The provision and use of accredited placements
 - Their ability to partner with the Church provision within IME
 - Access to SAAS funding
 - Optional Conference programme provision
 - Additional pastoral, educational and financial support for Candidates
 - Non-assessed support and activities e.g. worship, fellowship gatherings
 - The financial cost for the Church for the above provision
- 5.3 While we hoped to bring a recommendation to this year's General Assembly, a decision was taken towards the end of April that the process of selecting the LAP would benefit from a deeper dive into each submission made by Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Highland Theological College.
- 5.4 A recommendation will therefore be brought to GA 2026. While this delay is undoubtedly disappointing, it must be understood in the broader context of the IME programme's own development over the past 25 years. Further scrutiny of both the needs of the Church and

expectations of the LAP is now required, allowing FAPLT time to ensure that the recommendation brought forward is robust, credible, and widely supported.

5.5 The Selection Panel has confirmed that each submission fulfils the remit of providing a 3-year IME degree programme with accredited placements. However, there are important differences between the submissions that require further attention. FAPLT therefore requires additional clarity on a number of key questions, such as:

- What balance does the Church require between an 'in-person' and an 'on-line' delivery of the IME programme?
- In what ways will the need for the peer cohort experience highlighted by the Blake Stevenson report in 2018 be enabled by both the Church and the LAP?
- In terms of supplementing and enriching the degree programme, how will the Church's own contribution to formation be developed and delivered?
- The Church requires to further describe the nature of the partnership it requires to have with the LAP. And in turn, how would each LAP envision and articulate their response to that partnership if selected?
- Further work is needed to assess the expected time commitment in placements, ensuring a realistic and sustainable balance between study, life, and placement expectations. This includes dialogue with the LAP to clarify how accreditation will work in this context.
- Further exploration is required of the financial and legal memorandum of understanding to be entered into between the Church and the LAP. In particular, the costings provided by the Academic Providers need further scrutiny.

5.6 In addition to the above, more work will also be undertaken regarding the Compulsory Additional Training requirement, that serves to underpin ministerial education and support in the First Five Years. This is mentioned later in this Supplementary Report.

5.7 We are grateful to all who have brought us to this stage. For both the Academic Providers who submitted their submissions over two stages, and to the Selection Panel for their work, the progress required to bring this Supplementary Report to this year's General Assembly has been immense.

6. THE NEW INITIAL MINISTERIAL EDUCATION BD/MDIV DEGREE AND PROGRAMME

6.1 We have been asked many times what we, as a Church, want from a LAP. We can put this simply by saying that it is important for all Candidates, within their ministry context, to:

- Understand and critique the recent missional journey of the Church of Scotland
- Root their own reformed theology in a missiology that enlivens and encourages their congregations
- Place Scottish church history into context against the growth and spread of Christianity
- Confidently and competently explain and share the sacraments
- Preach and lead worship, having the skill to relate their interpretation and knowledge of the Bible to the context in which they live and minister
- Be pastorally sensitive and competent, meeting people where they are, be it in the hospital, the school, the nursing home, the community café, or the endless contexts where people gather to share comfort, joy, encouragement or lament
- Know themselves, with an adaptive leadership style that builds others in faith, self-worth and confidence
- Be prepared to contribute of their time and energy to the courts of Church, respecting its authority, challenging its failings, and forgiving its inadequacies

- Be ethically aware and respond through their biblical interpretation, developing theology, pastoral awareness and understanding of Church law to individuals and issues, with both challenge and sensitivity
 - Be willing to continually reflect and refresh both themselves and their ministries by building a rhythm for faith, life, family, rest and prayer
- 6.2 The Church understands the need for the continuation of traditional courses that root our understanding and theology. However, it also wishes to ensure that Candidates can develop and express their own understanding of a missional, sacramental and caring ministry for today's Church and society.
- 6.3 Therefore, we propose that ministry formation and training is shaped by:
- **An academic core of related subjects** which includes:
Life of faith and discipleship
Christian scriptures, history and thought
Practice of ministry
Mission
 - **Contextualised assessed placements with a missional emphasis** which includes core ministry experience of:
Preaching
Leading worship
The conduct of the sacraments
Pastoral practice of funerals and weddings
Missional practice and Discipleship
 - **Focused reflective practice integrating theology with practice** through both academic study and assessed placements through:
The interpretation and understanding of the Bible
A developed theological understanding of key Christian doctrines
Application and interpretation of Church Law
Application of pastoral practice and theology
- 6.4 While much of this content would be covered within the degree programme, the Church would complement and supplement it by working in partnership with the LAP to ensure that all aspects of training are addressed.

7. A FORMATION COMMITTEE

- 7.1 It is anticipated that within FAPLT there will be a need for a Formation Committee, which reports to FAPLT and which will oversee the shared partnership work between FAPLT and the LAP, together with other key stakeholders as required.
- 7.2 It is proposed that the Formation Committee would comprise of seven people with representation from the LAP, FAPLT and the wider Church, and would report through the People and Training Programme Group to FAPLT. The Director of Studies will serve as Secretary to the Formation Committee.
- 7.3 It is important to stress that this Committee will not replace the role of either FAPLT or a Presbytery in the annual appraisal of a Candidate, but rather will advise on and direct the training route undertaken by each Candidate.
- 7.4 This Committee would be responsible for:
- overseeing on behalf of FAPLT the implementation of the training and formation programme for FTWAS ministers and the Diaconate.
 - working in partnership with the LAP to review academic course provision.
 - working in partnership with the national Training Team and the LAP to oversee the placement provision for Candidates.
 - requesting and advising on programme changes to the provisions by both the Church and the LAP.

- directing the personalised training plan for each Candidate through an Initial Course Meeting, and thereafter on an annual basis, proposing or accepting changes to this.
 - 7.5 The work of both the Director of Studies and the Formation Committee is essential to ensure the principle of a shared partnership of provision is established. This will allow both the Church and the LAP to be confident in their own roles, and that of their partner, within the new programme.
 - 7.6 The partnership extends not just between FAPLT and the LAP, but also into our growing relationship with Presbyteries, congregations, Supervisors, mentors, Formation Partners and the national Training Team.
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8. PRESCRIBED COURSES – FULL TIME WORD AND SACRAMENT (FTWAS) MINISTRY

- 8.1 It is anticipated that there will be three prescribed courses that a Candidate for FTWAS ministry can undertake. The Formation Committee will evaluate and make a decision regarding the appropriate course for each Candidate. Their decision will be final.

Course 1

This course will be undertaken by most Candidates entering training who have not previously gained a degree in theology. They will be required to complete the three-year BD/MDIV degree with accompanying Church courses.

Course 2

This exceptional route will be available to Candidates who meet at least three of the following criteria:

- Aged over 50 years of age
- Previous theological study
- Experience of the Church of Scotland
- Other relevant life, work and church experience

They will be required to complete a two-year Diploma in theology provided by our LAP, with accompanying Church courses.

Course 3

This alternative route will be for Candidates who already hold a theology degree. The Formation Committee will set a course that ensures all aspects of the three-year BD/MDIV course are covered, including assessed placements. The Committee will also consider whether a Candidate could undertake a Master's degree or other related study programme. This is similar to what is currently required of Candidates who have completed their BD.

9. PRESCRIBED COURSES – THE DIACONATE

- 9.1 It is anticipated that there will be two prescribed courses that a Candidate for Diaconate ministry can undertake. Again, the Formation Committee will evaluate and make a final decision regarding the appropriate course.

Course 4

Most Candidates entering training, who have not previously gained a degree in theology, will be required to complete a two-year Diploma in Theology, provided by our LAP, followed by a one-year Deacon specific training year. The Training Team will collaborate with the Diaconate Council to develop the relevant coursework and training brief.

Course 5

Diaconate Candidates will be invited by the Formation Committee to complete a three-year BD/MDIV degree after the two-year Diploma course. This will be followed by a one-year Deacon specific training year. The national office Training Team will work with the Diaconate Council to develop the relevant coursework and training brief.

10. AGE LIMIT

- 10.1 In the new IME programme, Candidates for FTWAS and the Diaconate will require to complete their training by the 31st of December of the year in which they turn **60**.
-

11. EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANDIDATES

- 11.1 At present all Candidates in training are expected to sign an Expectations and Responsibilities of Candidates document which outlines what a Candidate can expect from the Training Team, their Presbytery and FAPLT. It also highlights what their responsibilities are as Candidates in relation to their standards of performance, conduct and actions. This document will be revised to take account of the training changes.
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12. ANNUAL APPRAISAL OF CANDIDATES

- 12.1 Presently all Candidates and Supervisors agree together a Learning Covenant. Both towards the end of the placement will complete reports, with the appraisal of the progress of a Candidate being undertaken on an annual basis.
- 12.2 At this annual appraisal of a Candidate, in attendance there is a FAPLT member of staff and a Presbytery Assessor (usually the Candidate's Formation Partner appointed by their Presbytery). If the FAPLT staff member has deemed that these reports are unsatisfactory, a FAPLT representative will also be in attendance.
- 12.3 When a Candidate becomes a Probationer, there are then two appraisals within the 15-month fulltime placement. One normally takes place at the end of six months, the other at the end of twelve months. The present Training Act allows for additional appraisal(s) to be added if required.
- 12.4 In the new system, it will be important that the annual appraisal of Candidate is undertaken at the end of each academic year, before progress can be made to the next. Further, ensuring that there is the provision for additional appraisals to be arranged if so required, it enables a flexibility that is required of a system that requires to be both pastorally sensitive, yet ensuring a Candidate has achieved the necessary capacity and capability required of any particular stage of training.
- 12.5 A Candidate will require to fulfil the expectations of the LAP, but the Church may wish to add further areas of assessment to ensure that a Candidate can show their developing capacity and capability within the eight sections of the Formation Framework. This is not dissimilar to that of the present system, but it is expected that there would be a streamlining of processes to ease the paperwork and reporting required by Candidate and Supervisor alike.
- 12.6 It will be for the People & Training Programme Group to establish the reporting and appraisal systems required by the Church.
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13. CANDIDATE SUPPORT

- 13.1 While oversight of Candidates' progress is essential, the Church must also highlight the spiritual and financial support it will provide.
- 13.2 It is anticipated that the annual bursary awarded to Candidate's Grant will continue to be awarded.
- 13.3 Additionally, the Formation Partner scheme will continue, whereby a Presbytery appoints a 'critical friend' for each Candidate, serving as the link between the national training process and Presbytery. In most circumstances, the Formation Partner will continue to serve as the Presbytery appointed representative at any appraisal meeting for a Candidate. The national office Training Team will work with Presbyteries and the LAP to further develop a support network for Candidates.

14. ISSUE OF EXIT CERTIFICATE/GRADUATE CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATE

- 14.1 This process would stay largely as at present, although with reference to the existing Training Act, section 22A(5) would be revised so that 'three' is replaced with 'two', ie a Graduate Candidate's Certificate would be issued on two occasions only. This is to make the situation consistent with the Registration of Ministries position for Category O and with the Admissions and Readmissions Act.

15. CHANGES FOR DEACONS, ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTERS (OLMS) AND READERS

- 15.1 Candidates for the Diaconate will follow a similar course to that of FTWAS Candidates, and the change of provision to a LAP will allow us to develop a training and formation course which will be more specific to the nature of this calling and role.
- 15.2 At present we do not provide any Deacon specific training, and the changes now proposed allow the Church to consider carefully the needs of this specialised role. Deacons will also enter into Expectations & Responsibilities and Learning Covenant documents.
- 15.3 The training for OLM and the Readership will remain unchanged and thus there will be no impact on Act IX 2011, the Ordained Local Ministry Act and Act XVII 1992, the Readership Act.

16. COMPULSORY ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- 16.1 In recognising the radical nature of this proposal, and recent consultation with those who have recently been inducted into the first Charge, it is acknowledged that we are shifting to a more modular form of training, building from core elements prior to ordination. The training period will be extended into a new First Five-Year programme to include more specific and specialist training post ordination that will help support those early years of ministry.
- 16.2 Newly ordained Ministers will be required to continue their theological studies and will receive preaching and pastoral mentoring to enable them to face the challenges of their new ministries.
- 16.3 In addition to the compulsory courses, elective courses will be developed to encourage those with a focus on the pioneering, missional, and discipleship development of their congregations. Work within the present First Five-Year programme and the Church of Scotland Learning platform will be reviewed and adapted, with additional provision developed accordingly.
- 16.4 It is therefore an essential principle of the new Training Act that it will include a compulsory additional programme of training for each minister who proceeds through Course 1, 2 or 3 during their first five years of ministry. Each minister will be asked to take responsibility for documenting their own progress, with this being made possible by the future digitisation of the appraisal and other systems within IME.
- 16.5 Consideration will be required to be given by both FAPLT and the Registration of Ministries to the status of those who without good reason fail to complete this additional training.
- 16.6 Given the Deacon specific training year, there would be no compulsory additional training for Deacons. There remains a strong encouragement for Deacons to continue their learning through the direction of the Diaconate Council.

17. MOVING FROM THE PRESENT WAY OF TRAINING AND FORMATION TO THE FUTURE

- 17.1 The training and formation of Candidates is a continuous process with each new intake having their training and goals prescribed by an Initial Course Meeting. We are presently working with those Candidates entering their training from September 2025 to see what changes or adaptations may be made to their training and formation programme to work within the present Training Act.

- 17.2 For those who training is already underway, we will continue to offer a placement and conference programme, and will work with the existing Academic Providers to ensure that these Candidates can continue in their present training route. Any changes that are required will be worked out on a case by case basis with each change requiring the approval of FAPLT through the People and Training Programme Group. The new Training Act will make provision for this.
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18. A NEW TRAINING ACT AND CHANGES TO THE DEACONS ACT

- 18.1 Whilst not bringing a new Act to this General Assembly, we have in this Supplementary Report propose the principles for such an Act and seek the Assembly's approval of these principles via the Proposed Deliverance. Approval is also sought to consequential amendments to the Deacons Act.
- 18.2 In the Appendix there is a table setting out in more detail what the new Training Act will look like and what will be the consequential amendments to the Deacons Act.

In the name of the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team

TOMMY MACNEIL, Convener
KAY CATHCART, Head of Ministries and Mission
DAVID CLARKSON, Vice-Convener, People and Training Programme Group

Appendix

TABLE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO ACT X 2004 & ACT VIII 2010

The Selection & Training for Full-Time Ministry Act (Act X 2004)

Section number	Topic	Expected change in new Act
1	Definitions	To be confirmed, depending on the rest of the changes.
2	Discernment and Initial Screening process	Largely unchanged.
3	Age, Time and Membership Limits for Applicants	Mainly unchanged, but one amendment will be to the age limit: FAPLT will not consider an application from any person who in all normal circumstances could not complete the prescribed course before 31 st December in the year of their 60 th birthday.
4, 5, 6, 6A, 6B, 7, 8, 9 & 10 11 [repealed]	Submission of Application Period of Discernment and Local Review National Assessment Opportunities to become a Prospective Candidate Nomination by the Presbytery	Largely unchanged.
New provision on Formation Committee	Formation Committee	Approve the setting up of a sub-committee of FAPLT, to be called, the Formation Committee, with the remit set out in the Report. Its membership would include representation from the LAP, FAPLT & the wider Church.
12 – 14 [15 & 16 repealed]	The Course (including areas of study)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One named Lead Academic Partner • New prescribed courses for both FTWAS and Deacons • 5 possible courses as per the Report • Flexibility of part-time study to be retained, subject to the approval of the Formation Committee • New specification of areas of study as per the Report • Placements to be integrated into study • Formation Committee to have the central role in directing study and placements for each Candidate
17	Placements	Removed/substantially changed as placements will be integrated within the degree/diploma programme. The Formation Committee will prescribe the new model of Learning Covenant to be agreed between the Candidate and Supervisor.
18 & 19	Presbytery Supervision during Course	Largely unchanged. The Formation Committee will prescribe the new model of Expectations & Responsibilities document to be entered into.

20	Initial Course Preparations [Meeting]	The Initial Course Meeting will remain in place but it will be overseen by and under the direction of the Formation Committee.
21 – 22A	Appraisal during Candidature Appraisal while a Probationer & Sustaining the Course	Principle of Appraisal to remain, combining that of the Candidate and Probationer appraisal journey.
22A	Issue of Exit Certificate/Graduate Candidate Certificate	Largely as at present, though a Presbytery will only be able to issue a Graduate Candidate's certificate on up to two occasions, not three, to align with the current approach on category O registration and the current Admission and Readmission of Ministers Act.
23-25	Complaints Procedure	This will remain largely unchanged.

The Deacons Act (Act VIII 2010)

Section number	Topic	Expected change in New Act
1	The Office of Deacon	Unchanged.
2	Definitions	To be confirmed, depending on the rest of the changes.
3	Selection & Training of Deacons	Act X 2004 is cross-referenced in the existing Act. Instead, the new Act will be cross-referenced so as to bring in the new courses, new areas of study, integrated placements, one LAP etc.
4	Academic and Practical Training of Deacons	Ditto as for 3.
5	Placements during training	Ditto as for 3.
6 & 7	Sustaining the Course	Ditto as for 3.
8	Ordination	Decision to recommend Ordination will remain with FAPLT. This section needs some updating generally.
Remainder of the Act		Unchanged, save for any general updating or clarification required.

PETITION

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The Petition of The Reverend Donald Michael MacInnes

Humbly sheweth

1. That the General Assembly has made provision for Priority Area Parishes to have their population double counted for the purpose of allocating ministry resources.
2. The Presbytery of Glasgow has determined that these resources do not require to be allocated to the specific parishes, or even Priority Area Parishes.
3. The Petitioner believes that Priority Area posts should be deployed only in Priority Area parishes.

May it therefore please your Venerable Court to instruct Presbyteries to deploy their allocation of Priority Area posts only in Priority Area parishes and if required to amend their Mission Plans by 31 December 2025 to reflect this or to do otherwise as to your Venerable Court may seem good.

And your petitioner will ever pray.

ANSWERS TO THE PETITION

FROM THE FAITH ACTION PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP TEAM

FAPLT thanks Mr MacInnes for highlighting the importance of partnership of the Church of Scotland with Priority Area parishes and for keeping this important commitment to the poor at the forefront of our minds.

Act 8, 2021 (as amended) known as the Presbytery Mission Plan Act states at 2.1.1

“A Mission Plan shall describe how the Church of Scotland’s engagement with Christ’s Mission is to be shaped and resourced in the following five years and to that end shall demonstrate how the Presbytery will:-

iii) make appropriate use of such ministry posts as may be permitted by the General Assembly so that the number of post holders in each Presbytery conforms to the numbers and timescales set by the General Assembly;”

The secondary principles first stated as a secondary document to Act 8, 2021, make specific reference to the Church of Scotland’s long held commitment to work with the poor. In Appendix X of the FAPLT Report 2025 the secondary principles include the section on the poor at 5.3.4

“The poor: The General Assembly has repeatedly affirmed that the gospel imperative is priority to the poor. At a time when resources are scarce, it is tempting to take away from the most marginal communities where churches are often very fragile and small. However pressing the reasons may be locally, this must be resisted because it makes a mockery of the gospel and the repeated commitments of the General Assembly. However, as in every part of the Church, this does not mean that existing patterns of ministry should not be evaluated and reviewed and different forms of church life introduced.”

It is the understanding of FAPLT that each Presbytery addressed itself to this issue.

Glasgow asserted the right to utilise its entire allocation as it saw best to meet the purposes outlined in the Mission Plan Act. Glasgow Presbytery sought information from the national offices regarding the likely allocation figure if it had no PA weighting. The resulting figure of 12 fewer posts offered Glasgow the best estimate of the additional allocation to Priority Areas. Glasgow determined that all of these would be used to supplement parish ministry in Priority Areas though it recognised that the greater number of parishes than allocated staff meant this resource would need to be shared. The Presbytery was explicit in the way it was to allocate posts in its Mission Plan. At 1.6 it deals with the allocation of posts.

“1.6 Allocation of posts

Presbytery are mindful of the instruction to allocate no more than 84 posts to all ministries funded by the national church. Within this allocation the majority shall be parish ministers, a recognition of the role of parish ministry in contributing to leading congregations, providing ministry to fulfil the Third Article Declaratory, honouring the concept of parish as a key means of engaging with local communities, and providing an educated and accountable professional ministry to all who seek such support within the boundaries of the Presbytery.

Presbytery also seek to exploit the resources available in a large and diverse regional expression of church.

There is, accordingly, an ability to engage those whose expertise may be shared across Presbytery and who are not confined to a more local context.

A further possibility, of releasing those primarily focused in parishes for a small portion of their time to develop expertise, is worth further exploration. This is likely not to be possible in the short to medium term given the need to invest in supporting effective adjustment across almost the entire Presbytery. It remains, however, a long-term possibility.

The requirement to allocate staff in other roles is recognised, too, both as an obligation under the PMPA and as a proper response to the diverse needs and opportunities in the Presbytery.”

Immediately after this the Presbytery states the way in which the Mission Plan will address the challenge of Priority Areas:

“1.6.1 Priority Areas

Following advice from Faith Nurture Forum staff on the outworking of the Priority Area Weighting both across Scotland and within the Presbytery it is understood an allocation of twelve posts has been granted to Presbytery under this weighting.

Presbytery accordingly allocate twelve posts to Priority Area parishes or to work in areas where there is significant deprivation but which are not formally designated Priority Area parishes, provided this furthers the Presbytery’s work with and amongst people struggling against poverty.

Presbytery has had a long-standing involvement in providing care for those whose housing is precarious or non-existent, demonstrated through the Chaplain to the Lodging House Mission, and one post has been set aside for work at the Lodging House Mission. The Mission Plan anticipates that these posts shall probably be filled by Ministries Development Staff (MDS).”

11.5 FTE of those 12 posts were allocated to PA areas whilst 0.5FTE was allocated to a PA Supervisory post.

Additionally, the Presbytery had identified 1.5 FTE for Specialist Ministry Posts: choosing to use 0.7 FTE from this to “top up” some of the PA posts which had received a lower resourcing.

In terms of process used by the Presbytery: their planning committee tasked with developing the Mission Plan consulted widely with Congregations and after a significant process, the Mission Plan was presented to the Presbytery and the Plan was agreed, before concurrence by the Faith Nurture Forum.

A Review Request from the parish of which the Petitioner is Minister alluded to an unfair distribution of posts. The Review request was refused by the Presbytery Mission Plan Review Panel on all grounds, not only on this specific issue.

FAPLT humbly ask the General Assembly not to grant the crave of this Petition on the evidence provided above and the commitment to its ongoing review of weightings.

MINUTES

To follow

AMENDMENTS AFTER ELECTION OF COMMISSIONERS, YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES, PROBATIONERS, FAMILIARISATION CANDIDATES AND DELEGATES

AMENDMENTS TO ORDER OF PROCEEDINGS

Page 7

227. Mr Alastair Blackstock, **Camelon Parish Church**

Page 8

242. **Dr** Scott M Paget, Lanark: Greyfriars

Page 11

445. Rev Ragaai **M Ghobrial**

550. **Rev** Susan Trigger

Page 12

Clèir Eilean Ì: Highlands and Hebrides

506. Mrs Aileen Binner, Probationer OLM

539. Mr Samuel **Torrance**

OTHER CORRECTIONS

VOLUME OF REPORTS 2025

REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE (11/1-25)

At section 5.1, page 11/7, corrections highlighted to table at Figure 3.

		Course	Content creation and updating	Facilitate by	Mentoring & Quality Assurance
Church of Scotland		Introduction	Safeguarding Officers	Volunteer Trainers	Safeguarding Training Officer
		Advanced	Safeguarding Officers	Volunteer Trainers	Safeguarding Training Officer
		Trustee	Safeguarding Officers	Volunteer Trainers	Safeguarding Training Officer
		Leadership/ Ministries	Safeguarding Officers	Safeguarding Officer x 2	Safeguarding Service Manager
		Train the Trainers	Safeguarding Officers	Safeguarding Officer	Safeguarding Service Manager
CrossReach	Children	Introductory	*Approving CR course	CrossReach Staff	Safeguarding Training Officer
		Managers	Safeguarding Service	Safeguarding Officer & Safeguarding Service Manager	Safeguarding Service Manager
	Adults & Older people	Introductory	Safeguarding Service	CrossReach Staff	Safeguarding Training Officer
		Managers	Safeguarding Service	Safeguarding Officer & Safeguarding Service Manager	Safeguarding Service Manager

REPORT ON THE PRINTING OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS

GA 2025

Interim Report of the Committee on Commissions (Standing Order 26/21) The Acts and Regulations of the General Assembly

The Committee recommends that it be empowered to revise the List of the following Acts, and to publish them:-

- I ACT AMENDING THE DISCIPLINE ACT (ACT I 2019)**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 2/7-12]
- II ACT AMENDING THE REGISTRATION OF MINISTRIES ACT (ACT II 2017)**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 2/12]
- III COMMUNION ROLLS AND ADHERENTS' ROLLS ACT**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 2/12-14]
- IV ACT AMENDING THE SACRAMENTS ACT (ACT V 2000)**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 2/14]
- V ACT AMENDING THE COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY ACT (ACT VI 1997)**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 2/14]
- VI ACT AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT VI 2023)**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 2/14]
- VII PRESBYTERY REVIEW ACT**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 3
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 2/5-6]
- VIII CONFESSIONS OF FAITH OVERTURE**
Edinburgh, 17 May 2025, Session 4
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 4/3-4]
- IX ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 5
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 8/24-25]
- X SAFEGUARDING ACT**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 6
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 11/20-25]
- XI ADMISSION AND READMISSION OF MINISTERS ACT**
Edinburgh, 20 May 2025, Session 8/9/10/11

[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports pages 14/31-37]

- XII CALL, ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT ACT**
Edinburgh, 20 May 2025, Session 8/9/10/11
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 14/42-57]
- XIII ACT AMENDING THE CHURCH COURTS ACT (ACT VI 2023)**
Edinburgh, 20 May 2025, Session 8/9/10/11
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 14/60]
- XIV ACT AMENDING THE PARISH MINISTRY ACT (ACT II 2018)**
Edinburgh, 20 May 2025, Session 8/9/10/11
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 14/60]
- XV ACT AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY MISSION PLAN ACT (ACT VIII 2021)**
Edinburgh, 20 May 2025, Session 11
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 15/2-5]
- XVI ACT AMENDING THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GENERAL TRUSTEES (PROPERTIES, FUNDS AND ENDOWMENTS) ACT**
Edinburgh, 21 May 2025, Session 15
[Here take in Act as set out in the Volume of Reports page 21/10]
- XVII ACT APPOINTING COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY**
Edinburgh, 22 May 2025, Session 16
- XVIII ACT APPOINTING DIET OF NEXT GENERAL ASSEMBLY**
Edinburgh, 22 May 2025, Session 16

The Committee also recommends that it be empowered to revise the List of the following Regulations, and to publish them:

- I REGULATIONS AMENDING THE CONGREGATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS “GIVING TO GROW” REGULATIONS (REGS I 2022)**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 5
[Here take in Regulations as set out in the Volume of Reports page 8/23]
- II STIPEND REGULATIONS**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 5
[Here take in Regulations as set out in the Volume of Reports page 8/25]
- III REGULATIONS AMENDING THE PRESBYTERY FINANCE REGULATIONS (REGS III 2016)**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 5
[Here take in Regulations as set out in the Order of Proceedings page 31]
- IV REGULATIONS AMENDING THE CONGREGATIONAL FINANCE REGULATIONS (REGS II 2016)**
Edinburgh, 19 May 2025, Session 5
[Here take in Regulations as set out in the Order of Proceedings page 31]

This list is provisional, as the Acts and Regulations mentioned here are considered after this Report is circulated.

INTIMATIONS

Copyright

Words and music of songs in copyright are used by permission under the following licences:
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Notices of Motion

A list of Notices of Motion will first be published on the website (on the Publications page: <https://www.churchofscotland.org/about-us/general-assembly/publications>) on Wednesday 14 May and then as appropriate until the Assembly opens; thereafter, the list will be published on the website and issued in print to in person commissioners who have no digital means of access on the morning of each day of the Assembly (ie the Saturday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday).

At this General Assembly, the most up-to-date list of Notices of Motion will be found in the Assembly Hub, as the Hub will constantly be updated in real time. If you have submitted a Notice of Motion and you are wondering why it does not appear in the list or in the Hub, then it is probably because it is still in the process of being published by the Clerks.

Consent Agenda

The Assembly Business Committee has been looking at the reporting cycle at the Assembly and this year is trialling a 'Consent Agenda'.

The idea is that certain Reports may be taken as read and their Proposed Deliverance will be agreed to by the Assembly without being heard in debate. However, commissioners will be able to intervene and direct that a Report should be heard and debated in the normal way.

It is proposed that at this Assembly the following Standing Committee Reports will be subject to the Consent Agenda process: the Delegation of the General Assembly, the Chalmers Lectureship Trust, and the Church Hymnary Trustees. All of these Standing Committees have been consulted on the Consent Agenda process and all have agreed to be so treated.

However, commissioners may countermand application of the Consent Agenda process as follows: by emailing pcoffice@churchofscotland.org.uk, naming the Committee(s) whose Report you propose be heard and debated by the Assembly in the normal way. Such an email requires to be received by us **by 12 noon on Monday 19 May**. For each Report a request will need to be received from at least five commissioners.

The Convener of the Procedure Committee will announce at 2pm on Monday 19 May which Report(s) have had their Proposed Deliverance agreed to via the Consent Agenda process and which Report(s) will be heard and debated in the normal way.

Questions to Conveners and Secretaries of General Assembly Standing Committees

This year the Assembly Business Committee is introducing a new opportunity for commissioners to approach Conveners and Secretaries of certain General Assembly Standing Committees, in advance of that Committee's reporting slot, to ask questions and discuss aspects of Reports. The hope is that this will encourage collaborative working and efficiencies of time.

Below is a timetable for when the Convener and Secretary of certain Standing Committees (or in the case of FAPLT, the Vice-Convener and Secretary of a Programme Group) will be present in person in the Martin Hall to engage with commissioners. The times are allocated around the circulation breaks and lunchtimes.

Please remember how helpful it is to raise questions/notices of motion in advance of when Reports are heard by the Assembly. Of course corresponding members for Committees along with the relevant staff are also present during Assembly time and can be asked questions outwith the timetable.

Saturday 17th May

Lunch (1300-1400)

Assembly Trustees (1300-1400)

Theological Forum (includes Returns to Overtures re Book of Confessions) (1330-1400)

Legal Questions Committee (1330-1400)

Circulation break (approx.1530-1600)

Theological Forum and FAPLT on Assisted Dying

Ecumenical Relations Committee

Monday 19th May

Circulation break 1 (approx. 10.15 (after Communion) to 10.45)

Safeguarding Committee

Registration of Ministries Committee

Lunch 1 (1300-1330)

FAPLT: Public Life and Social Justice Programme Group

FAPLT: Mission Support Programme Group

Lunch 2 (1330-1400)

FAPLT: Convener & Secretary

FAPLT: People and Training Programme Group

Circulation Break 2 (approx. 1530-1600)

FAPLT: Presbytery Mission Plan Implementation Group

FAPLT: Resource & Presence Programme Group

Tuesday 20th May

Circulation Break 1 (approx.1100-1130)

Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces

The Guild

Lunch 1 (1300-1400)

General Trustees

Lunch 2 (1330-1400)

Housing & Loan Fund

Circulation Break 2 (approx.1530-1600)

Nomination Committee

Vivid Vision

The future of the Church of Scotland lies in God's hands. We believe this to be true, and so we look to the time ahead with faith.

We also believe we each have a significant part to play in the future of the Church of Scotland and so we give ourselves to listen, learn, plan and act.

The Faith Action Programme Leadership Team (FAPLT) spent time discussing and praying, sharpening and clarifying, to create a picture of what this future might and could look like. It is a picture from their perspective. What does it look like from where you are?

Their Vivid Vision is captured in this film. It is a picture of what might be as we follow the promptings and guidance of the Holy Spirit in witnessing to Christ in our nation and beyond.

It comes as part of a set of resources to help your congregation or Presbytery imagine and prepare for this future. These materials can be accessed by Session Clerks and those in our national ministries. Set time aside to journey together through these materials and create a compelling vision for your congregation and community.

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/about-us/departments/faith-action-programme-committees-and-departments/faith-action-programme/vivid-vision>

St Giles' Service

The Assembly Service will take place at 11.00 am in St Giles' Cathedral on Sunday 18 May.

Gaelic Service

The Gaelic Service will take place at 12.45 pm in Greyfriars Kirk on Sunday 18 May.

Thursdays in Black

On Thursday of the Assembly you will find some people wearing black in support of the global movement against sexual violence – to find out more about this movement please follow this link to the World Council of Churches <https://www.oikoumene.org/what-we-do/thursdays-in-black>