

COMMITTEE ON CHAPLAINS TO HM FORCES MAY 2021**Proposed Deliverance****The General Assembly:**

1. Receive the Report.
2. Thank those who serve in Her Majesty's Forces as Chaplains for their service to Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force personnel, their families and the wider military community.
3. Recognise the particular service of those Chaplains who have served in support of the contribution of the Armed Services to efforts relating to Covid-19 in the past year and give thanks for the support of their families.
4. Commend to the prayers of the Church all Chaplains, and all those whom they serve.
5. Encourage eligible ministers of the Church to consider service as a Chaplain to HM Forces, Regular or Reservist.
6. Encourage those eligible to consider service as Chaplains in any of the cadet organisations, and thank all serving Cadet Chaplains.

Report**1. SCOPE OF REPORT**

1.1 Since the Committee did not report to the abbreviated General Assembly of 2020, this very short Report covers some topics that have exercised us over the last two years.

1.2 Chaplains and the Covid-19 emergency

1.2.1 The Committee is sure that the whole Church is grateful to our Chaplains, as to all Service personnel, who have so willingly, flexibly and courageously assisted civilian authorities during the Covid-19 emergency. The have been involved in the effort to provide testing, to construct treatment facilities and to support complex Health Service logistics, all at the same time as providing the routine of exercises and deployments which has continued in all three Services.

2. CHAPLAINS AND THE CHURCH**2.1 Tri-Service Conferences 2019 and 2020**

2.1.1 As part of each Chaplain's Continuing Professional Development requirement each year, the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland host a joint three-day conference at the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre, arranged by a serving Chaplain (on a rota that circulates round the three Services and between the two Churches).

2.1.2 In 2019 the principal speaker was the immediate past Moderator of the PCI, Very Rev Dr Charles McMullen. In 2020 (the conference being on-line) the principal speaker was the immediate past Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Very Rev Colin Sinclair. The Committee, and the PCI's equivalent 'Panel', are delighted to have this very constructive and easy working relationship for such an important part of the continuing development of our Chaplains.

2.2 Denominational Contact

2.2.1 The Committee's offer to Chaplains of individual pastoral contacts was not really taken up by Chaplains, and so the effort of the past year has been to produce forms of support that brought Chaplains together with representatives of the wider Church.

2.2.2 The retiring Moderator Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, at the same time as he was providing pastoral support to parish ministers, did not forget the needs of military Chaplains. He hosted an on-line coffee and Bible Study for them at Pentecost 2020, led worship in the Tri-Service conference mentioned above, and co-operated with the production of the Committee's Easter card to all serving Chaplains. The Committee, and all the Chaplains, are greatly in his debt for such a striking pastoral concern at such a stressful time.

2.2.3 Meanwhile, the Committee has used the on-line nature of its meetings to begin to develop more general links with the Chaplains; and at its meeting in January of this year welcomed a number of Chaplains for part of the meeting and a presentation on Chaplaincy in the Royal Air Force.

2.3. Moderators' Visits

2.3.1 In 2020 Colin and Ruth Sinclair and the Convener spent a week visiting the Army in Scotland, following on from the successful Scottish focus of Dr Brown's visit to the Royal Navy in Scotland in 2019. In 2021 Martin Fair spent a day undertaking a very compressed on-line visit to the RAF. In 2022 the Committee hopes that Lord Wallace will be able to undertake a more conventional visit to the Royal Navy.

3. RECRUITMENT

3.1 Much of the work of the Committee takes place behind the scenes, through the Convener's membership of the Tri-Service Advisory Group on Chaplaincy, and in conversations with the various heads of Chaplaincies on individual cases of need. One of the most satisfying of these background tasks is the work of the Convener, Vice-Convener and Secretary in interviewing potential Chaplains in order to decide whether to endorse their applications. In recent years there has been a marked flexibility in movement between Regular and Reservist Chaplaincy, and even the movement of Chaplains between different Services. It is particularly heartening to see Reservist Chaplains smoothly transition into full-time service, and the Committee is always delighted to help to make that happen.

In the name of the Committee

MARJORY A MACLEAN, *Convener*
JOHN C DUNCAN MBE, *Vice-Convener*
DARAN GOLBY, *Secretary*

Appendix 1

ROYAL NAVY

The world's trade routes always need to be maintained and protected, even during a pandemic, and Naval Chaplains were at sea throughout the year in support of this essential national commitment. In a strange twist, families at home seemed under greater threat than those deployed at sea in their ready-made, COVID-free, isolated environment. Chaplains were able to offer spiritual and pastoral care to sailors and marines, as many learnt of their parents or grandparents catching coronavirus at home.

The operational output of the RN has not stopped and neither did the Chaplains caring for individuals and communities, afloat and ashore. The newly restructured Royal Marines, currently in Norway on exercise, with 3 Chaplains offering support in those challenging arctic conditions, are adapting to a new way of operating in smaller groups and with better equipment, as part of their bold modernisation. New sailors now join the RN at 3 different locations, as usual HMS RALEIGH, but also Junior Rates join and train alongside Officers at BRNC and at HMS COLLINGWOOD, as the RN seeks to grow its numbers. The RN's Transformation Programme is now in its 'Year of Delivery' having streamlined the RN's HQ making it more flexible and efficient, while the NCS has also focused its energies on the frontline, extremely challenging under recent conditions. Nevertheless, training establishments have remained open, as have the Naval Bases, where their dedicated Chaplains have shown amazing initiative in how to minister to a threatened community despite the restrictions enforced by COVID.

The NCS welcomes a new Chaplain of the Fleet in July, the Reverend Andrew Hillier and it bids farewell to the Venerable Martyn Gough. The Church of Scotland unfortunately remains underrepresented in the NCS as we drop to just 3 Chaplains this year, but our ministers are all engaged in ministering to the women of men of the RN at the front line. We always welcome applications from a vibrant and diverse group of Church of Scotland ministers to serve the Fleet and the Royal Marines. In conclusion, while the world looks vastly different compared to the last time we gathered, the RN has continued its work, keeping our island nation safe, and her Chaplains have been at the forefront of caring for those who protect us in tempestuous seas.

The newest Church of Scotland Regular Chaplain in the Royal Navy, Rev Stephen Ashley-Emerly RN, spent the first quarter of 2020 developing alongside-support for HMSs DRAGON, DIAMOND, and LANCASTER and accompanying HMS NORTHUMBERLAND's crew on Basic Operational Sea Training, was deployed aboard HMS KENT last summer, and was otherwise heavily involved in the Navy's contribution to the Covid emergency.

Rev Mark Dalton RN has spent the last year as Chaplaincy Team Leader at RNAS Culdrose, where he has enabled the provision of pastoral care to personnel and their families, whilst also providing worship and Spiritual Development to a small congregation which has continued to meet virtually during the pandemic. Mark moves back to Scotland in early summer to take up an assignment looking after Scottish based Royal Marines.

Rev Dr Mark Davidson RN continued in his role as Chaplaincy Team Leader at HMNB CLYDE until Nov 2020. In addition, Mark served as Staff Chaplain (Operations) from January 2020 through to Jan 2021. In this role, he was responsible for choreographing the deployment of more than twenty-five RN Chaplains (representing more than 40% of the regular Naval Chaplaincy Service) across the Fleet. In December 2020, Mark was appointed Chaplain to HMS PRINCE OF WALES, the UK's newest and largest aircraft carrier.

Rev Dr Scott Shackleton RN continued in his role as the Director: Naval Service Ethics Programme which delivered the new RN Conduct & Culture Cell. He retires this year and intends to return to full time ministry in the Kirk. The Committee is grateful to him for his extensive service to its work in the last few years as the Church's senior Naval Chaplain.

For Rev David Young RNR, the past 12 months have been largely about providing pastoral support to the Ship's company of HMS DALRIADA and their families. He successfully passed the Accelerated Officer Programme at Britannia Royal Naval College, passing out in September 2020.

Appendix 2

ARMY

In the last year it has been an unexpected privilege as Chaplains to support our Service Personnel as they were able to deploy in unprecedented numbers to support the response to Covid-19 here in Scotland and in the wider United Kingdom. Chaplains are walking with, praying for and caring for our military flock as they assist on the front line against an enemy who was truly invisible. Chaplains were able to support soldiers locked down in barracks away from family and friends, sometimes in very remote locations in order to protect the Force against need. The Army is very used to "hurry up and wait" and "on the bus ... off the bus ... change bus" and this last year has tested that resiliency, but thanks to the Church's support in prayer we continue to serve.

It continues to be a busy time on Operations. As the Assembly sits, two Church of Scotland Chaplains are on Operations in Cyprus and Afghanistan. At the time of writing the Committee hopes that one, with the aid of modern communications and despite the time difference, will serve a Commissioner to the Assembly this year. Training continues at pace as the commitments for the military at home and overseas remain complex and raise significant pastoral issues amongst those who serve. Your prayerful support is deeply appreciated.

As you may be able to decipher from the list below, no fewer than eight Presbyterian Chaplains serve in leadership roles currently. Whilst this speaks of the generosity of the Church in sharing her talent, it also suggests that as a cohort we are getting long in the tooth. As it stands, the Call to new Regular Chaplaincy has not been heard from the Church since 2016. May I encourage the reader to listen carefully for that still, small voice to Regular, Reserve, ACF or OCM Chaplaincy - all have vacancies. May I call particular attention to Rev Seoras Mackenzie's nearly 23 years of Service as a Unit Chaplain as it drew to a close in March this year.

List of Church of Scotland and Presbyterian Church in Ireland Regular and Reserve Chaplains

HQ ARITC	Paul Swinn	Upavon
HQ 1 Arty Bde	Heather Rendell	Tidworth
HQ 1 st STRIKE Bde	Nicola Frail	Tidworth
HQ 12 Armd Inf Bde	Chris Kellock	Bulford
HQ 20 Armd Inf Bde	Alan Cobain	Bulford
HQ 38 (Irish) Bde	Jim Francis	Lisburn
HQ 51 Inf Bde & HQ Scot	Duncan Macpherson	Stirling
3 RHA	David Thom	Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
QRH	Graeme McConville	Tidworth
5 Regt RA	Hector MacKenzie	Catterick Garrison
32 Engr Regt	Paul Van Sittert	Catterick Garrison
29 EOD & S SGU	Richard Begg	Wimbish
1 WG	Colin Jones	Windsor
1 SCOTS	Graeme McConville	Belfast
3 SCOTS	Geoff Berry	Fort George
2 PWRR	Ivan Linton	Aldershot
2 LANCS	Stewart MacKay	Preston
1 YORKS	Mike Goodison	Catterick Garrison
1 MERCIAN	Mark Henderson	Bulford
1 R WELSH	Neil McLay	Tidworth
ITC (C) - S Chap	David Anderson	Catterick Garrison
ATR (W)	Norman McDowell	Winchester
32 Sig Regt	Mike Mair	Glasgow
2 R IRISH	Mark Donald	Lisburn
154 Regt RLC	Rory MacLeod	Edinburgh
5 MI Bn	Christopher Rowe	Edinburgh

List of Church of Scotland ACF Chaplains

UNIT	CHAPLAIN
1 Bn The Highlanders, ACF	Rev Fraser Stewart
1 Bn The Highlanders, ACF	Rev Alen McCulloch
2 Bn The Highlanders, ACF	Rev Shuna Dicks
2 Bn The Highlanders, ACF	Rev Keith Blackwood
West Lowland, ACF	Rev Fiona Wilson
Glasgow & Lanarkshire, ACF	Rev Ecilo Selemani
Lothian & Borders, ACF	Rev Cameron McKenzie

Rev D J MACPHERSON CF Senior Chaplain Scotland and 51 Infantry Brigade

Appendix 3

ROYAL AIR FORCE

RAF Chaplaincy has continued to seek to serve the Royal Air Force community through prayer, presence and proclamation throughout a turbulent year. The pandemic has seen many personnel continue in their role as essential workers and indeed yet more have been deployed in order to provide assistance to civil authorities in their response to covid-19. Ministering effectively to those personnel and their families has (like in so many other spheres) prompted Chaplains to engage in innovative ways of connecting and sharing. To put it in terms of the Branch's intent, we remind people of their value, encourage them to hope and explore with them their reason for being.

Rev Sheila Munro retired as Chaplain to the Royal Air Force in January of this year having served faithfully for many years on bases throughout the United Kingdom and deployments throughout the world. She has the thanks of the Chaplains Branch and the Service for her valuable ministry. Gratitude is also extended to the Kirk for allowing her to exercise that ministry among the personnel for whom she cared so diligently.

Rev Craig Lancaster has moved on promotion to Reverend (Wing Commander) from RAF Honington in Suffolk to serve as senior Chaplain at RAF Lossiemouth in Moray. The base is home to a number of Typhoon Squadrons including Quick Reaction Alert and the newly arrived Poseidon aircraft. More importantly it is home to the people who protect, maintain and fly the aircraft whom he looks forward to getting to know and serve. Padre Lancaster remains grateful for the prayerful support of the Kirk as it continues to allow him to fulfil a challenging yet incredibly rewarding ministry.