

# MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL

May 2014

*The purpose of the Mission and Discipleship Council is to resource God's people in the Church of Scotland for worship, witness, mission and discipleship; enabling and empowering the Church to share God's love in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, mindful of the changing contemporary culture of Scotland and beyond*

5

## CONTENTS

Proposed Deliverance	5/1	Appendix V: Life and Work Interim Report	5/28
Working out the vision	5/3	Appendix VI: Interfaith and Mission Report	5/30
Principle 1	5/4	Appendix VII: Eldership Consultation 2013 – Proposals Report	5/37
Principle 2	5/5	Appendix VIII: Young People in Decision-Making Report	5/40
Principle 3	5/7	Appendix IX: Local Church Review – Theological Introduction	5/44
Principle 4	5/9	Appendix X: Investigating the Invisible Church	5/45
Principle 5	5/12	Appendix XI: Salary Scales for Organists	5/47
Conclusion	5/14	Appendix XII: CARTA meeting dates	5/47
Appendix I: Statement of Purpose and Remit	5/15	Appendix XIII: Co-opted members	5/47
Appendix II: Mission Forum Report	5/16		
Appendix III: CARTA (Committee on Church Art and Architecture) Interim Report	5/21		
Appendix IV: Joint Emerging Church Group Report (JECG)	5/26		

## PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

### The General Assembly:

1. Receive the report.
2. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to raise awareness of online mission resources and have [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk) as a link on their Presbytery and congregational websites.
3. Note the revised Statement of Purpose and Remit of the Mission and Discipleship Council at Appendix I (Sections 1.2 to 1.5).
4. Strongly encourage Kirk Sessions to engage with the Mission Forum Report and use it for study and reflection (Section 1.6 and Appendix II).
5. Instruct CARTA, in support of the General Trustees, to take on a more pro-active role with Presbyteries in stimulating and supporting congregations to think creatively about how their buildings might be adapted for worship and witness in the 21st century (Appendix III).
6. Encourage CARTA and the General Trustees to give further consideration to improving the service they provide to Presbyteries and congregations through enhanced communication and collaboration (Section 2.1.1.7).

7. Instruct the CARTA Review Group to resolve the question of the terms of service of members of the Committee with the Council of Assembly and to bring a revised remit to the 2015 General Assembly (Section 2.1.1.8).
8. Welcome the new liturgical services for Ordination and Induction to Ministry of Word and Sacrament (Section 2.2.1).
9. Encourage all congregations and musicians to make use of the weekly music and worship resources being created by the Church of Scotland Music Group (Section 2.2.4).
10. Commend the Café Church DVD and relevant Quick Guides for use by Kirk Sessions (Sections 2.2.6 and 2.2.7).
11. Welcome the partnership with Fresh Expressions and the appointment of a Fresh Expressions Development Worker, and encourage the development of fresh expressions of church across Scotland (Sections 3.1 and 3.1.1.).
12. Encourage the Joint Emerging Church Group (JECG) to develop a wider emerging church network in Scotland, together with ecumenical and other partners (Appendix IV).
13. Urge Presbyteries and congregations to continue engagement with *Reformed, Reforming, Emerging and Experimenting* and *A Time to Grow* documents through discussion starters.
14. Commend the development and launch of *Life and Work's* new website [www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org) and encourage its use, alongside a subscription to the printed magazine, as a valuable source of news, information and resources for all involved or interested in the life of the Church of Scotland (Sections 3.3 to 3.3.1.4 and Appendix V).
15. Note the important theological work on Christian mission, including Christian witness in a multi-faith world, recently completed by Edinburgh 2010, the Lausanne Movement, the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Alliance and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, and commend their work to the Church for study and reflection (Section 4.1 and Appendix VI).
16. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to take opportunities to engage with people of other faiths in humble solidarity, loving service and faithful witness (Section 4.1.2).
17. Urge congregations to make use of the Interfaith and Mission Report for discussion and action, and thank and discharge the working group. (Appendix VI).
18. Recognise the hard work, effort and generous investment of time by the members of the Statistics for Mission group in fulfilling their remit to make the information from the 2011 Scottish Census available and accessible to the Church, and thank and discharge the working group (Sections 4.2 to 4.2.5).
19. Urge Presbyteries and congregations to use the parish profiles and welcome the resource *Who Is My Neighbour?* (Section 4.2.2).
20. Urge Presbyteries to collaborate with the Council and Kirk Sessions in supporting and stimulating learning in congregations (Sections 5.3 to 5.4).
21. Commend those Kirk Sessions who participated in the Eldership consultations for the high level of enthusiasm and commitment shown by their engagement in this process, as well as their desire to enhance the effectiveness of the office of the Elder (Section 5.3.3 and Appendix VII).
22. Urge support for the Learning Disabilities Working Group in its task of auditing the needs of the Church in this area and in resourcing and supporting congregations (Section 5.5.1).
23. Instruct the Council to review current resources on the Eldership and produce appropriate resources both for training prospective Elders and for the continuing development of all Elders (Section 5.5.3).
24. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to collaborate with the Council to do further work on the wider issue of young people in decision making (Section 5.6 and Appendix VIII).
25. Urge all Presbyteries to ensure their youth representative place at the General Assembly is filled each year (Section 5.6.2).

26. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to promote the *COSY Guide to Ethical Living* (Section 5.7).
27. Encourage Presbyteries and congregations to promote attendance at the 'My Father's House' National Youth Assembly at Gartmore House, Stirlingshire, from 15 to 18 August 2014 (Section 5.8.1).
28. Encourage Presbyteries to use the Local Church Review guidelines to identify and share effective practice with one another in this area (Sections 6.1.1 to 6.1.4 and Appendix IX).
29. Encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to explore the significance of the research contained in *Investigating the Invisible Church* (Sections 6.3 to 6.3.2 and Appendix X).
30. Note the continuing commitment of the Council to the effective implementation of the Priority Areas Plan for Action.

## REPORT

### 1. Working out the Vision

1.1 With a calling to develop God's people in the Church of Scotland, we have touched the lives of tens of thousands with our work in the last year. Fresh Expressions, Equip Days, the National Youth Assembly, *Different Voices*, *Life and Work*, *Pray Now*, *Pray It Forward* cards, Session Clerks conferences, *Starters for Sunday* and the websites are some examples of the rich breadth and variety of our engagement with the people of Scotland. Our mission is to create confident congregations and followers of Christ – *ordinary Christians empowered to do extraordinary things*.

1.1.2 For more information, visit [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

1.2 We do these things as we are called to fulfil our purpose:

*To resource God's people in the Church of Scotland, for worship, witness, mission and discipleship; enabling and empowering the Church to share God's love in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, mindful of the changing contemporary culture of Scotland and beyond.*

1.3 We have developed five principles to shape our thinking and decision-making. These come from our theological reflection on sharing God's Trinitarian love for the world and God's mission. Specifically, we will stimulate and support the Church:

1. To reflect critically on our practice and places of worship, and bring about creative change.
2. To communicate the good news of Christ's message.
3. To engage in mission beyond our walls.
4. To nurture in all a discipleship of learning and service.
5. To have a renewed vision that understands what it is to be the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

1.4 The focus of the Council's vision is God's people in the Church of Scotland. Whoever and wherever they are, our business is to provide or point to relevant activities and resources that support their growth in discipleship and capacity for mission. In the words of a guest speaker at the Fresh Expressions Vision Day in November 2013, these are "*ordinary Christians empowered to do extraordinary things*".

1.5 As a result of the formation of the Theological Forum by the General Assembly, and the removal of doctrine from the Council's Remit, we have revised our Statement of Purpose and Remit, which is available as Appendix I.

1.6 We have hosted the broadly based Mission Forum, which has sought to explore afresh the place of mission within the Church of Scotland and to hold the importance of mission before the whole Church. The outcomes of the Forum's discussions, which produced a rich diversity of insights, can be found in Appendix II.

## 2. Principle 1: Stimulate and support the Church to reflect critically on our practice and places of worship, and bring about creative change

2.1 Our main focus is on two distinct areas of work in what the Council has now renamed *Resourcing Worship* (formerly *Faith Expression*).

2.1.1 The first concerns places of worship, where **CARTA (Committee on Church Art and Architecture)**, in support of the General Trustees, plays a key role in ensuring that proposals for alterations are well founded and that the Church of Scotland continues to enjoy the privilege of “ecclesiastical exemption” with respect to its listed buildings.

2.1.1.1 Last year the Council was instructed:

*To set up a “review process” of the work of CARTA with a remit to investigate the ways in which the Committee may serve the changing needs of the Church in Scotland for building provision and report to the General Assembly of 2014.*

2.1.1.2 It is 80 years since the General Assembly of 1934 appointed a Special Committee of ministers, artists, architects and other lay people to advise Presbyteries on artistic questions, church fabrics and furnishings and other such matters. Although its name, composition and responsibilities have changed over the years, the Committee’s primary function remains essentially the same – to advise congregations on how to make buildings designed for worship and witness in the past fit for purpose in the present, while at the same time being good stewards of their inheritance.

2.1.1.3 The impetus for the current review was twofold: the belief that the Committee needs to do more, on behalf of its parent Council, to stimulate critical reflection and creative change as regards places of worship; and an expectation that its regular caseload will continue to grow, as more congregations seek advice and approval of their development plans.

2.1.1.4 In 2013 CARTA dealt with over 180 requests for advice or approval relating to a wide range of proposals, almost half as many again as in 2012. While some proposals were straightforward enough to be approved under powers, most required a visit and the submission of a report for consideration by the Committee. In many of these cases approval was granted in principle, pending the submission of more detailed information at a later stage, further increasing the volume of future work.

2.1.1.5 Having received more requests for advice about disposals following church closures, the Committee has published guidance notes and an appropriate form on the website, from which relevant **Quick Guides** can also be downloaded.

2.1.1.6 Recent issues with the administration of CARTA have been resolved, but the experience has highlighted the importance of considering what improvements to the way CARTA currently works are required if it is to continue to serve the changing needs of the Church.

2.1.1.7 The **CARTA Review Group’s interim report** at Appendix III describes its approach to its remit, the issues raised by its consultations and its emerging findings and recommendations. In particular, the report highlights the agreement between the Review Group and representatives of the General Trustees that both bodies need to work more closely together in a number of areas: these include clarifying their respective roles and responsibilities; improving communication by creating a single central point of contact for all enquiries, requests for advice and applications for project approval; encouraging congregations to think imaginatively and creatively about their buildings; and increasing the amount of joint guidance and activity.

2.1.1.8 The General Trustees’ representatives confirmed the importance of CARTA continuing to be a separate, independent consultative body, in order to protect the Church’s privilege of “ecclesiastical exemption”. They also expressed the view that the current regulation limiting the period of office of its members is not appropriate for CARTA, which has a service rather than a policy-making

function. As such, like the General Trustees, CARTA requires continued access to the best professional expertise and advice available if it is to deliver an effective service to all areas of Scotland and greater continuity of membership if it is to maintain standards.

2.2 In relation to worship practice, the Council has produced resources to stimulate and support the Church to reflect and innovate.

2.2.1 **The Liturgical Group** has completed two new services for the Ordination and Induction of a Minister. These are available online in two forms: one is a slight revision of the previous service and the other a more radical reimagining. The group is now looking at developing other liturgical resources linked to key occasions within the life of the Church.

2.2.2 The Council publish annually, through Hymns Ancient and Modern, the book **Pray Now**. This year's edition, entitled *Revealing Love*, takes its theme from 1 Corinthians 13 and offers reflections on Paul's great hymn of love. The book is an aid to both private and corporate prayer for the whole church, exploring the many facets of how people encounter love. This may lend itself in particular to use in wedding ceremonies or funerals, where this passage often features. Removal of the year from the title signals that the resource has relevance beyond 2014. *Revealing Love* can be purchased in hard copy, or Kindle version, on the Saint Andrew Press website – [www.standrewpress.com](http://www.standrewpress.com)

2.2.3 **Starters for Sunday** continue to *resource the resourcefulness* of ministers and lay worship leaders by offering a selection of locally created worship materials for every Sunday in the year. Presently, this web page is the most visited page on the Church of Scotland website, attracting around 30,000 hits per month. This year has seen contributions from CrossReach, Church and Society, the Church of Scotland HIV programme, World Mission, ALTERnativity, Christian Aid and the Expository Times. During 2014 we will be making selected archives available to access all year round; this material is located online.

2.2.4 Following up the success of the **Different Voices** Conference, the Church of Scotland Music Group has been developing a network of writers, worship leaders and musicians from across Scotland in ways that will enable them to resource one another in the fields of contemporary, classical, community and children's music. This will primarily be through the development of a social media presence offering articles, blogs, instructional videos, audio seminars, social networking and signposted spaces. The group will also create a platform for amateur writers and composers to make their worship music available to congregational musicians and worship leaders.

2.2.5 Congregations frequently ask for information or advice on formats of worship services that are welcoming and accessible for those who do not already attend a regular worship service, or whose preferred style of learning or communication does not find the traditional format of church worship engaging.

2.2.6 **Café style services** are one popular alternative, since they allow greater interaction, which helps in forming and strengthening relationships, and they create space for questions or discussion, which aids deeper learning.

2.2.7 The Church Without Walls team has produced a **Café Church DVD** to help congregations explore what Café Church is, explains the different formats it might take and answers some of the most common questions. It showcases two different models. Two Quick Guides, *Church and Café* and *Church and Café Frequently Asked Questions*, are also available, along with the DVD, free of charge from [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

### 3. Principle 2: Stimulate and support the Church to communicate the good news of Christ's message

3.1 Over the last decade the **Fresh Expressions** agency has demonstrated an impressive ability to communicate Christ's message and create disciples, primarily amongst those with no previous church connection. Recent

in-depth research in England has confirmed the positive impact of the Fresh Expressions movement within the Church of England, making the difference between a denomination in decline and one which is growing, with evidence of new life in all kinds of communities.<sup>1</sup> We celebrate and give thanks for the fruitfulness of this work.

**3.1.1** The Council is grateful for the resources and experience which Fresh Expressions has shared with us over recent years and on 1 October 2013 the Mission and Discipleship and Ministries Councils formalised their relationship with Fresh Expressions in a partnership agreement, and have now appointed a Fresh Expressions Development Worker. This is one way in which the two Councils are strengthening their commitment to supporting the development of new ecclesial communities in Scotland, and we look forward with hope and anticipation of future developments. Further information about this work can be found in the report of the Joint Emerging Church Group at Appendix IV.

**3.2** Following the success of the **Equip** events in 2011-2012, a new series of Equip Days commenced in October 2013 with an event at Penicuik North Church, which was warmly received and described variously as “*inspiring*”, “*amazingly well run*”, and even “*faultless*”, by those who attended. A further event focussing on new ways of being church was held in March 2014 in Ayr, with considerable support from Ayr Presbytery, covering such topics as Fresh Expressions, Statistics for Mission, Messy Church and More Than Gold. Inverness will host an Equip event in September 2014 and a pilot ‘Equip for the Arts’ is in planning. Details of all Equip events can be found on [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/events](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/events)

**3.3** The Council helps the Church communicate the good news of Christ’s message in many ways: these include *Life and Work*, *E-news*, *Pray it Forward* cards and *Why Believe?*

<sup>1</sup> Details of this research can be found at [www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/anglicanresearch](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/news/anglicanresearch)

**3.3.1 Life and Work**, editorially independent for its 135 years, continues, like all printed media, to operate in challenging commercial conditions, but it exceeded expectations with a higher than forecast surplus at the end of 2013. The General Assembly in 2013 approved a deliverance of the Council, instructing us:

*To form a group with the purpose of seeking new ways of supporting the financing, marketing and promotion of the magazine.*

**3.3.1.1** The group’s interim report is available at Appendix V. The review aims to help develop the reach of the magazine, a contribution to which has been the launch of the magazine’s website which has now been running for a full year – [www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org). It has been warmly received, has a growing following and is attracting a younger readership, which is the first step in preparing for the future.

**3.3.1.2** Almost 22,000 copies of the magazine were distributed each month during 2013, reaching more than 40,000 readers with every issue.

**3.3.1.3** The magazine of the Church of Scotland continues to have one of the highest circulations among comparative monthly titles published in Scotland.

**3.3.1.4** The *Life and Work* Advisory Committee met on two occasions in 2013 and was contacted on many more occasions between meetings. The Editor remains deeply grateful to its members for their insights and support.

**3.3.2** The Council has published a regular interactive E-newsletter to inform congregations and Presbyteries about conferences and events, resources and other relevant information. *E-news* contains links that take the reader to the appropriate page, either within [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk) to place their booking or to the relevant website. This enables the reader to access directly the information they are seeking.

**3.3.2.1** This is a significant way for the Council to resource congregations, since it lets the enquirer choose

what to search for and includes the option to subscribe or unsubscribe, reassured that the Privacy Policy protects them.

**3.3.3** The enormously popular *Pray It Forward* cards sold out in autumn 2013, meaning that potentially 120,000 are in circulation. We are exploring options to continue making these available.

**3.3.4** The **Why Believe?** apologetics group has been reconstituted as an integral part of the Council, to help God's people share the good news of Christ's message. There is a continuing interest in raising the confidence of Christians to speak into contemporary culture, particularly that of those under the age of fifty, a group who are largely missing from our churches. There are some contemporary resources on apologetics signposted on our website.

#### **4. Principle 3: Stimulate and support the Church to engage in mission beyond our walls**

**4.1** At the General Assembly of 2012, the Council was instructed:

*To bring a substantial report on all aspects of interfaith work, with particular reference to the place and practice of Christian mission in a multi-faith society, and report to the General Assembly of 2014.*

**4.1.1** The Council appointed a working group to undertake this task and have submitted a report entitled *Interfaith and Mission*, to be found at Appendix VI. This recognises the growing religious diversity in Scotland and the increasing opportunities for people of different faiths to encounter one another and build mutual understanding.

**4.1.2** Drawing on the outcomes of recent gatherings of the world church, the working group want to encourage congregations to reach out in kindness and confidence to their neighbours of all faiths.

**4.2** Last year it was noted that the General Assembly:

*Look forward to the availability of statistics for mission on the website of the Church of Scotland being available for every parish after the census results are published.*

**4.2.1** Throughout the last year, the National Records of Scotland have been releasing data from the 2011 Scottish Census. The **Statistics for Mission** group, a joint committee of the Mission and Discipleship and the Ministries Councils, was set up to make this information available and accessible through the Church of Scotland website under "Church Finder" [http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church\\_finder/](http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/church_finder/)

**4.2.1.1** We are pleased to report that, as the various Census data sets became available, the Statistics for Mission group has given the Church a digital map of the parish boundary and basic population and household statistics for every parish in Scotland.

**4.2.2** To support these profiles *Who is My Neighbour?*, a user's guide to statistics for parishes, was produced from material developed by Faith in Community Scotland specifically for the Statistics for Mission project: this is available online at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/statistics-mission](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/statistics-mission). The guide is designed to familiarise users with the statistical information available, not just from the Statistics for Mission project, but from other sources. It also contains valuable information about other resources for better understanding our neighbours.

**4.2.3** A number of people were trained to use the resource in February 2014, and they are available to help congregations or Presbyteries who would like to know how to use the Census information more fully. For more information, please contact us at [mandd@cofscotland.org.uk](mailto:mandd@cofscotland.org.uk)

**4.2.4** The technical challenges of this remit were enormous and the level of knowledge and expertise required to fulfil it is hard to exaggerate. We are grateful to the statisticians, geographers, programmers, web designers, community profilers and mission enablers, who committed their time to produce such a valuable tool for mission and planning.

**4.2.5** For those interested in the background and technical details of this project, a note is available at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**4.3** Highlights from the **Scottish Storytelling Centre's** programme included *Lockerbie-Lost Voices*, a challenging drama marking the twenty fifth anniversary of the Pan Am atrocity, and *Ban this Filth!* by Alan Bisset.

**4.3.1** The 2013 Scottish International Storytelling Festival took 'Journey' as its theme, looking at pilgrims, intellectual pioneers, explorers, travellers and nomads, as well as inner journeys. The network events had a twin focus on families and nurture, along with the inclusion of older people through Life Stories. The Living Voices project took place in care home settings in Aberdeen, South Ayrshire and Perthshire. Jointly organised with the Scottish Poetry Library, it piloted approaches to participative oral and literary arts amongst frail and vulnerable elderly people.

**4.3.2** Since its opening in its current form in 2006, the Scottish Storytelling Centre has successfully engaged with the arts and cultural world. It has always attracted a high level of external funding to support its activities but has also needed regular funding from the Council to sustain the arts programme and maintain its public profile. Although the Church owns the building and employs the staff, we cannot shape the programme despite having to under-write any deficits when the Centre exceeds its agreed budget. This means that the Council carries considerable responsibility and risk.

**4.3.3** The Centre exceeded its budget in 2013 by £30,000, a sum that has had to be found from the Council. Since this constitutes a level of support that is unsustainable we are working with all parties to try to explore options for different management arrangements that would protect storytelling and the traditional arts, and continue to celebrate the place they play in Scotland's cultural life, while ensuring the long-term viability of the Centre.

**4.4** We remain committed, however, to the place of art and culture in the Church. Many congregations are including arts and culture as part of their missionary conversation between faith and life, and as part of their learning activities. We welcome this as a creative response to Christianity's position in contemporary society, and

as a reflection of the theologies of creative inclusion and witness that have emerged from a 'church without walls' response to the Gospels. One example of the latter was *Brilliance in Brokenness*, an exhibition of textile art reflecting the experience of people living in some of Scotland's most deprived communities, which was mounted at the Centre in May 2013 by Faith in Community Scotland.

**4.4.1** Other examples of the Church's engagement with the arts include *Different Voices*, **Equip for the Arts** (which is in planning) and Crossreach's *Heart for Art* project.

**4.5** We continue to support the **More Than Gold** charity to ensure that the Church is well equipped to respond to the missional opportunities created by Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, which open on 23 July 2014. For further information look on the website [www.morethangold2014.org.uk](http://www.morethangold2014.org.uk)

**4.5.1** More Than Gold 2014 is one of the biggest ecumenical opportunities that Scotland offers this year for local congregations to engage with their communities in service, hospitality and mission. The Church of Scotland, The Archdiocese of Glasgow, The Scottish Episcopal Church, The Baptist Union of Scotland, The Methodist Church in Scotland, The Salvation Army, The United Free Church of Scotland and The United Reformed Church have all joined together, with a whole host of Christian organisations, to help churches make the most of the unique celebratory atmosphere that the Commonwealth Games brings.

**4.5.2** There are a wide range of activities your church can still be involved in: these include athlete family and volunteer homestay programmes, city centre chaplaincy, sports mission, mission and service teams, children's and youth work, social justice, community festivals, prayer, and follow up.

**4.6** **Saint Andrew Press** is the Church of Scotland's publishing house. It is managed by Hymns Ancient and Modern in London but its Senior Commissioning Editor is based in central Scotland. Recent publications have



included *Looking for Mrs Livingstone*, which was shortlisted as the Saltire Scottish Book of the Year and was the Radio 4 Book of the Week, *Pioneers of Scottish Christianity*, *A Gaelic Gospel*, *Freedom & Faith*, *Barclay on the Lectionary* and *Scots Worship – Lent, Holy Week and Easter*. Looking ahead, Saint Andrew Press will celebrate its 60th birthday in 2014 with the launch of an increasingly varied programme of imaginative new worship resources. Saint Andrew Press can be followed on twitter @standrewpress and its website – [www.standrewpress.com](http://www.standrewpress.com)

**4.7** The Council administers a series of **Special Mission Trusts** that are for mission purposes. An application form and criteria are set out on [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk). Since the last General Assembly the Council has awarded grants amounting to approximately £45,000.

**4.8** At the 2013 **Royal Highland Show** a marquee hosted by the Churches in Rural Scotland provided an ecumenical Christian presence at the show. The programme included a complimentary café, prayer activities, input from Christian Aid and More Than Gold 2014, traditional and contemporary Scottish music, puppets and face-painting for children and the young at heart and dramatised bible readings.

## **5. Principle 4: Stimulate and support the Church to nurture in all a discipleship of learning and service**

**5.1** We have built on the Congregational Learning Review and this year's report shows how it can make a difference to the delivery of our work. Creating a structure and a sustainable programme of work has required clear remit and wide consultation, so that Presbyteries and congregations can participate in an initiative that ensures all God's people can develop as disciples and elders.

**5.2** By creating opportunities for learning, we seek to encourage the growth of disciples for Christian living and service. The principle's aim 'to nurture in all' is both far-reaching and challenging.

**5.3** Since their appointments, the Team Leader and Congregational Learning Development Worker have worked with Council members to implement the extensive outcomes of the review. The new team is servicing a **Learning in Congregations Working Group** to produce draft proposals for developing learning congregations and supporting the church through resources, networking and signposting. This is consulting Presbyteries to ensure that the learning agenda that results meets the changing needs of the church. As a result, the Learning in Congregations initiative is currently producing and developing a range of resources and services for local congregations. This is partially funded by a generous grant from the Sir Duncan Carmichael Fund. For full details please go to [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**5.3.1** We are grateful to those Presbyteries who responded to the 2013 deliverance which urged:

*All Presbyteries to collaborate with the Council in the development of a network of Congregational Learning Facilitators.*

**5.3.2** We consulted Presbytery representatives in November and December 2013 using both face-to-face and on-line approaches, which affirmed the high value our Church places on learning for Christian living and service. The consultation also raised further questions about how learning can most effectively be promoted at a congregational level, a topic for further consultation. There was much positive feedback about being able to shape the initiative through a mode of consultation that enabled all, however remotely located, to contribute.

**5.3.3** In seeking to resource the local church the Council has developed guidelines for signposting resources produced by ecumenical partners and agencies, and has made progress in developing its own resources, including an annual easy-to-use learning guide for congregations called *Learn*, which will seek to Connect, Resource and Inspire.

**5.4** Some training is currently delivered to congregations via the **Presbytery Adult Trainer (PAT) Network**. In December 2013 the Congregational Learning Team organised a successful day conference for this network, which was an opportunity to consult about the Learning in Congregations proposal and learn from their experiences. The current network will continue to be supported by the Congregational Learning Team for up to three years, by which point it is hoped that many will have joined the new Learning in Congregations initiative.

**5.5** Other examples of how the Congregational Learning Team is nurturing in all a discipleship of learning and service are outlined below.

**5.5.1** The **Learning Disabilities Working Group** was reformed in September 2013 to address the following remit agreed by the Council in March 2011:

- To encourage and support local Churches in the inclusion of people with learning disabilities
- To establish and maintain a network of people interested and willing to help
- To keep aware of new developments and new agencies in this field

**5.5.1.1** In seeking to address the needs of the church in this area, one of the group's initial tasks is to conduct a fact-finding exercise at various levels – national, regional and local. This will include consulting current Presbytery Disabilities Advisers, people with learning disabilities and those in congregations with a particular interest and role.

**5.5.1.2** The results of this audit, once collated, will inform the planning of immediate and long term priorities and actions for the group.

**5.5.1.3** A consultation day was held in March 2014.

**5.5.2** **Church of Scotland Rural Working Group** has also recently re-formed with the following new remit:

- To identify and raise the profile of the needs of rural congregations and presbyteries
- To identify and enable engagement with the ministry and missional opportunities found in rural areas

- To identify and signpost specific rural resources
- To facilitate involvement with and arrangement of regional and or national events with a rural focus
- To provide advice on specific queries directed to the Mission and Discipleship Council on rural issues
- To liaise with the Scottish Churches Rural Group to ensure appropriate ecumenical co-operation

**5.5.3** The General Assembly of 2011 raised the issue of how elders might support and develop the ministry of the whole Church in the future. The Council responded by forming the **Eldership Working Group (EWG)**: its main purpose is to review the Eldership, examining patterns and models of Eldership currently in use across the Church today, and to bring to a future General Assembly a proposal for how this role might be developed and supported so as to meet the needs of Kirk Sessions and congregations. The group is aware of, and has met with, the *Special Commission Anent Ministerial Tenure and the Leadership of the Local Congregation* (Section 4, page 23/6) and they have tried to keep each other informed of their work.

**5.5.3.1** What has been distinctive about this initiative is the enthusiastic way individual elders and Kirk Sessions engaged with the consultation process. An account of this and its outcomes can be found at Appendix VII. We look forward to the findings and recommendations of the Legal Questions Committee regarding the implications of the survey on the use of Elders as Moderators. The reports from the Panel on Review and Reform and the Tenure Group offer additional insights from two different perspectives on the complex nature of eldership today.

**5.5.4** Due to high demand, the Congregational Learning Team delivered a second **Session Clerks' Conference** in September 2013. The two conferences (January and September) were attended by 173 delegates in total and much positive feedback was expressed. The team will be hosting a Session Clerks' and Elders Conference on 24 to 26 October 2014. For more information and booking details please visit [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**5.6** In 2012 the General Assembly instructed the Council;

*In collaboration with the groups indicated in the Deliverance of 2012, to bring forward for consideration by the General Assembly of 2014 some indicative proposals regarding how young people may become involved more thoroughly in the decision-making processes of the Church at all levels, with final proposals coming to the General Assembly of 2015.*

**5.6.1** We have explored ways in which young people could have more input into the decision making processes of the Church. Our findings are reported in Appendix VIII.

**5.6.2** At the General Assembly of 2013, 35 young adults came together as **youth representatives**, 25 of whom represented their Presbytery and 10 of whom represented the National Youth Assembly. Arriving on the Friday afternoon, the group had an intensive week, supported throughout by the Children and Young People Development Worker and a team of four volunteers. The days were long, beginning early with worship led by the youth representatives and ending with a three hour preparation session and worship in the evening led by the staff team; and, of course, there was a full day of debate in the Assembly hall. The experience of living, preparing, debating, learning and worshipping together was invaluable for all involved. We would encourage all Presbyteries to ensure their youth representative place is filled each year.

**5.7** The **COSY (Church of Scotland Youth) Guide to Ethical Living** was written by a group of young adults to help others consider how to live more ethically. The idea for the guide originated in the 2012 National Youth Assembly's discussion of the problem of tax dodging, when delegates expressed a desire to live more ethically but felt they needed more guidance on how to do this. Written by National Youth Assembly delegates, the guide is easy to read since each topic is broken down into manageable sections, each containing information and ideas for action. The Guide is available for free download, and the Council would encourage people to read it and pass it on to

others, such as Girls' Brigade and Boys' Brigade companies, Scripture Union groups, schools and youth groups.

**5.8 National Youth Assembly 2013** at the Westpark Conference Centre in Dundee was attended by 126 people from across the Church of Scotland. The theme was 'Identity: who do you say I am?' with a focus on "What it is to be me", "What it is to be in the Church of Scotland" and "What it is to be Scottish". Departing from the debate format used in previous years, where only a few voices are actually heard, NYA 2013 used a more flexible model of small group discussions with feedback, designed to enable each delegate to feel as if their voice had been heard, even if their opinion was different to others. This change, which was suggested by the young people themselves during the planning process, has been greatly appreciated.

**5.8.1** The next event on the theme of 'My Father's House' will be held from 15th to 18th August 2014 at Gartmore House, Stirlingshire, and is open to all those aged 17 to 25. It is planned to include discussions on worship, inter-generational ministry and how the church spends its money, a masquerade ball and the usual mix of workshops, worship, late night sessions and other activities. We would urge all congregations to encourage young adults (aged 17-25) in their midst to attend, offering them financial assistance where necessary. Further information and booking is available from [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**5.9 A Young Adults and Eldership Conference** was held in September 2013 for those aged between 18 and 30 who are already elders or interested in becoming elders. Running parallel to the Session Clerks' conference, it gave the delegates the opportunity to:

- Meet like-minded people, sharing in fellowship and learning from one another's different experiences
- Explore what being an elder in the Church of Scotland means
- Take time to reflect together on some of the challenges that being young brings to the eldership role and how to overcome them

- Work collaboratively with the Session Clerks to help shape the future of Eldership and subsequent training provision within the Church of Scotland

**5.9.1** While delegate numbers were small, the conference was seen as invaluable by those who attended and further opportunities are currently being explored.

**5.10** The **Children and Young People Working Group** established by the Congregational Learning Group, has a remit to explore ministry amongst children, young people and young adults and to report on:

- What is currently happening on a local, regional and national level
- The needs identified
- A proposed strategy to meet those needs

**5.10.1** This is in response to the deliverance from the General Assembly in 2013 encouraging the Council:

*To work collaboratively with other Councils of the Church, youth workers, young people and other experts in the field to think strategically about youth and children's work within the Church of Scotland. In conjunction with this, create a national network of people who work with children and young people within the Church.*

**5.10.2** In January 2014 the Group held a consultation day **Now You're Talking!** with those involved in work with children and young people in local churches, Presbyteries and national Councils and organisations. The outcome was a set of proposals aimed at enabling more effective ministry among children, young people and young adults at all levels of the Church. The Group will report fully at a future date.

**5.11** Nine **Inside Out Retreats** have been held in a variety of locations throughout the Highlands and Islands (Orkney, Sutherland, Ross, Abernethy, Inverness and Lochaber Presbyteries), attended by a total of 68 delegates. Retreats have also been held on five other occasions in the Central Belt, with another 75 delegates attending. Themes have included *Adventures in Worship*, *Letters from John* (looking

at the themes of love, truth and hospitality) and *Spiritual Journaling*. These events are feeding a spiritual hunger for a deeper encounter with God and one another; they are also bringing together Christians from different congregations and traditions and engaging them in meaningful dialogue. Feedback indicates they are refreshing and developing discipleship by encouraging spiritual disciplines.

**5.11.1** One participant said: *"It has given me much to reflect on, all good ... enjoyed a day set apart for the purpose of drawing closer to God in a new way for me ... Have started to experience the joy of journaling for myself ... great!"*

**5.11.2** Our vision is that people of the Highlands and Islands will have an opportunity to participate in a retreat held within their area once or twice a year. This year, training in leading a retreat has been offered in order to develop the capacity of emerging leaders.

## **6. Principle 5: Stimulate and support the Church to have a renewed vision that understands what it is to be the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit**

**6.1** Guidance on Local Church Review and Future Focus are two resources that enable congregations in the Church of Scotland to develop a renewed vision. Each is designed to deepen understanding of what it is to be the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit in their locality, and to help congregations on their spiritual journey. Both are available online at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**6.1.1** **Local Church Review** is the completion of an extensive process responding to the General Assembly instruction to the Council to provide:

*Guidance notes and appropriate forms for the Local Church Review process by 2014*

**6.1.2** The intention of Local Church Review is to encourage and support congregations to reflect on their current situation, future challenges and opportunities, and to capture their vision in an action plan that can be regularly reviewed. The material in Appendix IX reflects this purpose.

**6.1.3** The Local Church Review Group is indebted to those Presbyteries that shared their own resources and gave feedback on their experience. From this, the group identified three distinct models of Local Church Review processes. For each of these a process flowchart and template was developed, and made available to churches online at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk), to enable congregations and Presbyteries to select and adapt the information in a way appropriate to their own requirements and situations. Supplementary to these three processes, there is also some information on facilitation and goal setting.

**6.1.4** While there are considerable administrative tasks involved, Local Church Review is part of the ongoing spiritual life of the church, allowing space for reflection, discernment, affirmation and celebration. To complement this, worship resources are also available online.

**6.2** Since 2009 external facilitators have worked with over 50 congregations to deliver **Future Focus**, helping them to embark on a journey of investigation, reflection and envisioning. Our 2013 survey of some of those congregations who had worked through Future Focus more than a year previously has helped us to understand how to develop and strengthen this resource.

**6.2.1** Making Future Focus more accessible required either more external facilitators or the removal of the need for outside help. To address the first of these, 16 people attended a training event in November 2013 that covered facilitation skills as well as the Future Focus material; a further training event is planned for May 2014.

**6.2.2** We reported to the General Assembly of 2013 that a new Future Focus resource, **Future Focus – The Way Ahead** (available online), had been made available to congregations, to enable them to reflect upon their life together and on their mission and ministry without the aid of an external facilitator. While detailed information about the usage of this material is not yet available, we do know that by February it had been downloaded 110 times

from the website. More than one Presbytery has used it in developing their Local Church Review process.

**6.2.3** To support congregations in implementing their action plans, the Council is offering a one-day training event on change management in October 2014, to which those who have previously gone through a Future Focus process are warmly welcome. Details are available online.

**6.3** Research carried out by our Mission Development Worker (North) shows that in some areas of Scotland the largest and fastest growing part of the Christian community comprises those who are not engaged with a local church congregation. The research project, **Investigating the Invisible Church**, and its challenging outcomes, are described in Appendix X, and further resources can be found online.

**6.3.1** Building on the insights gleaned from Phase One of the research, an extensive survey was developed. A random sample of 5,500 people in the Highlands and Islands was telephoned and asked a series of questions to ascertain whether they were Christians, whether they attend a church congregation and whether they would be willing to participate in a survey. The research revealed that there are between 127,600 and 139,000 people in this region who self-identify as Christians but who do not attend church; 63,350 to 69,650 of these indicate that they have a personal faith in Jesus Christ that is extremely important to them and that shapes their decisions and choices.

**6.3.2** This research offers a rich understanding of their experiences and perceptions of faith and Church. Clearly there are important lessons to be learned. The context in which we live and minister has changed and we need to respond to that. Negative experiences within our congregations that have led some people to disengage need to be reviewed and lessons learned. The research findings and their implications are being disseminated through conferences, seminars, articles and web based publications. A book is being written and local newspapers have taken an interest in the research.

## 7. Conclusion *Ordinary Christians empowered to do extraordinary things*

7.1 “You said ... we did” is the key to our report. But reports are not simply tick box exercises. They are written to inform, inspire and energise. So we need to add another phrase “You said... we did ...let’s keep doing it!” So much needs to be done and so much can be done, if we act together. The Kenyan word “Harambee” is a call for people to work together, communicating and sharing the load.

7.2 We have sought to map out the land and describe the terrain. We want to stimulate you to think with imagination and creativity, to explore our resources, to access our services, to participate in our activities and then to **do** something. The great advantage we have is this – we do not do it alone or in our own strength. The power of prayer, the grace of God, and his reckless love make all things possible if together we are willing to step out in the great adventure of faith.

*In the name of the Council*

COLIN SINCLAIR, *Convener*

JOHN HAWTHORN, *Vice-Convener:*

*Congregational Learning*

RODDY HAMILTON, *Vice-Convener: Resourcing Worship*

NORMAN SMITH, *Vice-Convener: Church Without Walls*

ALISTER BULL, *Council Secretary*

LESLEY HAMILTON-MESSER, *Team Leader:*

*Church Without Walls*

RON CLARKE, *Team Leader: Congregational Learning*

NIGEL ROBB, *Team Leader: Resourcing Worship*

*(to 22 November 2013)*

GRAHAM FENDER-ALLISON, *Acting Team Leader:*

*Resourcing Worship (from 25 November 2013)*

*In the name of CARTA*

GRAEME ROBERTS, *Convener*

DAVID LOGAN, *Vice-Convener*

NIGEL J ROBB, *Team Leader: Resourcing Worship*

*(to 22 November 2013)*

## ADDENDUM

### Rev Roddy Hamilton

Throughout his time as Vice-Convener of the area of Resourcing Worship (formerly Faith Expression), Roddy has brought a spirit of encouragement to all who have had the privilege of working with him. His good humour, ability to see the potential in a fresh idea, his enthusiasm and the affirmation of the gifts of others, have all distinguished his time of service. Roddy’s own talent for superb creative liturgy and engaging worship have allowed him to be involved in a wide variety of the tasks of the Council as it endeavours to support congregations in worship, specifically in his involvement with the Liturgical Group and as Convener to the Music Group.

Through a period of transition and challenge, change and development in the Council, Roddy has brought stability and insight, which have contributed to fresh opportunities and new directions. The work of expressing faith in fresh and surprising ways has been enriched by his leadership and commitment. The Council wishes him well for his continuing ministry in New Kilpatrick.

### Rev Nigel Robb

Nigel Robb served as Team Leader for Faith Expression for eight years, following a similar period working in the Ministries Council. As Team Leader, in his unique way, he approached the tasks of providing resources for worship and engaging with doctrine with an insight and integrity acquired over many years. His institutional memory was a valued asset to both Council and Church, helping to inform and challenge us as we sought the way ahead.

To his other role as Secretary of CARTA, Nigel brought a breadth of knowledge of church history and theology, which is proving of great value to the current review. With boundless energy and enthusiasm, he has inspired and mentored congregations across Scotland to realise their aspirations to remake their buildings in ways that would enhance their worship and witness. Under his leadership, CARTA has become an agency that likes to say “Yes!”

For 16 months Nigel also took on the demanding job of Acting Council Secretary, working exceptionally hard to hold the staff and the Council together through the challenges of transition. We thank God for the gifts that Nigel brought to these disparate roles and wish him to know how much we value what he has done.

### **Dr Donald Smith**

Dr Donald Smith has served the Mission and Discipleship Council and its predecessors for over thirty years. He began his service as assistant to Rev Gordon Strachan at The Netherbow Arts Centre and was then appointed as The Centre's Director. During his tenure at The Netherbow Donald has successfully built bridges between the Church, faith and the cultural life of Scotland. His love of the Church and of Scotland, his wide ranging interests in the area of the arts, and his commitment to bringing the Christian story of Scotland and faith into the public arena has led to engagement across the breadth of Scottish national life.

As Director of The Netherbow, Donald was central in its development into The Scottish Storytelling Centre, building on the oral storytelling tradition as a positive interface between culture and religion in contemporary Scotland. He also played a pivotal role in the redevelopment of the Netherbow building into a world renowned centre for the arts, culture and religion.

Donald's work as author, playwright, and storyteller; his interest in church art and architecture; his involvement with the national cultural life of Scotland; his work with congregations across the country in helping them develop their worship and worship spaces: these have all been undertaken with great enthusiasm and unbounded energy. The Church has been fortunate to have had the services, the vision and the commitment of Donald Smith for all these years.

*In the name of the Council*

COLIN SINCLAIR, *Convener*  
JOHN HAWTHORN, *Vice-Convener:*

*Congregational Learning*

NORMAN SMITH, *Vice-Convener: Church Without Walls*

ALISTER BULL, *Council Secretary*

LESLEY HAMILTON-MESSER, *Team Leader:*

*Church Without Walls*

RON CLARKE, *Team Leader: Congregational Learning*

GRAHAM FENDER-ALLISON, *Acting Team Leader:*

*Resourcing Worship (from 25 November 2013)*

*In the name of the CARTA*

GRAEME ROBERTS, *Convener*

DAVID LOGAN, *Vice-Convener*

## **APPENDIX I**

### **MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND REMIT**

The purpose of the Mission and Discipleship Council is to resource God's people in the Church of Scotland, for worship, witness, mission and discipleship; enabling and empowering the Church to share God's love in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, mindful of the changing contemporary culture of Scotland and beyond.

Specifically we will stimulate and support the Church<sup>2</sup>:

- to reflect critically on our practice and places of worship, and bring about creative change
- to communicate the good news of Christ's message
- to engage in mission beyond our walls
- to nurture in all a discipleship of learning and service
- to have a renewed vision that understands what it is to be the body of Christ through the Holy Spirit

The remit of the Mission and Discipleship Council is:

- To take a lead role in developing and maintaining an overall focus for mission in Scotland, and to highlight its fundamental relationships with worship, service, education and nurture

<sup>2</sup> "the Church" in this case refers to all the churches in Scotland and not just the Church of Scotland

- To take a lead role in developing strategies, resources and services in Christian education and nurture, recognising these as central to both mission and discipleship
- To offer appropriate services and support nationally, regionally and locally in the promotion of nurturing, worshipping and witnessing communities of faith
- To introduce policy on behalf of the Church in the following areas: adult education and elder training, congregational mission and development, resourcing youth and children's work and worship
- To establish and support the Mission Forum with representatives of relevant Councils
- To encourage appropriate awareness of, and responsiveness to, the requirements of people with particular needs, including physical, sensory and/or learning disabilities
- To conduct an annual review of progress made in discharging the remit and provide a written report to the Council of Assembly

### Membership

- Convener
- 3 Vice Conveners
- 24 members appointed by the General Assembly (one of whom will also be appointed by the Ecumenical Relations Committee)
- One member appointed from and by both the General Trustees and the Guild
- Convener of the Committee on Church Art and Architecture

The Nominations Committee will ensure that the Council membership contains at least three individuals with specific expertise in each of the areas of mission, education, worship and media.

## APPENDIX II

### Mission Forum Report

### Our Changing World

*The Church is on a journey, and we are explorers and pilgrims,*

*but God is ahead of us. Nothing in heaven or on earth is foreign to God's all-embracing love.*<sup>3</sup>

We can never say "the last word" on any issue but constantly need to review and respond.

### A change of age

Global change has an impact on Scotland. We live in a world of tensions between competing ideologies such as consumerism, militant fundamentalism, or Western secular liberalism. We have also seen advances in science and technology, increasing disparity of wealth, increased mobility in populations, ecological pressures and the impact of social media in the digital age.

The Church's experience of such changes is different throughout the world and the churches in Scotland are continually seeking to understand how these changes impact on them and respond accordingly. We have to embrace the opportunities, be aware of the challenges and learn from the wider experience of the world Church.

### A changing nation

There have also been changes specific to Scotland.

The advent of devolution in 1999, the election of Scottish National Party Governments in 2007 and 2011, and the independence referendum in 2014, have accelerated the debate about identity. These political developments relate to the many economic and social challenges facing our country. These include housing and jobs, education and health, changes in social care provision, environmental issues, the blight of sectarianism and bigotry, the impact of welfare reforms, and the increasing gap between the rich and poor. The impact of globalisation upon Scotland has been paralleled in some parts with fragmentation. There are challenges of social integration as we welcome refugees, economic migrants and asylum seekers. We face a society where many working people are living in poverty, not just those without work. Life is complicated

<sup>3</sup> Mission and Discipleship Reflective Statement – [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)



by the impact of multi-national companies, increasing individualism, the growing digital divide within society and the changing nature of community.

The structure of social and work rhythms has also changed. The church needs to adjust more quickly to a world where both partners work, where Sunday has been re-shaped, the nature of volunteering has changed and there is a more mobile working population with long commutes. How does the church relate to changing family structures with more people cohabiting, more children born to single parents, more people living alone, more young adults unable to leave home and more civil partnerships?

We are acutely aware that many live in a framework of hopelessness, isolation, discouragement and estrangement. They lack meaning in the present and lose hope for the future. Many church people share the same experience, not least those in struggling congregations. There is a fear of being drawn in by false hopes and let down if the Church, like so many other bodies, fails to deliver on promises made. Honesty and trust are needed in a culture that fears looking foolish in front of others, fears taking risk through a step of faith or feeling exposed through failure. Without this spirit of openness, spiritual paralysis will take hold, leading to indecision or resistance to commit in faithful obedience.

The Mission and Discipleship Council's reflective statement expresses why we do not lose hope:

*The challenge of God's mission might seem impossible to meet, if the Creator were distant from creation. The opposite is true, as from the beginning of time God's loving purpose has been to make this earth, home.*

#### **The call to be a changing Church in a changing context**

The Church's responsibility in this uncertain social and political order is to bridge the gap between faith and the world. The Church increasingly speaks from the margins of society rather than from its centre. This is not a place of weakness, for it allows churches to express solidarity and support the marginalised in their cry for justice, as shown

by the Church's participation in initiatives to address food poverty, climate change, debt and fair trade.

The Church needs to awaken to the true impact of Christendom's demise. In a world of flux, the Church still holds onto its belief in the enduring nature of values and beliefs found in the Gospel. If genuine connections are to be made then we must be far more flexible in the options we provide for people to encounter God. Our changing culture requires congregations to cooperate not compete and to think ecumenically rather than denominationally.

We are called by God to make a difference, to be part of the transformation of lives, to provide leadership and to show the links between life and health, spirituality and well-being.

#### **How we respond – the Church's call to mission**

The Mission Forum is a group hosted by Mission and Discipleship to explore afresh the place of mission within the Church of Scotland and to hold the importance of mission before the whole church. During the last year, as practitioners, we have shared what mission means in the distinctive areas of work to which each Council and Committee is involved. This has led to a rich diversity of insight. While we recognise the danger that "if mission means everything, then it can so easily mean nothing", we have found that we are impoverished by trying to reduce the meaning of mission to a simple sentence. We want to encourage congregations and areas of church life to reflect on what mission looks like today in Scotland and to evaluate their work in that light. We hope that some of the bullet point comments may trigger that exploration.

Mission is pivotal in the Church of Scotland and expressed in a variety of ways, for instance:

**Mission and Discipleship Council** develops the whole people of God for mission at both an individual and local congregational level through training and resourcing.

**Church and Society Council** exists to work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, and to walk in service

with the people of Scotland. It aims to lead the Church of Scotland's contribution to public debate and discourse on political, social, ethical and economic issues at a local, national and international level.

**Ministries Council** works with the whole of the Church of Scotland to provide leadership that will enable the Church's mission.

**World Mission Council** seeks to engage individuals, congregations and Presbyteries in the life of the church internationally, helping us to make connections, to learn from each other, and to walk together in faith and love; and through sharing experiences and resources we can seek 'life in fullness' for all.

**Crossreach (Social Care Council)** seeks, in Christ's name, to retain and regain the highest quality of life which each individual is capable of experiencing at any given time.

**Panel on Review and Reform** helps us to find our vision for mission and address our changing context, encouraging us to respond as our context changes in order to be fit for purpose.

**The Committee on Ecumenical Relations** reminds us that the Church of Jesus Christ is bigger than the Church of Scotland. We do not work alone but in collaboration and solidarity with churches who share with us our commitment to act together in all matters, except where deep differences of conviction compel us to act separately (The Lund Principle<sup>4</sup>).

**Faith in Community Scotland**, a member of the Mission Forum, is a valued partner as we seek to live out our mission. Faith in Community Scotland walks together with people of faith in support of Scotland's economically

poorest communities. They are committed to working with all who share the desire to challenge and overcome poverty and exclusion.

**Congregations** are called to be mission-shaped in all they say and do and are.

We explored mission through addressing five questions, which were also explored, in parallel, by a group of young people:

- i. Mission is... Why Mission?
- ii. Mission as... What is Mission?
- iii. Mission through... What is the context for mission today?
- iv. Mission with... How do we interact in mission?
- v. Mission in... In what spirit do we do mission?

Papers on these themes can be found at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

**We recognised some unhelpful limiting views of mission when:**

- Mission is limited exclusively to evangelism
- Mission is seen as something that begins at the far end of the Mediterranean, where missionaries are special people
- Mission is centred round a well-known figure who "holds a mission"
- Mission began with the Great Commission and is restricted to a few key texts
- Mission is seen as imposing our culture on others or a cloning project
- Mission is something at the periphery of the Church, rather than the life of the Church
- Mission is for a few specialists, rather than the core calling of every follower of Jesus

**The beginnings of talking about mission:**

- Mission begins with God (Missio Dei)
- Mission is at the very core of who God is and what God does
- Mission is key to Christian faith and theology
- The whole of God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer

<sup>4</sup> The Lund Principle is an important principle in ecumenical relations between Christian churches. It affirms that churches should act together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately. It was agreed by the 1952 Faith and Order Conference of the World Council of Churches held at Lund, Sweden.

- (Father, Son and Spirit), is engaged in mission
- Mission is centred in Jesus, in his life, ministry, death and resurrection
  - Through the Holy Spirit, God indwells the Church, empowering and energising the members
  - The mission of God is Kingdom business
  - The mission of God has no limits or barriers
  - The mission of God includes the Church, creating a Church as it goes on its way
  - There is Church because there is mission, not the other way around
  - Mission is in everything God calls us to do as Church
  - We are invited to share in God's mission to the whole world
  - Though the word "mission" is not used in the New Testament, it saturates in every page
  - Mission becomes for Christians an urgent inner compulsion, even a powerful test and criterion for authentic life in Christ
  - Mission, though it includes the varying forms of Great Commission, is found throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation
  - In mission the whole people of God take the whole Gospel to the whole world
  - The Great Commission (to go) should be undertaken in the spirit of the Great Commandment (to love)
  - Mission is far richer than we first imagined. It includes evangelism, acts of mercy, social justice, worship and much more besides.

**We recognise that we have often failed to be the Church we are called to be**

- We have been complacent when we should have been urgent
- We have been arrogant when we should have been gracious
- We have been inconsistent, saying things we have not lived out
- We have "done mission" for others in a paternalistic way rather than engaged in genuine partnership with them

- We have sought power when we should have been vulnerable
- We have played safe when we should have taken risks
- Mission requires us to be conscious of our own need for repentance
- We have failed to learn from the model of Jesus' death and resurrection
- We need to die to live
- We need to let go and step out in faith, trusting God
- We need to be willing to be vulnerable and weak
- We need to learn to be, as well as to do
- We need to be "Cross-shaped" people
- Mission is always costly though also gloriously fulfilling

**The key to mission is found in Jesus who said "Follow me" (Church without Walls)**

- To say "mission is to follow Jesus" is simple, but the full breadth and significance of this is complex
- He provides the model for mission by his life, death and resurrection
- He gives the mandate for mission in his commission to the Church
- He empowers us for mission through his teaching, the Holy Spirit and the Church
- We understand mission by following the Jesus way. "Listen to him".
- "As the Father sent me, so I am sending you". This includes:
  - the fact that he came – his presence with the disciples
  - the life he lived – doing what Jesus did
  - the message he shared – saying what Jesus said
    - calling to repentance and to faith
    - welcoming, inviting and challenging
  - the gospel he proclaimed
    - changing lives, bringing forgiveness, calling for justice, offering hope
  - the love he taught
    - love God with all your mind, heart and soul
    - love one another
    - love your neighbour

(Who is my neighbour? What would be good news for them?)

- love your enemies
  - the example he gave (landmarks on the journey)
- feed the hungry
- heal the sick and care for those who are ill
- comfort the sad and mend broken hearts
- welcome the stranger and the alien and make them family
- visit the prisoners
- work for justice
- see to the needs of those at risk of being forgotten – advocacy for the voiceless
- confront poverty no matter what that may be
- care for God's creation

**Mission takes seriously the importance of the good news of the Kingdom of God**

- to declare and demonstrate the good news of the Kingdom in such a way that it can be seen as well as heard, so that people respond to Jesus' invitation to enter
- to show in the midst of hardship and poverty lives where
  - hearts have glowed and lit up others
  - teachers have brought out the best in others
  - some have just kept on keeping on, despite it all
  - service has been offered to the community
  - the people of God are serving, caring, worshipping, listening, laughing, open, shining
- to be the voice that speaks out, that challenges the status quo and protests
- to be the peacemaker, the listener, the carer and the one who prays for others

**This is both a call to the church community and a personal call**

- without mission the church dies
- we are called to embody what we share, by how we live together

Mission tells the good news

- to those who have not heard
- or who have forgotten
- or who have been let down
- whilst ensuring our tone as well as our truth reflect Jesus
- avoiding arrogance, triumphalism, insensitivity and is our companion on the way
- the first disciples were sent to live alongside, to share homes and to accept hospitality
- so we are called to learn from one another
- share questions and answers
- share challenges and opportunities
- and to touch lives
  - it will be rooted locally in specific contexts but never lose a global vision
- it involves proclamation, demonstration and presence – words, action and life
- it draws from our common life in Christ
- expressed in worship
- deepened by discipleship
- shared through stories
- nurtured in prayer
- to know and make known
- enabling others to see God

**This is both a global call and an ecumenical call**

- We need to listen, learn and serve the whole world
- We need to listen, learn and work with the whole Church and model the unity we share

**Jesus gives a context for mission in Acts 1:8**

First we are to be witnesses in "Jerusalem"

- where we failed Jesus by denial, flight and locked doors
  - admit our failings
  - where others crucified him
- forgive the failings of others

Then we are to be witnesses in "Judea"

- where everyone knows us – or thinks they do
- in the mundane, ordinary, local situations in which we live

The next challenge is “Samaria”

- where we are hated for who we are, and what we represent
- where we are uncomfortable because of history, culture, values

Finally to the “ends of the earth”

- a ripple effect
- contagious

### **Mission is an adventure of faith into the unknown**

- It is about being in the Spirit and responding to where people are in their lives
- It is about creating spaces and opportunities for people to initiate a relationship or go deeper with God
- It involves risk, a willingness to go beyond where have been already to meet pain or growth as equal companions
- Mission may begin with small steps of welcome, kindness, giving a helping hand
- Mission may involve making what we have open to the community and becoming part of the community's life
- It is exhausting, demanding, frustrating, often bringing us to our knees in despair and dependence, and at the same time energising, liberating, fulfilling and causing us to rejoice and wonder
- Mission always involved reconciliation, whether with God, others, oneself or creation
- It involves laughter as well as tears, exhilaration as well as tenacity, and tokens of grace are found along the road

### **Conclusion**

The original hope of the Mission Forum was to present to the Church a simple statement about the meaning of mission. Around this the whole Church could unite as it made mission its priority. However, by bringing together the breadth of the Church's work through our various bodies, it has become apparent that, in mission, *context matters*.

We have enjoyed the chance to talk with and listen to others for whom mission is their daily business. We

have been enriched by fresh insights and challenged by stories of transformation. We hope that our work together will provide a model of partnership in mission between different parts of the Church.

The Mission Forum presents this panorama to the whole Church. Please use it as a discussion starter for exploring what mission would look like in your particular context.

In a fast changing world we need to work hard to understand our culture, to see its strengths, weaknesses and blind spots. In Scotland, as Christians, we need to be “good news” as well as share “good news”. This is a time for clear minds, warm hearts and a willingness to have dirty hands.

We are called to faith, to hope and to love as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ. We invite you to reflect on this report and enthusiastically to join us on the journey.

## **APPENDIX III**

### **CARTA (Committee on Church Art and Architecture) Interim Report to the General Assembly 2014**

The Review Group was established in May 2013 in response to the following deliverance:

*Instruct the Mission and Discipleship Council to set up a “review process” of the work of CARTA with a remit to investigate the ways in which the Committee may serve the changing needs of the Church in Scotland for building provision and report to the General Assembly of 2014.*

The Group's members are Dr Graeme Roberts (Convener), the Rev Dan Carmichael, Campbell Duff, Paul Goode, the Rev Alison Mehigan and the Rev Nigel Robb (Secretary). The General Trustees were invited to be represented but preferred to be consulted by the Group.

The Group has met on seven occasions: three of these were to consult with representatives of Presbytery property committees (21 September), congregations which had sought CARTA's advice (16 November) and the General

Trustees (13 December). Subsequent consultations have been arranged with the Joint Emerging Church Group and the Mission Forum.

### Remit

At its first meeting (31 May) the Group noted that it had been given a very broad remit by the General Assembly and agreed to proceed by seeking:

1. To understand the reasons why the Committee was established and how it has developed into its current form.
2. To clarify with the Law Department and the General Trustees the nature of its role with regard to safeguarding the Church's privileged position in relation to "ecclesiastical exemption" and the implications of this for CARTA's constitution and mode of operation.
3. To review its current remit in the light of the Mission and Discipleship Council's aim to "stimulate critical reflection and development of places and practice of worship" and, in particular, to consider whether it should seek to play a more proactive role in encouraging and supporting congregations to think about how their buildings might be adapted to serve the purposes of mission and worship in the 21st century.
4. To formulate proposals for its future work in the light of *inter alia* the outcomes of the Presbytery Planning Process, the introduction of Local Church Reviews, recent developments in mission, worship and witness, and good practice relating to such matters as disabled access and energy management.
5. To review its composition in the light of the outcomes of 2, 3 and 4 above, including how the range of knowledge, skills and expertise required for its work can best be recruited.
6. To review its resourcing in the light of 2, 3 and 4 above, including its operating budget, administrative support and access to professional expertise.
7. To consider, in consultation with the Council of Assembly, the General Trustees and the Mission and Discipleship Council, where in the Church's

infrastructure CARTA is best located; and, if the outcome is to leave the Committee where it is, to consider how its operational relationship with the General Trustees might be improved.

8. To consult with congregations and presbyteries concerning their experience of working with CARTA and how this might be improved.

### 1. Rationale and development<sup>5</sup>

It is 80 years since the General Assembly of 1934 appointed a Special Committee of ministers, artists, architects and other competent lay people to advise presbyteries on artistic questions, church fabrics and furnishings and other such matters; three years later, this was re-titled as the Advisory Committee on Artistic Questions. From the start the Committee sought to improve standards, particularly of materials, stained glass, memorials, furniture, lighting, colour schemes and church layout. Informed by the liturgical and theological insights its members, it emphasised the centrality of the Word and Sacrament in the design of church buildings and presented itself as "a disinterested court of reference" and a source of "dispassionate guidance."

Reconstituted in 1946, the Committee formed regional panels to economise on the travel costs to congregations, who were encouraged to seek early advice on improvement schemes well in advance of their submission to the General Trustees. In the 1950s the General Assembly agreed to fund a book on church design for congregations, which was well received; this stressed the importance of being faithful to the doctrine and tradition of the Church of Scotland while addressing contemporary needs. Further books on the design, maintenance and furnishing of churches followed in 1964 and 1983.

As a result of growing concern about the number of alterations to 17th and 18th century buildings that

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<sup>5</sup> This section is based on an extensive paper on the History of CARTA prepared by the Secretary to illustrate how its development has been shaped by the changing needs of the Church

destroyed their distinctive character, the 1960 General Assembly instructed the General Trustees to ensure that the Committee was consulted about any proposed alteration to a church built before 1840. In 1973 the General Trustees agreed that all non-structural alterations should be referred directly to the Committee in order to avoid duplication, which led to an increased caseload.

In the 1970s the Committee began to promote its expertise to congregations considering union and the subsequent disposal of surplus buildings and furniture; it also established an organ advisory committee. In 1979 there was another name change, this time to the Advisory Committee on Artistic Matters, in an attempt to find one that more adequately reflected its work and purpose.

In the 1980s a depository for recycling surplus church furniture was opened in a disused church – replaced in 1993 by the present, a much less expensive, “Exchange and Transfer” service. During this decade the Committee dealt with a growing number of proposals to create social space beneath galleries and more flexible worship space by the replacement of pews by chairs and the alteration of chancel areas. It was also involved in the body set up by the General Assembly to devise a strategy for the deployment of the Church’s property resources. In 1988 a proposal to bring the Committee under the aegis of the General Trustees rather than National Mission was defeated.

In 1990 the Committee was at last granted secretarial and clerical support – just in time, as its annual caseload jumped from 201 to 310 the following year. At the same time, at the request of the General Trustees, the Committee became responsible for advising congregations on the disposal and transfer of the contents of redundant church buildings. This decade witnessed an increasing number of requests for advice about adaptations to improve inclusive access by those with physical disabilities. In a further attempt to clarify its status the Committee’s name was changed to the Consultative Committee on Artistic Matters in 1997 (two years later “Consultative” was dropped) and the case for its existence set out in some detail. The following years saw

it outline the criteria that should be met by any proposed alteration, as well as consider the various issues involved in replacing pews by chairs.

In the new millennium the Committee reminded the General Assembly of the need for its buildings to reflect the Church of Scotland’s reformed heritage in relation to layout and furniture. At the same time the Committee began to receive requests for advice about the installation of AV systems and the extension of chancel areas to accommodate praise bands. The requirement for churches to make “reasonable adjustments” under the 2004 Disability Discrimination Act was also reflected in the Committee’s caseload. In 2005, under the new arrangements for the central administration of the Church, the Committee’s membership (set at fifteen in 1934) was reduced – six years after the General Assembly had been invited to increase its core membership to 24 in response to the volume and range of its workload; this was subsequently increased to 17 in total.

Although its name, composition and responsibilities have changed over the years, the Committee’s primary function remains essentially the same – to advise congregations how to make buildings designed for worship and witness in the past fit for the same purposes in the present, while at the same time being good stewards of their inheritance.

## 2. Ecclesiastical Exemption<sup>6</sup>

Proposals to repair or adapt a listed building in a manner that may affect its character require an Application for Listed Building Consent to be lodged with the planning authority, but churches in ecclesiastical use that have been listed<sup>7</sup> as being of special architectural or historic interest are currently exempt from this control. Proposals to repeal this ecclesiastical exemption were successfully resisted in the late 1980s; and, on the evidence of a more recent pilot

<sup>6</sup> This section is based on a paper from the Law Department clarifying the legal basis of this exemption.

<sup>7</sup> The Review Group is endeavouring to find out how many Church of Scotland buildings are currently listed by Historic Scotland

scheme, the Scottish Government agreed to continue with the voluntary arrangement whereby proposals to alter church interiors are dealt with by each denomination under its own scheme of self-regulation: in the case of the Church of Scotland the General Trustees, advised by CARTA, are the recognised decision-making body.

To maintain its privilege of ecclesiastical exemption it is important that the Church of Scotland is able to demonstrate that its system of self-regulation is effective and that it includes a provision for independent expert advice. This means that the requirements of the General Trustees regarding the procedures for advising and approving proposals for alterations are strictly adhered to by presbyteries and congregations.

During the Review Group's consultations it became evident that there was some uncertainty amongst both presbyteries and congregations as to the respective roles and responsibilities of CARTA and the General Trustees in relation to the alteration of church buildings, particularly as regards the kind of proposals that CARTA is authorised to approve without reference to the General Trustees. **It was agreed to ask the General Trustees to clarify the position.**

### 3. A more pro-active role

The Mission and Discipleship Council recently agreed that its work should be based on five key principles, the first of which is stimulating and supporting the Church "to reflect critically on our practice and places of worship, and bring about creative change."

Currently, CARTA is primarily a reactive body, responding to requests for advice or approval from congregations rather than setting out to encourage and support them to think imaginatively and creatively about their buildings. The General Trustees have indicated that they would welcome CARTA's support in pursuing their own aim to be more strategic and proactive by encouraging congregations to reflect on their mission and how their church buildings might be adapted for the purposes of

worship and witness in the 21st century. The Trustees also see a role for CARTA in the changes being made in Priority Areas.

There was support for CARTA adopting a more proactive role as an encourager and enabler of change from those involved in the Review Group's other consultations. **The Review Group recommends that CARTA is encouraged, in support of the General Trustees, to assume a more pro-active role in stimulating and supporting congregations to think creatively about how their buildings might be adapted for worship and witness in the 21st century.**

### 4. Future work

If CARTA is to "serve the changing needs of the Church in Scotland for building provision" it needs to be in a position to answer two questions:

- How are the ways in which congregations wish to worship, witness and engage with their local communities likely to change in the next five to ten years?
- What are the implications of these changes for their buildings?

Consultation with representatives of Presbytery Property Committees and congregations suggests that, although the current Presbytery Planning Process may result in congregational linkages and unions without any immediate reduction in the number of church buildings, this is unlikely to be sustainable; and that CARTA has an important role as a disinterested source of expert advice and guidance regarding the choice of buildings to be retained, their development potential and the disposal of surplus furniture and fittings.

Making church buildings and what goes on in them both accessible and welcoming to those with disabilities is not only a legal obligation but also (to quote the Law Department) "central to the churches' mission of bringing people closer to God" and "a unique opportunity to take the lead in promoting the inclusion of disabled people in their communities." It is also General Assembly policy to reduce the Church's carbon footprint – a huge challenge



to congregations worshipping in old, poorly insulated and energy inefficient buildings. Both are areas for careful consideration when a congregation is contemplating or planning alterations to its buildings.

The Review Group is considering whether the new Local Church Review process might be used to encourage congregations to consider what changes to their current buildings and facilities would help them realise their future mission and action plans; gather early information from presbyteries about congregations contemplating or planning changes to their buildings; and monitor compliance with the requirement that congregations seek CARTA's advice about proposed alterations.

The Group has invited the Joint Emerging Churches Group and the Mission Forum to provide information about developments in their areas of responsibility with a view to considering their implications for the future work of CARTA.

## 5. Composition

CARTA currently comprises a Convener, Vice-Convener and 15 members, each of whom serves for four years; 50% of those retiring in a given year can be nominated for a further period of four years. The Committee has co-opted two people, who serve for a year, in addition to representatives from the General Trustees, Historic Scotland, the National Association of Decorative Fine Arts Societies, the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland and the Scottish Episcopal Church. It also has access to various specialist consultants, and former members are often willing to continue to assist with visits.

The Review Group has yet to address fully the issue of its composition and how to ensure that CARTA has access to the range of knowledge, skills and expertise required for its work through the recruitment and retention of sufficient suitably qualified volunteers, both to serve on the Committee and to assist with visits. It will also review how new members are supported in their initial months, so that they are quickly enabled to play a full and confident part in the Committee's work.

However, one outcome of the Group's consultation with representatives of the General Trustees is that both bodies require to have access to the best expertise available, and that the current limit on the period of office of CARTA members (unlike that of the General Trustees) is not appropriate for a body that has a service rather than a policy making function. As such, CARTA requires a measure of continuity of membership to maintain standards and ensure that specialist expertise is available on a regional basis. **It was agreed to recommend that members of CARTA be permitted to continue to serve beyond the maximum term set by the General Assembly, thus restoring the previous situation.**

## 6. Resourcing

Consideration of this has been deferred, pending further work on the likely range and volume of CARTA's future workload.

The Review Group noted, however, the view of the General Trustees that, as a result of introducing regular property surveys, church buildings are in a better condition now than for years, allowing congregations to think creatively and imaginatively about change. This has resulted in an increase in requests for advice and approval by CARTA and the General Trustees.

## 7. Location

The Review Group believes that the most appropriate location for CARTA continues to be under the aegis of the Mission and Discipleship Council, particularly in view of the close link between place and practice when it comes to worship and witness. Innovative practice (as well as the restoration of traditional practice) may require access to different, more flexible configurations of worship space; similarly, reaching out to and drawing in the wider community may involve creating contemporary social space where local people and groups can meet. Although it was proposed in 1988 that CARTA's predecessor should operate under the aegis of the General Trustees, the Review Group noted the importance that the latter now attach to CARTA remaining a separate and

independent consultative body of experts in order to protect the Church's privilege of ecclesiastical exemption. **Accordingly, the Review Group recommends that CARTA continues to operate as part of the Resourcing Worship team of the Mission and Discipleship Council.**

## 8. Areas for improvement

The Review Group's consultations with Presbytery and congregational representatives suggested a number of areas where the service provided by CARTA and the General Trustees might be improved, particularly through better communication and more effective collaboration. These include:

- clarifying the respective roles and responsibilities of the two bodies
- streamlining and simplifying the process of accessing advice and obtaining approval
- revising the paperwork required to avoid duplication
- creating a "single gateway" – a central point of contact at 121 for all enquiries regarding church buildings
- offering more guidance and advice to congregations considering or planning major alterations
- organising joint training events for presbyteries and congregations, possibly on a regional basis
- improving access to web-based resources

Both the Review Group and the representatives of the General Trustees are strongly in favour of streamlining the application procedure and reducing duplication by creating a single gateway, administered by the Secretary's Department of the General Trustees, with appropriate forms and processes: initially this will be paper-based before being digitised. **It was agreed to refer this to the relevant officers of both bodies to develop.**

There was also support from the representatives of the General Trustees for greater collaboration, including joint visits, resources, events and other activities.

One area where guidance is particularly needed concerns the reformed theological principles and practices that congregations and their architects should

bear in mind when considering or planning alterations to their sanctuaries. To this end the Secretary of the Review Group has drafted a historical and theological overview of the purpose and design of church buildings in the Church of Scotland, which is available online at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

## APPENDIX IV

### Joint Emerging Church Group Report (JECG)

1. At last year's General Assembly congregations were challenged to explore, by 2020, the possibility of establishing a new experience or expression of church appropriate to the local context. The scale and urgency of the mission challenge facing the Church has only grown in the intervening months, and the Joint Emerging Church Group lays this challenge before the Church once more.

1.1 Much of the work of the group has been directed towards enabling this challenge to be taken up, and the "mixed economy, where both existing and fresh expressions of church co-exist, not at the expense of each other but for the benefit of the whole" (Reports, 2008, pp 3/8, 2.2.2.3), to become the norm rather than the exception.

2. Both Councils are happy to report significant progress since the General Assembly of 2011, which considered an important piece of research, *Reformed, Reforming, Emerging and Experimenting (RREE)*.<sup>8</sup>

2.1 Details of the work tackled is contained in sections 4 to 8 below, and offer some insights on how the suggestions made in RREE will be progressed in order to facilitate this mixed economy within the Church of Scotland.

2.2 Goals identified in last year's Joint Report (Reports, 2013, 4/28-4/30) have been progressed:

1. A formal partnership with Fresh Expressions ([www.freshexpressions.org.uk](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk)) began on 1 October 2013.

<sup>8</sup> [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/emerging-church](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/emerging-church)

2. An appointment to the Fresh Expressions Development Worker post has been made. The Rev David McCarthy took up post on 17 February 2014, following ten years as minister of Greenock East End New Charge Development in the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley. This post will support the development of fresh expressions through the developing networks of existing practitioners and those exploring possibilities, by delivering and signposting to appropriate training and resources, and assisting the wider church to better understand what is happening through research and mapping of existing initiatives.
3. A national Fresh Expressions Vision Day took place in St Andrews and St George's West Parish Church in Edinburgh on Saturday 2 November 2013, attended by over 100 folk from Annan in the south to Shetland in the north, where the building itself was a metaphor of the mixed economy, utilising new technology within an historic building.
4. The work of the Statistics for Mission Group is reported on elsewhere: this key information will inform the mission of the whole Church, helping congregations to understand the missional opportunities in their parish.
5. Online resources such as Future Focus are available at ([www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/future-focus](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/future-focus)).
6. Also on line, following up on the RREE research, are some starter guides exploring what it means to begin a fresh expression of Church, which can be found in the Quick Guides section of our website. There are also signposts to *Go For It* ([www.churchofscotland.org.uk/service/gp\\_for\\_it](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/service/gp_for_it)) and also to the wide range of resources now accessible through the Fresh Expressions website ([www.freshexpressions.org.uk](http://www.freshexpressions.org.uk)).
3. The seeds of a mentoring network were sown at the annual Emerging Ministries Conference, held over two nights in Aberfoyle in November 2013, and the JECG in partnership with the Fresh Expressions Development Worker will pursue this.
4. Continuity of membership and leadership within the Joint Emerging Church Group (JECG) has allowed for focussed work to take place, reflecting both on the conclusions arising from the RREE document and on some of the areas for work highlighted in last year's *A Time to Grow* document.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the JECG has identified the following eight areas of work, with specifically three priorities in the period through to the General Assembly of 2015:
  - Areas of Work**
    1. Training
    2. Resources
    3. Structures
    4. Baseline Research
    5. Network Development
    6. Theological mentoring
    7. Go For It
    8. Theological definition of 'ecclesial community'

#### 4.1 Specific Priorities

##### 4.1.1 Training

4.1.1.1 Training for pioneer ministries such as building on the success of the Mission Shaped Ministry (MSM) Course which ran in Edinburgh from 2012 to 2013; it is planned to run a further MSM course and a series of local Vision Days.

4.1.1.2 It is hoped to hold a second national Vision Day in the autumn of 2014, perhaps in Glasgow.

4.1.1.3 A mapping of possibilities which already exist, exploring potential partnerships with parachurch agencies, existing academic partners, other academic providers, and distance learning providers south of the border.

<sup>9</sup> [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/emerging-church](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/emerging-church)

4.1.1.4 Exploring the development of training for pioneer ministers, as part of selection, formation and continuing ministerial development.

4.1.1.5 It is our intention to engage with the Training Task group and other relevant parties.

#### 4.1.2 Resources

4.1.2.1 Developing Web-based resources.

#### 4.1.2.2 Exploring the feasibility of a limited number of pilot full time pioneer ministries

4.1.2.3 Signposting to appropriate resources.

#### 4.1.3 Structures

4.1.3.1 Engaging across the Church in developing an increased awareness of emerging church.

4.1.3.2 Providing a forum for existing ecclesial communities to share their aspirations and concerns and relate to the wider church, including, but not limited to our former NCD congregations.

4.1.3.3 Encouraging developing groups and initiatives who are working towards building ecclesial communities.

4.1.3.4 Continuing to explore, along with the Legal Questions Committee and others, how new ecclesial communities and groups might relate to the wider Church.

4.1.3.5 Engaging with the Theological Forum in developing distinctive theological resources for Fresh Expressions and Emerging Church in the Scottish context.

5. A continuing dialogue will take place with **Go For It**, the successor fund to the Emerging Ministries Fund, Priority Areas Staffing Fund and Parish Development Fund. It was gratifying to note a good number of grants both from the main grant programme of Go For It, and the small grants programme, being awarded to projects which are establishing new ecclesial communities, and we look forward to continuing to partner and learn together.

6. It is also hoped to pool the information and resources relating to the group's work in one part of the Church's website, rather than it being located on either the Ministries Council pages or the Mission and Discipleship Council's pages.<sup>10</sup>

#### 7. Fresh Expressions – Developments in the Movement

7.1 Fresh Expressions has its roots in the Church of England, although it is now an ecumenical UK wide movement, with representation and support from the Church of England as well as the United Reformed Church, the Methodist Church and the Salvation Army. Bishop Graham Gray, Archbishops' Missioner, retires at the end of April and will be replaced by the Rev Canon Philip Potter of Liverpool, who is referenced in *Reformed, Reforming, Emerging and Experimental* at paragraph 3.5.4 on page 33.

### APPENDIX V

#### LIFE AND WORK REVIEW INTERIM REPORT

Those practising Zen Buddhism have long meditated upon this question: *you can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together, now show me the sound of one hand*. More generally, this elicits as many casual responses as it does keen reflection. If we took the liberty of recasting the question, we'd be no less challenged by this more immediate one: *you can hear the sound of two churches when they speak together, now show me the voice of one church*. This *Life and Work* review group appreciates the voice of the Church of Scotland is not a solo voice, but a chorus.

This ecclesiastical chorale, with its multi-part theology and wide Presbyterian vocal range, continues to celebrate its diversity and exercise the freedom of its evolving reformation. Its repertoire is sometimes expressed in the unison of resolved harmony, at others in the dissonance of unsettled difference. Unsurprisingly, such a creatively tensioned performance rankles and enraptures – often simultaneously. This is the voice that *Life and Work*, the

<sup>10</sup> [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/emerging\\_church](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/connect/emerging_church)

magazine of the Church of Scotland, has attempted to mouth and mirror for 135 years.

Since 1879, the church has benefited from the enduring vision of *Life and Work's* founding editor, Archibald Hamilton Charteris. Every ensuing issue nuanced by the stylistic and subjective leanings of thirteen subsequent editors, each answerable for the magazine's quality, consistency, accuracy, fairness and taste. Throughout, the title seasoned issue by issue, strengthened by the implacable pace and magnitude of world changing events. Credibly, subscribing to *Life and Work* was less about gratifying individual taste in periodicals and more about manifest allegiance to the expression of a broad church. For the subscriber, when the church performs its chorus *a cappella* (in the manner of the Church), personal predilection plays second fiddle. Still, the white heat of a tumultuous century couldn't forge this alloy of loyalty into an unconquerable rallying point.

*Life and Work*, in common with paper-based publications universally, is facing the skewer of the digital generation. This, coupled with the spike in the ageing demographic of its readership and absent younger stand-ins, signals an advancing pincer movement. These challenges to its sustainability are well-rehearsed but less so, the identification and exploitation of new opportunities for long-term sustainability through business planning. The group finds it surprising that *Life and Work* has no business manager responsible for directing sales, marketing and brand development. For some, mercantile language strains their appreciation of the title's *raison d'être*. For others, underinvestment remains a concern, since it prevents the church from fully profiting from *Life and Work* and not merely in monetary terms. The group considers the true worth of *Life and Work* lies beyond its balance sheet.

Whether telegraphing or echoing, as the magazine of the Church of Scotland, *Life and Work* is both messenger and mirror of the church, serving as its instrument and its model. The parallel between mission and discipleship is patent. While the group is respectful of the chasm between

commercialism and evangelism, it believes the whole church can stake its claim in the title's future prospects. The group reckons unrealised market penetration to be low-hanging fruit. Developing and extending brand reach through investment and business planning could propel the brand closer to the frontiers of consumer usage and engagement. Although the group believes the magazine's direction, style, format and content primarily serve its declining internal market, it believes its fate, if already cast, is not yet set.

The group maintains there is no less demand for news – only paper. Increasingly, countless illustrious titles are relinquishing their paper crown before the new media monarch. The universally applauded pixel, the newly crowned head of communication, has all but ascended to the throne of its digital dominion. The date of this expected coronation, as far as the church is concerned, could be deferred if it wholeheartedly supported and promoted the magazine at every opportunity; championing not just its value but those core values of the voice it serves.

The group acclaims the editorial independence of *Life and Work* as one of its commendable strengths. Freed from the threat of overreaching intervention, the title has earned enviable credibility through its independence. The group observed that the magazine is respected, trusted and influential. Additionally, its high quality, creative design, professional journalism and dynamic content make *Life and Work* bankable and marketable. Introducing a catalyst to these reactants could accelerate an enhanced reaction. That catalyst is investment. With the enlisted support of a rallied church grouped around its common cause, the magazine could improve its market performance. Equally, extending brand reach could add value to this asset as it prepares to present itself to multi-channel consumers, where on-demand access to content across their digital devices is expected 24/7.

The group is buoyed up as it continues appraising and prioritising challenges and opportunities prior to submitting its final report with recommendations in 2015.

It believes the church could offer respite for *Life and Work*. It is time to ensure that the new *Life and Work* website would be the title's launch pad rather than its lifeboat-in-waiting (if the church ever agreed it would be best served by an all-digital brand). The countdown to T-minus zero may have started; nonetheless, the launch window has opened for the business development of the magazine. The group is sensitive to the unnerving consequences technology-driven change brings.

A pay-to-read online edition of *Life and Work* was discussed, but today's market conditions are challenging. The contrasting demographic between magazine subscribers and website visitors presents challenges which can be addressed through strategy planning and investment. The payback is opportunities for deeper engagement with increasing numbers through harnessing the power that a multi-channel, multi-media presence offers. The insatiable appetite for on-demand multi-media content, user interaction and social media presents new horizons. Targeted content could be delivered to hitherto unreachable audiences.

The group advocates ongoing consultation and cooperation with the Editor. Digital consumers expect fresh content daily, and the operational impact of tooling up for this multi-channel, multi-media presence cannot be underestimated. Neither can the added heat to the pressure cooker that is an Editor's desk, or contributing authors. Collaboration with the Editor is pivotal to satisfying that tricky troika; quality, satisfaction and profitability. The group feels that the Editor, if unencumbered by responsibilities of workaday business matters, would be freed to do what Editors do best to deliver success. The group dared to envisage what success might look like for *Life and Work* in 135 years' time. Thoughts of heritage turned to legacy.

We can no more envision *Life and Work* in 2149 than Charteris envisioned for 2014. What is clear is that then, as now, that same impulse to share the Good News of Jesus Christ will impel the life and work of the church and that

old rules apply to new tools. These include a set of agreed business goals, why we believe these are attainable, and the plan for reaching those goals. When the church speaks together about strategy, performance, product and consumer, that immediate question remains: *Show me the voice of one church*. When the church performs a *cappella*, somewhere in its chorus the voice of the psalmist can be heard: *Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain*. [Psalm 127:1 (NRSV)].

## APPENDIX VI INTERFAITH AND MISSION REPORT

### 1. Introduction

At the General Assembly of 2012 the Mission and Discipleship Council was instructed to produce a report in the following terms:

*Instruct the Council to bring a substantial report on all aspects of interfaith work, with particular reference to the place and practice of Christian mission in a multi-faith society, and report to the General Assembly of 2014.*

The Council appointed a working group to undertake this task, which was chaired by its Convener. The co-opted members are listed at the end of the Mission and Discipleship report. The group has sought to be informed by the thinking of the Church of Scotland (Section 2); to recognise the context in which this discussion takes place (Section 3); to listen to the wider Church on this matter; to point to some of the theological principles involved (Section 4); and to highlight some aspects of good practice (Section 5). As well as reading and discussion, the group has met with Christians who are working in a multi-faith context, with chaplains from hospital, university and army sectors, and with leaders of other faith communities, and took the opportunity to listen, learn and reflect.

### 2. Background

It is 21 years since the General Assembly received a report from the Board of World Mission and Unity entitled "Mission and Evangelism in a multi-faith society and in a multi faith world". The three page report was followed by

20 pages of appendices. The debate on it at the General Assembly focussed almost entirely on the appendices. As a result, it is possible that the Church lost sight of much that was good in the report. While the world has changed significantly since 1993, we would want to endorse the following statements from that report:

- People coming to Scotland from other countries and cultures often find their security and significance in the deep roots of their religion.
- The challenge of witnessing in a multi-faith context may be relatively new to Scotland, but it is the context from which the Early Church emerged.
- We have an obligation to be good neighbours to other communities in our country. We must seek the good of these groups as we would seek our own. Wherever we love, concerned for the welfare of people and creation, we share in God's mission to the world. The love of Christ constantly takes us to the edge of our own social groupings, urging us to cross new thresholds. Boundaries become less important than being true to our centre in the God of love.
- Love does not happen at a distance. It is about relationships; meeting, understanding and trust. We have much listening to do. It is vital that ordinary Christians and people of other faiths simply listen and talk with each other. This is the ministry of dialogue.
- Honest conversation includes a straightforward owning of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. The call to be witnesses to Jesus Christ is at the heart of our identity as Christians. That witness involves action and words, lifestyle and explanation. Sometimes words are cheap and actions are costly. Facing up to the cost of authentic witness is the mark of being a disciple in any society.
- Take the initiative and make the first approach. Be prepared to have your preconceived ideas about others and about yourselves challenged. Take time to build relationships. Get to know the people around you. Understand the social and religious practices of others. Make contact with the nearest place of worship of another faith to try and establish friendly relations. Involve members of other Christian churches in meetings with people of other faiths.

### 3. A changing context

While there is much in the 1993 Report which has enduring value, the overall context has changed out of all recognition. Among the reasons for this are:

#### a) A changing world

- New communication technology, particularly the internet, has brought the people of the world closer to one another in ways unimagined in earlier times.
- At the same time, many have reacted against the global consumerist culture by returning to their religious roots, so that there has been renewal and revitalization in the major world religions.
- The landscape of world Christianity has greatly changed with increasing secularization in the global North and West, and vigorous church growth in many parts of the global South and East.
- Contrary to its claims, the global free-market system does not make possible a better life for all. It has resulted, rather, in affluence for some and poverty for many.
- Large-scale migration has brought the peoples of the world into contact in new and often stressful ways and has greatly increased religious plurality in the Western world. The need for labour to support ageing populations in the West means this pattern is likely to continue despite some political and social concerns.
- The attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 and the subsequent "War on Terror" have increased levels of fear and mistrust, and posed searching questions about the role of religious communities in the quest for justice and peace.
- Religious polarisation in our world has increased after attacks by fundamentalist religious groups in a variety of contexts, as well as the ongoing conflicts in what was the "Arab Spring."
- Awareness of the threat to the earth's future posed by population explosion, global warming, resource extraction and environmental pollution has greatly increased.

- With new-found access to social media, grassroots movements are directly involved in shaping democracies, governance and decision-making in unprecedented ways.
- The advent of devolution in 1999, the election of Scottish National Party Governments in 2007 and 2011, and the independence referendum in 2014 have intensified debate about Scottish identity – which inevitably includes a religious dimension.
- The breakdown in trust in institutions, *eg* banks, media, government and church, have all contributed to make people more cynical and suspicious.

b) **The changing face of religion worldwide**

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, which produces the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*<sup>11</sup>, is widely recognised for its expertise in religious demography. It has shown how, against the trend in Western Europe, the world is becoming increasingly religious rather than secular. Atheism and agnosticism peaked in 1970 at 19.2% of the world population but have been in steady decline ever since, and are expected to fall to barely 10% by 2020. The major reason for this is the changes that have occurred in China and Eastern Europe, where religious affiliation has been greatly increasing. In global terms, the human community is currently becoming more religious not less – a development with many implications, not least for mission and evangelism in a context of religious plurality. We are living through an era of religious resurgence.

Comparing 1970 with what is projected for 2020, the following are all declining: atheists (4.5% to 1.8%), agnostics (14.7% to 8.9%), ethno-religionists (4.6% to 3.4%) and Chinese folk religionists (6.2% to 5.7%). Increasing are Hindus (12.5% to 14%) and Buddhists

(6.4% to 7.1%). Christians are almost constant (33.2% to 33.3%). By far the largest growth is among Muslims (15.6% to 23.9%). The two largest world religions, Christianity and Islam, in 1970 together claimed the allegiance of 48.8% of the global population, a figure projected to increase to 57.2% by 2020. This suggests that Christian-Muslim relations are likely to be increasingly significant. It is often presumed that the increasing secularisation of the West will inevitably be rolled out across the world, but these figures refute that assumption.

c) **The changing face of religion in Scotland**<sup>12</sup>

The 2011 census is revealing in regard to religion in Scotland. The number of those indicating that their religion is "Church of Scotland" fell between 2001 and 2011 from 42.4% of the population (2,146,000) to 32.4% (1,718,000). "Church of Scotland" was overtaken by "No religion" as the most popular answer. Those opting to describe themselves as having "No religion" increased from 27.8% (1,409,000) to 36.7% (1,941,000) between 2001 and 2011.

With the exception of "Jews", who remained constant at 6,000, all other non-Christian religions saw an increase in the number of their adherents. Buddhists increased from 7,000 to 13,000, Hindus from 6,000 to 16,000, and Sikhs from 7,000 to 9,000. The religion showing by far the biggest increase in adherents is Islam, rising from 43,000 to 77,000 in the course of the ten-year period. Muslims now represent 1.4% of the population, suggesting that Christian-Muslim relations are of growing importance. In relative terms, the number of those who identify themselves as belonging to a faith other than Christianity is small. However, their numbers are clearly growing while the number of Christians is falling, with the result

<sup>11</sup> World Christian Encyclopaedia – [www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/](http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/)

<sup>12</sup> For further information on the religious makeup of Scotland see [www.scotlandscensus/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbtable7.pdf](http://www.scotlandscensus/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbtable7.pdf)  
For information by Council area see [www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbfigure12.pdf](http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/rel2asbfigure12.pdf)



that Scottish society is increasingly diverse in terms of religious identity. It is also apparent that the cities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow, along with East Renfrewshire, have higher levels of religious diversity than the rest of the country.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Theological reflections

The thinking of the Group was informed by the work done on interfaith and mission as part of three major world conferences held in recent years and a statement issued together by three global church bodies. We have looked at each of these three conferences in the order in which they occurred, and conclude with a document endorsed by three world bodies.

The Group found much in these widely affirmed statements which can inform and enrich our thinking as we witness to Christ in an increasingly religiously diverse context in Scotland.

Each of these world gatherings comes to this issue from their own distinct perspective, and inevitably some readers will be drawn to the language and insights of one rather than the others. However, the group felt that all three gatherings added value to our understanding and bear further reflection, and that there was a significant degree of overlap between them.

- a) **Edinburgh 2010**<sup>14</sup>, brought together a very wide representation of world Christianity to mark the centenary of the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference, and issued a **Common Call** which included the following statement:

*"Remembering Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection for the world's salvation, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called to authentic dialogue,*

*respectful engagement and humble witness among people of other faiths – and no faith – to the uniqueness of Christ. Our approach is marked with bold confidence in the gospel message; it builds friendship, seeks reconciliation and practises hospitality."*<sup>15</sup>

- b) Later in 2010 the **Third Lausanne Congress**<sup>16</sup> took place in South Africa and adopted **The Cape Town Commitment**<sup>17</sup>. Under the heading "Living the love of Christ among people of other faiths" it includes the following points:

"A) We commit ourselves to be scrupulously ethical in all our evangelism. Our witness is to be marked by 'gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.' (I Peter 3:15-16) We therefore reject any form of witness that is coercive, unethical, deceptive, or disrespectful.

B) In the name of the God of love, we repent of our failure to seek friendships with people of Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and other religious backgrounds. In the spirit of Jesus, we will take initiatives to show love, goodwill and hospitality to them.

C) In the name of the God of truth, we (i) refuse to promote lies and caricatures about other faiths, and (ii) denounce and resist the racist prejudice, hatred and fear incited in popular media and political rhetoric.

D) In the name of the God of peace, we reject the path of violence and revenge in all our dealings with people of other faiths, even when violently attacked.

E) We affirm the proper place for dialogue with people of other faiths, just as Paul engaged in debate with Jews and Gentiles in the synagogue and public arenas. As a legitimate part of our Christian mission, such dialogue combines confidence in the

<sup>13</sup> Further data on religion in Scotland has been released by National Records of Scotland since this report was compiled including cross-tabulations of religion against age, sex, ethnicity and national identity

<sup>14</sup> [www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocuments.html](http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocuments.html)

<sup>15</sup> Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson ed., *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Today and Tomorrow*, Oxford: Regnum, 2011, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> The Lausanne movement emerged from the Congress in World Evangelism held in 1974 in Lausanne, where the influential Lausanne Covenant was written. Since that time, there have been two global gatherings, at Manila in 1989 and Cape Town in 2010.

<sup>17</sup> [www.lausanne.org/en/documents/ctcommitment.html](http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/ctcommitment.html)

uniqueness of Christ and in the truth of the gospel with respectful listening to others<sup>18</sup>

- c) A third statement to which the Group gave attention is the new affirmation on world mission and evangelism adopted by the **World Council of Churches in 2012: *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes***<sup>19 20</sup>. This text featured prominently at the 10th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held in Busan, South Korea in November 2013. *Together Towards Life* focuses on the Holy Spirit as the agent of mission. Our calling is to “join in” with what the Spirit is doing in the life of the world. This opens up dialectic between the particularity of redemption in Christ and the work of God’s Spirit in the world.

What is clear is that by the Spirit we participate in the mission of love that is at the heart of the life of the Trinity. This results in Christian witness which unceasingly proclaims the salvific power of God through Jesus Christ and constantly affirms God’s dynamic involvement, through the Holy Spirit, in the whole created world.

This statement creates a framework where it is possible to be strongly affirmative about the distinctive content of Christian faith while also being radically open to the presence and action of God in the wider world.

*Together Towards Life* also highlights the relationship between evangelism and dialogue as we encounter people of different faiths, ideologies and convictions:

<sup>18</sup> Lausanne Movement, *The Cape Town Commitment: A Confession of Faith and a Call to Action*, IIC1, <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/ctcommitment.html> p2-3, accessed 2 July 2013

<sup>19</sup> *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2013, Section 18

<sup>20</sup> [www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/mission-and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes)

Dialogue is a way of affirming our common life and goals in terms of the affirmation of life and the integrity of creation. Dialogue at the religious level is possible only if we begin with the expectation of meeting God who has preceded us and has been present with people within their own contexts. God is there before we come and our task is not to bring God along, but to witness to the God who is already there. Dialogue provides for an honest encounter where each party brings to the table all that they are in an open, patient and respectful manner.

Evangelism and dialogue are distinct but interrelated. Although Christians hope and pray that all people may come to living knowledge of the Triune God, evangelism is not the purpose of dialogue. However, since dialogue is also “a mutual encounter of commitments”, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ has a legitimate place in it. Furthermore, authentic evangelism takes place in the context of the dialogue of life and action, and in “the spirit of dialogue”: “an attitude of respect and friendship”. Evangelism entails not only proclamation of our deepest convictions, but also listening to others, and being challenged and enriched by others.<sup>21</sup>

- d) Another very significant development in the Church’s thinking on Inter-Faith and Mission was the joint statement prepared by the **Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, the World Council of Churches and the World Evangelical Alliance** in 2011: “*Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct*”.<sup>22 23</sup>

When it turns to practical questions of how to conduct Christian witness in a multi-religious world,

<sup>21</sup> *Together Towards Life*, Section 95

<sup>22</sup> *Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World: Recommendations for Conduct*, sections 6-12

<sup>23</sup> [www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religious-world](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/interreligious-dialogue-and-cooperation/christian-identity-in-pluralistic-societies/christian-witness-in-a-multi-religious-world)

it offers a number of principles to guide our conduct, including the following:

**Rejection of violence.** Christians are called to reject all forms of violence, even psychological or social, including the abuse of power in their witness. They also reject violence, unjust discrimination or repression by any religious or secular authority, including the violation or destruction of places of worship, sacred symbols or texts.

**Freedom of religion and belief.** Religious freedom including the right to publicly profess, practice, propagate and change one's religion flows from the very dignity of the human person which is grounded in the creation of all human beings in the image and likeness of God (cf Genesis 1:26). Thus, all human beings have equal rights and responsibilities. Where any religion is instrumentalised for political ends, or where religious persecution occurs, Christians are called to engage in a prophetic witness denouncing such actions.

**Mutual respect and solidarity.** Christians are called to commit themselves to work with all people in mutual respect, promoting together justice, peace and the common good. Interreligious cooperation is an essential dimension of such commitment.

**Respect for all people.** Christians recognize that the gospel both challenges and enriches cultures. Even when the gospel challenges certain aspects of cultures, Christians are called to respect all people. Christians are also called to discern elements in their own cultures that are challenged by the gospel.

**Renouncing false witness.** Christians are to speak sincerely and respectfully; they are to listen in order to learn about and understand others' beliefs and practices, and are encouraged to acknowledge and appreciate what is true and good in them. Any comment or critical approach should be made in a spirit of mutual respect, making sure not to bear false witness concerning other religions.

**Ensuring personal discernment.** Christians are to acknowledge that changing one's religion is a decisive step that must be accompanied by sufficient time for adequate reflection and preparation, through a process ensuring full personal freedom.

**Building interreligious relationships.** Christians should continue to build relationships of respect and trust with people of different religions so as to facilitate deeper mutual understanding, reconciliation and cooperation for the common good.

e) **Reflections of the Working group**

The Working Group has benefitted from considering the conclusions of these recent global Christian gatherings and statements, and commends them for wider study. Rather than repeating much that is good and has already been highlighted from these reports, the group's own thinking has in addition revolved around the following points:

- Awareness that, increasingly, Christians in Scotland are neighbours with those of other faiths.
- The need to face the tension between the particularity of God's self-disclosure in our Lord Jesus Christ and the reality of a multi-cultural and multi-faith society.
- Recognition that, while within our churches there may be different convictions as to how we view other faiths, there is agreement that as Christians we are called to continue to bear witness to Jesus Christ, and to reflect the love of God for all.
- A sense that it is time to have confidence – a confidence in the gospel which will mean that we are not hostile or defensive in our relations with those of other faiths, but rather open and loving.
- Openness and love will include engaging in respectful witness, praying for people to come to faith in Christ and, should they wish to do so, having the right to change their faith.

The Group valued the prophetic observation of Lesslie Newbigin, in his last public address in 1996,

that in the 21st century “three major factors will compete for the allegiance of the human family: the gospel, the free market, and Islam.”<sup>24</sup>

### 5. The Way Ahead – kindness and confidence

When Jesus came into a multi-faith world, he came “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). These two marks should describe the church, as we share the love of God and bear witness to the truth that is in Jesus Christ. In so doing we take seriously the Great Commandment, to love our neighbour, and the Great Commission, to share our faith.

We confess that sometimes the Church has shown an intolerant or arrogant spirit towards other faith groups, which contradicts the “good news” we profess to share. At the same time we have sometimes so downplayed our distinctives that we have ended up with nothing to share. We want to be unashamedly Christian but also Christlike in our spirit.

In today’s context as Christians we need to recover the confidence of our first century predecessors in the message about Jesus Christ as good news for all people everywhere. At the same time we need to recapture the qualities of welcome, kindness, hospitality, service and unconditional love which enabled the early church to bring a distinctive presence to its multi-faith world.

A general ethic of welcome, kindness and respect alongside humble witness needs to be translated into active practice at local level. What would love look like in your locality?

Guidelines for taking the first step at a local level will include:

1. Building on and developing existing personal relationships, and establishing these if they do not already exist.
2. Recognising that much is achieved informally, over meals, rather than just in meetings.

3. Gaining a growing understanding of faith groups in your area. The best way is through both listening to adherents and reading about their faith. Either one on its own will not be adequate.
4. Meeting and talking together with leaders/people from other faiths before a problem or crisis occurs so that, if it does, networks of relationships are already in place.
5. Working locally, as most significant change is achieved locally. Do not underestimate the value of local initiatives. If you are a minister/leader, convey to others the value of their local efforts.
6. Being honest and open, if asked, about our desire that someone ultimately become a follower of Christ [if that is indeed your desire]. This need not prevent meeting to discuss other dimensions of your relationships, and many appreciate such openness, especially if you encourage them to be similarly open.
7. Understanding the extent to which the people you are meeting are representative of their ‘community’. Do they represent, for instance, the whole ‘Muslim community’ or ‘Hindu community’ in your area, or only a part?
8. Being aware of possible power relations in planning events, so if you arrange, for example, a Christian-Muslim meeting, paying attention to such questions as: Who is organising it? Can this be jointly handled? Can the venue be neutral, or else alternate between a church and a mosque? Is there transparency over aims?
9. Avoiding inviting people to go beyond where they are comfortable, *eg* suddenly asking people to pray together without warning.
10. Being aware of practical sensitivities over issues such as gender matters, dress, food, alcohol and toilet facilities can avoid unintended embarrassment. Much can be communicated by some basic consideration of these matters so as to make claims of respect *etc* seem much more real. If in doubt, ask, rather than trying to guess.

<sup>24</sup> Leslie Newbigin, *Signs Amid the Rubble: The Purposes of God in Human History*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, p. 117.

At our website [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk) we have a number of resources (*eg* Quick Guides) that will give

further practical information on issues related to Inter-Faith and Mission.

## Conclusion

The 1993 report reminded us that our confidence as Christians comes not from being in a majority but “in the wonder of being loved in Christ”. Christian confidence should be humble not arrogant, since it is based on what God has revealed, not what we have discovered. Though mysteries remain, the New Testament teaches that, in Christ, we have been given enough revelation of God’s character and purposes to be certain and clear about the core of the Christian faith. At the same time we can admit to areas of uncertainty where we encounter them. We can also admit what is good and true in other faiths, without fear that we are diminishing our own faith. Christians need to explain what we actually believe and how this resembles or differs from other faiths.

Being secure in our Christian identity expresses itself in true love for others, in honest listening to their beliefs and concerns, and in explaining our own views and experiences. These are key marks of Christian confidence in a multi-faith world.

We are on a journey into an ever more connected world and our awareness of its multi-faith character is growing all the time. Building on the insights of the 1993 report, taking account of our changing context, globally and nationally, and learning from the theological work at world church level, we bring to the church a fresh imperative to reach out in love and faithfulness to those around us who profess other faiths.

Local congregations have a key role in this area. We welcome the good work that is already under way in a number of contexts through various agencies. However, there is much more to be done. The Council is ready to prepare or signpost resources to assist congregations to develop this part of their Christian discipleship.

We live in a time of great opportunity and we must not fail our calling as the Church towards our neighbours.

## APPENDIX VII

### ELDERSHIP CONSULTATION 2013 – PROPOSALS REPORT

#### Introduction

The General Assembly (GA) of 2011 raised the issue of how Elders might support and develop the ministry of the whole Church in the future. The Council responded by forming a group, the Eldership Working Group (EWG), to look at patterns and models of Eldership currently in use across the Church today and to bring to the attention of the GA, ways in which these could be shared, reflected upon and in some cases adapted to encourage appropriate practice in our changing contexts.

In developing its proposals, the EWG has looked at the history and development of the Eldership from earliest times, as well as earlier reports on the topic. It has also consulted the Church through a series of face to face regional consultations<sup>25</sup> and by inviting every Kirk Session to contribute via a discussion questionnaire.<sup>26</sup> From this it has gathered findings about the experience of Elders, current patterns of the Eldership and its service to the mission of the Church of Scotland. While the past experience of the Church is important in shaping our understanding of the distinctive nature of the Eldership in the Church of Scotland, the group believes that the outcomes of the national consultation with Kirk Sessions should shape the way in which the Eldership serves the Church in the 21st Century.

The EWG greatly appreciates the impressive response to the two phases of the consultation. Notably there were 564 returned questionnaires (at the closing date) from the Kirk Session discussions, with very detailed and thoughtful contributions being provided. This is a real testament

<sup>25</sup> The summary of findings from this first phase is contained in the document ‘Report of findings from consultations held in April 2013 which can be found on [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/eldership-consultation](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/eldership-consultation)

<sup>26</sup> The summary of findings from this second phase are contained in the document ‘EWG – Eldership Consultation 2013 – Phase 2 Summary of Findings’ which can also be found via the above link

to the high level of enthusiasm and commitment of our Elders who serve the Church of Scotland, as well as their desire to enhance the effectiveness of the office.

### **Proposals Arising**

The consultation process has enabled the EWG to identify a number of proposals for enhancing the Eldership. Whilst it believes that its proposals apply across the whole Church, it recognizes the need to heed the clear message that came through the consultation process: namely, the need for any provision, resources etc to be developed in such a way as to allow for the rich and varied parish contexts across Scotland. The EWG cautions against a “one size fits all” approach which does not take account of the reality of life in the different parts of the country.

The Assembly Council Report on Eldership (2003) described an Elder as someone with *“The call and commitment to undertake, along with the minister, responsibility for the life of the congregation in all aspects, including worship, mission and service to the wider community.”*

However it is concerning that the findings from the consultation process reveal that a significant number of Elders do not see the Eldership as a call in the same way that those serving as Ministers have responded to a call from God.

Whilst there is recognition that the responsibilities of the Elder have changed, it was evident that any guidance should specifically cover the trusteeship responsibilities involved as well as the spiritual ones.

Furthermore there were many requests for some sort of pre-ordination training so that individuals could be appropriately prepared to take up the role.

### **Proposal 1 (Preparing to serve)**

*Provide guidance explaining what is meant by a “call” and why Eldership is an ordained office, and clarify the role of the Kirk Session and the individual Elder in the call to Eldership. This might be presented under the titles of ‘So, you have just been asked to be an Elder’ and ‘So, you are looking for a new Elder.’*

### **Proposal 2 (Preparing to serve)**

*Develop proposals for a process, including developmental opportunities, in which prospective Elders would be expected to engage, that enabled them to discern their call and be prepared for the role. This would involve considering both the spiritual and the trustee dimensions of the office, including its roles and responsibilities.*

The Church Without Walls report (2001) expressed the role of Elder as a broad leadership one, with a variety of strands to it:

*“We need leadership. We need Elders with vision and flexibility. In our Presbyterian Church the role of Elders is crucial. In the role of the Elder the ‘one size fits all’ pattern of districts is prevalent, but that does not give room for variety of abilities to be exercised. There needs to be an honest appraisal of the gifts and callings of our Elders, and to realise that not all Elders are gifted in leadership, nor are all gifted in pastoral care.”*

The consultation gave a positive response to the idea of helping Kirk Sessions to gain a better understanding of the gifts and skills required for the different Eldership roles and in turn to discern which individuals have the appropriate ones. The focus, it was suggested, should be on a process of prayerful reflection rather than purely the application of professional or business-based appraisal type models.

Feedback also included many comments about people accepting the invitation to become an Elder with insufficient knowledge of the responsibilities and significance of the role. The overwhelming majority of respondents agreed that prospective Elders should be able to access clear guidance about the responsibilities of the role, so that they understand the nature of the Kirk Session. However, surprisingly few respondents cited existing guidance materials, which in any case would need to be updated.

### **Proposal 3 (The Role of Elder)**

*Suggest ways by which Kirk Sessions can identify the gifts of potential Elders, providing examples of good practice and signposting resources that will enable them to do so.*

**Proposal 4 (The Role of Elder)**

*Provide updated guidance about the role of Elder (including expectations, attributes, skills, gifts and abilities required) that could be used to identify what is required and what individuals can bring to the Kirk Session. This should include guidance for the Kirk Session about the process of approaching prospective Elders and enabling them to come to a considered decision.*

The practice of ongoing development, to be undertaken on a fixed and recurring basis, was first introduced by the Presbyterian Church in the USA and subsequently taken up by secular organisations and professions around the world. The responses to the consultation suggested that this is not a significant feature of the life of most Kirk Sessions. It was, however, evident that there is a clear appetite for ongoing development in order to enable Elders to continue to carry out their commitment and calling, but this should respect the voluntary nature of the role. The EWG accepts the need to give careful consideration to how to motivate Elders to engage in such ongoing development, which should be understood as a part of our Christian discipleship.

**Proposal 5 (Ongoing Support and Development)**

*Develop provision that engages Elders in the richness of ongoing development as a part of the discipleship process in Christ, focussing on the knowledge and attributes needed for the spiritual and other responsibilities of the office and respecting the diversity of needs and backgrounds of Elders.*

The EWG also acknowledges that many of the changes confronting the Church are those which have affected society as a whole:

- Changing patterns of work and leisure.
- Less commitment to institutions and voluntary organisations.
- A decline in the nuclear family structure and an increasing rise in single parent families and people living on their own.
- Concerns regarding financial futures, pensions and the impact of extended longevity.
- A post-modern world view in which no “one size fits all”.

In addition, the Church of Scotland like many other denominations is facing particular challenges in this century:

- An ageing congregational profile.
- A decline in the number of young people involved in the life of the Church.
- A change in attitudes towards participation in an institution (believing without belonging).
- A much more mobile society where denominational loyalty and memory are unusual in some areas.
- An increasing need for the Church to respond to expectations of convenience, time and commitment of people who have many other possible avenues of service and involvement.

In light of the above, the consultations also touched on how existing models and structures of the Eldership, functioning as the leadership team of a congregation through the Kirk Session, will need to adapt in the years ahead.

**Proposal 6 (Leadership)**

*Provide guidance and examples of how some of the traditional roles of an Elder can be shared with other members of the congregation with appropriate gifts and commitment. This might include case studies from congregations operating under the Unitary Constitution.*

**Concluding comments**

What the EWG hopes will be the outcome of this process of consultation is an understanding of the factors which will support, encourage, enhance and sustain the Eldership as a competent and confident group of local leaders.

While we acknowledge the importance of respecting the traditions of the past, the Church is called to the future that God has set before us. We trust that our conversations with Elders and Kirk Sessions across Scotland will result in an enhanced understanding of the role of the Eldership and in more effective support for both prospective and serving Elders as well as for the Kirk Sessions and congregations they seek to serve and lead.

*“When anyone is united in Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone, and a new order has already gone. From first to last, this has been the work of God.” 2 Corinthians 5, v 17.*

## APPENDIX VIII

### YOUNG PEOPLE IN DECISION MAKING REPORT

The General Assembly of 2012 approved the following section of the Mission and Discipleship Council deliverance:

*Invite the (Mission and Discipleship) Council to facilitate further discussion and examination of the issues involved in developing the work on young people becoming more meaningfully involved in the decision making processes of the Church; such discussions should involve representatives of the Council of Assembly, the Church and Society Council, Legal Questions Committee, the General Assembly Arrangements Committee, as well as the Moderator of the Young Assembly and an elected General Assembly Youth Representative, and report to the General Assembly in 2013.*

In 2012 the General Assembly (GA) passed a resolution which instructed the Mission and Discipleship Council to explore ways in which young people could have more input into the decision making processes of the Church. Immediately in the minds of many people this implied extending the role and function of those young people who are appointed as representatives to the General Assembly itself. Given the existing role which is played by youth representatives, this could only mean extending to them the full rights of Commissioners or changing the manner of decision making at the Assembly to include indicative voting before commissioners cast their deliberative votes.

In discussions that have followed two major considerations have emerged. The first, that extending the role of youth representatives is not without constitutional complexity and the second, that the GA is not the only place and, perhaps not the most important place, where the views and influence of young people in the Church need to be expressed.

To take the first of these points, it needs to be fully understood that the nature of Presbyterian government as it is practised in the Church of Scotland means that

leadership and decision making is provided through a hierarchy of courts and these courts are populated by those who are ordained to the offices of the eldership, the diaconate and the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

To extend these functions to any category of persons who have not been ordained to office would constitute such a significant change in the polity of the Church of Scotland that it would require Barrier Act procedure to enact it. While it is quite possible to envisage such proposals being put together and offered to the church for consideration, it would give rise to the greater question as to why a selection of young people (albeit elected from either their Presbytery or the NYA itself) should enjoy a role and responsibility which may never fall to other church members.

In some General Assemblies of other Presbyterian churches indicative voting is used to extend the influence of those who are in attendance. Young people themselves are divided on the issue of youth reps having a vote at the GA, indicative or full. On speaking to young people we found that some were confused as to why they don't have the vote when they can speak and move motions, while others, who perhaps have had more time to understand the church structures, accept that they could have a vote if they were an elder and therefore attending GA as a commissioner, and that it wouldn't be right, within the structures as they currently stand, for them to have a vote.

The Council do not believe that the place of young people in the church is hampered by the absence of a vote or an indicative vote at the General Assembly. On the contrary, the Council would readily acknowledge that the GA has been the one court of the Church which has been particularly welcoming of the presence of young people, listened attentively to them, and been influenced by their insights and proposals.

That there are youth representatives at the GA who are able to voice their opinions, ask questions and put forward motions is to be commended. Each Presbytery is invited to send a youth representative (aged 18-25) and, together



with the 10 NYA representatives, they live together for the week and are supported through the process by a team from Mission and Discipleship. Those who have the opportunity of being a youth representative find it an invaluable experience; they get to learn far more about what the church does than by sitting in a pew on a Sunday morning; they get to have their say, they feel a part of the process and many make friends for life.

However, consistently Presbytery places are not filled: in 2013 only 25 of the 46 Presbyteries used their space (just 54%). We understand that there are barriers to young people attending the GA, particularly due to it clashing with many university exams, but we would urge all Presbyteries to make every effort to ensure their youth representative place is filled each year.

The National Youth Assembly (NYA) is perhaps one of the most successful ways of young people being involved in the decision making processes of the church at a national level. The four day event, run by Mission and Discipleship and held in August each year, is open to all 17-25 year olds who have a connection with the Church of Scotland. In 2013 the event moved from the debate style of discussion akin to the GA, where only a few voices are actually heard, to a more flexible model of small group discussions with feedback, designed to enable each delegate to feel as if their voice had been heard. While the new process needs further development, it was appreciated by the majority of delegates and actually allows the variety of voices heard to be fed back to the Councils and committees of the church and indeed the GA.

The mechanisms for feeding the discussion back could do with being developed further: many of the delegates attending NYA leave feeling as if their voices have been heard by those attending but not sure whether that voice will make it to the councils and committees where decisions are actually made. While written and verbal reports are given from the NYA to the GA, after the verbal report is given there is only a time for questions and no deliverance is offered for discussion and debate.

Perhaps now is the time to consider enabling discussion and debate on the ideas that the delegates of NYA bring forward. The NYA could be asked to bring to the GA a Deliverance each year based on the outcomes of their discussions, which could be debated on the floor of the Assembly in the same way as those from any other Council or committee. Enabling discussion to take place in this way on matters of importance to young people will go some way to helping the delegates feel that their involvement in the decision making processes of the national church is more than tokenistic.

There are a small number of young people involved in the national Councils and committees of the church. Many have taken up the opportunity after having been involved in NYA or GA and met with others already involved in this way. While the involvement of young people in our Councils and committees is to be encouraged, it is important that those selected are there because of their skills, gifts, talents and interests, and not because they are young.

There is a great desire amongst young people to get involved, but in order to enable this to happen in a meaningful way the approach to location, timing and structure of meetings may need to be adapted. With education and/or work commitments, there are few young people who are readily available to attend meetings during the day in locations involving several hours travel.

If we are serious about young people being involved, we need not just to alter our times of meetings but also offer an environment conducive for discussion at our meetings so they feel able to speak and that their opinions are valued in the same way as any other members. So too we need to bear in mind that not all young people feel able to commit to being on a Council or committee for four years as their lives are constantly changing, but this does not mean they do not want to be involved; perhaps joining a short life working group or being a co-opted member for a year would work better for them.

The working group would encourage all Councils and committees to continue to consider how they can best

involve younger members in their work, and people in local congregations to consider nominating young people to serve in this way.

If what occurs on a national level is to support what is happening at a Presbytery level and in local congregations, then the issue of young people being involved in decision making is far wider than what happens at the GA. In their discussions with young people, the group realised that on a national level there are a number of good opportunities for young people to be involved in decision making and those who have taken up the opportunities do feel very involved and that their voice is valued.

However, on a local and Presbytery level their experience is very different: there is a distinct lack of opportunities for young people to be involved in decision making on a Presbytery level and, on a local level, the number and variety of opportunities vary widely from congregation to congregation. Arguably this is where the most immediate and significant change has to happen.

The GA in 2006 approved and gave support to the Church of Scotland youth strategy: a strategy designed, after wide consultation, to provide options for local congregations and Presbyteries to engage young people (the strategy can be found on [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)). As often happens, some congregations embraced the strategy, taking the challenge it provided to engage more purposefully with the young people in their parish, while others recognised it as a good strategy but did not necessarily know how to apply it to their context, and others still may well have left the strategy gathering dust on a book shelf.

Consequently the experience of young people in our parishes varies widely. Some have been ordained as elders and so play a full part in the decision making processes of the congregation, while others just attend services on a Sunday and are not enabled to take any part in decision making processes. These are some of the ways that the small selection of young people the group talked to were involved in decision making in their local congregations:

- Elder
- Leadership in uniformed organisations
- Part of a team organising alternative/youth focused worship services
- Churches operating under a unitary constitution – on session teams
- Running a youth fellowship
- Decorating the sanctuary
- Part of the worship team
- Youth committee/Council
- Being part of a nominating committee during a vacancy
- Holiday club organising team
- Choosing charities to raise funds for
- Part of the congregational board
- Being part of the Junior Church leadership team
- Being part of a Messy church leadership team
- Involvement in projects in priority areas
- Involvement with audio/visual teams
- Being a Christian Aid church rep
- Giving feedback from events they have attended

If young people are to become more involved in the decision making processes of the Church then they need to be given opportunities in their local congregations. The possibilities are wide and, as seen by the examples above, are not dependent on having a critical mass of young people.

In thinking about what opportunities a local congregation can provide, it is important to think about the young people involved in that congregation – the skills, interests and gifts they have –and create opportunities to match. Every young person is different, so not all are interested in getting involved with the Junior Church, not all will be called to the eldership, and not all will want to get involved in organising worship services.

The Council would urge every congregation to explore with the young people in their parish how they could become more involved in the decision making processes of the congregation, paying particular attention to their gifts, skills and interests.

In conversation with young people on this issue, there was an awareness that things have changed dramatically over the years. Several young people spoke of their congregations recently celebrating the long service of some of their elders and their surprise at the number who had been elders for 50 or 60 years. This means that 50-60 years ago it was normal for young people to be ordained as elders, whereas today it is a rarity.

The Council would like to take this opportunity to remind congregations that someone can be ordained as an elder from age 18 and to encourage congregations to explore with any young people in their parish what the eldership is about and, if young people are called to the eldership, not to hesitate or wait until they turn 40 to ordain them.

While the involvement of young people in decision making on a local level varies from congregation to congregation, from no opportunities through to multiple opportunities, the involvement of young people in decision making on a Presbytery level is all but non-existent. On speaking to young people who have been involved in the NYA and/or GA, their perceptions of Presbytery were not positive.

Those that had attended a Presbytery meeting had often been invited to go along and give a report about their time at the General Assembly as a Presbytery youth representative. While they were grateful for the opportunity and thought informing Presbytery of what happens as a youth representative at GA was important, they were aware that they were not being involved in decision making, and their involvement was tokenistic at best, as they were just brought in to deliver their report and then asked to leave while the rest of the meeting took place.

One young person spoke about being a Presbytery elder, but how it was not really a good experience as they were often ignored, did not feel welcome and couldn't speak up. Despite offering a very negative perception of Presbytery, the same young people were very keen to understand Presbytery better and to get involved.

Since NYA 2013 several Presbyteries have been in touch with the Council to try and explore ways that they can involve young people in decision making, harnessing the enthusiasm with which they return from the NYA and/or GA.

Falkirk Presbytery have appointed two young people as corresponding members, offering them the chance to attend and participate in Presbytery meetings, while not having a vote. Similarly St Andrews Presbytery invited a young person to be a youth co-optee for a few months.

Hamilton Presbytery began their process in November 2013 by inviting those that had attended the NYA and/or GA in the last few years to an evening gathering. Over food they got to know one another and shared stories about how they were involved in decision making in their local church and on a national level.

Discussion then took place about how they could take the good points of that involvement and create opportunities at a Presbytery level. It was felt that they needed to learn what Presbytery was all about and how it functioned before they could think about how best to get involved, so they decided to get together for food before attending a Presbytery meeting together.

In conjunction with this, they also wondered whether the model that exists at a national level (NYA, GA and involvement in Councils) could be replicated within the Presbytery and so are planning an NYA style residential event for young people in the Presbytery. To keep conversations going between gatherings and help foster a sense of community Presbytery-wide, the group are using social media.

Glasgow Presbytery began their process by inviting some youth workers to meet with some folk from Presbytery to explore possible ways forward. An interesting discussion took place, with a real desire to not be tokenistic evident throughout. In recognising that it would be best for any further thoughts to be led by the needs and hopes of young people rather than the current structures of

Presbytery, the group decided to arrange a gathering of young people, supported by their youth workers, to discuss the issue further.

Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbytery started with the idea that before they actually tried to engage young people in decision making, they had to get to know the young people in their Presbytery and help them feel connected to each other and see that Presbytery was something that they could or might want to get involved in. So they held a gathering for young people in the Presbytery, involving food and informal discussion.

The Council recognises that each Presbytery is different, as are the young people within their bounds, so it would be inappropriate for the Council to provide a one size fits all approach. Lasting change will be more likely to occur if the developments in each Presbytery grow organically and so fit that Presbytery and its young people.

The developments in the Presbyteries outlined above, while at the time of writing at an embryonic stage, are extremely encouraging and should be commended to others to learn from. The Council would wish all Presbyteries to get in touch to see if they can learn from these pioneers and facilitate young people being involved in decision making within their own Presbytery.

As one can see, the issue of young people being involved in the decision making processes of the Church is far broader than their involvement at the General Assembly. That being said this report has in many ways focused on those of an age to attend NYA and GA, 17/18 to 25 year olds and hasn't begun to consider how those under 17 can be involved too.

Therefore the Council recommends that work should continue on the broad issue of young people being involved in decision making, paying particular attention to different age groups, what happens/opportunities in local congregations and what happens/opportunities in Presbyteries. It is the Council's view that their Children and Young people Working Group is the best place for this to happen.

## APPENDIX IX

### LOCAL CHURCH REVIEW THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

Local Church Review (LCR) is a creative relationship between congregation, Presbytery and the wider community. The Good News of Jesus Christ is made known in the relationship he had with those he met on the journey; it is this meeting and journeying that is central to LCR. In Jesus' relationships, there was transformation: from Zacchaeus in his tree to the woman threatened with stoning; from the Samaritan Woman at the well to the night-time meeting with Nicodemus.

LCR offers the opportunity to build an energised relationship between a Congregation and a Presbytery where the journeying together in learning about each other becomes a catalyst for transformation and renewal for both. This is done through learning the story of the congregation and discerning the congregation's hopes. It recognises that what is in the past is legacy, as Jesus did with so many of those he met, and invites the congregation to discern where it might be going.

Far from being a cold form-filling and information-gathering exercise, LCR uses these and other methods to create reflective practice within a congregation. Through these means it invites the congregation, with the care and partnership of Presbytery, and with input about the broader community, to 'go with the life': to seek the places of opportunity and move into the future, not so much with a plan, but with a vision – all the time holding the invitation Jesus gives us to seek out the life and live that life to the full.

It is the three-sided process that takes in the story of the congregation, along with the insights of Presbytery and in partnership with the needs of the local community that makes LCR robust. Yes, administration will be involved; yes, there will be form filling and statistics as this is often the means by which the church measures the life of Congregations but it is the conversations and discussion that result from that information that makes the process

possible. More effectively, however, LCR invites the congregation and Presbytery to reflect on – and affirm – their joint story and discern their call to travel together and shape the future.

### General Principles

The process of Local Church Review creates principles to shape the life of the congregation, rather than determine prescriptive behaviour. It is a process in which faith and vows of membership should be highlighted and strengthened throughout.

1. It is a congregational review rather than a Presbytery review and should encourage good working relationships between the two.
2. It invites a cross section of people (gender, age, length of time in the congregation), to be involved. The fact that this is an open meeting must be stressed to congregations well in advance of the arranged date.
3. It should feed into the vision of the congregation, and Presbytery must be equipped to support the outcomes.
4. Its purpose is to encourage, support and enable the congregation itself – taking into account the past but more importantly, the future.
5. It is aspirational and an on-going process and measures the point at which the review takes place. The past is legacy.
6. It leads into other things in the life of the congregation.
7. It is not programme-driven, but visionary and encourages new and healthier relationships within and beyond church.
8. It is specific to the congregation – its hopes, its aspirations, its needs to fulfil the work and vision of the gospel in that place.
9. It is something that is revisited each year by the Session asking, 'Where have we got to in our plan?'
10. Local Church Review is a continuous process in which Presbytery must play a constructive and continuous part. Presbytery must always be very open and honest about the use of the Review Reports which should be to assist congregations to reach their full potential and not for any underlying purpose.

The resources are available at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk)

## APPENDIX X

### Investigating the invisible church: *a survey of Christians who do not attend church*

During September – November 2013 the Mission and Discipleship Council undertook an extensive survey in the Highlands and Islands in order to better understand what has been called “churchless faith”. A random sample of more than 5500 people was contacted and those who were willing (about half) took part in a short interview. 430 people who identified themselves as Christians who do not attend church completed the survey. It explored what they meant when identifying themselves as “Christian” and probed their experiences and perceptions of faith and church.

We can now say with confidence that approximately 44% of the population of the Highlands and Islands identify themselves as Christians who are not engaged with a church congregation. Based on the population estimate of the study area from the last census, this constitutes about 133,300 people.<sup>27</sup>

We also now have an understanding of what people mean when they identify themselves as “Christian”. The survey included a set of questions which, together, give an indication of how significant a person’s faith is to them and the extent to which it influences their daily life.<sup>28</sup> The same questions have been used extensively in other studies. High scores on this scale indicate that a person’s faith underpins all that they do; their faith is core to their motivation and, in this sense, they *live* their faith. Low scores suggest that they perceive their faith as having less

<sup>27</sup> Statistically, we can be 95% confident that the true proportion of all who fit our criteria is in the range 41.93% to 45.67% (ie c.127,600 – 139,000).

<sup>28</sup> The 10-Item Hoge Intrinsic Religiosity Scale – see Hoge, D. (1972) A Validated Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 11, 369-376.

impact on their life. Other questions in the survey asked about their habits regarding prayer, scripture reading, and meeting with other Christians.

The survey's findings mean that we may need to revise our understanding of the nature of the Christian population in the Highlands and Islands (and, most probably, elsewhere). It has been commonplace to view the population which attends church regularly and the Christian population as largely synonymous. This is incorrect. In fact, the larger part of the Christian community does not engage with a church congregation on a regular basis. It has been conventional in recent years, when thinking about Christian mission, to talk about "the 90%", those with no regular contact with a congregation, as those who need to be reached with the gospel message. However, it is now clear that a sizeable proportion of that 90% represents people who are already on a journey of discipleship with Jesus Christ.

Some of us may need to revise our assumptions about people who have left our churches. If views have prevailed that those who have left our churches are usually "backsliders" for whom a crisis of faith or a trivial disagreement is the main reason for their departure, these need to be revised. We must also recognise that Christians who do not attend a church congregation fall along a broad spectrum in terms of what their faith means to them – as do regular churchgoers.

The survey's findings demand that we ask searching questions about whether our congregations are hospitable, welcoming and inclusive communities. The voices of those who now practice their faith outside of a traditional congregational context also challenge us to rediscover the priority of discipleship. Congregations need to re-evaluate the opportunities they provide for Christians to explore faith, work through questions and doubts, and grow in Christian character.

The crucial role of life's crises and challenges in impacting the way people express and nurture their faith journeys is highlighted within the survey data. The importance of church congregations being "caring communities" and

the need for diligence and excellence in "pastoral care" is underlined. The research suggests that congregations would do well to review how they respond to their members and those in the wider community at times of particular need and crisis. House moves, too, are times when Christians may re-engage with congregational life, move away from congregational life or just be on the lookout for others with whom to share the Christian journey. These are therefore key opportunities for congregations to extend welcome and support. Not only in the crisis times, but through strong relationships and open conversation, congregations need to be attuned to the ups and downs of people's lives.

Many who took part in the survey see the need for radical change in the churches. Some have tried sharing their ideas and thoughts, but feel ignored. We need to hear their perspectives and thoughts. Congregations must not fear criticism. Where criticism is levelled there is usually at least a kernel of truth and so it should be welcomed. From the first phase of this research, in which we listened in detail to Christians who are not part of a congregation, we discovered how much value there is in allowing people to tell their story of faith and church. If we are genuinely willing to listen, we need not fear offence in asking them to share their experiences.

The insights we have gained from the Christian community beyond congregations suggest a need for greater diversity in terms of expressions of church. How might we encourage diversity and learn to see new forms of church not as schisms, but as green shoots to be cherished in a spirit of unity and humility?

A summary of the findings of the survey, "Investigating the invisible church" is available at [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/mission-research](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/mission-research)<sup>29</sup> and readers are invited to share their thoughts and reflections in response.

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<sup>29</sup> [www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/investigating-invisible-church](http://www.resourcingmission.org.uk/resources/investigating-invisible-church)

## APPENDIX XI RECOMMENDED SALARY SCALES FOR ORGANISTS

Information taken from the Scottish Federation of Organists website – [www.scotsorgan.org.uk](http://www.scotsorgan.org.uk)

The following scales are with effect from 1 January 2013:

Type	Salary Scale	Deputy Fee
Churches without choirs	£1,525 – £2,355	£55
Churches with choirs making an occasional individual contribution to worship	£2,355 – £3,570	£55 – £70
Churches with choirs making a substantial individual contribution to worship	£3,570 – £5,020	£70 – £95
Churches with complete and competent choirs singing full choral services	£5,020 – £7,500	£95 – £105
Churches employing a full/part-time professional director of music with extensive responsibilities are recommended to consider salary scales higher than scale	£7,500+	£105+

Recording fees remain unchanged:

- The fee + 50% for sound recording
- The fee + 100% for video recording

## APPENDIX XII CARTA MEETING DATES FOR 2014

26 June, 18 September, 27 November.

## APPENDIX XIII CO-OPTED MEMBERS ON GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

### Pray Now

Carol Ford  
Peggy Roberts  
Tina Kemp  
Mark Foster  
Adam Dillon  
Mary Ann Rennie  
Ishbel McFarlane

### Statistics for Mission

Andy Whittet  
David Stewart  
Douglas Vallance  
Norman Jamieson  
Fiona Tweedie  
David Lewis

### Joint Emerging Church

Doug Gay  
Tommy McNeill (Ministries)  
Sarah Ross  
Alison Urie  
Terry Taylor (Ministries)  
Jim Teasdale (Ministries)

### Rural Group

Richard Begg  
Andy Campbell  
Ronnie Gall

### Learning Disabilities

Liz Fisk  
Ivy Blair  
Paul Goode  
Sheena Wurthmann

**Scots Language**

Robert K MacKenzie  
Jamie Stewart  
James Campbell  
James Merilees

**Interfaith and Mission**

Rosemary Dowsett  
Ken Ross  
David Smith  
Malcolm Duff  
John Kennedy  
Mahboob Masih  
Martin Whittingham

**Children and Young People**

Chris Long  
Hannah Nisbet  
Jen Robertson  
Alastair Ross  
Barbara McDaid

**Young People in Decision-Making**

Ruth Halley  
Fiona Mathieson  
Donald Carmichael  
Jan Mathieson  
Euan Paterson  
Robert Kimmitt  
Lynsey Martin

**Life and Work Review**

Tom Collins  
John McCallum  
Marc Jones

**Eldership Working**

John Spooner  
Rona Lannigan  
Elspeth Dale

**CARTA Review**

Jim Cuthbertson  
Caroline Lewis

**Music Group**

Iain McLarty  
Jane Bentley  
Richard Michael  
Mark Cameron  
Margaret McLarty

**Liturgical Group**

Neil Gardner  
Karen Hendry  
John Shaw-Dunn  
Robert Mackenzie

**Local Church Review**

Dorothy Kinloch  
Mandy Hickman

**Why Believe?**

Fiona Brown  
Alistair Donald  
Daniel Frank  
Ailsa Fyfe  
Joanne Hood  
Scott McRoberts  
Christopher Rowe  
Ross Watters

**Learning in Congregations Group**

Keith Ross  
Ian Graham