

- 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.*³

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

³ Mission and Discipleship Reflective Statement – 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 Principle⁴).

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

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

⁴ 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