

PRESBYTERY OF GORDON

Presbytery met for ordinary business at Upper Donside Church (Lumsden) on Tuesday 3rd May 2011 and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator Mr David Harvey. Present were 22 ministers, 1 deacon, 22 elders and 3 corresponding member. There were 17 apologies.

MINUTES OF 5TH APRIL 2011

The minutes of 5th April were read and approved.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: REV ALAN GREIG

The Convener presented his report and eight deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery appoints Mr David Harvey as Convener of the Business Committee for the period 2011-2015.
2. Presbytery appoints Rev Tommy Calder as Convener of the Ministries Committee for the period 2011-2015.
3. Presbytery appoints Rev Douglas McNab as Convener of the Mission & Discipleship Committee for the period 2011-2015.
4. Presbytery appoints Rev Euan Glen as Convener of the Support & Services Finance Committee for the period 2011-2015.
5. Presbytery appoints Rev Rosemary Legge as Convener of the Mission & Discipleship Parish Education Committee for the period 2011-2015.
6. Presbytery appoints Mrs Anne Campbell as Convener of the Mission & Discipleship Ecumenical Relations Committee for the period 2011-2015.
7. Presbytery appoints Mr David Harvey as presbytery representative on the Committee to Nominate the Moderator of the General Assembly.
8. Presbytery reappoints Rev Dr Mary Cranfield as Convener of the Ministries Vacancy Procedure Committee for the period 2011-2013.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INTIMATIONS: THE CLERK

The Clerk presented the correspondence and intimations as printed (pages)

The Clerk highlighted several items included in the intimations section of the Presbytery agenda.

There was one additional intimation from Rev Brian Dingwall.

1. The Parish Education sub committee will be reporting at the next Presbytery meeting on their plans for a training session for new presbytery elders and any other interested members on the operation of the presbytery.

MINISTRIES COMMITTEE: REV EUAN GLEN

The Convener presented his report and one deliverance which was approved.

Extension of retirement date.

1. Presbytery approves the request of the Rev Brian Dingwall to continue to serve the pastoral charge of Upper Donside as a parish minister up to his 70th Birthday.

Pastoral Care Committee

He also as Convener of the Pastoral Care Committee outlined the plans being developed by the Committee to revise the services available. Currently most of the contact from those seeking pastoral care is with the convener and much of the work of the committee is carried out by him. The aim is to encourage those seeking support to contact any member of the committee, not just the convener, and for the work of the committee to be more evenly shared across the committee members. A leaflet containing information about the background, skills and church experience of minister and elder members of the committee is being produced and the information will also be posted on the Presbytery website. The Pastoral care to be offered is not professional counselling but if further help is required, this will be sought.

Presbytery Plan Review Group

The Ministries Committee Convener asked Rev Dr Alan Murray as convener of the Group to present his report.

He explained the process by which the Group had produced the questionnaire which was designed to contribute in the revision of the Presbytery Plan which was required of all presbyteries by the General Assembly.

The three elements to be brought together are the review of reviewable buildings, the review of the tenure for three congregations and the overall review of the presbytery plan. He explained that the group believed that the most effective way to carry out the presbytery review was to seek the harmonisation of all three tasks within a common timescale. This could be achieved by extending the deadline of the review of reviewable buildings to match the date for the overall revision of the plan. Ministries Council had been contacted and had supported this approach.

There was one deliverance.

1. Presbytery agrees to move the deadline for the review of reviewable buildings contained within the current Gordon Presbytery plan from December 2011 to December 2012.

Rev Euan Glen expressed concern that this extended the period of uncertainty for reviewable buildings as in his own case at Cluny. He expressed concern about the expenditure limits for reviewable buildings. After much discussion over alternative ways forward the deliverance was approved but the Convener agreed to take the question of expenditure limits for reviewable buildings back to the Group to see whether this concern could be resolved.

The Convener explained how important it was for the plan to reflect God's wishes rather than our own wishes and called on Rev Jane Taylor a member of the Group to lead Presbytery in prayer seeking God's will and assistance in our work.

It was explained that a period of prayer will be an integral part in the reporting to presbytery on the progressing of the review. Rev John Cook next explained the 'Mission driven' purpose and format of the questionnaire. It should be taken away for completion by ministers with their Kirk Sessions and returned to the Group by the end of September 2011.

The need to consult with members and parishioners was also highlighted and recognised as of real value in completing the questionnaires.

Some concern was expressed over the return date for the questionnaire. The Group will consider and inform on the possibility of extending the return date perhaps to mid October.

The current target is to have a draft version of the revised Presbytery Plan available by April 2012.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work involved in creating a comprehensive questionnaire.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: REV NEIL MACGREGOR

The Convener presented his report and one deliverance which was approved.

1. Presbytery approves the sale of two fields forming part of the Gartly Glebe by the Congregation of Noth Parish Church for the sum of £16,000 as determined by the General Trustees.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE: REV JOHN RENTON, CONVENER

The Convener presented his report.

Mission Shaped Introduction Course

The Convener reported that the starting date for the Mission Shaped Introduction course had been postponed by one week to Thursday 12th May to allow time for more members of congregations to enrol. If sufficient numbers are not realised the course will be cancelled. The training sessions are an introduction to a year long Mission Shaped Ministry course which Aberdeen Presbytery is commencing in the autumn. He once again encouraged each congregation to send a number of people to the Intro course.

Information flyers have been distributed and information is also available on the Presbytery website.

Resources Day

Members were encouraged to ensure the return of the questionnaires to the Convener to facilitate in the planning of this June event as soon as possible.

Home Mission Committee

The Convener was invited to present his report.

He presented a Good News story on 'Operation Andrew' at Barthol Chapel. He began by explaining that the fundamental issue confronting the Church was the loss of confidence or faith in the Gospel. Their initiative of 'Operation Andrew' was part of their activities for 2010 the Year of Mission. All members were given a copy of St John's Gospel to pass on to someone with no church connection and asked to extend to the person an invitation to come along to a special service to mark St Andrew's day. Despite the poor weather, 'Operation Andrew' was a success in building contacts and attracting new people to church. Members learned to put their trust in God and 'Just witness'. Materials used will be put on the Presbytery website.

WORLD MISSION COMMITTEE: REV ISABEL BUCHAN

The Moderator asked the Clerk to deliver a short report on behalf of the Convener.

He reported that the Convener wished to thank everyone who sent photographs and information for the Twinning application form. The World Mission Committee will meet soon to finalise the application.

There being no further business Presbytery was adjourned to meet again at Chapel of Garioch Church on Tuesday 28th June 2011 at 7.00pm for Holy Communion followed by ordinary business.

Presbytery closed with prayer.

Moderator.....

Clerk