

The Church of Scotland
Presbytery of Gordon



Presbytery Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday 28 June 2011

PRESBYTERY OF GORDON

Presbytery met for ordinary business at Chapel of Garioch Church on Tuesday 28th June 2011 and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator Mr David Harvey following the celebration of Holy Communion. Present were 27 ministers, 1 deacon, 24 elders and 3 corresponding member. There were 9 apologies.

MINUTES OF 3RD MAY 2011

The minutes of 3rd May 2011 were read and approved.

REPORT OF DILIGENCE OF COMMISSIONERS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY: REV TOMMY CALDER

This was the fifth time that Rev Tommy Calder had attended the General Assembly. Yet, once again, he was reminded of the range of activities in which the Church of Scotland participated both nationally and internationally. It is therefore impossible to do justice to all of the reports. This was the first year of the redesigned Hall creating a more open appearance. There was a new event 'Roll Away the Stone' on Sunday afternoon after the traditional Sunday morning service in St Giles' Cathedral. This new event was very enjoyable.

After Holy Communion on Monday, the most important debate of the week for many was the 'Same Sex Relationships and the Ministry'. There was a great deal of discussion carried out in a very open way. At the conclusion of the session, the question which he wondered about was, 'What will happen next?'

The Panel on Review and Reform debate saw many of the deliverances scrapped without debate. The Ministries Council report concentrated on the Church's financial situation and the high proportion of ministers who were over 50 years of age. The solemnity of the Forces Chaplain report was another strong memory which remained.

Tommy found it a very interesting and worthwhile week and he said that he left the Assembly with a feeling of challenging times ahead.

At the close of the report of diligence, the Moderator thanked Rev Tommy Calder for his report.

Rev Ian Groves then spoke of his concern at the low number of Commissioners attending some of the debates. In the discussion that followed it was recognised that it is not practical to expect all commissioners to attend every session but allowing for this fact there was a feeling that this could not account for the low attendances at some of the debates.

Rev Groves made the following deliverance which was approved by Presbytery

1. Presbytery instructs the Clerk to write to the Principal Clerk to express the disquiet of the Presbytery at the low number of commissioners present at some debates of the General Assembly of 2011 and invite the Principal Clerk to seek ways of encouraging Commissioners to be present."

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: REV ALAN GREIG

The Convener expressed his thanks to the Moderator for leading worship and to Rev Brian Dobby for conducting Holy Communion. He highlighted the Moderator's important message on 'practising hospitality' which was a challenge for all to follow.

He then presented his report and four deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery appoints a special committee to deal with any urgent matters during the summer months. The Committee to comprise at least three people from Moderator, Clerk, Property Convener and Business Convener. The definition of urgent to be agreed by the Committee members.
2. Presbytery approves the locations of Presbytery meetings in 2011/12 -September, February & March – Inverurie West, October – Huntly Cairnie Glass, November – Inch Leslie Premnay Oyne, December – Inverurie St Andrew's, April – Strathbogie Drumblade, May – Pitmedden, June – Skene (Moderator).
3. Presbytery instructs each charge to send between two and four representatives to the Stewardship and Finance seminar on Wednesday 28th September in Inverurie West Church at 7.30pm for information about the National Stewardship Programme approved at the General Assembly 2011.
4. Presbytery appoints Rev Eleanor Macalister to the Presbytery Support Visits Committee in place of Rev John Cook.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INTIMATIONS: THE CLERK

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

There were 2 additional letters

1. Ministries Council: Presbytery Parish Workers management.
2. Principal Clerk: Consultation / information day for Superintendence Conveners and Presbytery Clerks to explain the current situation following decisions by the General Assembly on 'Same sex Relationships and the Ministry'.

The Clerk also provided background on Peter Donaldson (Inverurie St Andrew's) sponsored walk and greetings card.

There were two intimations from Rev Ian Groves and Rev Dr Mary Cranfield respectively.

1. The People's Bible Roadshow will be at Inverurie West Church Acorn Centre on Monday 4th July offering people the opportunity to take part in creating a digital 'People's Bible' to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the creation of the King James Bible.
2. Culsalmond and Rayne Congregation are holding a 'Praise with a difference!' an open air songs of praise celebration on Sunday 10th July at 3.00pm at Freefield House near Old Rayne.

MINISTRIES COMMITTEE: REV EUAN GLEN

The Convener presented his report.

Team Ministry Report – Ellon

The Convener reminded members that Presbytery was responsible for receipt of team reports though the reports are no longer circulated generally, as there is a level of confidentiality to be preserved. The report from Ellon detailed the work of the paid and volunteer team ministry. He had suggested and it had been accepted that future reports should focus mainly on the work of the minister and the Presbytery Parish worker. He then presented the deliverance which was approved.

1. Presbytery receives the Team Ministry report and wishes the ministry team well in their work at Ellon Parish Church.

Practising Certificates

The Convener highlighted the support and active participation of retired ministers in the work of the Church and explained the circumstances in which a practising certificate is required by a retired minister and a minister without a charge but not of retirement age. He said that Rev Mark Davidson had taken up the post of full time naval chaplain and consequently no longer required a practising certificate. He was sure Presbytery would wish him well in his new role.

There was one deliverance which was approved.

1. Presbytery issues and renews the Practising Certificates for Revds. Sheila Craggs, Eleanor Macalister, Andrew Lyon, Iain U Thomson, Anthony Craig, Alex Buchan, John Mack and Don Hawthorn for a period of one year.

The Convener then presented certificates to those present.

Study Leave Applications

The Convener presented an application for study leave from Rev Dr Paul McKeown which would be used in an in depth study of two books to assist in the development of his ministry. Approval has been gained from Ministries Council and the necessary cover arrangements are in place for his leave.

There was one deliverance which was approved

1. Presbytery approves the application for study leave from Rev Dr Paul McKeown for the period of 19th August to 2nd September 2011.

The Convener also informed Presbytery of his receipt of the Study Leave report on 'Rural parishes' from Rev Brian Dingwall. The Convener then called on Rev Dr Paul McKeown, Convener of the Education for Ministry Committee to present his report.

Education for Ministry

The Convener explained the Enquiry and Assessment Process which persons applying for acceptance to study for the ministry were required to pass through. He informed Presbytery that Dr Peter Kiehlmann (Foveran) had been successful in passing the Enquiry and Assessment Process and offered congratulations and best wishes to him on Presbytery's behalf.

The Convener also explained that we were fortunate in having people at present on the Enquiry and Assessment Process and in order to continue to facilitate this process, it was necessary to have a Presbytery Representative appointed for a current enquirer should the person wish to proceed to a period of co-ordinated field assessment.

There were two deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery agrees to nominate Dr Peter Kiehlmann as a Candidate for the Ordained Local Ministry and to give notice of nomination to the Ministries Council.
2. Presbytery approves the appointment of Rev Alison Jaffrey to act as Presbytery Representative should the enquirer presently at Ellon Parish Church wish to proceed to a period of co-ordinated field assessment.

The Convener stated that there is a requirement for Presbytery to have a number of members trained in the assessment process being put in place to manage applications by Readers to become Ordained Local Ministers. A half day training course will be provided by the Ministries Council for members wishing to become Assessors. This will take place in Aberdeen on Tuesday 13th September from 10.00am – 1.30pm at a venue yet to be announced. Anyone interested in attending should notify him or the Clerk.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: REV NEIL MACGREGOR

The Convener presented his report (page) and four deliverances which were approved.

Meldrum and Bourtie

1. Presbytery approves the Congregation of Meldrum and Bourtie obtaining a grant of £10,000 from the General Trustees in respect of the cost of a feasibility study, development of design brief, conceptual design and development of budget costs.

Property expenditure limits:

2. Presbytery agrees to maintain property expenditure limits as set at October 2010 meeting.

Skene

3. Presbytery approves the expenditure of £39,950 by the congregation of Skene Parish Church on upgrading the Skene manse during the period of vacancy.

Delegated powers:

4. Presbytery approve the delegation of powers to the Presbytery Property Convener or Vice Convener during the period of Presbytery Recess. This to relate to emergency works or matters previously tabled at Presbytery.

SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE: REV MATTHEW CANLIS, CONVENER

The Convener of the Finance Committee Mr. Malcolm Christie presented his report (pages). He informed members that the final date this year for Presbytery to submit a request from a congregation to the Stewardship and Finance Department for the use of an element of the 3% of a Presbytery's Ministries and Mission Contribution to reduce their contribution was 30 September (instead of 31 October as was the case previously). This must not reduce the contribution from any congregation below £100.

Attestation of Congregational Accounts 2011

The Convener spoke on the process involved in checking the congregational accounts in preparation for their attestation by Presbytery. He expressed his appreciation to the Congregational Treasurers, the finance committees and Mr Alistair Kinnon. There were two deliverances which were approved.

1. The Presbytery commends the commitment and effort of Congregational Treasurers, Financial Courts and Independent Examiners in preparing the accounts in the format now required and also that of Mr. Alistair Kinnon for his expertise and assistance in the attesting process.
2. The Presbytery attests the Congregational Accounts as detailed on the attached form and instructs the Presbytery Clerk to forward a signed copy of the form along with a copy of this report to the Stewardship and Finance Department in Edinburgh.

Rev Euan Glen thanked Mr Christie for his term as Finance Convener on behalf of Presbytery and for his efficient and committed manner in which he had carried it out. He said that working as a member of the Finance Committee allowed him to appreciate the considerable contribution Mr Christie had made.

Presbytery Support Visits Committee

Rev Ian Groves presented the report (page) and three deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery notes the enactment of Local Church Review as the law of the church at the 2011 General Assembly. Presbytery further notes the view of its Support Visits Group that their visits comply with the spirit of the new act; and that where practical their visits will be informed by the act.
2. Presbytery instructs the Business Committee to include the supervision and management of Local Church Review in the remit of a Presbytery Coordinator, in the event that this post is revived.
3. Presbytery approves the following scheme of visits for the Session 2011/2012:

Schedule of visits 2011-12:-

Before Christmas 2011

Howe Trinity Leader - Ian Groves + Mark Paterson/Richard Huxtable; Alison Jaffrey + an elder

Huntly Cairnie Glass Leader - Brian Dobby + David Harvey; Eleanor Macalister + James McPherson

Ellon Leader – Alison Jaffrey + an elder; Brian Dobby + David Harvey

After Christmas 2011

Meldrum & Bourtie Leader- Eleanor Macalister + Crosby Chisholm; Alison Jaffrey + an elder

Newmachar Leader- Ian Groves + Mark Paterson/Richard Huxtable; Eleanor Macalister + Sheila Gray

It was noted that it would be necessary to rearrange the allocation Rev Alison Jaffrey to the Meldrum and Bourtie visit as this was her own congregation, and authority was given to the Committee to make suitable adjustments..

Foveran

Rev Ian Groves then called on Rev Brian Dobby to present the report of the Support Visits Group to Foveran Parish Church (pages).

Rev Dobby presented the report and four deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery receives the report
2. Presbytery congratulates the Minister, Kirk Session, Congregational Board and congregation of Foveran Parish Church for their faithful proclamation of the gospel by word and deed.
3. Presbytery particularly commends the excellent work amongst children and young people
4. Presbytery assures the congregation of its ongoing support and prayers as it faces the challenges ahead.

The Moderator extended the best wishes of Presbytery to Rev Ken Pryde on his ministry at Foveran.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE: REV JOHN RENTON, CONVENER

The Convener presented his report.

Mission Shaped Ministry Introduction Course

This introduction course which was held at Kemnay Church Centre from 12th May – 16th June was led by Rev John Cook, Rev Brian Dingwall and Mrs Elaine Moffat. There were 16 participants from 8 congregations. The course offered help to congregations looking at new mission opportunities as they responded to the Presbytery Plan Review. Feedback from those attending had been very positive.

Home Mission

The material for Operation Andrew is available on the Presbytery website

The Back to Church Sunday workshops which were held by Michael Harvey in March had been much appreciated.

The Convener encouraged members to bring their 'Good News' to Presbytery and to use the 'Good News' spot.

Parish Education

A training evening for new Presbytery members on how Presbytery works will be held at Lumsden on 23rd August at 7.30pm. The Children and Youth Resources day has been postponed due to lack of response. The information gathered from the survey will be passed on to the new convener for future use.

A bank account held in the name of Parish Education will be closed and the monies passed on to the Presbytery Treasurer.

A one session introductory course 'Eldership Today' will be offered to elders at Kemnay Church Centre on Thursday 23rd September at 7.30pm. There will be the opportunity to learn about further courses available on 3rd and 10th November. The course will be led by Rev Rosemary Legge. Leaflets on the course were available for uplift.

General Assembly Remits 2010

The convener reported that the Committee had fulfilled all the relevant recommendations and remits passed on to it by Presbytery.

He ended by thanking on behalf of Presbytery the two retiring conveners, Rev Brian Dingwall (Parish Education) and Rev Dr Mary Cranfield (Ecumenical Relations) for their work.

Rev Douglas McNab said that it was important to recognise Presbytery's thanks to Rev John Renton the Convener of Mission and Discipleship Committee for his great amount of work in leading the Committee during his period of office.

There being no further business Presbytery was adjourned to meet again for ordinary business at Inverurie West Church on Tuesday 6th September 2011 at 7.30pm

Presbytery closed with prayer.

Moderator.....

Clerk