

## **PRESBYTERY OF GORDON**

Presbytery met for ordinary business at Insch Leslie Premnay Oyne Church Hall on Tuesday 1st November 2011 and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator Rev Iain U Thomson. Present were 24 ministers, 1 deacon, 23 elders and 2 corresponding members. There were 13 apologies.

### **MINUTES OF 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2011**

The minutes of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011 were read and approved. The record of those attending was corrected to read, 15 ministers, 18 elders and 3 corresponding members.

### **BUSINESS COMMITTEE: MR DAVID HARVEY**

The Convener presented his report. He thanked the Moderator for conducting the Business Committee meeting whilst he attended the second meeting of the Committee to Nominate the Moderator for the 2012 General Assembly. The Committee has chosen the Rev Albert Bogle to be the Moderator-Designate.

The Convener presented four deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery notes the participation of Blairdaff and Chapel of Garioch, Culsalmond and Rayne, Daviot, Fintray, Kinellar and Keithhall, Kintore, Inverurie St Andrews, Inverurie West in the Inverurie and District Churches IDCT in a United Advent Service in the Burghmuir Sports Centre on the morning of Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November and the consequent cancellation of services in their parishes to encourage maximum participation in the joint service.
2. Presbytery agrees that the Presbytery Year Book for 2012-13 and subsequently is made available to members in an electronic form only, and a printed copy is made available to members without an email address on request.
3. Presbytery approves the overseeing of the National Stewardship Programme by the Support and Services Committee and relevant sub committee.
4. Presbytery supports the request from the Congregation of Inverurie West Church to move from the Model Constitution to the Unitary Constitution.

The Moderator expressed Presbytery's thanks to Rev Euan Glen for the production of the Year Book which was greatly appreciated.

### **CORRESPONDENCE AND INTIMATIONS: THE CLERK**

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

The Clerk informed members of one additional item of correspondence.

1. Rev Brian Dingwall's wish to demit as minister of Upper Donside Parish as of September 2012.

### **SUPPORT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE: REV MATTHEW CANLIS, CONVENOR**

#### Finance Committee

The Convener of the Finance Committee Rev Euan Glen presented his report (pages        ).

#### Ministries and Mission Allocations for 2011 and 2012

He explained with reference to the notes provided the process whereby each congregation's allocation was calculated by using the example of his congregations at Cluny. The calculation of each congregation's allocation is based on a graduated scale which is related to the congregation's income base. Where the calculated increase in the allocation for any congregation represents an increase for the year of over 9%, the increase is limited to 9%. He explained that Presbytery had a 3% allowance within Presbytery's total allocation, and outlined the circumstances where this could be used to reduce the allocation of a particular congregation. A number of questions on the subject were then answered by the Convener.

The Convenor tabled an addendum to his report detailing the situation where reductions in Ministries and Mission allocations which Presbytery had agreed in November 2010 had yet to be fully implemented by the Stewardship and Finance Department in Edinburgh. There followed considerable discussion on alternative ways of seeking solutions to the issues which were identified, after which the deliverances were approved.

1. Presbytery seeks conversations with the Council of Assembly to allow congregations who were promised a reduction in Ministries and Mission allocations in 2010 and who have not yet received such a reduction to have this reduction implemented in 2012.
2. Presbytery requests that any reductions given to the congregations should not come from the Presbytery allocation for 2012 as these reductions allocations were promised from an earlier budget.
3. Presbytery approves the Ministries and Mission Allocation for 2012 as laid before Presbytery on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011 and requests the congregational representatives pass the information to their Congregational Treasurer.

#### Safeguarding Services

Rev T. Graeme Longmuir, Presbytery Safeguarding Advisor informed that members had satisfactorily completed Safeguarding Training for Congregational Safeguarding Co-ordinators and asked that the Moderator present the certificates. The Moderator read out the names of the Co-ordinators: - Anne MacLennan, (Strathbogie), Helen Milne and Margaret Gill, (Tarves), Phyllis Beverly (Noth), Mark Paterson (Inverurie West) and Mary Ritchie (Kintore). He presented certificates to those present and congratulated and thanked them for their work.

Rev Douglas McNab commented from the floor in relation to the preceding item and his experience of lack of response from 121 on enquiries, with the exception of the Ministries Council.

Rev Matthew Canlis, Convener explained that he had hoped to have a speaker on the 'Youth for Christ' initiative at this meeting but this had not proved possible. He highlighted the fact that he was seeking to develop an initiative for providing activities and events with young people in the Presbytery and anyone interested in the venture should contact him.

#### **CHURCH AND SOCIETY: REV ELLEN LARSON DAVIDSON**

The Convener presented her report ( page ) and highlighted the items for members attention.

1. 'Prisoner's Week' will be from 20th – 27th November with the theme 'Welcome Home?: starting over after prison'.
2. '16 Days of Activism and Prayer against Violence against Women'.
3. The Stevenson Prize for religious observance in schools.
4. Fair Trade Chocolate Christmas Tree Decorations.

#### **MINISTRIES COMMITTEE: REV TOMMY CALDER**

The Convener presented his report.

##### Overtures under the Barrier Act.

The Convener highlighted corrections to the remit information provided in the Church of Scotland Remit booklet and some additional corrections he had discovered. There were four overtures to be considered:-

1. Anent Discipline of Ministers, Licentiatees, Graduate Candidates and Deacons.
2. Anent Bullying.
3. Anent Discrimination.
4. Anent Discipline of Elders, Readers and Office Bearers.

The Convener fully explained the amendments contained in the proposed amendments to the acts and highlighted the principles of the changes.

Each overture was approved unanimously with 41 members for and none against.

The Moderator thanked the Convener for his clear understandable presentation.

##### Presbytery Plan Review Group

The Convener Rev Dr Alan Murray said that he wished to say a big thank you to congregations for completing and returning their results for the 'Building a Vision' survey document. The responses will provide valuable information which will be used by the group in their review work. The Convener informed members that his preliminary look at the material returned was exciting and encouraging, it showed there was a considerable amount of agreement in the areas in which we do well, and in the areas in which we would wish to improve.

##### Education for Ministry

The Convener Rev Dr Paul McKeown had one deliverance to present relating to the management of the Student Bursary Fund. The fund had remained unused for a number of years and the deliverance which he was presenting recognised the studies of our three students in Presbytery.

1. Presbytery approves an annual disbursement of funds from the Student Bursary to all students in training for ministry under the supervision of the Presbytery of Gordon, the sum this year being £100 each.

The deliverance was approved.

##### Presbytery Vacancy Procedure Committee

The Convener spoke on the decisions taken by her committee and the relevant caveats.

1. The extension of Udny and Pitmedden Parish Church's right to call a minister for a further six months.
2. The approval of the Vacancy Schedule for Skene Parish Church for submission to the Ministries Council.

The caveat for each of the above decisions is that there is the facility for members of Presbytery and the relevant congregations to submit their objection to the Presbytery Clerk within eight days. If there are four dissenters to either decision their objections will be considered by Presbytery.

The Convener also reported on the wish of Rev Brian Dingwall to demit as minister of Upper Donside Parish as of September 2012. As a consequence, the Moderator and Clerk had approved the following members as the Upper Donside Vacancy Procedure Committee:- Ruth Greig, Jane Taylor, Jeanette Lamb, Anthony Craig and Mary Cranfield.

The Moderator said he also wished to thank Mrs Esther Dingwall for all of her work with Presbytery particularly her work as a Presbytery Safeguarding Trainer and discharged her from her role.

#### **MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE: REV DOUGLAS MCNAB: CONVENER**

The Convener presented his report.

##### Disability

He invited Susanna Bichard, Presbytery Disability Advisor to speak on Disability.

Susanna entitled her talk 'Welcoming the Stranger' and spoke on four key themes, 'the Impact of exclusion', 'the Biblical imperative', 'the Legal obligation', and 'What we can do to be more inclusive'.

The importance of welcoming disabled people and having a positive inclusive attitude were emphasised along with the acknowledgement that we are all equal before God and all are held in God's loving embrace. We are all called to action in 'loving the stranger' and creating the 'comfort factor' in the Church is the responsibility of us all. Little things can make a big difference often for very little or no cost. She expressed the hope that if inclusion is not already on agendas or built into strategic planning that this would change. Our attitude is the key.

Susanna said that all of the information covered in the report would be sent out by email to members. Hard copies were available from the Clerk for non email users.

Alternativity

The Convener invited Rev John Renton to speak about ‘Alternativity.

Rev Renton asked us all to ‘Take time out’ and use Advent as a time of reflection. Christmas has become synonymous with everything that the church should be opposing. ‘Alternativity’ through the resources available [www.alternativity.org.uk](http://www.alternativity.org.uk) gives us ways and ideas on celebrating Christmas which will help people rediscover the message of Christmas. John had used these with his congregation and other members agreed that they have found it to be a valuable resource. Leaflets were available for each congregation on ‘Alternativity’.

The Convener drew members attention to a Mission and Discipleship remit from this year’s ‘C. of S. General Assembly Remits Booklet’:- 3. ‘Instruct Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to provide parish and Presbytery boundary information as requested by the Statistics for Mission Group’. He asked members to send the relevant map and information for their Church to either Rob Barker, Convener of Home Mission or himself.

He also encouraged members to continue to inform Rob Barker, or himself of their ‘Good News’ for inclusion in the ‘Good News’ spot of his report.

The Convener then reminded members of the forthcoming events listed in the Intimations of this evening’s agenda. In addition, a presentation on ‘The Waldensian Church in Italy : a contemporary Reformed Church with medieval roots’ would take place in the Acorn Centre, Inverurie on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm: further information is available through Rev Mary Cranfield.

There being no further business, Presbytery was adjourned to meet again for ordinary business at Inverurie St Andrew’s Church on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at 7.30pm

Presbytery closed with prayer.

Moderator.....

Clerk .....