

PRESBYTERY OF GORDON

Presbytery met for ordinary business at Inverurie St Andrew's Church on Tuesday 6th December 2011 and was constituted with prayer by the Moderator Rev Iain U Thomson. Present were 21 ministers, 1 deacon, 22 elders and 3 corresponding members. There were 13 apologies.

The Moderator thanked Rev Longmuir and his congregation for the invitation to the recently refurbished St Andrew's Church.

MINUTES OF 1ST NOVEMBER 2011

The minutes of 1st November 2011 were read and approved.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: MR DAVID HARVEY

The Convener presented his report and 4 deliverances which were approved.

1. Presbytery notes that the Presbytery records have been inspected and were found to be in order.
2. Presbytery approves the attendance of the Presbytery Clerk at the Clerk's Forum Conference on February 21st and 22nd at a cost of £120.00.
3. Presbytery asks members to inform Rev Euan Glen, Presbytery Year Book Editor, of any additions, amendments to the Year Book to ensure its currency.
4. Presbytery approves the request from Upper Donside Church for variation in dates of payment of Ministry and Mission allocation 2012 to meet local circumstances.

He asked members to collect their congregation's copy of the annual 'Congregational Statistics' form for completion and return to the Presbytery Clerk by Friday 27th January.

The Convener then reported on the Inverurie and District Churches Together's IDCT United Service held in the Garioch Sports Centre in Inverurie on Sunday 27th November, the first Sunday in Advent. Some 520 people attended from the 10 participating congregations, and most seemed to have enjoyed an uplifting experience. On behalf of Presbytery he thanked the IDCT organizing committee, the Garioch Sports' Trust for the generous gift of the use of the Centre facilities, the Centre staff for their support and assistance in setting up the hall, and everyone who took part in what was a memorable worship service.

The Moderator welcomed Mrs Moira Lee as the new Presbytery elder for New Machar Parish Church.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INTIMATIONS: THE CLERK

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

He informed members that Ian Waldron, Graham Ritchie and Marbeth Ritchie of Kintore Church had attended a course on being an Elder Moderator of a Kirk Session.

The Clerk had one additional intimation of a Christmas Music and Songs evening in Meldrum Church on Sunday 11th December at 6.00pm.

The Moderator invited Rev T. Graeme Longmuir, Minister of Inverurie St Andrew's to tell members of the refurbishment story of the church.

INVERURIE ST ANDREW'S CHURCH REFURBISHMENT: REV GRAEME LONGMUIR

Rev Longmuir thanked the Moderator and spoke of the fact that this refurbishment was following a trail blazed by other churches in the Presbytery during the last few years. He highlighted the open area, the music space, the new office and the St Apolinaris Chapel which had been created, plus the light, airy new colour scheme. The availability of the church had been transformed as it was now open every day of the week, and this had been reflected in the number of people using the church. The number of services had been increased too whilst the new organ was singled out for its own unique sound and how it contributed to worship.

There had been an unexpected additional expense with the replacement of the boiler as a result almost all of the funds available had been used but all costs had been met.

Rev Longmuir thanked the Property Committee for the advice and guidance as well as the sympathy, support and understanding received from Presbytery. He said that it is a real joy to lead worship with the refurbishment giving a real boost to worship.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY: REV ELLEN LARSON DAVIDSON

The Moderator invited Rev Lorna Murray to present her talk on 'Suicide among young men'.

Rev Murray asked members to take copies of the leaflets which she had brought. She said it was very pertinent to speak on this subject as a report had been presented to the General Assembly by the Church and Society Council this year. (The report 'Suicide among young men: the Church as a community of carers' is available on the Church of Scotland's website.)

The prevention of suicide among young men in particular, but in all parts of society, is a very real issue of which we should all be aware. (Suicide levels among young men in Scotland are twice the level in England). We should ensure that we do everything in our own churches to make sure that all feel that life is worth living.

Suicide occurs when the motive, means and opportunity all come together, so we must seek to prevent this (Micah 6: verse 8 - 'Seek justice, show constant love').

Congregations can engage through Faith, reducing causes, and training.
Pastoral care needs to be both proactive in reducing and eliminating the causes and reactive in addressing a crisis.
We must learn from our God who loves and cares, in how we can work together to address this challenging problem in our society.
'Choose for Life' training has been provided by Rev John Renton and herself.

The Moderator thanked Rev Murray for her talk.

MINISTRIES COMMITTEE: REV TOMMY CALDER

Presbytery Vacancy Procedure Committee

The Convener spoke on the decisions taken by her committee.

CALL TO REV STELLA CAMPBELL FROM SKENE CHURCH

The Convener of the Vacancy Procedure Committee Rev Dr Mary Cranfield presented her report. She reported that the Skene Vacancy Procedure Committee had met and considered the call of the Rev Stella Campbell (currently a trainee at South Queensferry) to the charge of Skene. They considered reports from the Vacancy Advisory Committee and are satisfied that the relevant papers which were delivered to the Presbytery Clerk are in order and that the Vacancy Schedule has been approved by the Ministries Council.

The Vacancy Procedure Committee were delighted to sustain the call of Rev Stella Campbell to the charge of Skene and to make arrangements for Stella's induction. The Convener then invited Presbytery to concur with the decision of the Skene Vacancy Procedure Committee that the call of the Rev Stella Campbell to the congregation of Skene should be sustained. Presbytery enthusiastically endorsed the decision.

The arrangements are that the Ordination and Induction service will take place on Thursday 19th January at 6.45 for 7.00pm. Details of those officiating are still to be finalised

The Moderator invited Mr Malcolm Christie as Skene's representative to address Presbytery.

Mr Christie thanked Presbytery for this opportunity and spoke of the endorsement of the congregation after Stella had preached as sole nominee. There was great pleasure on Stella's acceptance of the call and everyone was looking very positively towards the future.

He thanked the Skene Vacancy Procedure Committee and in particular Mary as convener of the committee. He also thanked Marion, their Deacon, and Euan as their Interim Moderator for all of their guidance, advice and support.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: REV NEIL MACGREGOR

The Convener presented his report (page).

Meldrum & Bourtie Parish Church

In seeking to further the proposals for development of the glebe land in Oldmeldrum, owned by the congregation, the General Trustees require to be afforded the 'comfort' that Presbytery fully support the sale of the entire Glebe (9.5 acres) for the purposes of residential development and the provision of a new church centre and new manse. This form of 'comfort' is needed as the General Trustees are required to expend a considerable sum to secure access to the land-locked glebe.

There was 1 deliverance which was approved.

1. Presbytery fully supports the sale of the entire Meldrum & Bourtie glebe land (9.5 acres) at Oldmeldrum for residential development and the provision of a new Church Centre and Manse within it. The exact location of the new buildings will be decided once architect's drawings have been completed, approved and discussions held with the preferred developer.

MISSION AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE: REV DOUGLAS MCNAB: CONVENER

The Convener presented his report.

He reminded members of the Mission and Discipleship remit 3 from this year's 'C of S. General Assembly Remits Booklet': '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.

He then asked Rev Euan Glen to share the Good News from Monymusk and Cluny Churches.

Rev Glen described their children's storytelling weekend event (see pages).

The idea for the event came from the Monymusk Sunday School leader as part of the churches efforts to reach out to their communities. As a result of being put in contact with Anne Pitcher, a Baptist evangelist by the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Anne came north to lead a storytelling event held on the Saturday of the Harvest Thanksgiving weekend. Demand outstripped supply, as the event was limited to 20 children from Monymusk and Cluny. The event had two parts to it, a Bible storytelling hour plus games followed by an hour in which everyone made their own puppet. In between these was a snack time.

On the Sunday Anne also took part narrating the 'Feeding of the five thousand' which involved all ages of the congregation. The cost of £265 for the weekend event was covered by a Brownie's donation, a small attendance fee and the remainder from the congregations. The storytelling weekend event fulfilled all expectations.

Other initiatives planned include the upgrading of online services and a Christmas Community carols evening in Monymusk village square featuring a Brass Band which is part of the ongoing theme of developing the Churches presence at the centre of the communities.

The Moderator than Rev Glen for his Good News and encouraged others to continue sharing their news.

There being no further business, Presbytery was adjourned to meet again for ordinary business at Inverurie West Church on Tuesday 7th February 2012 at 7.30pm

Presbytery closed with prayer.

Moderator.....

Clerk