

# **PRESBYTERY OF GREENOCK AND PAISLEY**

*February 11<sup>th</sup> 2020*

**At Bishopton and within the Cornerstone there, the 11<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020, the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley met as appointed and was constituted with prayer.**

## **SEDERUNT**

Mr Jack McHugh, Moderator, with 28 ministers, 48 elders, 2 deacons and 4 corresponding members, as recorded separately.

## **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from 11 ministers, 8 elders and 4 corresponding members, as recorded separately.

## **WELCOME**

The Moderator welcomed Rev Dr Sonia Blakesley to her first meeting of Presbytery since her induction to Paisley: St Mark's Oldhall Church and looked forward to working with her in the months to come.

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the ordinary meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup>, the ordination on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and the service of union on January 30<sup>th</sup> being in print and in the hands of members were approved.

## **APPOINTMENT OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

The next meeting was approved as 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in the Cornerstone, Bishopton.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The order of business was approved as printed with one additional item from the Business Committee.

## **NOTICES**

The Clerk highlighted the notices.

## **BUSINESS**

Rev Ken Gray, Convener, presented the report from the Business Committee and the following deliverance was approved:

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. *agrees that the union of the Presbyteries of Dumbarton and Greenock & Paisley is not a once and for all exercise and that:*
  - 2.1. *we are embarking on the first step which is to prepare ourselves for union as a functioning Presbytery in September 2020;*
  - 2.2. *we must expect to make further, perhaps even more radical changes, in the near future;*
  - 2.3. *there is nothing that we're doing now that is working so well — or is likely to work so well — that it is not up for discussion; and,*
  - 2.4. *our organisational bias will be towards ongoing appraisal and accountability, review and reform.*
3. *agrees that a successful Presbytery*

- 3.1. *supports local congregations;*
- 3.2. *enhances and enables ministry and mission; and,*
- 3.3. *does not enervate congregations or their elders and ministers.*
4. *agrees that we can realistically aim for an agreed Basis of Union for the General Assembly May 2020 this to be in the hands of the Principal Clerk by 24 April 2020 at the latest*
5. *To this end, agrees that:*
  - 5.1. *each Presbytery will appoint a negotiating team of 5 to work together as a Joint Negotiating Committee to prepare a draft Basis of Union;*
  - 5.2. *the Joint Negotiating Committee will aim to submit a draft Basis of Union to the Business Committees of each Presbytery by 15 February 2020;*
  - 5.3. *the negotiating team from Dumbarton shall be: Mrs Christine Cavanagh, (Elder, Bearsden : Killermont and former Vice-Convenor of the Panel of Review and Reform); Rev Ruth Morrison, (Minister, Clydebank: Waterfront linked with Dalmuir: Barclay); Rev Ian McEwan (Minister, Bearsden: Baljaffray) Mr Robert Stuart (Elder, Milngavie: St Luke's) Rev David Young, (Minister, Helensburgh linked with Rhu & Shandon)*
  - 5.4. *the negotiating team from Greenock & Paisley shall be: Rev Alan Sorensen, (Minister, Greenock Wellpark Mid Kirk); Rev Hanneke Marshall, (Minister, Bridge of Weir: St Machar's Ranfurly); Rev Gary Noonan, (Minister at Houston & Killellan); Mr Leon Marshall, (Elder, Kilmacolm Old); Miss Jennifer Boag, (Elder, Greenock: Westburn)*
  - 5.5. *the convenor of the Joint Negotiating Committee will be Christine Cavanagh;*
  - 5.6. *the Joint Negotiating Committee will organise itself and its work as it thinks best*
  - 5.7. *the Joint Negotiating Committee will prepare a draft Basis of Union taking account of the guidelines below;*
  - 5.8. *the Joint Negotiating Committee may call upon any outside help which it deems necessary; and,*
  - 5.9. *the Draft Basis of Union will*
    - 5.9.1. *name the new Presbytery;*
    - 5.9.2. *establish an initial committee structure – taking account but not bound to the new structure of the National Church — which meets the requirements of the new Presbytery. This may mean that existing committees are not transferred into the new Presbytery, but that, instead, individuals are asked to take responsibility for an area of Church life;*
    - 5.9.3. *establish new Presbytery Mission areas;*
    - 5.9.4. *set a target for Presbytery meetings for Ordinary Business which may be as low as 3 a year;*
    - 5.9.5. *consider the location or locations where Presbytery might meet;*
    - 5.9.6. *consider what paid roles would enhance the mission of the Presbytery and offer necessary support to Congregations and Ministers — subject to finance being available; and*
    - 5.9.7. *cover such other matters as are required at this stage.*
6. *agrees that, in its work, the Joint Negotiating Committee is:*
  - 6.1. *to allow the two Clerks to create new standing orders based on existing and to take account of the draft Basis of Union;*
  - 6.2. *to allow the two Treasurers to discuss merging funds and assets and future financial administration and to bring recommendations;*
  - 6.3. *to allow the work of each Presbytery in relation to Planning, Local Church Review and Fabric to continue as independent streams (with the independent Planning, Local Church Review and Fabric streams to be under the oversight of a committee or committees of the new Presbytery)*

- with the expectation that they will merge into one river in due course (to be reviewed in 2 years). This is in order to retain local knowledge and established working relationships;*
- 6.4. *to take account of the fact that, pending more information, it is unlikely that a full-time clerk can be appointed prior to September 2020. At present, it is unclear what level of funding will be provided by the national church to meet the costs of more staff;*
  - 6.5. *not required to determine where the Presbytery Office will be. While the location and size of the current Greenock & Paisley Office may necessitate finding new premises, this can be considered once a new Clerk is in place and the new Presbytery's requirements become clearer; and*
  - 6.6. *to work on the basis that the current Secretary of the Presbytery of Greenock and Paisley will be offered the post of Presbytery Secretary of the united Presbytery.*
7. notes the appointment of Rev Liz Geddes as locum at Langbank from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020;
  8. grants permission for Lochwinnoch to cancel their usual worship on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 in order to have a joint service in Calder UF Church;
  9. after election appoints Mr Derek Bisset as a commissioner to the General Assembly 2020 to replace the formerly appointed Ms Mary Barr;
  10. appoints Rev Alan Sorensen and Mr John Hawthorn as Presbytery's representatives on the Commission of Assembly;
  11. appoints Mary Jane Bird as Presbytery representative on Renfrewshire Education Board to replace Ian Keith who resigned recently;
  12. appoints John Armit of Paisley South as an additional elder and instructs the Clerk to amend his details in the roll of Presbytery;
  13. approves the decision by Greenock East End congregation to hold a joint service in Greenock Mount Kirk on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December;
  14. notes that there was no service of worship in Greenock Mount Kirk on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February due to adverse weather conditions;

### **PRESBYTERY PLAN REVIEW**

*The congregations of Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Johnstone:St Paul's, Neilston and Paisley:St Ninian's had been cited to appear in their interest.*

*Mrs Lesley Davidson spoke on behalf of Paisley St Ninian's Ferguslie.*

Rev Alistair Shaw presented the report from the Presbytery Plan Review Committee, apart from section 4 which was presented by Rev Ken Gray and the following deliverance was approved:

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. approves the Basis of Dissolution for Lochwinnoch, as in **Appendix 1**;
3. approves the Basis of Guardianship for Greenock St. Margaret's, as in **Appendix 2**;

4. amends the Presbytery plan for Howwood and Johnstone: St. Paul's to read that the congregations shall be linked and instructs the committee to produce a Basis of Linkage in consultation with local parties;
5. amends the Presbytery plan for Neilston to read that the congregation shall be allowed to call a minister on the basis of a seven year reviewable tenure, with the proviso that if they fail to find a minister within two years of Presbytery granting the right to call, the question of readjustment shall again be raised;
6. amends the Presbytery plan for Paisley: St. Ninian's Ferguslie to read that the congregation shall be dissolved and instructs the committee to draft a Basis of Dissolution in consultation with local parties;
7. instructs the Kirk Session of Paisley: St. Ninian's Ferguslie to dismiss their hall-keeper, to dismiss their secretary, to terminate the agreement with Renfrewshire Council in respect of the rental of their hall, to ensure that money given for special projects is used for the purposes intended and not for the general running of the Church;
8. instructs the Business Committee to seek more Assessor Elders to join the Kirk Session of St. Ninian's Ferguslie and to try and find someone who would be able to act as treasurer for St. Ninian's;
9. amends the Presbytery plan for the town of Paisley to state that the post of Pioneer Minister in Ferguslie Park will become permanent, using one of the ministerial number allocated to the Presbytery;

### **MISSION & DISCIPLESHIP**

Mrs Mary Jane Bird, Convener, presented the report from the Mission & Discipleship Committee and the following deliverance was approved:

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. notes two Kirk Session Safeguarding Trainings:
  - 16th February 2020 in Paisley Stow Brae from 2pm until 4pm
  - 22nd March 2020 in Greenock Westburn from 2pm until 4pm
3. requests Kirk Sessions to let Carolyn (carolyn.lockhart@ntlworld.com) know of requirements for further Safeguarding Training so that relevant courses may be offered;
4. notes that the next deadline for receipt of grant applications is 12 noon on Friday 21 February;
5. encourages Kirk Sessions to pass on information to young adults (18-30) connected to their congregations to apply for places on the new national weekend residential event: Abernethy Centre, Barcaple, 7th-9th August 2020;
6. notes that Callum McMillan, Johnstone High will not now be attending General Assembly as our Youth Rep due to family circumstances;

7. appoints Seonaid Knox, St John's Church, Gourrock as the Youth representative at General Assembly 2020 to replace the previous nomination;
8. encourages Kirk Sessions to highlight the Scottish Bible Society's new app: Bible 2020 <https://scottishbiblesociety.org/2020/01/bible-2020-millennials/>
9. encourages Kirk Sessions to consider using dyslexia-friendly text for church literature and Power Point slides (**see appendix 3**)

## **COMMUNITY INTERESTS**

Rev Pamela Gordon, Convener, presented the report from the Community Interests Committee and the following deliverance was approved;

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. notes that funding is available from Community Interests Committee to support Presbytery wide Christian based projects. Deadline for applications is Sunday 10th May.

## **PROPERTY**

Mr Ian Russell, Convener, presented the report from the Property Committee and the following deliverance was approved;

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
- 2.a) approves in retrospect, an application by the Paisley: Sherwood Greenlaw congregation to treat an outbreak of dry rot in the upper and lower halls. Previously approved by Presbytery in September 2019, further work was found to be required and the estimated cost including ancillary expenditure is now estimated at £47,500 rather than the originally estimated total of £22,500, both figures inclusive of VAT and ancillary works. Funds are available although grant aid is also being sought;
- .b) notes that the Property Committee has approved a grant of £4,750 from the Cargill Bequest Fund to the Paisley: Sherwood Greenlaw congregation in connection with the above project;
3. approves, subject to the approval of the General Trustees, an application from the Greenock: Lyle Kirk congregation for a programme of stonework repairs at a total cost of £ 282,947 inclusive of fees and funding is available with fund raising also ongoing. This application supersedes the approval for similar works given by Presbytery at its February 2018 meeting;
4. approves an application by the former Paisley: St Luke's congregation (now in union with the former Paisley: Lylesland congregation to form Paisley: South) to dispose of their present Manse. It will be a requirement of Presbytery that the free proceeds of any such sale shall be credited to the benefit of the united congregation, as laid down in the Basis of Union, for the purpose of purchasing a replacement manse. It is recommended

that the congregation liaise with the General Trustees and the Church of Scotland Law Department;

5.a) notes that the issue of some of the electronic copies of the 2019 quinquennial inspections was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances but all have now been issued to the congregations concerned;

b) previously instructed the congregations subject to the 2019 quinquennial inspections to complete the items identified in the reports as urgent within the prescribed period of 1 year, and to report on progress to the December 2020 meeting of Presbytery. In view of the delays in issuing reports and general changes to Presbytery, this is now altered to the first ordinary business meeting of Presbytery in 2021;

6. notes that the annual Presbytery Diligence Return regarding the Care of Ecclesiastical Properties was completed and returned to the General Trustees on the 23 December 2019 and duly acknowledged;

### **WORLD MISSION & ECUMENICAL RELATIONS**

Rev Peter Gill, Convener, presented the report from the World Mission & Ecumenical Relations Committee and the following deliverance was approved:

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. encourages congregations to support Christian Aid Event: "Gatherings 2020" Friday 21 February 2020; at Wheatley House Academy, 150 Ingram Street, Glasgow, G1 1DW;
3. encourages church leaders to support Glasgow Presbytery Conference on Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020; at St.Rollox Church of Scotland, 70 Fountainwell Street, Glasgow, G21 1RG;

*a new section 4 was proposed and seconded as follows:*

4. notes with concern the refusal by the government of the application for asylum by Rev Peter Gill's family, Mrs Rebecca Johnson and her daughters Jessica and Amy;
  - a. supports this family in their appeal against this decision;
  - b. instructs the clerk to convey that support to the relevant agency and;
  - c. commends their situation to all congregations within the bounds for their prayer and support

Presbytery approved by a large majority to accept this section of deliverance and subsequent sections were renumbered.

5. notes the request for churches to adopt smarter communication, feedback, raise awareness of events within congregations. Email WMER secretary with church coordinator contact details;
6. notes date of World Day of Prayer 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and encourages congregations to attend services throughout presbytery;

7. encourages congregations to remember and pray for all who suffered and are still suffering in light of the recent commemoration of the 75th year of liberation of all involved in the holocaust (27th Jan 2020);
8. instructs the Business Committee to consider invitations to guest speakers and, if so minded, to provide suitable dates;
9. invites the Rev Pamela Gordon to deliver a presentation of her visit to China in 2019.

### **LOCAL CHURCH REVIEW**

Rev Stephen Smith, Convener, presented the report from the Local Church Review Committee and the following deliverance was approved:

Presbytery:

1. receives the report;
2. receives the Local Church Review report for Johnstone High as contained in **Appendix 4**;
3. receives the Local Church Review Report for Elderslie Kirk that consists of the previous Interim Report plus the Action Plan as contained in **Appendix 5 and 6**;
4. thanks the visiting teams and team leaders for their work in producing these reports to be received;
5. gives thanks to God for the faithfulness of each congregation, office bearers and ministry teams in terms of their witness and mission in their parishes;
6. encourages each congregation for the different initiatives being undertaken in each place;
7. agrees the action plans and initiatives for each congregation and encourages their office bearers as they seek to take initiatives identified forward.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment to meet on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7.00pm for ordinary business in the Cornerstone, Bishopton.

*Moderator*

*Clerk* |