

**REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016

The outline Order of Business in Appendix 1 details the arrangements for the 2016 General Assembly. The General Assembly will meet in the Salutation Hotel, Perth from Wednesday 8th to Friday 10th June. The annual meetings of the Women's Home and Overseas Committee and all Business Sessions and the Opening and Closing Services of the General Assembly will take place in the Salutation Hotel. The culmination of the General Assembly will be the Closing Service during which the Moderator will give his address. On Friday evening, it is planned to make a presentation to Leprosy Mission Scotland from this year's Easter Scheme.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2017

The committee recommends that the General Assembly 2017 be held in the Salutation Hotel, Perth from Wednesday May 31st until Friday June 2nd. This is one week earlier than normal as the Salutation Hotel is already booked for a conference during the first full week in June.

STEDFAST

Mr Alastair Wright continues as Stedfast Secretary and works well with the Stedfast Editorial Team. The Stone Agency continues to design the magazine and the General Secretary provides valuable support and advice. A decision was made to change to the magazine being full colour as from the February / March issue in 2016. The price is now £2 per issue. The printing of Stedfast is now being undertaken by L & S Litho. The Team continues to commission and request material from within and beyond the church in its effort to provide a magazine that encourages, supports and advances the life and witness of the denomination. Congregations are, as always, encouraged to give Stedfast their support.

PRAYER UNION

The Committee appreciates the valuable contribution which the Prayer Union continues to make to the life of the church in providing an opportunity for focused prayer throughout the denomination. Mrs Wemyss Billows and her Committee are to be commended for the quality and content of the Prayer and Study Guide which is widely used throughout the church. The Prayer Union Committee has asked whether there is a need for an annual meeting. There is no constitution and no requirement for such a meeting, although the Prayer Union Committee has been asked to suggest alternative ways of keeping congregations informed and of determining the contributions made to mission partners. The Administration and Finance Committee have asked for a written report. A report on the work of the Prayer Union can be found in Appendix 2 to this report.

COORDINATING FORUM

The Coordinating Forum continues to meet to share information on the work of presbyteries and the committees of the church. The present committee structure has been in place for a number of years and has encouraged committees to liaise and work together where appropriate. Reshaping for Mission has been an encouraging development during the last year.

NOMINATIONS TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES

The Committee would like to express thanks to everyone who has willingly accepted nomination to General Assembly Committees, in particular to those who have agreed to become Conveners and Vice-Conveners of Committees.

RESHAPING FOR MISSION

The group appointed by the Coordinating Forum to consider Church Planting / Revitalisation has met on a number of occasions during the last year. Consideration has been given to the issues involved, and thanks are expressed to Rev Dr David Miller for all the work which he has undertaken. Adverts have been placed in both the Church of Scotland's magazine, "Life and Work" and the "Presbyterian Herald", the magazine of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, seeking individuals who feel led to serve as ministers, church planters and church revitalisers within the denomination. A similar advert has been sent to the Highland Theological College and Edinburgh Theological Seminary. We await the outcome of these adverts.

CHURCH WEBSITE

A small group was appointed to review the denominational website. It is hoped that this will provide more information to those seeking to find out more about the denomination and also where our congregations are located.

CHURCH OFFICE

New windows have been installed in the Church Office. There is a requirement for the outside of the building to be painted and this will take place soon.

HIGHLAND THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Highland Theological College now have use of two rooms on the top floor of the Church Office. This has enabled them to have a satellite in Glasgow, which is much more accessible for students in the Central Belt. Video-conferencing facilities allow students to participate in the lectures which are taking place in Dingwall. A major refurbishment took place on the top floor of the Church Office to enable the rooms to be used by HTC.

CHURCH CENSUS

The Scottish Church Census took place on Sunday May 8, 2016. Most denominations supported this initiative. We look forward to the results being published. The committee has made a small contribution to the total cost.

MODERATORIAL VISITATION

Thanks are expressed to the Moderator, Mr Andrew Scott and his wife Helen, for their visits to congregations during the past year and for the encouragement he has brought. The Moderator has willingly represented the church at a number of meetings and events.

East: Burntisland: Erskine, Corstorphine, St Ninians, West Calder

West: Ardeer, Ayr, Bellshill: St Andrew's, Canonbie, Kilmaurs: Maxwell & Kilmarnock, Milngavie, Langside & Shawlands, Millerston, Shieldhall & Drumoyne,

North: Cunningsburgh, Dounby, Newport, Sandwick, Tayport

QUINQUENNIAL VISITATION

During the year the following quinquennial visitations have been carried out:

East: Bannockburn: Murrayfield, Sauchie & Fishcross

West: Candlish: Wynd, Dalreoch, Uddingston: Park

North: Aberdeen: Northfield, Carnoustie: Erskine, Lossiemouth

CHARITY LEGISLATION AND 'OSCR' (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator)

The Charity Regulator (OSCR) continues to ensure Charities adhere to charity accounting standards and a new Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) was issued during the year with implementation from January 2015. These standards only apply to charities preparing accrued accounts which generally mean those with income above £250,000 per annum.

OSCR have also indicated that they will publish charity's accounts online but this will only apply to charities with income in excess of £25,000 per annum.

OSCR have released new guidance on the responsibilities of charity Trustees and also implemented a new scheme for reporting 'Notifiable Events'. Details of these are available from the OSCR website.

The advice given is that Presbytery Finance Committee's and Church Office be informed of any case of 'non-compliant' Reports which are returned by OSCR so that corrections are made and help can be offered to avoid a similar situation arising in future.

CONGREGATIONAL TREASURERS

We acknowledge the additional work and commitment which has been required from all treasurers in recent years to fulfil and the requirements of Charity Law and of OSCR and thank treasurers and responsible committees for their efforts. If problems occur in meeting these requirements Treasurers are advised to contact Church Office.

AUDIT OF DENOMINATIONAL ACCOUNTS

Alexander Sloan, Chartered Accountants, who are the Auditors appointed by General Assembly, have carried out their audit. It is recommended that this firm be reappointed for the 2016 audit.

In the name of the Committee,

GRAHAM G BROWN	Convener
IAN A BOA	Vice-convener
JOHN O. FULTON	Secretary

APPENDIX 1

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016

**OUTLINE PROGRAMME
SALUTATION HOTEL, PERTH**

WEDNESDAY 8th June

11.00 & 2.15 Committee on Women's Home and Overseas.

7.00 Opening of General Assembly

THURSDAY 9th June

09.45 Opening Devotions
Memorial Tributes
Reception of Delegates from other Churches
Report of Assembly Business Committee
Presentation by Ministry Committee
Presentation by Ecumenical Relations Committee
Presentation by Christian Education & Evangelism Committee
Presentation by Church & Society Committee

Breaks will be: Lunch 12.30 – 1.45, Tea 4.30 – 6.00 (Meal at 5 p.m.) with tea/ coffee from 11 – 11.15 and 3.00 – 3.15 p.m.

The Annual meeting of the Friends of the Students Association will be at the close of the afternoon session.

FRIDAY 10th June

09.45 Opening Devotions
Representative of Scottish Bible Society
Report by Committee on Women's Home and Overseas
Presentation by Youth Committee
Presentation by Overseas Committee
Presentation by Administration & Finance Committee
(including Reshaping for Mission)

Report by General Trustees
Committee on Records and Minute Books
Any business left over from previous diets/ closing items

Breaks will be: Lunch 12.30 – 1.45, Tea 4.30 – 7.00 (Meal at 5 p.m.) and tea/ coffee from 11 – 11.15 and 3.00 – 3.15

7.00 **Closing Service**
Including Moderator's Address

APPENDIX 2

REPORT OF THE PRAYER UNION

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016

Christians in Christ have always recognised the necessity of maintaining intimate relations with God through His ordained channel of prayer. In prayer we yield out lives and circumstances to the Lord and trust Him to act in His time and in His way.

Over the years the Prayer Union Committee has valued the prayers of God's children throughout our denomination. We appreciate the encouragement and support received through letter, cards and telephone. The current Committee stands at: -

Convener Mrs Wemyss Billows

Secretary Mrs Beth Skinner

Members Mrs Isabel Baird
Mrs Jane Owens
Mr Ian Shering
Mr Alec Scrimgeour

The Committee meets in late January / early February each year when the content and layout of next year's Booklet is decided upon. At this time we give consideration to the missionaries and agree to whom and what amount of monetary gift we will give at Easter and Christmas. Through the generosity of our congregations we are able to give a gift of £140 each year to our missionaries. We are in close contact with our missionaries and they express their sincere thanks and appreciation of the support of our denomination.

We contribute £1,200 towards the publication of the Booklet to the Administration and Finance Committee. We thank the Administration and Finance Committee for their generosity towards the cost of publication of the Booklet.

Each Member of the Prayer Union Committee contributes several weeks to the Booklet and we are greatly indebted to our contributors from the North, East and West Presbyteries. We thank God for their willingness to convey God's love to others through His word.

In 2015, 2,500 Booklets were published and distributed to congregations, retired ministers and to our missionaries. Booklets were also placed in Christian Bookshops and in the hands of many other interested folk. As always we are most grateful to Hugh Clarkson, printer, for all his care and concern on our behalf. Over the past four years he has not increased the cost of the Booklets.

Special thanks to Mr Robert Ralston and his team who organise the packing and distribution of the Booklets.

The Committee sincerely thank the Rev John O Fulton, General Secretary, and Mrs Helena Jarvis for their kindness and support.

Wemyss G Billows
Convener
Prayer Union Committee