

**REPORT OF THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2016**

**INTRODUCTION**

Faith is a vital part of the DNA of the servants of Jesus Christ. The disciples showed faith when they left their work and activities and followed him. Peter took it seriously when he stepped out in faith and walked on the water. In the Old Testament the writer of Ecclesiastes challenged his hearers to “Cast your bread upon the waters and it will return to you after many days.”

Faith is apparent in these days as the Church seeks to serve God, proclaim the Gospel in our day and shows willingness to reach out into new communities. This report is presented at a precarious yet exciting time for the Church. The number of congregations in the denomination is reducing at a time when the number of Ministers, Pastors and Ministry Assistants is increasing. Some ministers have left past labours to come over and serve smaller congregations in the United Free Church. A number of congregations have taken the courageous step to use their limited resources to call a full-time minister or church planter. The resources of the Church are being invested in faith, in renewed efforts to see women and men, of all ages come to know and follow the Lord. The challenge of faith is very real in these days.

**PROBATIONERS**

Rev Gordon Mackenzie completed the denominational requirements as part of his preparation for ministry. Mr Mackenzie was licensed in June and was ordained and inducted to Lossiemouth in October.

Rev Dr Jane McArthur (Glasgow: Darnley) completed the denominational requirements as part of her preparation for ministry. Dr McArthur was licensed in January and was called to (Dundee: Caird Avenue) and is expected to be ordained and appointed in May.

Rev Dr David Miller (Glasgow: Millerston) completed the denominational requirements as part of his preparation for ministry. Dr Miller is at present serving as a Ministry Assistant at Glasgow: Millerston.

**STUDENTS**

Mr Jason Lingiah (Edinburgh: Corstorphine) was accepted as a student in training for the ministry. Mr Lingiah is at present employed, two days per week in his first student attachment at Burntisland: Erskine). It is expected that Mr Lingiah will meet all the requirements of the Church during 2017.

**STUDENT CONFERENCES**

Two Student Conferences were held in the past year. The late Summer Conference was a two-day residential conference held at Carronvale. The conference followed the three-year syllabus prepared by the Ministry Development Worker and approved by the Committee. It included topics relating to practical theology, ministry, and Church practice. The students and probationers once again expressed positive thoughts on the conduct and content of the conference. Thanks are due to those who spoke and led the various sessions. The second conference will be a two-day event to be held in the Church Office.

## **READERSHIP**

A training day for Readers was held in Stirling in late October and followed the outline course prepared by the Ministry Development Worker. The focus was on worship, preparation to lead worship services and worship within the context of the United Free Church. The Committee is grateful to Rev E. Worton, Rev A. Deacons and Rev M. Keane for their contributions to a worthwhile day. Three prospective readers and six existing readers attended.

A voice training day was held at Darnley in March and was attended by three prospective readers, an existing reader and two probationers. The course was led by Mr Richard Ellis who amongst other things assesses ministry candidates at New College in Edinburgh. Mr Ellis led sessions on the theory of speaking, leading worship, the physical nature of the voice and also carried out individual assessments of those attending. It was a very productive day.

## **READER**

Mrs Moira Frew (Lochwinnoch: Calder) continues with her studies at The Highland Theological College and has also attended two courses towards meeting the requirements of the Church.

## **RE-SHAPING FOR MISSION**

The Ministry Committee continues to contribute to the work of Re-shaping for Mission and is represented on the Re-shaping Group. The Committee is encouraged by the progress being made in this crucial area in the life of the Church. The Committee has undertaken to be responsible for the recognition of those who will serve the Church in the work of Church Planting. The Committee considered that the Reshaping Group has better knowledge and expertise to interview prospective candidates for the role of Church Planter. It was agreed that such interviews be carried out under the supervision of the Re-shaping Group and that a report on any such interview be submitted to the Ministry Committee for consideration and approval.

When approved, any such candidate will be placed on the list of those accepted by the Church as Ministry Assistants (Church Planters). They could then be referred to congregations or presbyteries looking for a Church Planter for their consideration.

## **MR LEWIS CAMPBELL**

An application was received from Mr Lewis Campbell to be recognized as a Church Planter within the United Free Church. Mr Campbell was interviewed by the Re-shaping Group and a report recommending Mr Campbell was received by the Committee. The Committee approved that Mr Campbell be recognized as a Ministry Assistant (Church Planter).

## **CHURCH RE-VITALISATION**

The Committee is encouraged by the congregations that are exploring becoming Church re-vitalisation Congregations. The Committee has been pleased to receive schedules from the congregations of Carnoustie: Erskine, Dundee: Caird Avenue and Kilmaurs: Maxwell and Kilmarnock and has agreed to support them financially as they seek to step out in faith. It is the prayerful hope of the Committee that these churches will soon have settled full-time ministers engaged in Ministry of Word and Sacraments and evangelism and mission. The Committee was supportive of the adverts placed in Life and Work and the Presbyterian Herald highlighting the opportunities for such Church re-vitalisation situations.

It is recognized by the Committee that the areas of Re-shaping for Mission, Church Re-vitalisation and Church Planting will inevitably pose new questions in terms of practice and procedure. It is clear that the Church is journeying through new territory and that identifying a

fair and consistent process is not always easy. It is important that there is order but also that these exiting new initiatives are not un-necessarily hindered or prevented. The Committee is grateful to the Principal Clerks for their guidance on these matters.

### **IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE**

The In-Service Conference for Pastors, Ministry Assistants and Ministers took place at Gartmore House from the 22-24 September 2015. Dr Ian Hepburn a lecturer in Old Testament led four inspirational sessions on worship. Dr Hepburn helped participants consider the meaning of worship from a Hebrew perspective.

The 2016 In-Service Conference will be held at Gartmore House from 20-22 September and will have a focus on pastoral issues. The details of the conference are still in the planning stages but a stimulating few days is anticipated.

### **PRE-RETIREMENT CONFERENCE**

The Committee is aware that five ministers will reach 65 years of age in the next five years. It was agreed that it would be helpful to arrange a pre-retirement conference for ministers and spouses later in the year. Arrangements are being made to offer and organize the conference.

### **STIPENDS AND SALARIES**

The proposed stipends and salaries as from 1 January 2017 are as follows:

Minister	Single Charge	£24,876	and a manse.
	Linked Charge	£26,400	and a manse.
Part-time Minister	2 days	£ 10,044	
	3 days	£15,072	
	4 days	£20,088	
Ministry Assistant and Pastor	2 days	£ 9,048	
	3 days	£13,572	
	4 days	£18,096	
	5 days	£22,620	
	Full-time	£21,768	and a manse
Other allowances	Retiral Grant	£5,500	
	Island Allowance	£2,000	
	Pulpit Supply	£50 plus expenses of 30p per mile where a car is used	
Interim Moderator:		£500	

### **PART-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANTS, PASTORS AND MINISTERS**

Rev. T. Ireland indicated his desire to retire from his post as part-time minister at Kilmaurs: Maxwell and Kilmarnock at the end of September 2015. Mr Ireland served the congregation faithfully as a full-time and then part-time minister and has contributed much to the life of the congregation and community alike. The Committee wishes Mr Ireland well as he enjoys a well-earned retirement.

Rev C. MacAulay informed the Committee of his desire to retire from his part-time appointment at West Calder: Limefield as of May 2016. Mr MacAulay has served the congregation faithfully for many years and will be greatly missed. The Committee wishes Mr MacAulay well in his retirement.

During the year two new appointments began. In July Rev Martin Paterson took up a 3 day per week appointment at Stonehouse which was expected to continue till at least May 2016. In October Rev Nathan Owens began a temporary appointment at Kilmaurs: Maxwell and Kilmarnock on a 3 day per week basis. Both of these appointments have brought encouragement to the congregations being served.

The Committee continues to receive reports from congregations and Interim Moderators on the work of Pastors, Ministry Assistants and Part-time Ministers. The reports once again have highlighted the faithful service, significant work done and blessings experienced under this gifted group of servants. The Church is indebted to each one of them for the quality of their work and their willingness to go the extra mile in the service of the Lord. The Committee commends them to the prayers and support of the Church.

### **MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT WORKER**

The Committee is very thankful for the work carried out by Rev Alexander Ritchie in his role as Ministry Development Worker. Mr Ritchie provides considerable assistance and advice to the Committee and its Pathways Group. The Committee would seek to extend this post for a further year.

### **FRIENDS OF THE STUDENTS**

The Committee is very grateful for the support given by the members of the Friends of the Students' Association to students during their courses of study. We know that their practical and prayerful support is much appreciated by the students. More information about the Association will be available at their annual meeting held at the close of the Friday afternoon session at General Assembly.

### **THANKS**

The Committee is aware of the many people who contribute to the training and support of ministry within the Church. The work of the Committee is wide-ranging and at times demanding. The Committee would thank all who assisted over the past year and especially to Rev John Fulton for his faithful work and forbearance and to Mrs Helena Jarvis for her faithful support.

In the Name of the Committee

ARCHIBALD M FORD	Convener
ANDREW SCOTT	Vice-convener
JOHN O FULTON	Secretary

