

Presbytery Meeting Tuesday 28th June 2016 Summary

Peterculter Parish Church, the church of the Presbytery Clerk Rev Dr John A Ferguson, hosted the June Presbytery meeting and the business included the following:

Syrian Refugees

At the May meeting, Presbytery welcomed the arrival of a number of refugee families and individuals from Syria to Aberdeen. The June meeting was addressed by Alana Nabulsi, an Aberdeen City Council appointment as Refugee Project Manager, who expressed her passion to help in the integration of 30 Syrian refugees to communities in Aberdeen. She had been surprised at the amount of valuable help that had been available from the Aberdeen churches. From day one the refugees appreciated all the community support received and Alana gave thanks on behalf of the 19 adults, 10 boys and 1 girl. At primary school teachers were impressed at how well the children were settling in.

Eventually there will be 100 Syrian refugees in Aberdeen.

Youth Assembly

Hannah Mary Goodlad, Moderator of the National Youth Assembly (NYS) 2015-2016, spoke about the privilege it had been to serve the Youth Assembly because the Assembly gives an opportunity for young adults to voice their opinions and actively participate in the decision making within the Church of Scotland. The focus during the year had been on environmental issues, child exploitation and intergenerational work.

This year the NYA is from Friday the 19th to Monday the 22nd August at Gartmore House, Stirlingshire.

Cove New Charge Development (NCD)

At the May meeting of Presbytery it was reported that the Rev David Swan had intimated his wish to demit his charge from 30th June 2016. At the June meeting Presbytery agreed his request be granted.

The Cove Leadership Team felt that they could not continue to provide the necessary leadership during a period of vacancy and they also indicated their intention to resign from the 30th of June. Consequently it was no longer practical for Cove NCD to continue. Presbytery noted that the Ministries Council had agreed that Cove NCD should be dissolved and the parish be returned to Presbytery from June 30th.

Presbytery gave thanks for the 18 year life of the church plant at Cove and for the dedicated ministries and Leadership Team who were willing to reach out to the community in new and innovative ways.

Presbytery agreed to dissolve the Parish Grouping between Cove NCD and Kincorth Parish Church from June 30th 2016 and appointed the Rev Eddie McKenna, minister at Kincorth, as Interim Moderator from July 1st 2016.

It was also noted that the Planning and Deployment Committee were engaged in discussions with the Ministries Council about the future of the Cove parish.

Aberdeen Presbytery Plan 2013 (2016 Update)

In 2013, following a General Assembly instruction, a Presbytery 10 year Plan, which was to be reviewed annually, was produced including planning criteria for an allocation of 38.1 Full Time

Equivalent (FET) ministry posts. The Presbytery Planning and Deployment Committee reported an update for 2016 which was to be sent to the Ministries Council after decisions of Presbytery.

Presbytery agreed that, in the case of a vacancy occurring, a full time Minister of Word and Sacrament should be inducted without restriction to the following congregations:

Bridge of Don Oldmachar
Bucksburn Stoneywood
Craigiebuckler
Cults
Dyce
Ferryhill
High Hilton
Holburn West
Kingswells
Mannofield
Midstocket
Newhills
Northfield
Peterculter
Queen's Cross
Queen Street
Rubislaw
St Columba's
St George's Tillydrone
St Machar's Cathedral
St Mark's
St Mary's
St Stephen's
South Holburn
South St Nicholas, Kincorth
Stockethill
Torry St Fittick's
Woodside

Mastrick and Summerhill will jointly call a minister to the Mastrick charge having agreed a Basis of Deferred Union

Presbytery noted that it was unable to make a determination on the future status of both Cove Parish Church and Garthdee/Ruthrieston West and an update would be made at a later date.

Presbytery also noted that the Parish Grouping between Queen Street, Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting and St Mark's had been dissolved as had the Grouping between Mastrick and Summerhill.

It was agreed that the following congregations be allocated Additional Ministries Staff as follows:

Dyce: 0.5 FTE
Garthdee: 0.5 FTE
Mannofield: 0.5 FTE
Mastrick/Summerhill: 1.6 FTE
South St Nicholas Kincorth: 0.5 FTE
St George's Tillydrone: 0.5 FTE
Torry St Fittick's: 0.5 FTE

Presbytery also agreed to appoint Additional Ministries Staff as follows:

Middlefield: 1.0 FTE (Middlefield to remain under the Guardianship of Presbytery)

Mission Development Leader: 1.0 FTE

Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting

As a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) with the URC, Presbytery intends that a full time Ministry of Word and Sacrament be appointed to the LEP under the terms of the existing constitution (or any future constitution that might be agreed. However, for recording purposes the Presbytery Plan records the appointment as 0.5 FTE.

Buildings

Presbytery expected that the ecclesiastical buildings in all charges shall remain in use beyond the lifetime of the Plan with the exception of Garthdee, Summerhill and Middlefield, where a determination could not be made at this time.

Ministries and Mission Discretionary Allowance

A Working Group comprising the Conveners of Congregational Stewardship, Congregational Support, Ministries, Planning and Deployment and Visitation and Oversight Committees drafted a discussion paper exploring how best Presbytery might use its discretionary allowance from the annual Ministries and Mission Contributions. For 2016 this is 5% (£83K). The December 2015 Presbytery meeting invited Kirk Sessions to discuss the paper and return their responses to the questionnaire.

Sixteen replies were received and a report giving an analysis of the comments was received by the June Presbytery. Some of the responses were:

94% in favour of part of the allowance being used to provide long-term financial or other support for congregations which continually struggle to make ends meet

94% in favour of Presbytery taking full advantage of its allowance each year

86% in favour of it being used for creative change at congregational level

Presbytery invited the Business and Finance Committee to discuss the report and bring proposals to the September meeting of Presbytery.

Candidates for Ministry

Following Local and National assessment procedures, the Ministries committee was delighted to bring forward the names of two people answering God's call to serve the church through its ministries of the Word. They are Mr Martin Greig, a member at Holburn West, who Presbytery nominated as a Reader-in-training and Dr Amy Bender, a member at St Stephen's, who Presbytery nominated as a Candidate in training for the Ordained National Ministry.

Training in Leading Funerals

Three people had attended a three session programme led by Anne Smith, Congregational Learning Facilitator, on leading funerals. This included a very helpful visit from a local funeral director. The training was at the stage of shadowing with parish ministers to gain practical experience.

Cairns Counselling

Presbytery warmly congratulated Cairns Counselling for being awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services. This is the highest recognition a voluntary organisation can receive and is

regarded as the MBE of the Voluntary Sector. The staff members and 30 volunteers who make the work of Cairns Counselling possible were particularly congratulated.

Ten Must Know Bible Stories Project

The Rev Louis Kinsey, Minister at St Columba's Bridge of Don, intimated a project which the congregation plan to develop for teaching 10 Bible Stories to primary school children. Working with 7 local primary schools the resources will allow Christianity to be taught well and the stories to be used across the curriculum. The aim is to ensure every child in Bridge of Don leaves primary school knowing the stories and are confident in discussing them.

