

Lanark, on Tuesday 5 February 2019 the **Presbytery of Lanark** met in Lanark: Greyfriars Parish Church and was constituted in prayer.

Sederunt: Mr Jim Watt, Moderator and Rev Bryan Kerr, Clerk along with others as in the Sederunt Book – in all 11 Ministers, 17 Elders and 8 Visitors.

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Rev E Clelland, J Cutler and D Young Ministers; H Chekansky, A McPhee and A Reid, Elders; K Gardiner, M McGillivray and D Wiseman Corresponding Members.

Welcome to Visitors

The Moderator welcomed visitors attending the Presbytery meeting.

Approval of the Order of Business

The Order of Business as circulated was approved.

Minutes of meeting on 6 November 2018 & 4 December 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2018 and 4 December 2018 were held as read and approved.

Decisions taken under delegated powers

The clerk the Presbytery that the following decisions had been taken under delegated powers.

Property - Kirkmuirhill Manse (12th December)

The Presbytery:

1. subject to the agreement of the General Trustees, agree to the sale of the field adjacent to Kirkmuirhill Parish Church, subject to successful planning application, for a sum of £135,000 recognizing this sum is less than market value but noting the developer is willing to grant access to the old Manse from a new road to be built from Carlisle Road and undertake the planning process.
2. agree to the purchase of 82 Vere Road, Kirkmuirhill as the new Manse of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church and authorise the General Trustees, in consultation with the Congregational Board of Kirkmuirhill to make appropriate offers on the property, noting that the property is on the market for offers over £175,000
3. Instruct the titles for a new Manse in Kirkmuirhill to be vested in the General Trustees
4. Urge the General Trustees to make available a short term loan for the purchase a new Manse for Kirkmuirhill in recognition of the prospective sale of old Manse and adjacent field.

Vacancy Procedure Committee (Kirkmuirhill) (5th January 2019)

The Presbytery, having received all relevant papers relating to the vacancy in Kirkmuirhill Parish Church including:

- voting papers and a signed declaration of election result whereby 99 members voted for and 1 voted against electing Mr Andrew Rooney as minister of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church;
- a call to Mr Andrew Rooney subscribed by 83 members of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church as listed on the electoral register with 15 signing a paper of concurrence

agrees that, in respect of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church and in terms of Act VIII, 2003 (as amended), the call to Mr Andrew Rooney to the congregation of Kirkmuirhill Parish Church be sustained, with the ordination and induction of the said Mr Andrew Rooney to take place on date to be determined when an entry date for the new manse has been agreed by all parties.

Vacancy Procedure Committee (Carnwath linked with Carstairs) (8th January 2019)

The Presbytery, in respect of Carnwath linked with Carstairs, and in terms of Act VIII, 2003 (as amended), agree to

1. Release Rev Maudeen MacDougall from the charge of Carnwath linked with Carstairs to translate to Scone and St Martin's from a date to yet be determined and instruct her to await the instructions of the Presbytery of Perth.
2. Appoint Rev Jim Cutler as Interim Moderator in the charge of Carnwath linked with Carstairs from the date of translation of Rev Maudeen MacDougall and with immediate effect for vacancy business.
3. Appoint Rev Elspeth MacLean (Convenor), Mr Robert Carson (replaced by Mr Scott Paget when Mr Carson is out of the country) and Mr Ian Ivison as Advisory Committee for Carnwath linked with Carstairs.
4. Grant permission to the charge of Carnwath linked with Carstairs to call a minister on the basis of unrestricted tenure in accordance with the agreed Presbytery Plan of the Presbytery of Lanark.
5. That a Nominating Committee of nine people for the charge of Carnwath linked with Carstairs be appointed with five people from Carstairs and four from Carnwath.

Property – Carnwath linked with Carstairs (23rd January 2019)

The Presbytery grant permission to Carnwath linked with Carstairs to let out the manse of the charge when it becomes vacant with all contracts being entered into through the Law Department of the Church of Scotland.

Vacancy Procedure Committee (Kirkmuirhill) (31st January 2019)

The Presbytery, in respect of the vacancy at Kirkmuirhill, appoint Tuesday 12th March 2019 at 7pm for the Ordination and Induction of Mr Andrew Rooney to be the minister of the charge.

Decisions taken under delegated powers (Christmas Break)

The clerk the Presbytery that the following decisions had been taken under delegated powers (Christmas Break).

Presbytery Retreat (3rd February 2019)

The Presbytery, in respect of the Presbytery Retreat to be held on 2nd March 2019, agree to pay the £50 donation to the Ignatian centre and provide subsidy for a maximum of 10 spaces at a total cost of £150.

Roll of Presbytery

Rev William (Bill) Buchan DipTheol BD (formerly Kilwinning: Abbey) – having requested to transfer membership as a Minister of Word and Sacrament (Category R) from the Presbytery of Perth to the Presbytery of Lanark and having handed to the Clerk a practising certificate, Rev Bill Buchan re-affirmed his ordination vows, signed the formula and was duly welcomed to the Presbytery of Lanark by the Moderator, Presbytery Clerk, Depute Clerk and Presbytery Support Convener.

Correspondence

The Clerk informed members that all items of correspondence had been notified via email and that a number of pieces of correspondence had been received and remitted to appropriate Committee Conveners or passed on by e-mail to Ministers, Session Clerks and members of Presbytery.

Good News Stories

David Waters, Kirkmuirhill, spoke of a conversation with an individual who expressed great appreciation for the ministry of Bill Love, Reader, in The Douglas Valley Church.

Elijah Obinna, Carlisle: St. John's, spoke of the Christmas Day lunch for those who would otherwise have been on their own where 48 meals were served by volunteers from a number of congregation including the Clerk to the Presbytery of Hamilton.

Farewell to Rev Maudeen MacDougall

The Moderator invited representatives of the two churches to pay tribute to Miss MacDougall's ministry. Betty McLeod, Carnwath, spoke of the variety of worship that had been experienced and led including Nite Kirk. Mrs McLeod spoke warmly of the journey minister and congregation have undertaken over the last three years. Mabel Morris, Carstairs, spoke of an eventful three years where new initiatives have been initiated and appreciated, including Open the Book in the schools. Mrs Morris spoke of the restarting of initiatives in nursing homes and committees. Both representatives spoke warmly of the three years of ministry that Miss MacDougall has undertaken within the churches and community.

The Moderator invited Rev George Shand to share thoughts on Miss MacDougall's ministry. Mr Shand spoke of many people who have spoken warmly of Miss MacDougall's pastoral skills as well as the many ways she has supported her congregation and colleagues.

The Moderator invited Miss MacDougall to respond. Miss MacDougall thanked Presbytery for the support and friendship she has received from members over three years of ministry that have been enjoyable and sometimes challenging. Miss MacDougall thanked those who have journeyed with her in the parishes and sought to develop new ideas and patterns of mission.

The Moderator assured Miss MacDougall of the prayers of Presbytery as she translated to Scone and St. Martin's in the Presbytery of Perth.

Upper Clyde Local Church Review

The Moderator called for the report of the Local Church Review of Upper Clyde which was given in by Mr. Scott Paget, Presbytery Support Committee Convener. Mr Paget outlined the process and asked the Moderator to invite representatives of the charge to present some findings from their action plan.

Rev Dr Nikki Macdonald spoke on behalf of the congregation. Dr Macdonald spoke of the engagement with the LCR process and highlighted the following aspects of the newly adopted action plan:

- Removing Isolation – with limited public transport the church is exploring possibility of church community bus to collect people from some of the villages around the parish ... to come to church and to act as a service to the parish for other matters. It is hoped that this initiative might break down transport issues, isolation and allow the community to see the church as a welcoming church.
- Stewardship recruitment drive – to look at how people can get involved in the life of the church and share their talents.
- Blether and biscuits – grew out of LCR process to listen to villages. The Kirk Session are aiming for an annual conversation with the communities they serve.
- Interactive All Age events – bringing families together for activities and worship with an initial trial at Leadhills.
- Redevelopment of Community Pop Up Choir – following death of one of the leaders the congregation and community now feel ready to start looking at beginning that work again. The choir will be for community singing but also singing for special services with a focus on singing for enjoyment.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The Presbytery:

1. Receive the Report
2. Commend the congregation of Upper Clyde for their engagement in the Local Church Review Process.
3. Note the action plan that has been devised for the charge of Upper Clyde and the final report is contained in Appendix I.
4. Commend the minister, Kirk Session and congregation of Upper Clyde to the prayers of Presbytery.

Kirkton LCR (Val MacSween)

The Moderator called for the report of the Local Church Review of Carluke: Kirkton which was given in by Mr. Scott Paget, Presbytery Support Committee Convener. Mr Paget outlined the process and asked the Moderator to invite representatives of the charge to present some findings from their action plan.

Mr Val MacSween spoke on behalf of the congregation. Mrs MacSween spoke of the engagement with the LCR process and when the Kirk Session were asked what was important within the life of the church, the elders

came up with 73 proposals. Seven ministry teams were allocated the proposals to work on in order that an action plan could be developed. The following aspects of the plan were highlighted:

It was acknowledged that some of the plans were already in place and being developed.

- Visitation to members changed a few years ago and the congregational survey highlighted it wasn't working as well as it might. The Kirk Session made changes to ensure more visits carried out.
- The Kirk Session are beginning to make changes slowly to traditional Sunday worship and involve the young people in the church which is being well received. Desire for young people to be more involved in worship and young people reading scripture every week, welcoming on the door, uplifting offering.
- Coffee Shop links – The Kirk Session are developing Café church once a month – young person's café church also started once a month.
- The Kirk Session are looking at how they welcome, how they deepen relationships, notice people who are missing or need support.
- Web presence being developed
- Lenten studies, passion play during Holy Week, starting prayer group, house group rejuvenation, social events within church and within community are all being worked on.
- There is a recognition that the congregation need to be more involved and more visible in community.
- Schools work – the Kirk Session are investigating ways to increase work, Messy Church with the Children and Youth worker.
- The Kirk Session are also working out how property is used and whether it could be used more effectively.

Mrs MacSween commented that enthusiasm for development and change is huge within the congregation and that the Kirk Session appreciate knowing that the support of Presbytery is evident. In closing, the Kirk Session of Carluke: Kirkton expressed a willingness to share ideas and resources with other churches on aspects of mission and congregational life.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The Presbytery:

1. Receive the Report
2. Commend the congregation of Carluke: Kirkton for their engagement in the Local Church Review Process.
3. Note the action plan that has been devised for the charge of Carluke: Kirkton and the final report is contained in Appendix 2.
4. Commend the minister, Kirk Session and congregation of Carluke: Kirkton to the prayers of Presbytery.

Thanks from the two congregations were expressed to the Depute Presbytery Clerk for his guidance throughout the process as well as his pastoral support to those involved.

Report of the Presbytery Support Committee

The Presbytery called for the Report of the Presbytery Support Committee which was given in by Mr. Scott Paget, Convener.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The Presbytery:

1. Receive the Report
2. Note that the charges of Biggar lw Black Mount, Lanark: St. Nicholas, Coalburn and Lesmahagow: Old and Law must provide, no later than 18th February 2019, the name of the elder they wish Presbytery to commission to the General Assembly.
3. Thank the Rev. Elspeth MacLean for her term as convener of the Worship and Discipleship Committee.

4. Appoint the Rev. Louise Mackay as convener of the Worship and Discipleship committee with effect from 6th March 2019
5. Appoint Bill Love as Convener of the Presbytery Complaints Committee with immediate effect.
6. Instruct all Kirk Sessions and Congregational Boards to ensure that treasurers are aware that Presbytery dues must be paid in the year in which Presbytery call for them and not held over until the following financial year.
7. Note that no congregation has submitted a request seeking dispensation from paying 2019 Ministry and Mission Contributions by Standing Order.
8. Agree to designate the property at 82 Vere Road, Kirkmuirhill as the manse of Kirkmuirhill
9. Note the decision of Douglas Valley church's kirk session to see guardianship as a positive way forward and assure theme of presbytery's prayers and support.
10. Note that a positive meeting took place with the General Trustees in respect of the buildings in Biggar and that the outcome was that plans for work on the church building, particularly in respect of heating, should be an urgent priority for the Kirk Session
11. Note the date of ordination and induction of Mr Andrew Rooney to Kirkmuirhill has been set for 12th March 2019 with the Moderator to conduct worship and give the charges and Rev Louise Mackay to preach.

Report of the Relationship and Context Committee

The Presbytery called for the Report of the Relationship and Context Committee which was given in by the Rev. Dr Elijah Obinna, Convener. Dr Obinna expressed his appreciation of those who had come along to the Mission Conference and made it such a success. Thanks were expressed to the Moderator for chairing the meeting and to the committee for their work in ensuring the conference worked so well.

It was moved, seconded and agreed-

The Presbytery:

1. Receive the report.

The Context of Lanark Presbytery

The Moderator invited the Presbytery Clerk to share a presentation on the context of the Presbytery that had been delivered to the recent Mission Conference. This presentation highlighted a number of statistics within the congregational returns which showed a decline of 47% of church members in the previous 18 years. The Clerk offered to make the presentation available to anyone who would find it useful to think about the changing context.

Intimations

The Presbytery Retreat Day would be held on 2 March 2019 at Braehead House. Arrangements and booking process were highlighted on a poster and emailed to all congregations.

Adjournment:

The Presbytery adjourned to meet for Ordinary Business on Tuesday 5 March 2019 at 7 pm in Greyfriars Parish Church, Lanark.

Closure

The Moderator closed the meeting by offering a prayer of blessing.

Moderator

Clerk

Appendix 1

Local Church Review Report of Visiting Team

Name of Congregation: UPPER CLYDE PARISH CHURCH

Names of Visiting Team Members: Rev. Maudeen MacDougall, Hugh Stewart

Congregational Story

What has been since 2013 one congregation with a parish that spans 170 square miles was, sixty years ago, nine churches in nine villages and surrounding. The villages remain, and the challenges to ministry are many – disconnection, poor transport links, the changing nature of community and the additional time needed to do everything, because of travelling distances.

A small creative and generous congregation seek to rise to the task of being church in such a dispersed and changing environment. The congregation has a small core group of dedicated Elders.

Congregational Leadership

Rev. Nikki Macdonald has been in post since October 2014. This is her first parish, and she has established strong working relationships within the church and many of the communities, and particularly good working relationships with the 5 local primary schools (ranging between 13 and 35 pupils each).

Unfortunately, during the period of the Local Church Review a number of key officers died, and individual and community grief being a significant issue over the end of 2017 and into early 2018. Since then it has been very difficult to fill key positions within the Kirk Session – so difficult in fact that Presbytery has introduced 4 Assessor Elders with skill and experience from other congregations in the Presbytery.

The Local Church Review process was therefore, at times, necessarily held up because of lack of time and available human resources. However, the congregational workshops built on a very useful Kirk Session away day which had been held early in 2017 and provided a very valuable context for LCR.

Like many small rural congregations of the Church of Scotland, 'maintaining what we currently have' is always a matter of concern, but there is also a continual enthusiasm for reaching out into the different communities that the church has physically retreated from over these last years. Resources for this, however, are rather thin.

The 'Blether and Biscuits' initiative during the LCR did reveal a positive response within some communities for the Church reaching out.

Congregational Life

Worship is creative and dynamic, and attractive, and takes account of the diversity of traditions that congregation members originate from. Links with the school also connect creatively with the church/congregation at major festivals.

The challenge for the congregation always remains 'being church' in and for all the different communities.

It is hard to see how the congregation can continue to sustain a model of church life where it appears to be only the Minister who is the link between differing communities. It is also hard to see how the congregation can continue to engage in effective mission without partnership and support.

Congregation & Community

The congregation is 'the church' in all these communities. The congregation is ecumenical in make-up as reflects the local worshipping community. There are no other churches or church meetings within the parish.

The congregation is primarily elderly and as such has deep links with some long-standing aspects of community, but less links with the younger more mobile commuter community which is less engaged locally. There appear to be significant gaps, in most of the smaller communities, in community leadership and therefore in community planning.

Recommendations for Action and Support

During the period of Local Church Review, Presbytery attached four Assessor Elders to the Kirk Session to help UCPC through a difficult period following the death of some key elders

Partnerships out-with the parish should be encouraged, and the congregation should also be encouraged to make use of the presbytery's variance fund for outreach activities.

The next three years are perhaps crucial years not only for the broader direction of the whole Church of Scotland but also for how we can best be church, and experiment, in areas such as Upper Clyde with small dispersed communities.

Timetable for subsequent superintendence and congregational action

LCR will keep engaged with the Minister and Kirk Session so that 1 year and 3 year reviews can happen at times that are appropriate and helpful to the congregation.

Assessor Elders will, of course, report back to Presbytery on the ongoing needs of the congregation.

Date report submitted to Kirk Session

Any outstanding areas of disagreement between Kirk Session and Visiting Team?

None

A copy of the congregational action plan expressing a vision of the local church for its mission over at least the next five years must be submitted with this report.

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Appendix 2

**Local Church Review
Report of Visiting Team**

Name of Congregation: Kirkton Parish Church, Carluke

Names of Visiting Team Members: Rev Elspeth MacLean and Helen Chekansky

Congregational Story

Carluk Kirkton have been an active well-organised church for many years and are part of the Carluk parish grouping. Their minister Rev Iain Cunningham completed his years as Convenor of World Mission 8 months after this Review began.

Congregational Leadership

In conversation with Iain Cunningham it was clear that he is fully aware that his absence due to World Mission work has had an impact on the church, and he was looking forward to being back in the parish and picking up the reins again. Forward planning has been an important part of the church's life over a number of years. Iain was very honest about the financial situation of the church, which received a substantial bequest making it look very well off, but whose regular givings only just cover the costs of the ministry.

Congregational Life

The congregational life of Kirkton is impressive and their attention to detail can be seen in the attached five year plan. Iain's absence had an impact, but the presence of Rev Susan Cowell (locum), Lesley Ewing (Youth worker) and for a period of time Lorna MacDougall (Probationer) meant that a good team was in place. The forward planning which is detailed in the attached plan is good, although we did have some concerns that a large number of items were all to be tackled in the first year. However, we understand that it now becomes the responsibility of the various working groups to take this on board and produce more realistic timescales. We also were pleased to see that a Stewardship campaign is planned to improve and maintain finances.

Congregation & Community

Kirkton is part of Carluk parish grouping and it is hoped that this will be able to continue the good joint work done in the past. Kirkton has a very good presence in the community, with strong links to four schools, as well as sheltered housing complex and the Bakehouse Cafe.

Recommendations for Action and Support

The minister and kirk session have worked diligently to produce a comprehensive action plan taking them forward in all areas in the next five years.

Timetable for subsequent superintendence and congregational action

Kirkton have regular annual reviews programmed in and should be commended by Presbytery for their very thorough attention to all their planning. As with all congregations we assure Kirkton Kirk Session that Presbytery offer their full support if this is required at any time.

The Local Church Review team have timetabled a return meeting with all congregations in year 1 and year 3. Because the congregation had robust planning systems, their link with the LCR was limited to initial meetings and the origination and analysis of an extensive congregational survey. The congregation are to be commended on their diligent approach towards this survey, and their use of the feedback in their planning. Otherwise they did not perceive any 'value added' from the LCR Team at this time.

However, as part of the LCR process is also about how congregations can contribute to/ require support from Presbytery, and this was not addressed, this is something the LCR Team will take up at their Year 1 visit (which can coincide, perhaps, with the congregation's annual review).

Date report submitted to Kirk Session

13th November 2018

Any outstanding areas of disagreement between Kirk Session and Visiting Team?

The only disagreement was the timing of this local church review, which failed initially to consider the minister's National Church commitments.

A copy of the congregational action plan expressing a vision of the local church for its mission over at least the next five years must be submitted with this report.

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