

PRESBYTERY OF MELROSE AND PEBBLES

The Presbytery will meet **ONLINE** on Tuesday 1 September 2020 for Worship at 7pm and thereafter for ordinary business.

Victoria Linford, Clerk

How to access the service and meeting:

7pm-7.30pm: The worship service led by the Moderator can be found at -

<https://standrewsleckie.co.uk/presbytery/>

7.30pm: Here is the Zoom invitation -

Topic: Presbytery Zoom Meeting

Time: Sep 1, 2020 7:30 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96311545113?pwd=NWV6QWl2a2l0aTQxYUo3MHZyZVhXZz09>

Meeting ID: 963 1154 5113

Passcode: 642106

Dial in: 0131 460 1196 (use the same Meeting ID and Passcode above)

BUSINESS

1. Constitute
2. Sederunt and Apologies
3. Minutes of meeting on 23 June 2020 (pp112-113)
4. Welcome to new members and farewell to Rev Stewart McPherson
5. Tribute to Rev Andrew Rae
6. Order of Business
7. Business Committee
8. Vacancy Procedure Committee (p4)
9. Committee on Re-opening of Church Buildings (p5)
10. Presbytery Planning Implementation Group (p6)
11. Standing Committee reports:
 - (a) Mission and Service (*report to follow*)
 - (b) Property and Stewardship (p7)
12. Intimations
13. Correspondence
14. Adjournment

Business Committee

1. Presbytery notes that, due to the coronavirus situation, the sacrament of Holy Communion is not being held at the meeting in September 2020 (notwithstanding Presbytery Standing Order 1.1).
2. Presbytery appoints Rev Margaret Steele and Rev Rosie Frew to be additional members of the Business Committee for 2020/21.
3. Presbytery approves membership of its Committees for 2020/21 as set out in the Presbytery Year Book (*to follow*).
4. Presbytery notes that the Church of Scotland will meet in General Assembly on 2-3 October 2020. A summary of the proposed reports is attached (p3). The Presbytery appoints the following Commissioners to the General Assembly to be held online from 2-3 October 2020: Very Rev David Arnott, Dr Fiona Burnett, Rev Marion Dodd, Rev Rosemary Frew, Mrs Isobel Hunter, Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald, Ms Susan McDonald, Mrs Mary McElroy, Rev Sheila Moir. [*Two further commissioners to be appointed - one minister and one elder*].

Intimations

1. The Presbytery Prayer diary for Autumn 2020 will be circulated soon.
2. Presbytery Year Book 2020-21 will also be available soon.
3. The Church of Scotland website (www.churchofscotland.org.uk) has on its homepage (see “COVID-19 (Coronavirus) advice”) regularly updated information for congregations during the ongoing coronavirus situation.
4. Presbytery thanks all those congregations who have sent details about the re-opening of their church building(s) for buildings insurance purposes (see Church of Scotland Insurance Company email of 12 August 2020). Please could all congregations that have not been in touch with the Clerk do so as soon as possible.

DRAFT ORDER OF BUSINESS: GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020 – 2-3 October 2020

Report of the Legal Questions Committee:

To include reports of decisions made to call the Commissions of November 2019, May 2020 and July 2020

Legislation on Safeguarding, Registration of Ministries, appeals

Appeals Act amendments – to permit an additional Convener and Vice-Convener for the Appeals Committee of the Commission of Assembly

Amendment to the Commission of Assembly Act – to allow for substitute appointments due to ill-health.

Report of the Faith Nurture Forum:

Legislation on appeals in Act X 2004

Restricted Certificates of Eligibility for the International Presbytery

Legislation rewriting sections 20-22 of Act X 2004 on initial course meeting, candidate appraisals and sustaining a person as a graduate candidate

Legislation amending section 6 of the Readership Act

Report of the Principal Clerk

Report of the Safeguarding Committee

Report of the Assembly Trustees (sections X to Y of deliverance): Finance: to include GA receiving the Report and Accounts of Unincorporated Entities for 2019 and to approve the income disposition for 2021

Report of the Assembly Trustees: *Remits and priorities of the Forums*

Report of the Faith Nurture Forum (cont): *to include review of what the July 2020 Commission agreed as to vacancy process and video-conferenced meetings of Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions*

Report of the Faith Impact Forum

Report of the National Youth Assembly 2019

Report of the General Trustees

Report of the Legal Questions Committee (cont): *possible legislation to enable the holding of virtual congregational meetings for unions, linkings, other forms of adjustment; sale of buildings*

Report of the Vacancy Procedure Committee: September 2020

The Committee, excluding the Rev Miller Milloy as an interested party, agreed that the number of people to be on the Nominating Committee for Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn would be 9.

The Committee, having noted that the Rev Malcolm Jefferson had agreed to be Interim Moderator of Carlops linked with Kirkurd and Newlands linked with West Linton: St Andrews when the Rev Stewart Macpherson's Interim Ministry post there finished, agreed that he would commence as Interim Moderator on Monday 7th September 2020, remaining as Interim Moderator until the linking process is complete.

Deliverance:

1. Presbytery receives the report.
2. Presbytery notes the decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee that the number of people to be on the Nominating Committee for Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn would be 9.
3. Presbytery notes the decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee that the Rev Malcolm Jefferson would start as Interim Moderator at Carlops linked with Kirkurd and Newlands linked with West Linton: St Andrews on Monday 7th September 2020, remaining as Interim Moderator until the linking process is complete.

PRESBYTERY CHURCH RE-OPENING COMMITTEE

The Church of Scotland Guidance Paper on Covid-19 (coronavirus), Reopening of Church Buildings, all 59 pages of it, has been the basis of our considerations.

It has been an interesting learning curve as we have come to grips with the requirements for reopening.

I would like to thank Calum Macdougall and Fan Heafield for all their help in going through Check Lists and Risk Assessments, and giving valued help and advice.

I would also like to thank all those who were faced with filling in the necessary paperwork.

To date we have given permission to reopen as follows-

11 July Trinity Church, Galashiels (PRAYER)

25 July Skirling (WORSHIP)

25 July Stobo (WORSHIP)

11 August St. Boswells (WORSHIP)

21 August Ashkirk (WORSHIP)

21 August Kirkurd and Newlands (WORSHIP)

24 August Newtown St. Boswells (WORSHIP)

26 August Trinity, Galashiels (WORSHIP)

We are currently waiting for further information or clarification from Selkirk and from Mertoun.

We expect to give approval for these two in the next few days.

Keith Simpson

27 August 2020.

Progress on Presbytery Plan Implementation: September 2020

Four out of the seven working groups have prepared draft bases of adjustment:

- Draft basis of linking between Ashkirk presently linked with Selkirk and Ettrick and Yarrow
- Draft basis of union between Maxton and Mertoun linked with Newtown linked with St Boswells

Both the above have been considered by the Presbytery Planning Task Group at 121 and comments received on each. The above proposed union is waiting on clarification from 121 on how congregational voting can take place within existing regulations. Present Church Law does not allow a congregational vote to take place within the existing regulations. It is hoped that the law will be changed at the October General Assembly to allow a virtual congregational vote to take place.

The other two are both in the Peeblesshire cluster and are awaiting comment from the Presbytery Planning Task Group at 121. They are:

- Draft basis of linking between Upper Tweeddale Parishes and Carllops linked with Kirkurd & Newlands linked with St Andrew's, West Linton
- Draft basis of linking between Eddleston presently linked with Peebles Old and Stobo and Drumelzier.

The remaining three working groups are in various stages of discussion regarding the preparation of draft bases of adjustment.

David Brackenridge

Convener, Presbytery Plan Implementation Committee

Property and Stewardship Committee Report for Presbytery 1st September 2020

Two applications for Ministries and Mission Rebates have been received over the summer; from Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn and from the 1st Galashiels Girls Brigade. The Property and Stewardship Committee has not met but the two requests have been circulated and comments received from several members.

At Innerleithen a reduction of £3,500 in Ministries and Mission Contribution is requested to contribute towards enabling Innerleithen Church to be a 'Digital Learning Centre'. The bulk of the cost has been met by Borders College. It is anticipated that the installation will help with broadcasting services from Innerleithen and may also prove valuable to Presbytery.

The Girls Brigade will be starting their session remotely this year. It is anticipated that a mix of online material and mailed packs will be used. To cover the registration fee and the cost of packs up until Christmas a rebate of £2,400 is requested. There are about 60 girls in the brigade, mostly from low income families which may well have been affected by the lockdown and its economic consequences.

There remains a reasonable fund that could be rebated for mission; however in the current financial climate it is impossible to know whether the rebate system will be maintained in future years.

Deliverance:

1. Presbytery receive the Report
2. Presbytery approves a rebate of £3,500 to Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn.
3. Presbytery approves a rebate of £2,400 to Galashiels St John's for the 1st Galashiels Girls Brigade.

ZOOM MEETING 23 JUNE 2020. On Tuesday the twenty-third day of June 2020, the Presbytery met by Zoom at 7pm for fellowship and at 7.30pm for Ordinary Business, and the meeting was constituted in prayer by the Moderator, Dr Fiona Burnett.

SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES: There were in attendance 16 ministers and 24 elders whose names were recorded by the Clerk in the attendance book. Apologies were also noted by the Clerk.

MINUTES: The minute of the meeting of 3 March 2020 was submitted and approved.

APPOINTMENT OF PRESBYTERY MODERATOR: The Moderator outlined some of the highlights and challenges from her year as Presbytery, including Presbytery Planning, the coronavirus lockdown and the developing links with Zomba Presbytery. The Moderator also thanked Presbytery for the support she had received during her year as Moderator. Presbytery unanimously elected Rev Malcolm Jefferson as the next Moderator of Presbytery. After the Prayer of Consecration, Mr Jefferson took the Chair. He expressed thanks on behalf of Presbytery to Dr Burnett for her year as Moderator.

TRIBUTE TO REV BOB DEVENNY: Rev Rosie Frew paid tribute to Rev Bob Devenny who died in May 2020. Presbytery asked the Clerk to send a copy of the tribute to the family of Mr Devenny.

TRIBUTE TO MRS LORRAINE MULHOLLAND: The Very Rev Dr Finlay Macdonald paid tribute to Mrs Lorraine Mulholland, Session Clerk of Eddleston Church and a member of Presbytery for many years, who died in April 2020. Presbytery asked the Clerk to send a copy of the tribute to the family of Mrs Mulholland.

ORDER OF BUSINESS: The order of business was approved as printed.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: Prof Murray Campbell, Convener, presented the report of the Business Committee. Presbytery received the report.

1. Presbytery appointed the following Conveners to the Presbytery's Standing Committees for 2020-21: Governance Committee: David Brackenridge; Mission and Service: Fiona Burnett; Property and Stewardship: Isobel Hunter.
2. Presbytery approved the following dates for its meetings in 2020-21 (venues to be confirmed later): Tuesday 1 September 2020; Tuesday 6 October 2020; Tuesday 3 November 2020; Tuesday 1 December 2020; Tuesday 2 February 2021; Tuesday 2 March 2021; Tuesday 4 May 2021; Tuesday 22 June 2021
3. Presbytery noted that, for 2020-21, Business Committee will meet on the morning of the second Thursday before each Presbytery meeting (i.e. 12 days before the Presbytery meeting).
4. The laptop and printer purchased by Presbytery in 2013 having broken down, Presbytery noted that the Business Committee had authorised the purchase of a new laptop and printer; the laptop purchase is being arranged through the Church of Scotland IT Department and the revised budget will take account of this expenditure.
5. Presbytery noted that a Complaints Committee was formed to consider a complaint made against a member of a congregation within the Presbytery bounds; the Complaints Committee has issued its report and no further action is required by Presbytery.

RE-OPENING OF CHURCH BUILDINGS: Prof Murray Campbell, Convener of the Business Committee, facilitated a discussion on the re-opening of church buildings following the coronavirus lockdown. Following discussion, Presbytery agreed the following:

1. Presbytery noted that the Church of Scotland has issued guidance entitled "Covid-19 (coronavirus) Reopening of Church Buildings" and urged all Kirk Sessions to consider how to apply this guidance in their own situation, keeping all amendments to the guidance under review.
2. Presbytery acknowledged and commended congregations for all they have been doing to enable worship, mission, pastoral care and other activities to take place while their buildings have been closed, often in new and innovative ways; in considering the possibilities for the re-opening of church buildings, Presbytery acknowledged that there will be a variety of responses across its congregations, and urged Kirk Sessions not to feel any undue pressure to re-open their church buildings while Covid-19 restrictions are still in place.
3. Presbytery appointed a new temporary Committee, under the convenership of Keith Simpson (with two other members), from now until the end of December 2020, to support Kirk Sessions and congregations following the coronavirus lockdown, especially in relation to the safe re-opening of church buildings, including:
 - being familiar with the "Covid-19 (coronavirus) Re-opening of Church Buildings" guidance from the Church of Scotland (as updated);
 - approving all checklists and risk assessments required by the guidance, before Kirk Sessions can proceed with re-opening any of their church buildings;
 - offering other support and guidance to Kirk Sessions about the re-opening of church buildings;
 - liaising with the Business Committee and bringing to the Business Committee (in the first instance) any suggestions that require funding or additional input;
 - reporting to Presbytery in September and at the end of December (and additionally as it thinks appropriate).

AUTHORISATION OF PRESBYTERY WORSHIP LEADERS: Dr Fiona Burnett, Convener of the Mission and Service Committee, presented a report on those who had successfully completed the Presbytery Worship Leader Training. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery approved the following as Worship Leaders and instructed the Clerk to send the Authorisation Certificates to the relevant ministers for presentation to the Worship Leaders within their congregations: David Bethune (Selkirk); Fiona Corbett (Selkirk); Elissa Jones (Selkirk); Eve Hartswood (Stow and Heriot); Paul Goode (Earlston); Anne Grieve (Caddonfoot); Colin Herd (West Linton: St Andrew's); David Leckey (Galashiels: Old and St Paul's); Eleanor Simpson (Galashiels: Old and St Paul's). Presbytery thanked all its Worship Leaders for their service within the Presbytery.

23 June 2020

PRESBYTERY of MELROSE and PEEBLES

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STATISTICAL RETURN: The Clerk submitted the statistical return for the year ended 31 December 2019 as follows:

Number of Communicants:	5208 (2018: 5353)
Removals:	
By Death	138
By Certificate	22
Otherwise	21
Admissions:	
By Profession	11
By Certificate	21
By Restoration	4
Supplementary Roll:	532
Children under 17:	251
Over 18 involved in life of congregation:	268
Elders:	392
Baptisms:	32 (including 3 adult baptisms)
Blessings:	4
Weddings:	27
Funerals:	180

Presbytery received the report, noting with sadness the low number of Admissions in 2019.

ACCOUNTS INSPECTION COMMITTEE: Mr Fraser Simm, Treasurer, presented the report of the Accounts Inspection Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery noted that the necessary inspection work had been carried out as far as possible. Presbytery thanked the Accounts Inspection Committee for their work.

VACANCY PROCEDURE COMMITTEE – INNERLEITHEN, TRAQUAIR AND WALKERBURN: Rev Margaret Steele, Convener, presented the report of the Vacancy Procedure Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery noted the decision of the Vacancy Procedure Committee that Innerleithen, Traquair and Walkerburn be granted permission to call a minister to its vacant charge. Presbytery noted the Committee's findings that the finances are in good order, that the work which requires to be done on the Manse in regards to a new kitchen and bathroom is known by the congregations and will be done with the input of the minister elect, and that Presbytery is to be notified when the work commences.

PROPERTY AND STEWARDSHIP: Mr Fraser Simm, Treasurer, presented the report of the Property and Stewardship Committee relating to a revised budget for 2020. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery approved the revised budget, including allowances for a new Presbytery laptop and printer. Presbytery approved the revised Presbytery dues for 2020: Congregations up to 170 members: £275; Congregations from 171 to 380 members: £410; Congregations over 380 members: £600. Mrs Isobel Hunter, Convener, presented a further report of the Property and Stewardship Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery approved a reduction in the Ministries and Mission payment in 2020 for Stow St Mary of Wedale and Heriot Parish Church of £1,200 to enable the vestry of Stow Church to be used as a missional space within the community; noting however at the request of the Committee that action to deal with a dry rot outbreak in the Stow Church building has yet to be dealt with and Presbytery urged the Kirk Session to proceed with this work immediately.

INTIMATIONS:

1. The Presbytery Prayer diary for June/July/August 2020 is now available; it was circulated electronically with the Presbytery papers and has also been provided to congregational prayer promoters.
2. Thank you to all Kirk Sessions who have submitted details of their congregational elder for 2021-21; please could all remaining commissions for Presbytery elders be sent to the Clerk as soon as possible.
3. Congregations are encouraged to send details of online worship to John Henderson for inclusion on the Presbytery website.
4. If you have any ideas or resources you would like to share with other congregations, do send them to the Clerk who will circulate them.
5. The Church of Scotland website (www.churchofscotland.org.uk) has on its homepage (see "COVID-19 (Coronavirus) advice") regularly updated information for congregations during the ongoing coronavirus situation.

APPRECIATION OF RETIRING MEMBERS: On behalf of Presbytery, the Moderator thanked Rev Bruce Lawrie, Miss Dorothy Small and Dr Margaret Habeshaw (corresponding member) for their contribution to Presbytery over recent years.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the Presbytery adjourned to meet on Tuesday 1 September 2020 for worship at 7pm, followed by Ordinary Business, with the venue still to be agreed, of which public intimation was made and the *sederunt* was closed with prayer.

Moderator

Clerk