

## PRESBYTERY of MELROSE and PEBBLES

The Presbytery will meet at **Innerleithen Church** on Tuesday 4 December 2018 at 7pm for ordinary business.

Victoria Linford, Clerk

### Business

1. Constitute
2. Sederunt and Apologies
3. Minutes (pp85-86)
4. Order of Business
5. Business Committee
6. Authorisation of Presbytery Worship Leaders
7. Standing Committee Reports:
  - (a) Governance (*verbal report*)
  - (b) Mission and Service
8. Intimations
9. Adjournment

**[REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED DURING THE MEETING, AFTER AGENDA ITEM 6]**

### Business Committee

1. Presbytery notes the appointment of Rev Neil Combe as locum for Galashiels: Old and St Paul's linked with Galashiels: St John's with effect from 1 December 2018.
2. Presbytery approves the appointment of Rev Ann Purdie (United Free Church of Scotland) as locum for the Churches of Upper Tweeddale with immediate effect; and agrees to appoint her as a corresponding member of Presbytery.
3. Presbytery notes that Rev Tony Foley has been accepted as a Candidate under the Admissions Procedure (which allows ministers from other denominations to transfer to the Church of Scotland); he will be undertaking a nine-month familiarisation placement with Rev Calum Macdougall.
4. Presbytery notes that a complaint was referred to a Complaints Committee under the Presbytery Complaints Procedure; the complaint has been investigated by the Committee and no further action is required.
5. Presbytery agrees to amend the Presbytery's Standing Order as follows: at the end of 8.1, Business Committee membership, add "If the membership of the Business Committee falls below nine, for example as a result of a member of the Business Committee fulfilling more than one role within Presbytery, the Business Committee may co-opt an additional member or members until the Business Committee membership is restored to nine members".
6. Presbytery Review pilot: Presbytery notes the report following the review visit by Angus Presbytery (pp2-4).

### Intimations

1. Place for Hope are holding two one-day courses in Edinburgh: "Growing Through Change and Conflict – Foundation" on Saturday 8 December 2018 and "Growing Through Change and Conflict – Further Skills" on Saturday 19 January 2019. Further information on these and other courses can be found on the website [www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes](http://www.placeforhope.org.uk/training/set-programmes).
2. Reminder: Treasurers and other interested parties are encouraged to attend a Treasurer's Conference on 6 December 2018 at 2pm in Penicuik North Church.
3. Induction of Rev Barry Hughes to St Mark's Church, Stirling: Thursday 13 December 2018 (time to be confirmed).

4. From Dr Fiona Burnett, World Mission Group:

- a. If anyone gives or receives a new smartphone this Christmas, our friends in Malawi would be very happy to receive the old handsets as long as they are in good working condition, have been released from their network carrier and reset to factory setting so they have no password requirement. Just let me know and I can collect.
- b. We have been asked for clerical shirts by our ministerial friends in Malawi. If you have any that are no longer required and again in good condition, I'll be happy to receive them and send them on.
- c. The World Mission Group are planning a get together of church representatives and everyone interested to receive and discuss ideas of what we would like to have included in the next Memorandum of Understanding with Zomba Presbytery. To reflect the continuing development of our relationship, we'd like to include more local and individual church aims from both Presbyteries. We will be meeting on Sunday 3 February 2019 at 2.30pm in Innerleithen church hall and everyone is invited.

# Presbytery Review Pilot – Melrose and Peebles by Angus Presbytery

## June 2018

### **Review of Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles**

The visiting team of Rev Dr Ian McLean and Rev Peter Phillips would like to thank the representatives of Melrose and Peebles, Rev Julie Rennick, Rev Margaret Steele and Rev Calum Macdougall for meeting with us on Thursday 14 June 2018 at Earlston. We were warmly welcomed and particularly want to thank Mrs Rennick for her hospitality.

We are aware that the year has been testing for the Presbytery and for its Clerk, and with heartfelt prayers wish the Presbytery God's blessings for the years to come.

The Presbytery furnished the visiting team with its review documents prior to the meeting consisting of a brief report on 1. Facts and Figures, 2. The Presbytery Today, and 3. Future Plans. These documents, the third of which was collated from discussions at a meeting of Presbytery, formed the basis of conversations at the review visit.

### **Presbytery Meetings**

Melrose and Peebles have, for the past two years, established a new pattern for Presbytery meetings. Presbytery meets on the first Tuesday of September, October, November, December, and then February, March, May and on the last Tuesday of June.

All meetings take place in Innerleithen, with the exception of the September meeting, which includes Communion and which takes place in the home church of the Moderator, and the last meeting in June which is held at a different venue each year, and which includes a presentation by the hosting charge. Each meeting, which begins at 7.00pm and adjourns at about 9.00pm, includes a break for refreshments and socialising. Café style meetings are being explored for all meetings. This is understood to enable the Presbytery to be more supportive. It is acknowledged, however, that there is still a tendency for Ministers to speak to Ministers and elders to speak with elders.

The October meetings are substantially meetings of the Presbytery Committees; Governance, which deals with Superintendence, Planning and Vacancy Procedure; Mission and Service; and Property and Stewardship.

The committees may also break into subgroups, which may also meet on other occasions as necessary. The World Church subgroup, for example has been busy arranging a two week visit for young people from Malawi during which time they will also participate in the National Youth Assembly.

The Business Committee meets independently during daytime a few days prior to the Presbytery Meeting.

Urgent matters can be dealt with at the October meeting, or more usually with reports at the following meetings in November. The December meeting is an opportunity for a forum meeting with various speakers. The cycle is then repeated in the New Year.

The Presbytery also arranges away days twice each year to which the neighbouring Presbyteries of Dun and of Jedburgh are invited.

The new arrangements were established following consultation with Presbyters and have seen a positive response in attendance. A review has concluded that the arrangement is positive and will be continued, with tweaks.

We were impressed with the new arrangements, in particular that ministers and congregations have 'bought into' them, that they seem to have allowed the Presbytery to be able to react quickly as necessary with the Moderator's Committee being granted powers to act as necessary between meetings, and that they have enabled Presbyters to know each other more deeply and with greater understanding of each other's issues, as well as for congregations to share good news stories.

### **The Presbytery Plan**

The Presbytery has taken the opportunity of the ministerial flux of current and expected vacancies to assist the Presbytery Plan and thoroughly review it going forward. The Presbytery has responded very quickly to the Council of Assembly report at General Assembly and over 100 members from every local congregation took the opportunity to attend an Away Day led by Rev Rosemary Frew, Convenor of the Governance Committee, to consider next steps in the planning. We were impressed with the willingness of the Presbytery to engage so thoroughly and quickly.

### **Collaboration with other Presbyteries**

Borders Council Area is served by Melrose and Peebles, along with Duns and with Jedburgh Presbyteries. Cross Presbytery representatives are appointed to the Borders Council's Education Committee as well as to the appropriate NHS body. Such collaboration is of benefit, but there may be scope for further co-working in areas of mutual benefit. We recommend further exploration of collaboration with neighbouring Presbyteries particularly in relation to imaginative use of the 5% scheme.

We were pleased to hear that Melrose and Peebles is open to using the 5% scheme creatively to equip ministers and congregations for mission, including in the exploration of a retreat for ministers in charges.

### **Meeting Sunday needs**

We note that the current and expected level of vacancies is a problem that will not get easier in the shorter term. There is only one reader in the Presbytery, although thanks to the 5% scheme that individual has been attached to a linked charge. It appears that congregations are ever more reliant upon retired ministers to fill pulpits. We were pleased that worship training is being taken seriously and would encourage the Presbytery in its training and appointment of local worship leaders and worship teams.

### **Buildings**

Buildings continue to be both a blessing and a burden for many Presbyteries, and deeply felt issues arise. The Presbytery is aware of this and is seeking ways whereby congregations are enabled to take ownership of any decisions regarding necessary changes to the number and use of buildings. We would encourage the Presbytery to take every opportunity for advice and guidance from the General Trustees to enable congregations to assess their own building in the light of the needs of the church today. We

drew attention to the Way Forward Pilot Project in which Angus and neighbouring Presbyteries have worked closely with the General Trustees and benefited from the interchange.

### **Age Profile**

The Presbytery is geographically large with travelling times significant. With meetings at 7.00pm this can mean younger presbyters who work can find attendance difficult. The effect is that Presbytery Elders tend to be older and retired from secular employment. This is not a problem unique to Melrose and Peebles, but it does raise a more general question. If we are concerned at missing generations in church life, how can we enable them to participate more fully? There is no criticism of the Presbytery here, but it is a question that it is important that we ask. If Melrose and Peebles find an answer then we would request that they share it more widely.

### **Clerks**

We did raise a question about the support available to the Clerks, particularly the Presbytery Clerk and were pleased to hear that that was under consideration.

### **Going Forward**

It is not for the visitors to provide solutions to the challenges that have been highlighted, far less impose any, however we do hope that the exercise of preparing the material and reflecting upon it will have provided a useful springboard to developing the life and witness of the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles, not only as Presbytery but in and through its constituent congregations. We are impressed at the reflection that has already taken place and even more that this thinking has resulted in significant change being implemented and greater engagement encouraged. Of course, nothing stands still and we all require an openness to continually reassess the context in which we minister and look for the guidance of God in seeking to implement his purposes. While you are intent on ensuring that the governance aspects of a Presbytery's responsibilities are properly attended to we concur that you are right in putting the focus on the support and encouragement of your congregations especially in outreach.

You encourage your congregations to share Good News stories with the rest of the Presbytery but it strikes us that you might helpfully share some of your Presbytery's Good News stories with other Presbyteries – your neighbours and beyond.

Rev Peter Phillips  
Rev Dr Ian A McLean  
Presbytery of Angus  
August 2018

# MISSION AND SERVICE COMMITTEE

## Report to Presbytery December 2018

### 1. PURPOSE

To report on Study Leave requests and Presbytery activities associated with the 2018 Year of Young People.

### 2. STUDY LEAVE

2.1 The Rev Julie Rennick seeks the approval of Presbytery for Study Leave over two weeks, 6 – 19 March 2019, to attend the NEXT Church Conference in Seattle, USA on the interweaving relationship between Ruth and Naomi followed by time with Southminster Presbyterian Church in Boise, Idaho, USA. This Study Leave application has been approved and fully funded by the National Scheme.

2.2 The Rev Elspeth Harley seeks Study Leave from 4 - 18 February 2019 in order to increase her understanding of the issues of homelessness and alcoholism and how Christian organisations in Edinburgh are assisting people who are homeless or have alcohol problems. This study will help to identify ways of applying knowledge gained to ministry in Galashiels through reading and contact with homeless people in Edinburgh and in Galashiels. Costs of pulpit supply and travel amount to £350.

### 3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 This Scottish Government led campaign aimed to inspire Scotland through its young people, celebrating their achievements, valuing their contribution to communities and creating new opportunities for them to shine locally, nationally and globally. In May 2016 The General Assembly agreed to 'encourage Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to participate in the 'Year of Young People' as an opportunity for the Kirk to engage with young people.'

3.2 In December 2016 Presbytery agreed to give favourable consideration to participating in the 2018 Year of Young People by inviting Kirk Sessions to nominate a 'Year of Young People' contact person. Young people were to be an equal part of any Working Group formed. Presbytery approved a planning budget of up to £2,500 for 2017 from the Ministry and Mission Fund with a detailed programme and costs reported to Presbytery in November (£2,500 carried forward + £1,970)..

3.3 Neither the Working Group nor the Kirk Session nominated contact person proved practical. However, six events were planned to take place across the Scottish Borders throughout 2018/19, in collaboration with Jedburgh and Duns Presbyteries. The events were divided into two themes – the first 'Understanding Young People' followed by 'Celebrating Young People'.

3.4 In March 2018 an interim progress report on the six events was presented to Presbytery.

### 4. THE SIX EVENTS

4.1 In May 2018, in partnership with Scottish Borders Council, a **Conference for School Chaplains and School Managers**, with responsibility for chaplaincy and Time for Reflection, attracted 58 school staff and 21 ministers and church youth workers as part of ecumenical chaplaincy teams. The programme was led by Baptist Minister the Rev. Dr. Steve Younger and chaired by Mr. Ian Topping the Church of Scotland Representative on the Scottish Borders Council committee responsible for education. The budget set aside for this event was £400. All costs (c. £1,500) were met by Scottish Borders Council.

4.2 During the June 2018 'Presbytery Away Day' – held in partnership with Scripture Union Scotland – 34 ministers and elders participated in discussing and learning from the

American research which led to the course '**Growing Young**'. This interesting programme provided insight to accommodating the interests and spiritual needs of young people including how to welcome young people back to church. The budget set aside for this event was £70; actual costs £65.

4.3 In August 2018, 8 young people from **Malawi** and 1 from **Lebanon** visited the Borders to spend time with those of a similar age. In addition to welcomes across Presbytery the visitors visited Lindisfarne, the Youth Assembly, Scottish Parliament and Blantyre and enjoyed locally hosted social occasions often in the company of young people of a similar age. Scottish Borders Council provided a civic reception. The budget of £7,250 from the Ministry and Mission Fund – together with donations from other sources – met all of the costs associated with the visit (£16,250).

4.4 In November, Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies staff from all nine Secondary Schools were introduced to **The God Question** DVD series with a view to holding in 2019 an area or region wide gathering of senior students; in collaboration with Jedburgh and Duns Presbyteries, secondary schools and the Church of Scotland Representative on the Scottish Borders Council committee responsible for education. The budget set aside to provide copies of the DVD series with teacher and student guides and a central gathering was £2,500. To date £920 has been spent on the much appreciated resources. The balance may be spent in support of the central gathering plus additional copies of the study guide.

4.5 As yet at an early stage an event based on the BBC '**Question Time**' format, with young people on the panel and in the audience, is under consideration. £500 was set aside for this event.

4.6 Discussions could be held now with young people currently or previously associated with the church on how their contribution to the work of the church might be celebrated near Easter 2019. £1,000 was set aside for this event.

4.7 In addition to the Presbytery sponsored programme churches held special services on the theme of young people some based on the Church of Scotland Toolkit.

## 5. BUDGET

The £7,250 for the Malawi visit was fully committed. Of the £4,470 for the other five events only £985 has been spent. Presbytery approved initial funding of £2,500 in 2017 which was carried forward into 2018 plus £1,970 to meet the anticipated overall costs of £4,470. These funds may be required in 2019 to contribute to The God Question gathering, the debate and the 2019 celebration event – all yet to be confirmed. These figures may require confirmation from the Property and Finance Committee.

## 6. DELIVERANCE:

6.1 Presbytery receives the report.

6.2 Presbytery approves the request from the Rev Julie Rennick for Study Leave from 6 – 19 March 2019.

6.3 Presbytery approves the request including funding for the Rev Elspeth Harley's Study Leave from 4-18 February 2019.

6.4 Presbytery notes the actual costs and the balance of funding for the Year of Young People programme.

6.5 Presbytery requests that the Property and Stewardship Committee confirms the funds set aside for the continuation of the 'Year of Young People' events into 2019.

6.6 Presbytery invites Kirk Sessions to consider a Presbytery 'celebration' event for young people around Easter 2019 and to forward ideas to the Mission and Service Convener.