

INNERLEITHEN 5 DECEMBER 2017. At Innerleithen Church on Tuesday the fifth day of December 2017, the Presbytery met at 7pm and, in the absence of the Moderator, was constituted in prayer by the former Moderator, Rev M Steele.

SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES: There were present 14 ministers and 22 elders whose names were recorded in the attendance book. Apologies were also recorded in the book.

MINUTES: The minute of the meeting of 7 November 2017 was submitted and approved.

PRESENTATION OF READERS AND CANDIDATES: Rev J Rennick, Training and Supervision Co-ordinator, presented Mrs Margaret Cashman and Mrs Frances Selkirk, Readers. Rev Barry Hughes and Ms Rachel Wilson, Candidates for the national ordained Ministry of Word and Sacrament, were unable to attend but hoped to be present at the February meeting. Presbytery noted that Mrs Cashman was now retiring from active service as a Reader, and conferred upon her the status of Reader Emeritus. The Moderator, in the name of Presbytery, thanked the Readers for their invaluable service, and wished all Candidates well in their ministry training.

SPEAKER – MR TOM BURNHAM: Mr Burnham made a presentation on some of the challenges faced by refugees in Lebanon and on the work of the church in that country to support refugees. Lebanon is a tolerant area within the Middle East, with each of the main faith groups represented in Parliament. However, the increasing number of refugees coming into Lebanon is creating a burden on the state, and churches are working hard to help refugees. For example, the Presbyterian Church in Lebanon is running schools for Muslim refugee children, up to the age of 11. This work is in part supported by the Church of Scotland World Mission Council, and Earlston Church within our Presbytery has recently established a twinning with a congregation in Lebanon. Mr Burnham suggested some ways in which members of Presbytery can help, including by supporting the proposed visit of two young Lebanese people to the Youth Assembly in August 2018, speaking up for Middle Eastern refugees in Scotland, speaking out against any proposals for the invasion of Lebanon and going to visit Lebanon if the opportunity arises. On behalf of Presbytery, the Moderator thanked Mr Burnham for his presentation.

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

BUSINESS COMMITTEE: Rev Calum Macdougall, Convener, presented the report of the Business Committee. Presbytery received the report.

1. Presbytery noted that its current Presbytery Plan was adopted in 2013, that the last annual review of the Plan took place in May 2017 and that its five-year review is due in 2018. Out of the 14 charges within the Presbytery, there are currently six charges which are either vacant (or soon to be vacant) or in respect of which the Plan has been suspended or where the review period for the charge is complete (or soon to be complete or may be brought forward). Presbytery agreed that the current Presbytery Plan be suspended (under Act VII 2003, section 9(1)) and the five-year review of the Plan be brought forward a few months and instructed the Clerk to notify Ministries Council of this decision. Presbytery remitted to the Governance Committee the undertaking of such a review of the Plan, the Governance Committee to report to Presbytery by the March meeting. This will allow a systematic review of the Plan to be undertaken rather than dealing on a piecemeal basis with the current vacancies and reviews. Such review will not affect the status of ministers in unrestricted charges or charges which have already been given permission to call a minister under the existing Plan.
2. Presbytery noted that it will soon be appointing commissioners to attend the next General Assembly (19-25 May 2018); if any elders in congregations within Presbytery are interested in attending (other than to accompany their minister under the usual attendance rota), either in 2018 or future years, please could they let the Clerk know.

AFTER A BREAK IN THE MEETING FOR TEA/COFFEE, PRESBYTERY RESUMED.

DISCUSSION TOPIC – NATIONAL PRESBYTERY REVIEW PILOT: Rev J Rennick, Assistant Clerk, introduced the discussion topic which arose out of the pilot scheme for a national Presbytery Review, in which our Presbytery is participating. Members of Presbytery discussed the following topics in small groups: “Please set out your shared vision for the future”, “How might our communities change in the years ahead?” and “How do you see the development of Presbytery Planning in future years?”.

GOVERNANCE: Rev Rosie Frew, Convener, presented the report of the Governance Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery noted the Governance Committee’s report on the two matters (Bases of Union/Linking, and Safeguarding) remitted to it by Presbytery in terms of the General Assembly Remits Booklet 2017. Presbytery appointed the following visiting teams for Local Church Reviews in 2018:

EARLSTON:

Ministers: Rev Bruce Lawrie and Rev Janice Faris
Elders: Mrs Fran Selkirk and Ms Susan McDonald

EDDLESTON I/w PEEBLES OLD:

Ministers: Rev Rosie Frew and Rev Milton Cashman
Elders: Mr John Henderson and Mrs Margaret Cashman

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GALASHIELS: OLD AND ST PAUL'S l/w GALASHIELS: ST JOHN'S
Ministers: Rev Margaret Steele and Rev Malcolm Jefferson
Elders: Miss Linda White and Mr David Brackenridge

Presbytery appointed the following visiting teams for Interim Reviews in 2018:

CADDONFOOT l/w GALASHIELS: TRINITY
Minister: Rev Pamela Strachan
Elder: Col Andrew Campbell

UPPER TWEEDDALE (Broughton, Glenholm and Kilbucho l/w Skirling l/w Stobo and Drumelzier l/w Tweedsmuir):
Minister: Rev Sheila Moir
Elder: Mrs Sandra Thomas

PROPERTY AND STEWARDSHIP: In the absence of the Convener, Mr Fraser Simm presented the report of the Property and Stewardship Committee. Presbytery received the report. Presbytery approved a £5,500 rebate for 2018 in their Ministry and Mission contributions to the parishes of Maxton and Mertoun l/w Newtown l/w St Boswells, to be paid as in 2017. Presbytery approved a £3,744 rebate for 2018 in their Ministry and Mission contributions to Galashiels: St John's. Presbytery asked members to pass on to Congregational Treasurers the information about a support fund and about the possibility of sharing Treasurers.

INTIMATIONS:

1. Statistics forms will be sent out shortly to all Kirk Sessions and must be returned to the Assistant Clerk by 31 January 2018.
2. The next issue of the Presbytery Prayer Diary is being prepared and copies will be sent out by email with some copies available at Presbytery to collect.
3. Reminder - Duns Presbytery has invited the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles to participate in its conference day on Saturday 3 February 2018, at which the speaker will be Rev Peter Neilson. Further details will be provided in due course.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. From Ettrick and Yarrow Church – Presbytery granted permission to Ettrick and Yarrow Church not to hold its usual diet of worship on the morning of Sunday 24 December 2017, in order to hold a Christmas Eve service instead at 6pm.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, the Presbytery adjourned to meet on Tuesday 6 February 2018 at 7pm in Innerleithen Church for Ordinary Business, of which public intimation was made, and the *sederunt* was closed with prayer.

Moderator

Clerk