

MELROSE AND PEEBLES PRESBYTERY

REPORT FROM MISSION AND SERVICE COMMITTEE - October 2019

WORLD MISSION

1. Visit to Malawi

Plans for this visit are in an advanced state. The group will leave on Thursday 10th October, returning Saturday 19th October. There are 7 in the group from Melrose and Peebles Presbytery, and 2 from Biggar High School. Biggar High School have a developing link with Thondwe and the 2 places are being funded externally. The following are the participants on the visit,

Denis Robson (Presbytery and group leader)
Pamela Strachan (Presbytery)
Peter Coom (Presbytery)
Eve Hartswood (Stow and Heriot)
David Coom (Stow and Heriot)
David Kerr (ITW)
Joanne Gordon(ITW)
Monica McGee (Biggar)
Catriona Campbell (Biggar)

The Group applied for 2 places for representatives from St Andrews Leckie lw Lyne & Manor but unfortunately they had to pull out and the grants could not be transferred to another church.

The flight costs for the visit have been met by the national Church but all other costs will be met by the participants. This is estimated to be no more than £500 per person. In view of the short time period and summer holidays, we seek Presbytery approval to give a loan facility to the group so they can, if necessary, fundraise on their return. This loan facility would extend to 31st December.

During the visit, there will be opportunities to not only visit but stay with members of their partner churches. Our Malawi friends have been working hard in drawing up a programme which will be full and varied. The programme includes a formal signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

2. Memorandum of Understanding (see Appendix)

This has been agreed by both committees and now requires Presbytery to formally agree the Memorandum.

3. Midwife Training

We are pleased to report that the Zomba Nursing School reopened on Monday 16th September and classes resumed the following Monday. This means that Limbikani has now entered his third and final year of tuition. We have not yet received the invoice for this but funds are available.

4. Geoffrey Matias

We have had a good response for sponsoring Geoffrey and the World Mission Group would like to thank everyone who has either given or promised to give, it is all appreciated. There have been developments, however, which slightly alter previous arrangements. Geoffrey

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wrote at the end of August that he had been offered a 6 month research nurse internship on a program run by the Malawi College of Medicine (Malaria Alert Centre). This offers as he says “a unique opportunity to increase my knowledge and experience in my current field.” Denis Robson and Fiona Burnett encouraged him to take up the post, which is funded, as it gives him additional qualifications and experience for his chosen career. Geoffrey will finish at the end of February. Parallel to this development, Denis Robson had a conversation with Ruth Shakespeare from Mulanje Mission Hospital. This hospital has been supported in the past by the Church of Scotland and is approximately 100km from Zomba. According to its website it is a “220 bedded hospital providing a full range of medical, surgical and paediatric services. Together with the adjacent College of Nursing, MMH has become well known for its high standards of care, under the governance of Blantyre Synod of the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian (CCAP).”

The idea being discussed with the hospital is that they take on Geoffrey as a member of staff and we pay a proportion of his salary for a number of years yet to be confirmed. He would be treated as a full staff member and receive all the benefits of such appointment. At the end of that period there would be discussion on future plans but Presbytery would not be committing itself to anything beyond the initial contract. The number of years would depend on the money given or pledged by February 2020. This is still very much in the discussion stage but if it was possible it would a) give Geoffrey some stability and b) allow us to assist a CCAP mission hospital in their staffing.

5. Deliverance

- 1) Presbytery notes that the following people will be visiting Zomba presbytery in October: Denis Robson (Presbytery and group leader), Pamela Strachan (Presbytery), Peter Coom (Presbytery), Eve Hartswood (Stow and Heriot), David Coom (Stow and Heriot), David Kerr (ITW), Joanne Gordon (ITW), Monica McGee (Biggar), Catriona Campbell (Biggar)
- 2) Presbytery notes that Faithshare grants have been provided by the Church of Scotland for seven of the nine travellers which will cover their cost of international travel plus insurance. The two from Biggar High School have their own funding.
- 3) Presbytery agrees that the remaining costs for local travel and accommodation can be settled by the Presbytery treasurer and recharged to each traveller. This is expected to come to no more than £4,500 (i.e £500 per head) and will be charged to each traveller in advance but with settlement extended to the end of the year, so that any balance remaining into 2020 will be very small.
- 4) Presbytery thanks Denis Robson and the Zomba Presbytery for all their hard work in organising this visit and undertakes to support the group through prayer.
- 5) Presbytery agrees the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 6) Presbytery notes with pleasure the resumption of the Zomba Nursing School and the resumption of classes and that Limbikani is now in his third and final year of study.
- 7) Presbytery notes the ongoing discussions with Mulanje Mission hospital regarding funding of a Midwife post at the hospital and instructs the Mission and Service Committee to bring a report to the February meeting.