I.

REPORT

OF THE

ASSEMBLY ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

The Committee met in February 2010 to consider items relating to the forthcoming General Assembly, in particular the following:

1. Representation of Presbyteries in the General Assembly

   The Committee decided that Presbytery representation at the Assembly, based on one third representation, be as follows, and Presbyteries were notified accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>No. of Qualifying Charges</th>
<th>No. of Ministers Entitled</th>
<th>No. of Elders Entitled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh &amp; Perth</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow &amp; Argyll</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness, Loch. &amp; Ross</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skye &amp; Wester Ross</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Isles</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gt. Lakes &amp; W. Canada</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Moderator’s Reception, Accommodation and Lunches

   The Committee was informed by the Moderator Designate that he wished to use the facilities at the Free Church College for the Moderator’s Reception, although initially he had hoped that the Reception might be held in the Chaplaincy Centre. Consequently arrangements have been made for the College premises to be available. Lunches for Assembly personnel, delegates and observers over the three full days of the Assembly, have been booked at “Howies” restaurant in Victoria Street.

3. Assembly Programme

   The Committee was informed that the Church of Scotland General Assembly was due to begin on Wednesday 19th May 2010, which meant that the visit of the Lord High Commissioner to the Free Church Assembly would need to be scheduled for Thursday 20th as the only suitable day for the visit. Consequently arrangements have been made for the visit of the Lord High Commissioner to take place on Thursday 20th May at 2.45pm.

   Tearfund made a request for an opportunity to highlight their work at the Assembly. As Tearfund was well known and supported throughout the Church and as the Church had recently contributed to their Disaster Fund this year, the Committee agreed to recommend that Tearfund representatives be given the opportunity to address the Assembly. The Committee are recommending that they speak at the beginning of the afternoon sederunt at 2.00pm, prior to the Lord High Commissioner’s visit.

4. Remit from 2009 Assembly

   The 2009 General Assembly instructed the Committee to appoint a Working Party, comprising representatives of the Committee and of the Strategy Sub-Committee, to examine how the work of the General Assembly might be aligned to meet more closely the needs of the Church. Various proposals and ideas were considered by the Working Party and the Committee is now in a position to bring a set of proposals, as set out in the Proposed Deliverance, to the Assembly for their approval. The two most substantial matters being recommended are:

   (1) Reconstituting the Assembly Arrangements Committee and extending its remit so as to include the work done by the Business Committee and Bills and Overtures Committees of Assembly. It has been the practice for these two Committees to be appointed by the Assembly at the First Sederunt and then to meet immediately after adjournment. For some time this arrangement has not been satisfactory, chiefly because papers cannot be made available to these Committees until after they have been formally appointed. This gives very little time for a meaningful examination of papers by these Committees seeing they are required to report to the Assembly the next day. It also means that the Assembly programme cannot be given to Commissioners till after the Assembly has opened. Under the proposed changes a draft copy will be included along with Assembly papers sent to Commissioners ahead of the Assembly.
This will also be true of papers in addition to Committee and Board Reports so that Commissioners will be able to read these in advance of coming to the Assembly.

While this means that not all members of this Committee as proposed will be members of the Assembly every year, the Assembly Arrangements Committee did not see this as an obstacle. On the contrary, the fact that the proposed Committee comprises Clerks of Assembly, Synods and Presbyteries should mean that the Committee will already have a working knowledge of how to examine and process the various types of papers which come before the Assembly annually.

(2) Having discussion sessions during the Assembly in addition to the formal debates. This was a major consideration arising out of the consultation with members of Strategy and it was agreed in the consultation that this proposal would be of considerable benefit to the Assembly, not least to Commissioners less familiar with formal procedure. The intention here is to give prolonged consideration in a more informal way to items specified by the Committees and Boards of the Church in their Reports as being of importance. The discussions ought to be seen as a measure designed to lessen the tension sometimes occasioned by the presentation of proposals and counter proposals in the formal sessions of the Assembly. The discussion sessions will be chaired by the Moderator who will have discretion to decide on how these sessions will be conducted. In order to facilitate these discussions and to better prepare Commissioners coming to the Assembly the Committee is recommending that Committees and Boards highlight items in their annual Reports which they consider require substantive consideration.

The Committee also considers that Presbyteries ought to be encouraged to report to the Assembly through an appropriate Committee or Board on such matters as their strategy on evangelism and youth work. While the Proposed Deliverance does not call for this to be made mandatory the Committee nevertheless believes that such information from Presbyteries would be of interest and benefit to the wider Church and would also help to overcome the perceived gap between Presbyteries and the General Assembly.

5. Election of Moderator Designate On information from the Assembly Clerk, the Committee is recommending a scheme for the annual election of the Moderator Designate, thereby adjusting the existing legislation (Act V, Class II, 1938) to give a more defined structure to the process of election. The details are set out in the Proposed Deliverance.

6. The Reformation in Scotland – Commemoration The Committee is recommending that an item commemorating the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland be included in the Assembly programme. Arrangements have been made to include this at a suitable juncture.

7. Other The Committee continues to be grateful to Rev. William M. Mackay for acting as Hospitality Coordinator, to Mr. John Scoales for his work as Assembly Officer, to Mrs Sharon Fraser for her contribution to producing the Assembly reports and for making arrangements for Assembly delegates, to the Offices staff for the processing of items relating to the Assembly, to Alistair Oliver and Becky Robertson for their supervision of the sound system and related technology, and to the students and others who share duties at the doors.

DOUGLAS MACKEDDIE, Convener
KENNETH M. FERGUSON, Vice Convener

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Committee on Assembly Arrangements, and thank the Committee, especially the Convener.

2. The General Assembly thank the Committee for its work in attending to the various arrangements required for the running of the Assembly, in particular the arrangements for delegates, hospitality, lunches and transport.

3. The General Assembly, with a view to the more efficient ordering of the business of the Assembly, reconstitute the Assembly Arrangements Committee and extend its remit to include the functions hitherto carried out by the Business Committee and the Bills and Overtures Committee of Assembly. The Committee shall be appointed by the General Assembly annually on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee and shall consist of the Principal Clerk of Assembly, the Assistant Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator and past Moderator of the Assembly, the Clerks of home Synods and Presbyteries, and the Moderator-designate of the General Assembly who shall become a member of the Committee following the announcement of his acceptance of nomination. The Committee shall have powers to appoint their own Convener and Vice-Convener from their own membership. The Convener and
Vice-Convener shall be appointed by the Committee at their meeting to be held not later than the last day of April each year to ensure that both are among the elected Commissioners to the following Assembly and shall hold office for a year. The Principal Clerk of Assembly shall be Clerk of the Committee. The Committee shall also have powers to appoint an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

3.1 The General Assembly appoint the Committee to meet not later than the last day of April each year, in order to give sufficient time for the Committee’s annual Report to the General Assembly to include a draft programme and all papers recommended to be passed into the Assembly. At this meeting the Committee shall formulate a programme of business for the Assembly, after giving due consideration to the following:

1. the number of Reports from Committees and Boards and the length of time thought to be required for each, taking account of which Reports or sections of Reports should be the subject of less formal discussion;
2. the periods of informal discussion rather than formal debate that the Assembly may wish to take up;
3. all other items of business due to come before the Assembly and estimated time thought to be required for each;
4. the number of delegates expected at the Assembly;
5. any Appeals, Dissents and Complaints, Overtures, Petitions or References or any other cases coming to the Assembly from the inferior courts.

3.2 The Committee shall present its Report at the First Sederunt of the Assembly. This Report shall be included with other Reports of Boards and Committees issued in advance to Assembly commissioners.

3.3 All Commissions shall be sent by Clerks of their respective Presbyteries so as to be in the hands of the Clerk of the General Assembly not later than one week before the meeting referred to in 3.1 above. The Assembly Clerk shall give due notice to the Clerks of Presbyteries of the date of the meeting to facilitate this. The Assembly Clerk shall report on all Commissions and Elders’ Certificates to the Committee when it meets and the Committee shall examine these Commissions and Certificates and include an item on them in its report. All Commissions and Certificates outstanding at the opening of the Assembly shall be reported to the Assembly by the Assembly Clerk at the First Sederunt.

3.4 All Overtures, Petitions and Papers (other than Committee and Board Reports) from Synods and Presbyteries intended to be transmitted to the Assembly as in 3.5 above shall be in the hands of the Assembly Clerk not later than 15th April in each year. The Clerk of Assembly shall lay such papers before the Committee and parties concerned shall be in attendance at the meeting. The Committee shall report to the First Sederunt of the General Assembly on the receivability of the documents. In the event of the Committee resolving not to receive a particular document, the parties concerned shall have a right of appeal against the finding of the Committee to the General Assembly.

3.5 In addition to the foregoing meeting the Committee shall meet at a suitable date after the General Assembly for the purpose of receiving the Moderator’s Report and disposing of matters relating to the Committee’s Budget for the ensuing year. The Committee shall also meet in January to make preliminary arrangements for the forthcoming General Assembly. The Committee shall meet at other times as may be required.

3.6 The General Assembly direct that, beginning at the 2011 Assembly, discussion sessions be held during the Assembly in addition to formal debate, on the recommendation of the Assembly Arrangements Committee. The Committee shall make its recommendations at the First Sederunt through its Report to the Assembly. All commissioners shall be expected to attend these discussion sessions. While no formal proposal or motion may be presented at these sessions the discussion ought nevertheless to give prolonged consideration to the items specified by the Assembly.

3.7 The General Assembly instruct Committees and Boards to highlight with an asterisk items in their annual Reports which they consider require substantive debate, in order to assist the Assembly Arrangements Committee with its recommendations about discussion sessions and to aid commissioners in their preparations for the Assembly. This shall not preclude any commissioner asking questions about, or speaking to, other items in reports.

3.8 The General Assembly instruct the Assembly Arrangements Committee to produce a small booklet dealing with report compilation and processing, this to be produced and circulated to all Boards and Committees in time for their compilation of reports to the 2011 General Assembly.
3.9 The General Assembly authorise Presbyteries to provide information timeously to Standing Committees or Boards on such matters as evangelism and youth work as they deem to be of importance to the wider Church, for incorporation into their annual Assembly Reports.

4. The General Assembly direct that Standing Orders, Sections II-IV, be amended so as to incorporate the changes set out in paragraph 3 and sub-paragraphs above.

5. The General Assembly appoint a Special Committee, consisting of the Conveners and Vice-Conveners, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Standing Committees and Boards, along with the retiring Moderator as Convener, to nominate a Moderator of the next General Assembly. They instruct the Assembly Clerk to prepare a list of all Ministers of the Free Church of Scotland of at least twenty years’ standing who are members of Presbyteries or are serving with the International Missions Board and who have not previously indicated they do not wish to be considered for the office of Moderator, and to circulate the list to each member of the Special Committee requesting that they mark the names on the said list in order of preference. When these lists are returned the Clerk shall (1) arrange the list in the order of preference expressed by members of the Special Committee; (2) approach the ministers whose names appear on the list in the order preferred until one indicates his willingness to accept office. This name shall then be submitted to the members of the Committee for their approval, and when so approved shall be publicly intimated to the Commission of Assembly appointed to meet in October for their approval.

6. The General Assembly thank the Committee for arranging to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the Reformation in Scotland at a suitable point in the Assembly programme.

7. The General Assembly thank Rev. William M. Mackay for his diligence as Hospitality Coordinator for the Assembly.

8. The General Assembly thank Mr John Scoales for his work as Assembly Officer. They also thank the Free Church College and Church Offices respectively for releasing Mr Scoales from his duties during the Assembly week.

9. The General Assembly thank the Free Church College for allowing the College premises to be used for the Moderator’s Reception.

10. The General Assembly thank Mrs Sharon Fraser for her contribution to producing the Assembly reports and for making arrangements for Assembly delegates, the Offices staff for the processing of items relating to the Assembly, Mr Alistair Oliver and Miss Becky Robertson for their supervision of the sound system and related technology, and all the students and others who have agreed to take on duties at the doors of the Assembly.
II.

REPORT
OF THE
ECUMENICAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee continues to fulfil its remit to develop relationships with other branches of the Church of Jesus Christ in the full persuasion that unity is not simply a promise but an objective requiring effort on our part. The question as to why the church is so fragmented in the world is a puzzling one, never more so than today when the gospel has reached more people in more cultures and nations than ever before. Furthermore, in an increasingly secularised world where the tide of public opinion appears to be stacked against the gospel, the believing church (and particularly the Reformed church) can ill afford to remain fragmented without good reason. Whilst each occasion in which the Free Church meets fraternally with others of like mind is a reminder of the many areas of agreement there are between Reformed denominations, these are also a rebuke and a reminder of the continuing scandal of division amongst those who subscribe to the Reformed faith. The Lord’s Prayer in John 17 for unity is often quoted within the context of ecumenical relations and yet the reality is far from us as we tolerate unacceptable reasons for the separation which often exists.

The Committee believes it is a New Testament mandate to seek, by all legitimate means, a greater understanding amongst the Lord’s people, with a view to greater cooperation and indeed union where possible, praying unashamedly that the Lord will one day unite His church around His infallible and inerrant word. One can only imagine what a different world it would be if such an objective was ever to become a reality.

Whilst the dream of one church remains in the realm of the hypothetical, and whilst there are significant theological differences which separate the church at large, it is harder to see why churches of a distinctively Reformed persuasion should remain in such a fragmented array. Perhaps we have lost sight of the unifying objectives behind the composition of the Westminster Confession which Robert Letham stresses in his recent book on the subject when, quoting Warfield, he says:

“The churches in the British Isles prized the support of other Reformed churches. They wanted to demonstrate their unity with them. Behind this lay a long history of interaction with continental churches and theologians, a commonality resulting from an almost seamless web of consensual theology” (The Westminster Assembly, pages 155 - 257).

If this was the thinking within the halls of Westminster, there is every reason why relentless effort should be made to rediscover this “seamless web of consensual theology” and create further organic and organisational unity between churches which subscribe to it.

1. **ICRC Conference Christchurch**

The International Conference of Reformed Churches as a world wide body of Reformed churches continues to be the central forum in which the Free Church finds theologically appropriate fraternal relationships. In October 2009, the quadrennial meetings of the ICRC were held in Christchurch, New Zealand and attended by around 70 delegates from all over the world. These included four from the Free Church of Scotland: Rev. James Maciver, Rev. Alex Macdonald, Rev. Kenneth Ferguson and Rev. M. Iver Martin. Day time sessions, under the chairmanship of Rev. Bruce Hoyt of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand and which tended to be business orientated, took place in the Holiday Inn, Christchurch, whilst the evening sessions as well as evening meals were held in Bishopdale Reformed Church.

There were excellent presentations given on the theme chosen for the conference: “The Vitality of the Reformed Faith”. Delegates, together with a large number of visitors each evening, heard stimulating speeches which occasioned lively discussion. Dr George W. Knight III of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, spoke on “Facing the Challenges of the Charismatic Movement”; Dr Nelson D. Kloosterman of the United Reformed Churches in North America, gave a paper on “Facing the Challenge of Individualism in Church Life”; Rev. P. Frank van Dalen of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, spoke on “Facing the Challenge of Islam”; and Dr Mohan Chacko of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of India, spoke on “Facing these Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Context”.

The ICRC admitted five new federations into its membership, including the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC), the Independent Reformed Church of Korea (IRCK), the Reformed Churches of Brazil (RCB – IRB), and the Reformed Presbyterian Church of India (RPCI). Whilst these churches were
admitted, an additional four federations had their membership applications held in abeyance until the next meeting of the ICRC when it is hoped all the criteria for membership will have been met. The Free Church delegates were unashamedly gratified by the undertaking given by the FCC delegates that their application was submitted as a separate denomination, thus, we assume, effectively relinquishing their long standing claim to be the Free Church of Scotland.

Membership of the ICRC now stands at 30 churches with the next conference scheduled to take place in Wales in 2013. One cannot help sensing the enormous potential there is within this body of churches particularly in terms of the support that could be given to a host of missionary and church planting opportunities. However, one cannot help at the same time, feeling a sense of frustration that, whilst such opportunities exist, the body is inefficient and weighed down with its own internal bureaucracy. We welcome therefore, the establishment of a “committee of review” which was set up last year to reassess whether the ICRC is working as well as it should and what steps could be taken to improve its effectiveness.

2. EuCRC Conference Edinburgh  

Under the auspices of the International Conference of Reformed Churches a third European regional conference was held in the Edinburgh Conference Centre from 17th to 19th March 2010, under the rubric ROUTE (Reaching Out Unitedly To Europe). Rev. Dr Richard Pratt was the main speaker, with Rev. David Meredith and Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell also contributing a lecture and closing sermon respectively. The main emphasis, as in the previous two conferences, was on evangelism and theological education. A great deal of information had been gathered since the previous conference by Rev. David Miller who presented a report on the location and nature of enterprises in evangelism and church planting currently carried out throughout Europe.

The uptake of places by people from Churches in Scotland, including the Free Church, was disappointing with significantly fewer representatives than attended from Churches in the Netherlands and other parts of the European mainland. Around 70 delegates attended the two main days of the Conference, representing Reformed Churches in Sweden, the Ukraine, Holland, Romania, Scotland, Italy, Belgium, Slovakia, Russia, Lithuania, Ireland, Croatia, Serbia, and Switzerland, with one delegate from India using all his savings to get to the Conference!

Dr Pratt spoke of the challenges posed by the disintegration of Christian culture, the changes introduced by immigration and the growth of other religions, and the decline within the churches. As Reformed Churches we have not risen to the challenges very well. Our response needs to draw on the examples of Christ and the apostles. In his second lecture, Dr Pratt focussed on theological education, highlighting the facts of young people growing up in a multi-ethnic society, the expense of theological education, and the challenge of churches requiring their leaders to have theological training, although these Churches are reducing in size. It is important that we emphasise training, but it needs to be affordable and accessible.

Rev. David Meredith spoke on “Can Conservative Churches Grow?” focusing on the transition from the Jerusalem church to the Antioch church, the latter being the church which reached out to the Gentiles. Dr Iain D. Campbell preached an excellent sermon on 2 Corinthians 4:7 - “but we have this treasure in jars of clay” - which was stimulating, challenging, informative and reassuring. Audio recordings of all three speakers are available from the Clerk.

Other sessions included a plenary dialogue between Rev. David Robertson, Dundee, and Dr Stefan Paas of the Netherlands; a presentation on church planting work in Amsterdam; church and theological education in the Ukraine; and the combination of gospel proclamation and diaconal ministry in new church work in Holland. The Conference also attended a service of thanksgiving in Buccleuch and Greyfriars Free Church at which Rev. Alex MacDonald preached an excellent sermon from John 4:1-29, showing how Jesus was the perfect example of cross-cultural mission in his dialogue with the woman of Samaria.

The next Conference is due in two years time and Churches in the Ukraine are assessing whether it will be possible to hold it there. The Committee wish to commend the EuCRC Conference to all ministers and elders within the Church. It is imperative that Reformed Churches in Europe unitedly reach out to the millions of unevangelised people throughout.

2. Free Church and Church of Scotland  

Commissioners at the 2009 General Assembly will remember that a debate took place as to the wisdom of continuing the talks which had been regularly taking place between the Free Church and the Church of Scotland over a five year period. The debate was precipitated by the then ongoing and uncompleted question of whether an allegedly gay minister be inducted to a Church of Scotland charge. Our Assembly decided that, in view of the uncertainty over what the outcome might be, we would not take any action which might preclude the outcome. At the time same however, commissioners were assured that the Committee
would make an “appropriate” response in the event of the outcome being an unscriptural one. The Kirk’s decision is now legendary and the Committee subsequently felt that it had no alternative but to suspend the talks. It has informed this decision directly to our Church of Scotland colleagues. Inevitably, there has been disappointment felt and expressed by both parties. Interestingly though, the Church of Scotland has asked the Free Church of Scotland to submit comments on the question of human sexuality to the commission established by Macpake/Morrison to be brought to the 2011 Assembly. With help from Rev. Professor Donald M. MacDonald, the Clerk has forwarded material produced in recent years by the Public Questions Committee.

3. Other Church Relations

3.1 United Free Church Informal discussions continued between the Committee’s three representatives, Rev. Alasdair Macdonald, Rev. Angus Macrae and Rev. David MacPherson, and representatives of the United Free Church. The Committee is again asking the Assembly to agree that the discussions be continued between the two groups of representatives under the direction of the Committee.

3.2 Affinity Rev. David Meredith continues to represent the Committee and the Free Church on the Council of Affinity and is also Chairman of the Gospel Partnership team within Affinity. The Committee was thankful to learn in the course of the year, that Affinity appeared to have put the problems of 2008/2009, which involved not appointing Mr. Meredith to the Chairmanship of the Council, behind them. He informed the Committee that Affinity were on a more positive course and that the membership of the Free Church was considered to be important and valuable to the progress of the organisation.

3.3 International Presbyterian Church The Committee has held discussions with the International Presbyterian Church, London, through Rev. Paul Levy, Clerk to their Church Relations Committee, with a view to examining the possibility of fraternal relations with the Free Church. The discussions are not yet sufficiently advanced to bring proposals to this Assembly. The International Presbyterian Church already has very good relations with the Free Church congregations in London and Cobham.

2. Visits

2.1 PCA Assembly Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean attended the 2009 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA), as a delegate of the Free Church, and brought greetings. He also promoted Sing Psalms on behalf of the Psalmody Committee. The Committee is grateful to Dr. Maclean for his visit.

2.2 Baptist Union The Committee is grateful to Rev. Angus J. Howat who attended the opening session of the Baptist Union Assembly, at their invitation, in Glasgow in November 2009.

2.3 United Free Church The Committee is grateful to Rev. Alasdair Macdonald who attended the opening session of The United Free Church Assembly, at their invitation, in Perth in June 2009.

M. IVER MARTIN, Convener
KENNETH M. FERGUSON, Vice Convener

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations.

2. The General Assembly thank the Committee for its work in promoting the interests of the Free Church of Scotland and in seeking to maintain good relations with Churches and Christian organisations in the UK and abroad.

3. The General Assembly note with approval the Committee’s decision to suspend discussions with representatives of the Church of Scotland although they also regret the reasons which gave rise to their decision. They express their gratitude that the Free Church of Scotland were asked to submit material to the Church of Scotland’s Special Commission and thank Rev. Professor Donald MacDonald and the Clerk for forwarding materials to them. The General Assembly record their hope that the outcome of the Commission’s deliberations and report to the 2011 Church of Scotland General Assembly will be faithful to the teaching of scripture and thus glorifying to God.

4. The General Assembly note the ongoing meetings between representatives of the Committee and representatives of the United Free Church of Scotland. The General Assembly approve of further meetings between the two groups under the oversight of the Committee.
5. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Meredith for representing the Free Church on the Council of Affinity. They also note with thankfulness the progress that Affinity have made since last year.

6. The General Assembly thank Rev. M. Iver Martin, Rev. James Maciver, Rev. Alex J. MacDonald and Rev. Kenneth Ferguson for their attendance at the ICRC conference in Christchurch, New Zealand in October 2009. They note with thankfulness the increase in membership of the ICRC and also the establishment of a “committee of review”.

7. The General Assembly note with gratitude the successful EuCRC conference held in March 2010 in Edinburgh. They thank all from the Free Church who contributed to the conference by attendance and by helping with transport. They thank Rev. David Meredith and Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell for their lecture and sermon respectively and the Clerk, Mrs Sharon Fraser, Miss Louisa Young and Mrs Donna Maciver for their work in helping with the organising and administration of the conference. The General Assembly commend the ongoing work of the EuCRC, in particular, the emphasis and aim of cooperation in mission, evangelism and theological education throughout Europe.

8. The General Assembly thank Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean for his attendance at the 2009 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America.


10. The General Assembly thank Rev. Alasdair Macdonald for his attendance at the opening session of the United Free Church Assembly in June 2009.
III.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Over the past year, the Board of Trustees dealt with a variety of issues covering finance, policy, strategy, compliance and risk management. The Board continued to monitor the legal activities of the Free Church (Continuing). The Board is greatly assisted in its work by its Sub-Committees, namely the Finance Sub-Committee, the Compliance, Audit and Risk Management Sub-Committee, the Strategy Sub-Committee and the Legal Group.

(A) FINANCE

1. Financial Overview  At the time of writing, the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st December were under review by the Church’s auditors. The commentary below is based on draft figures although no substantive changes are anticipated. It is expected that final, audited accounts will be available for commissioners at the General Assembly.

2009 was a difficult year for the UK economy in general and the Church was not immune from the effects of the wider economic challenges. Income in the year fell by around £640,000 although around £560,000 of this was accounted for by sale of properties in 2008 while there were no property sales in 2009. Investment income was particularly badly affected with a significant reduction compared to the previous year. Congregational remittances lagged behind 2008 levels for much of the year but rallied in the final months to end only slightly down on the 2008 figure. Legacy income was around £100,000 for the year compared to £200,000 in 2008. Against this fall in income, expenditure was held at a level around £45,000 lower than in the previous year.

Non-cash items had a significant impact on the bottom line figure in the accounts which record a loss in excess of £330,000 for the year. The two major items at play are a substantial actuarial loss on the Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme (around £930,000) and an unrealised offsetting gain on the Church’s investment portfolio (around £475,000). The Pension Scheme loss stems from a revaluation of the liabilities of the Scheme by the Scheme Actuary with the use of more adverse actuarial assumptions. The gain on investments reflects the recovery of investment markets following the sharp falls in 2008. Separating out these non-cash items reveals a far more positive picture. Despite the reduction in income noted above and fears that the Church would record a shortfall for the year, the Board is pleased to report a cash surplus of around £130,000. It records its gratitude for the support of all contributors and its thankfulness to God for His provision.

The first quarter of 2010 has seen an increase of around 20% in the level of remittances to central funds compared to the same period in 2009. While this is an encouraging start under the new remittance system that came into operation from January 2010, it is too early to know whether this is indicative of a real improvement in the overall level of remittances or simply an improvement in cash flow resulting from monthly levying of ministry and administration costs. Further commentary on the new remittance system is provided in Section (B) of this report.

2. 2011 Budgets  As in previous years, the Board intends to make budget schedules available to committees and budget holders in advance of their first meetings following the General Assembly. Following a consultation exercise with committees, the Board will then draw up final recommendations for a balanced budget in light of anticipated income, and present these to the Commission of Assembly in October for final approval.

3. Stipend  In April 2009, the level of stipend was increased by £500 to £19,000. The Board was asked by the 2009 General Assembly to undertake a review of the Church’s financial position in October 2009 with a view to assessing whether or not funds could be made available to finance a further increase in stipend to be backdated to April. Following such a review, the Board concluded with regret that the Church’s finances did not allow for such an additional increase. However, in order to offset this somewhat, the Board agreed to accelerate the increase in stipend for 2010 from April to January. The revised stipend of £19,500 was included in the budget presented to the Commission of Assembly in October 2009 and became effective from 1 January 2010.

4. Pension Contributions  The Board, in conjunction with the Personnel Committee, keep the level of “employer” contribution to the Church’s Pension Scheme under review. The Board is grateful for the work of the
Personnel Committee in this area and following receipt of a report from the Committee, the Board recommends that the level of contribution be maintained at its current level of 10% of pensionable salaries.

5. **Legacies**  
The Board acknowledges with grateful thanks the following legacies received during 2009:

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<th>Legator</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Annie Jack</td>
<td>International Missions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jemima Macaskill</td>
<td>General Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret Urquhart</td>
<td>International Missions</td>
<td>53,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Adamson</td>
<td>International Missions</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
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<td>99,450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Investments**  
The performance of the General Trust and Pension Fund investment portfolios was monitored throughout the year by a Joint Investment Committee comprising the Finance Sub-Committee and the Pension Scheme Trustees. The funds themselves were managed by Brewin Dolphin. Following sharp declines in both funds during the previous year, 2009 witnessed a strong recovery for both funds in keeping with positive performance in markets in general. The performance of each fund during 2009 is noted below.

- **General Trust**  
The General Trust experienced strong growth during 2009, recovering much of the decline experienced in the previous year. The total value of the fund at 31st December 2009 was £3,737,504, representing a 22% rise compared to the same point in 2008. The income from the portfolio helped to fund the activities of the Church and, in some cases, produced income for congregations that had funds invested with the Board.

Performance has continued to improve in the first quarter of 2010 although commentators are somewhat cautious as a result of significant economic challenges ahead.

The value of each unit in the share pool increased in keeping with the increase in the value of the portfolio. Each unit was worth £4.02 in 2009. Interest on the capital sums held for the major funds and committees of the Church was distributed at 14.0p per unit.

- **Pension Fund**  
The Pension Fund also rallied strongly in 2009 and stood at £5,800,516 at the end of 2009. This again represented an increase of 22% compared to the previous year. The income on the fund was around £225,000. This income is reinvested in the fund by the Investment Managers. The Pension Fund has a similar outlook for 2010 as the General Trust and has experienced a similar improvement in its performance since the year end.

For accounting purposes, the Church is obliged, under the Financial Reporting Standards (FRS 17) to provide an updated valuation of the Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme assets and liabilities. Watson Wyatt, the Scheme Actuary, has carried out this valuation for the year ended 31st December 2009. This shows that the total assets of the Scheme (including bank cash deposits) were £5.927m, an increase of around £0.92m on the previous year. However, liabilities also increased and stood at £9.802m (£8.033m in 2008). The increase in liabilities resulted from a change in the actuarial assumptions used. The combined effect has been to increase the deficit in the Scheme on an FRS 17 basis to £3.875m, an increase of around £0.85m in the year.

7. **Colegio San Andres**  
Over the past few years, the Board has been exercised by the financial difficulties facing the Colegio San Andres and has reported its concerns to the General Assembly. This year, the Board is delighted to report that the progress made in 2008 continued in 2009 with the school recording a profit of £37,000 and seeing significant increases in student numbers. The Board commends the school’s headmaster, Mr Clive Bailey, and his staff for their achievements.

The 2009 General Assembly approved the constitution of a new governance regime for the school and tasked the Board with taking legal and regulatory advice in relation to the transfer of the assets and liabilities of the school to a new management association. Regrettably, the Board has been unable to progress this transfer as rapidly as it would have hoped on account of ongoing uncertainties surrounding legal action taken in Peru against the Church, the school and the former headmaster of the school. At present, the school’s legal exposure is bound up with that of the Church.
since it has no separate legal status of its own and does not own the school property. However, if control of the school was transferred to a new association, it would then have legal liability. If the assets were subsequently transferred, it is possible that these would be at risk. The Board continues to work with the Church’s Law Agent on this matter and an update is provided in Section (E) of this report.

The Board, the International Missions Board and the senior management of the school remain committed to the transfer of the school as soon as is practicable. To this end, and with a view to providing greater flexibility of timing, the Board agreed with a recommendation from the International Missions Board to make a slight modification to the constitution for the new association. The proposed change is designed to allow the association to be established prior to final resolution of the legal case if that was deemed to be appropriate. At present the Transitory Dispositions attached to the constitution envisage the assets of the school being transferred to the Association within 90 days of its establishment. It is proposed that this be amended to allow the Association to be established but to remove the obligation to transfer the assets within 90 days. The existing and proposed wordings are noted below:

Existing:

Within [90] days of the Constitution becoming effective, the Board of Trustees of the Free Church of Scotland, through its Nominees in Peru will convey to the Association title to the property in which the Colegio operates at Av. Petit Thouars 179, 144, 141, 145, Pasaje Hernan Velarde 152; 164, 174 and 132 (Santa Beatriz, Lima). Such conveyance being subject always to the other provisions of the Constitution and, in particular, those under Title Eleven.

Proposed:

**Once the Constitution becomes effective**, the Board of Trustees of the Free Church of Scotland, through its Nominees in Peru will convey to the Association title to the property in which the Colegio operates at Av. Petit Thouars 179, 144, 141, 145, Pasaje Hernan Velarde 152; 164, 174 and 132 (Santa Beatriz, Lima) **as soon as practicable**. Such conveyance being subject always to the other provisions of the Constitution and, in particular, those under Title Eleven.

The Board will continue to take advice in relation to legal and regulatory issues before proceeding with any transfer.

8. **Finance Manager**  
The Board is pleased to report the appointment of Mrs Catriona Cazaly to the role of Finance Manager. Mrs Cazaly took up her new position in August 2009 and brings to the role her extensive accounting experience in the health, charity and education sectors.

**(B) FINANCIAL POLICY**

A new system of congregational remittances and project fundraising came into operation from January 2010. Implementation of the new system occupied a considerable proportion of the time of the Board’s Finance Sub-Committee during the year. The Sub-Committee also dealt with a number of financial policy matters referred to it by the Board and kept congregational remittances and budgets under review.

1. **New Remittance System**  
A new system of congregational remittances for the Church was approved by the 2008 General Assembly. The new system seeks to place greater responsibility on local congregations to meet the costs of local ministry. It also seeks to promote better communication from the central Church and introduces a project fundraising element. Since its approval by the General Assembly, the Board and its Finance Sub-Committee have worked to ensure that implementation of the new system would be as smooth as possible. In particular, the Board has sought to provide guidance to Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees and to congregational treasurers in relation to the practical aspects of the new system. To this end, presentations were held in each Presbytery to outline the mechanics of the system including the basis of calculation of each of the levies and the procedures for completing and submitting remittance forms. The meetings were well attended with representatives of most congregations participating.

The Board also issued written guidance for Deacons’ Courts and congregational treasurers and produced a separate document for contributors to explain the new system. The Board hopes that these measures have helped the transition from the old system to the new. The Board is pleased to note that there has been a high level of compliance from congregations in the early months of operation.

A key element of the new remittance system involves project specific fundraising by the Home and International Missions Boards. The Boards have adopted a joint approach to this aspect of their remits, producing an information
leaflet on the various projects for which they are seeking support and conducting a series of presentations to congregations outlining the range of mission work in which the Church is engaged. The Board hopes that these efforts to communicate more widely on the work of the Church will encourage people to become more involved in this work whether that be through prayer support, financial support or in other practical ways.

As noted in Section (A) of this report, the first quarter of 2010 showed an encouraging increase in the level of remittances from congregations. However, the Board considers that it is too early to draw any conclusions as to whether this is indicative of an increase that will be sustained across the year or if it is simply a smoothing of cash flow resulting from the requirement placed on congregations to meet specific levies each month. While a smoother cash flow profile is welcome, the Board is hopeful that the increased transparency of the new system and the fundraising efforts of the Home and International Missions Boards will indeed translate into an overall increase in the funds available for the work of the Church.

2. **Manse Ownership** The Board was asked by the General Assembly to consider the current practice whereby ministers are required to live in manse accommodation. The Board took the view that, to some extent, this issue had become confused with the separate issue of retirement accommodation for ministers. The Board agreed that manses should continue to be regarded as an important base for pastoral ministry including the provision of hospitality and pastoral support. They also felt that a departure from the current principle of manse occupation would lead to financial and practical complications such as those associated with different housing market conditions in different areas.

3. **Retirement Accommodation** Having reached its conclusion in relation to manses, the Board asked its Finance Sub-Committee to consider options for dealing with concerns that ministers might have in relation to the provision of retirement accommodation. The Sub-Committee gathered information on practices in other denominations and took advice in relation to the options for “buy to let” mortgages. In addition, the Sub-Committee was made aware that the Personnel Committee had conducted a survey of ministers designed to assess the level of concern over this issue. At the time of writing, neither the Sub-Committee nor the Board had had an opportunity to review the results of this survey although it seems clear that a number of ministers are concerned about retirement accommodation and in particular, about the issue of housing provision in unforeseen circumstances. The Board considers that there are no easy solutions in this area but remains committed to exploring a range of options aimed at alleviating concern amongst ministers.

4. **Legacies** Acknowledging the importance of legacy income to the Church, the Board agreed to produce a leaflet encouraging contributors to consider a legacy to the Church when preparing their wills. This has now been produced and circulated to congregations for distribution.

5. **Allocation of Income to Funds & Grants Policy** The introduction of the new system of remittances where donations are being sought for specific purposes brought into sharper focus the need for a review of the Church’s policy in relation to allocation of income to funds and on making grants to third parties. An issue was highlighted with the practice operated in the past whereby, in some cases, donations for specific recipients were forwarded in addition to the budgeted grant for these recipients. This had the effect of leaving budgeted spend unfunded and expenditure running ahead of income.

The Board agreed that this problem needed to be addressed in a way that would promote a degree of certainty for both the Church and recipients of grants. To this end it was agreed that income and expenditure budgets should be set each year for each of the funds operated by the Church and that these budgets should include grants to third parties. On receipt, income would then be credited to the fund and expenditure, including on grants, would be incurred in line with the budget. Only if income was received for a purpose not covered by budgeted grants would it be passed on directly to the identified beneficiary. In cases where income for a specific purpose exceeds a budgeted grant, the Board would consult with the relevant committee or board to decide whether the surplus would be carried forward in the fund until the following year or, in the case of a pressing need, if it would be appropriate to make an additional grant. Where a fund is in deficit in any one year, the General Fund would be expected to cover the deficit for that year on the understanding that expenditure plans for future years would be reviewed in light of income levels.

**(C) STRATEGY**

The past year has seen the Strategy Sub-Committee continue to pursue the objectives set out in the three-year plan presented to the Commission of Assembly in October 2008. The Sub-Committee also held several scenario planning sessions to assess potential challenges for the Church in the coming years.

1. **Effectiveness of Presbyteries** The Commission of Assembly of October 2008 required Presbyteries to
review their manner of working and to report diligence on this matter to the Board of Trustees by February 2010. Rev. Derek Lamont oversaw this process within the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth and the results of this were sent to other Presbyteries in order to facilitate their response to this remit. The Board have not yet received reports from other Presbyteries and encourage responses as soon as possible.

2. **Diaconal Ministries** The same Commission of Assembly asked Presbyteries ‘to identify those Christian agencies engaged in diaconal ministry to needy people within the bounds of their Presbytery and to initiate or develop links between suitable diaconal ministries and congregations belonging to the Presbytery’ and to report diligence on this matter to the Board of Trustees by February 2010. Again, the Board wishes to remind Presbyteries of this remit in order that reports are submitted as soon as possible.

3. **Preaching Workshops** One of the most significant issues to arise out of the church wide strategy consultation held between 2005 and 2008 was a widespread dissatisfaction with the standard of communication in the denomination. This included preaching. The Glasgow and Argyll Presbytery sought to address this issue by running a preaching workshop led by Rev. Alex MacDonald and Rev. Alasdair I. Macleod. However a more comprehensive effort needs to be made and the Board has requested that the Board of Ministry take steps to provide support to ministers on this issue.

4. **Gospel Partnerships** The Commission of Assembly of October 2008 also encouraged Kirk Sessions to ‘seek opportunities for their congregations to work more closely with other like minded congregations in their locality.’ There is a model of local partnerships prevalent in England that draws local congregations of different denominations together for mission and outreach. These are exemplified by the South East Gospel Partnership which includes the Free Church congregation in Cobham (www.segp.org.uk) and the North West Gospel Partnership (www.northwestpartnership.com). There are also less formal partnership arrangements involving Free Church congregations in Scotland. For example, Bon Accord Free Church in Aberdeen is involved in the West Central Churches Fellowship in Aberdeen. The Board highlights these models of gospel partnership as a possible vehicle for implementing the remit.

5. **Scenario Planning** The Board asked the Strategy Sub-Committee to consider possible future scenarios as a way of informing strategy for the Church. In pursuit of this remit, the Sub-Committee undertook an exercise that sought to describe possible scenarios in relation to the economy, politics, demography, health, society and general culture. It considered how the Church should respond to anticipated developments in these areas and what changes might be needed in areas such as structures, skills, resources and people in order to allow an effective response. The Board hopes to revisit this topic based on the output from the work of the Sub-Committee with a view to developing more concrete action plans.

(D) **COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Board was assisted throughout the year by its Compliance, Audit and Risk Management (CARM) Sub-Committee and by the Church’s Compliance Officer, Mrs Muriel Macleod. The work of the Board in this area covered a range of topics.

1. **Governance** During the year, the Board undertook a review of its procedures and its remit and responsibilities. As part of this review, the Compliance Officer gave a presentation reminding Board members of their individual and collective duties and responsibilities under charity legislation. In light of these duties and responsibilities, the Board considered the manner in which it conducts its business. It was agreed that greater focus should be placed on substantive strategic issues facing the Church rather than on matters of detail. To this end, it was agreed that agendas for Board meetings should be increasingly shaped around the elements of its remit relating to strategy monitoring and coordination, objective setting, risk management, financial management and governance. In pursuit of this change of focus, the Board also agreed that the Chief Administrative Officer should be empowered in such a way that the Board would need to be consulted only on matters of principle or when major decisions are required. Otherwise, reports should be submitted to the Board on actions taken.

One of the issues highlighted by the review of duties and responsibilities was the need for trustees to be selected on the basis of individual skills relevant to their role. To this end, the Board believes that a skills audit is required in order to identify the skills required when nominations are sought for new members of the Board. The Board is keen to work closely with the Nominations Committee in this regard in order that Presbyteries are encouraged to consider skill requirements when making nominations. Clearly this is a matter for all committees and boards to consider when nominations are being sought for new members.

2. **Risk Management** A key aspect of the Board’s role is to manage the risks faced by the Church. This
does not mean that all risks should be eliminated but rather, that steps should be taken to examine where risks exist and to identify reasonable steps to mitigate these risks. During the year, the Board continued its oversight of risks in areas such as governance, financial, operational, regulatory and legal risks. The CARM Sub-Committee is tasked with keeping the Board’s Risk Register under review on an ongoing basis.

3. **Charity Trustee Duties and Responsibilities** During the year, the Compliance Officer prepared a guidance note on charity trustee duties and responsibilities. A copy of this document was circulated to all congregations for distribution to individual trustees.

4. **Data Protection** The Compliance Officer also developed a Data Protection Policy for use by congregations. A summary of the main aspects of the policy was circulated to all congregations with the full document being made available on the Church’s website.

5. **UK Border Agency** In the Board’s report to the 2009 General Assembly an overview was given of the steps that the Church needed to take to ensure compliance with the UK Border Agency’s (UKBA) new points-based immigration system. In keeping with the subsequent instruction of the General Assembly, an application for a Sponsor Licence was made to the UKBA. This application was successful thereby allowing the Church to issue Certificates of Sponsorship to non-EU nationals whom it wishes to employ.

6. **Health and Safety** In response to requests for support from several congregations, a series of guidance notes on a variety of health and safety issues were prepared by the Compliance Officer. At the time of writing, these were being pulled together in a pack for circulation to congregations.

7. **Protection of Vulnerable Groups** The CARM Sub-Committee has been monitoring developments in relation to the replacement of the system of disclosure checks for those working with children or adults at risk with a new membership scheme to be known as the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme). The new scheme is not yet in force and there remains uncertainty over some aspects of its implementation. The Board will keep the situation under review and will keep the wider church informed through the CARM Sub-Committee and the Compliance Officer.

**(E) LAW AND ADVICE**

1. **Legal Group Update** The Legal Group continued its work in support of local congregations dispossessed of their properties by the actions of the Free Church (Continuing). This involved the provision of support and advice to congregations where a variety of options were being considered with a view to resolving local disputes.

   The Board notes with thankfulness the clear and concise ruling by Lord Uist in favour of the Free Church in relation to the properties at Broadford. It regrets the decision by the Free Church (Continuing) to appeal this ruling and the resultant delay in bringing the matter to a conclusion. The Board understands that the appeal is due to be heard in October 2010.

   Having received no encouragement that a negotiated settlement could be reached in relation to its properties and funds, the Partick congregation decided that it had no option but to seek recovery through legal channels. The Board supported the congregation in its decision and a summons was lodged in the Court of Session in December 2009. It is anticipated that a hearing will be set for some time in early 2011 at which point the ruling on the Broadford appeal should be available.

   The Board remains hopeful that other local disputes can be resolved without recourse to legal action.

2. **Legal Action in Peru** As outlined in Section (A) of this report, the legal action taken in Peru against the Church, the Colegio San Andres and Mr Donald MacAulay, the school’s former headmaster remains unresolved. While the Board is of the view that a robust defence could be mounted against the action, it also believes that in order to expedite matters, to remove uncertainty and to limit the level of legal expenses incurred, it might be prudent to seek an out of court settlement. However, while the Board understands that there might be an opportunity to reach such a settlement, it also recognises that if it expects indemnity from the Church’s insurer from legal liability, the decision to seek settlement lies with the insurer rather than with the Church. In this regard the Board has been disappointed by the difficulties experienced to date in attempting to engage the insurer in dialogue and by the resultant lack of progress in bringing matters to a satisfactory conclusion. The Board recognises the frustration experienced by the senior staff in the school in Peru as a result of this lack of progress and wishes to give an assurance that it will continue to work closely with the Church’s Law Agent and to do all in its power to bring about
a speedy resolution.

3. **Law Agents** As reported to the 2009 General Assembly, Balfour + Manson were appointed as the Church’s new Law Agent during the year. The Board is pleased to report that the transition from Simpson & Marwick to Balfour + Manson has proceeded smoothly.

(F) WORSHIP

At the General Assembly of 2008, the Board was asked to consult with Presbyteries in relation to the worship, discipline and unity of the Church. In response, the Board presented a proposed process for dealing with the matter to the 2009 General Assembly. Over the past year, the Board commissioned a series of papers on a variety of topics and circulated these to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions for consideration. Presbyteries were asked to provide a response to the Board with particular reference to whether or not a departure from the present practice in relation to worship should be permitted in light of biblical teaching.

The 2009 General Assembly agreed that consideration of this issue should be taken up at a plenary meeting of the General Assembly in 2010 comprising all ministers with a seat in presbytery and an equal number of elders. This decision was referred to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act and the Board will report on the responses in a supplementary report together with its findings and recommendations.

(G) OTHER MATTERS

1. **16 North Bank Street** Since the University of Edinburgh vacated the premises at 16 North Bank Street, attempts to secure a new tenant proved fruitless. As a result, the Board has been considering other options for utilisation of the two vacant floors and has consulted with the local congregations in Edinburgh on the matter. During this consultation, considerable enthusiasm was expressed for a proposal to develop an expanded bookshop and coffee shop within the ground floor accommodation. Although plans are at an early stage, initial drawings have been commissioned and the Board is of the view that this could present an excellent outreach opportunity in the heart of Edinburgh.

2. **London Congregations** The General Assembly of May 2009 and the meeting of its Commission in October 2009 tasked the Board with preparation of constitutions to allow the London City and Cobham congregations to register with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Following consultation with a firm of solicitors in London, a constitution has now been developed based on the constitutions approved by the General Assembly for congregations in Scotland.

The Board was also tasked with taking the necessary steps to resolve the anomalies that exist in the titles to the manse properties used by the London City and Cobham congregations. This has been the subject of fairly extensive exchanges with the solicitors in London. The advice received from the solicitors is that due to the nature of the technical shortcomings in the title to the Cobham manse, no change should be made at present. Rather, the advice is that if the property is placed on the market for sale at some future juncture, the issues with the title should be resolved at that stage. With regard to the London City manse, the solicitors advise that the property should be conveyed to property trustees appointed by the congregation once it has registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

The Board is in the process of consulting with the congregations to implement the recommendations in relation to the constitutions and property titles.

3. **Property Sales** When permission is granted for the sale of properties held under the Model Trust Deed, the General Assembly has until now required that the transaction is carried out by, or under the oversight of, the Church’s Law Agent. Over the past year, the conveyancing work on certain transactions has been carried out by the Church’s Compliance Officer who is a qualified solicitor and has considerable experience in this field. In such cases, the Board considers it unnecessary to incur the additional costs involved in having the Law Agent review the transaction.

As a result, in its proposed deliverance, the Board is suggesting that a flexible approach is taken such that transactions can be carried out under the oversight of either the Law Agent or a suitably qualified person in the employ of the Church.

4. **Use of Conferencing Technology for Meetings** The Board is aware that increasing use is made of modern technology such as video or telephone conferencing in facilitating meetings of committees and boards. The Board is supportive of this development and has found that telephone meetings have helped to keep its own business moving more efficiently at times when face to face meetings might have been more difficult to arrange. The Board is also supportive of routine matters being decided by email communication between meetings of committees and
boards as long as any decisions are formally recorded in the minute of the next meeting.

The Board was asked by the 2009 General Assembly to consider the development of a set of procedures to be followed when such technology is used. In this regard the Board does not believe an extensive set of procedures to be necessary but considers the following to be appropriate:

- Technology such as video conferencing should only be utilised where all members of the committee or board have reasonably ready access to such facilities.
- The minutes of a meeting conducted by video or telephone conferencing should indicate the location of the meeting as being that of the chairman or convener and should also indicate that the meeting was held by video or telephone conference.
- The sederunt should be read out by the secretary or clerk once all participants have joined the meeting.
- It is preferable that any issues requiring a vote to be taken should be held over until a subsequent face to face meeting. If this is not possible, at the instruction of the chairman or convener, the secretary or clerk should record the vote of each member in turn and after tallying the votes, advise the committee or board accordingly.
- Meetings of committees or boards conducted by video or telephone conferencing should be subject to the same rules of confidentiality as would be the case in a more traditional face to face meeting.
- If any decisions are taken by email between meetings, these should be formally recorded in the minute of the next meeting of the committee or board.

(H) CUSTODIER OF TITLES

Three Petitions for the sale of property have been received. All Petitions have supporting documents from congregations and Presbyteries which are in order. The Petition from Smithton-Culloden and Nairn Free Church was originally addressed to the Commission of Assembly but could not be taken by the Commission as the Property is not being replaced (Act V, 1967).

(1) Smithton-Culloden and Nairn

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 17th May 2010, the petition of the Deacons’ Court of Smithton-Culloden and Nairn Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the manse at Gordon Street, Nairn, is now surplus to requirement because of the purchase of a new manse;
2. Whereas the manse requires significant repair and maintenance;
3. Whereas the congregation own and maintain six separate buildings and require to consolidate these buildings;
4. Whereas the congregation will require to liquidate assets to enable them to develop their buildings to meet the challenges of a changing situation;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly grant permission for the sale of the manse at Gordon Street, Nairn, and that the congregation be allowed access to the capital for development of new building and maintenance of existing properties.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem best.

And your Petitioners will ever pray.                      Angus Mackay, Clerk pro tem

(2) Greyfriars-Stratherrick

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 17th May 2010, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the Manse at Tomatin is currently occupied by the minister of the Duthil-Dores congregation of the Free Church Continuing (FCC);
2. Whereas the Church buildings at Tomatin and Dores are currently being used by the Duthil-Dores congregation of the FCC;

3. Whereas cordial negotiations have resulted in a proposed settlement with respect to these properties;

4. Whereas the General Assembly in 2007 affirmed its support of locally negotiated settlements in a manner which is just and reflects that the assets seized are in fact the assets of a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland and do not belong to another group;

5. Whereas the congregation of the FCC are hoping to acquire suitable alternative accommodation;

6. Whereas the negotiated settlement would entail the sale of the Manse at Tomatin with vacant possession by the Trustees of Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church of Scotland and after the deduction of all marketing and legal costs the division of the proceeds 80% to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church congregation and 20% to the Duthil-Dores FCC congregation;

7. Whereas the negotiated settlement would entail ownership of the Church building at Dores being transferred to the Duthil-Dores congregation of the FCC;

8. Whereas in the event of the Free Church Continuing ceasing to exist as a denomination or the Duthil-Dores (Dores and Tomatin) congregation of the Free Church Continuing ceasing to exist as a congregation the Dores Church building will be transferred back to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick congregation of the Free Church;

9. Whereas in the event Duthil-Dores congregation of the Free Church Continuing ceasing to use the church building at Dores solely as a place of public worship and other church activities the Dores Church building will be transferred back to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick congregation of the Free Church;

10. Whereas the negotiated settlement would entail the sale of the Church building at Tomatin with the entire proceeds being retained by the Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church congregation;

11. Whereas the proposed settlement would further the progress of the gospel by the removal of a scandal;

12. Whereas the proposed settlement is supported by the Kirk Session, Deacons Court and the congregation;

Wherefore may it please your Venerable Court to take these premises into consideration and authorise the disposal of property as indicated at 6, 7 and 10 above and having formally agreed that the transaction should proceed, the transaction be carried out through the Law Agent of the Free Church of Scotland, and further that any proceeds be lodged with the General Trustees on behalf of the congregation, the interest in the meantime to be added to the capital.

Or do as in their wisdom may seem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Norman Macdonald, Clerk

(3) Park

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 17th May 2010, the Petition of the Deacons’ Court of Park Free Church humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the church building at Cromore is in need of extensive renovation to bring it up to the legal requirements necessary for public meetings;

2. Whereas the building is now surplus to the requirements of the congregation;

Wherefore it is humbly requested that the General Assembly grant authority to sell the said building, and direct that the proceeds of the sale be applied to the funds of the congregation, or to do otherwise as in their wisdom they deem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Iain T. Campbell, Clerk pro tem
Appendix One

CONGREGATIONAL REMITTANCES

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Group II - Self Supporting Charges

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<td>23</td>
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<td>Point</td>
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<td>Lairg &amp; Bonar Bridge</td>
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**Group III - Subsidised Charges**

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<tr>
<td>Cumbernauld</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elgin &amp; Forres</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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**Group IV - Other Charges**

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<tr>
<td>Glenelg &amp; Arnisdale,Lochalsh &amp; Glenshiel</td>
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REPORTS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF [2010]

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PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

(A) FINANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Board of Trustees and thank the Chairman, members of the Board, the Chief Administrative Officer and his staff for their work.

2. The General Assembly acknowledge with humility and thanksgiving the provision made by the Lord for the work of the Church. They thank those who gave in a regular, responsible and liberal manner is support of that work and record their appreciation for legacies received during the year.

3. The General Assembly instruct the Board to prepare draft budget schedules for circulation to committees and boards before their first meeting following the General Assembly with a view to approving the 2011 budget at the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly. The General Assembly empower the said Commission of Assembly to take up and finally dispose of a report from the Board on this matter.

4. The General Assembly record their appreciation for the work of Mr Clive Bailey, the headmaster of the Colegio San Andres, and his staff and give thanks to God for the significant improvement in the financial health of the school.

5. The General Assembly hereby amend the second numbered paragraph under Title Twelve of the constitution for the Reformed Educational Association San Andres as approved in Act XXVII, 2007 to read:
   Once the Constitution becomes effective, the Board of Trustees of the Free Church of Scotland, through its Nominees in Peru will convey to the Association title to the property in which the Colegio operates at Av. Petit Thouars 179, 144, 141, 145, Pasaje Hernan Velarde 152; 164, 174 and 132 (Santa Beatriz, Lima) as soon as practicable. Such conveyance being subject always to the other provisions of the Constitution and, in particular, those under Title Eleven.

6. The General Assembly are pleased to note the appointment of Mrs Catriona Cazaly as the Church’s Finance
Manager and trust that she will know the Lord’s blessing in her new role.

**B) FINANCIAL POLICY**

1. The General Assembly commend the work of the Finance Sub-Committee and thank its Convener, members and advisers.

2. The General Assembly note the steps taken to ensure smooth implementation of the new system of congregational remittances. They are also pleased to note that, to date, there has been a high level of compliance with the new system from Deacons’ Courts.

3. The General Assembly endorse the Board’s view that manses remain an important base for pastoral ministry and reinforce the principle that, in holding a charge, a minister is obliged to occupy the manse.

4. The General Assembly instruct the Board to continue its investigation into options for assisting ministers with concerns over retirement accommodation and to bring a report to the 2011 General Assembly.

5. The General Assembly note the production of an information leaflet in relation to legacies and encourage Deacons’ Courts to make this information as widely known as possible.

6. The General Assembly endorse the Board’s policy in relation to the allocation of income to specific funds and the provision of grants.

**C) STRATEGY**

1. The General Assembly commend the work of the Strategy Sub-Committee and thank its Convener, members, advisers and clerk.

2. The General Assembly remind Presbyteries of the terms of Paragraph 9 of Act III, Commission of Assembly, October 2008, in relation to diaconal ministries and instruct them to report their progress to the Board of Trustees by January 2011 in order that the Board may report to the General Assembly of 2011.

3. The General Assembly remind Presbyteries of the terms of Paragraph 10 of Act III, Commission of Assembly, October 2008, in relation to the workings of Presbyteries and, where they have not already done so, to report their progress to the Board of Trustees by January 2011 in order that the Board may report to the General Assembly of 2011.

4. The General Assembly commend to Kirk Sessions the models of gospel partnership highlighted in the Board’s Report.

5. The General Assembly instruct the Board to continue its work in relation to longer term strategic priorities for the denomination.

**D) COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

1. The General Assembly commend the work of the Compliance, Audit and Risk Management Sub-Committee and thank its Convener, members and advisers.

2. The General Assembly endorse the view that Committees and Boards should conduct an audit of the skills and experience required when vacancies arise in their membership and to provide such information to the Nominations Committee. They further instruct the Nominations Committee to make this information available to Presbyteries when seeking nominations.

3. The General Assembly note the Board’s ongoing work in assessing the risks facing the Church and identifying possible actions to mitigate these risks.

4. The General Assembly instruct the Board to keep developments in relation to the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme under review and to report on such developments to the 2011 General Assembly.

**E) LAW AND ADVICE**

1. The General Assembly commend the work of the Legal Group and thank its Convener, members and advisers.
2. The General Assembly note with thankfulness the clear and concise ruling in the Court Session in relation to the properties at Broadford. They regret the decision of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) to appeal this ruling and the resultant delay in bringing the matter to a conclusion.

3. The General Assembly note the situation in relation to the legal action taken in Peru against the Church, the Colegio San Andres and the former headmaster of the school. They commend the issue to the Church as a matter for continued prayer.

4. The General Assembly thank Mr John Hodge and Ms Fiona Muirs of the Church’s Law Agent for their support and advice to the Church during the year. They also thank the Church’s Counsel, Mr Heriot Currie, QC and Ms Ruth Charteris for their work on behalf of the Church.

(F) WORSHIP

1. The General Assembly notes the work undertaken by the Board in fulfilment of its remit in relation to the worship, discipline and unity of the Church.

(G) OTHER MATTERS

1. The General Assembly endorse the Board’s plans for the development of a coffee shop and bookshop at 16 North Bank Street. They instruct the Board to report on progress to a future General Assembly.

2. The General Assembly note progress in relation to the formulation of suitable constitutions for the London City and Cobham congregations and in relation to resolving difficulties with the titles to the manse properties of the two congregations.

3. The General Assembly instruct that transactions relating to properties held under the Model Trust Deed may be carried out by, or under the oversight of, a suitably qualified person in the employ of the Church, if available, or by the Church’s Law Agent.

4. The General Assembly, recognising the advantages to be obtained from the use of modern technology in conducting the business of Church courts, committees and boards hereby enact as follows:

4.1 Technology such as video conferencing may only be used for the conduct of meetings where all members of the court, committee or board have reasonably ready access to such facilities.

4.2 The minutes of a meeting conducted by video or telephone conferencing shall indicate the location of the meeting as being that of the chairman or convener and should also note that some members were present by way of video or telephone link.

4.3 The sederunt of a meeting conducted by video or telephone conferencing shall be read out by the secretary or clerk once all participants have joined the meeting.

4.4 It is preferable that matters requiring a vote to be taken be held over until a subsequent face to face meeting. If a vote needs to be taken on a particular matter, at the instruction of the chairman or convener, the secretary or clerk shall record the vote of each member in turn and after totaling the votes, advise the board or committee accordingly and record in the minute as normal.

4.5 All members of courts, committees or boards must ensure that normal rules governing confidentiality are adhered to in the conduct of meetings held by telephone or video conferencing.

4.6 Any decisions relating to the business of a court, committee or board, taken outside of a formal meeting (for example, decisions taken following email consultation) must be recorded formally in the minute of the next meeting.

(H) CUSTODIER OF TITLES

1. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Smithton-Culloden and Nairn Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell the former manse at Gordon Street, Nairn, the proceeds of the sale to be lodged with the Board of Trustees in behoof of the congregation and the capital to be made available upon application to the Board for the development of new buildings and maintenance of existing properties, the transaction to be carried out under supervision of the Church’s Law Agent.
2. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church and grant its crave. They authorise the sale of the manse at Tomatin, and direct that of the proceeds remaining after the deduction of all marketing and legal costs, 80% be allocated to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church congregation and 20% to the Duthil-Dores congregation of Free Church Continuing, the proceeds allocated to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church to be held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation and made available to the congregation for congregational purposes. The General Assembly authorise the transfer of title to the church building at Dores to the congregation of the Duthil-Dores congregation of Free Church Continuing on condition that, should the Free Church Continuing, or the Duthil-Dores congregation of Free Church Continuing cease to exist, or should the said congregation cease to use the church building at Dores for meetings of a strictly religious, charitable or social nature (as specified in The Practice, Supplement to Chapter I, paragraph 2.2), the title shall be transferred to the Greyfriars-Stratherrick congregation of the Free Church of Scotland. The General Assembly direct the Deacons’ Court of Greyfriars-Stratherrick Free Church to secure a legally binding agreement with the Dores congregation of the Free Church Continuing to secure the above-mentioned condition.

3. The General Assembly receive the petition from the Deacons’ Court of Park Free Church and grant its crave. They grant authority to sell the church building at Cromore, the transaction to be carried out under supervision of the Church’s Law Agent. They direct that the proceeds of the sale be held by the Board of Trustees on behalf of the congregation and that they be applied to the funds of the congregation, upon application to the Board of Trustees.

(I) SYNODS

1. The General Assembly remind Synod Clerks to ensure that the requirements of Act XXXIX, 2009, paragraphs 3-4 and 6-8, are to be implemented annually in accordance with the terms set out.

2. In accordance with the requirements of Act V, 2002, paragraph 2.1, the General Assembly appoint the Northern Presbytery as Assessor Presbytery to the Western Synod; the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross as Assessor Presbytery to the Southern Synod; and the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth as Assessor Presbytery to the Northern Synod. The General Assembly remind the North American Synod that such cases as require either of the two Presbyteries comprising that Synod to be at the bar of Synod should be forwarded directly to the General Assembly, or Commission of Assembly, whichever is the more appropriate.
IV.

REPORT

OF THE

HOME MISSIONS BOARD

Jesus said, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). The Church of Jesus Christ is from its very roots and foundation and blueprint a mission organisation. There is (or ought to be) no such thing as a non-mission church. We cannot say “Our role is only to minister to the members of the Church, to those already in the kingdom.”

Did the Father send Jesus to minister to those already saved, to those already righteous? No, he came to seek and to save the lost, to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance. The Father sent him into the world, not into an isolated and insulated cocoon.

In the same way Jesus is sending us into the world. We must challenge ourselves and all our structures and organisations and policies and activities with this one great question: Are we telling (and showing) a lost world the good news of God’s love?

As the Home Missions Board we have a responsibility to keep this great perspective before ourselves and before the wider Church in all that we do.

The past year was another very busy one in the life of the Board. We had 12 remits from the General Assembly, some of them covering major areas. Among the latter were church planting, team ministries, and the appointment of Rev Neil MacMillan as Development Officer in a full-time capacity.

In addition to four meetings of the Board, various Presbyteries and congregations were visited by the Chairman or the Executive or ad hoc committees of the Board.

Another major area of work was in connection with implementing the new fund-raising policy. For this and many other aspects of the finances of the Board, we are greatly indebted to Rev. Malcolm Macleod, who is retiring from the Board at this Assembly. In conjunction with the International Missions Board we produced a fund-raising leaflet with donation envelope which has been circulated via The Record and also directly to congregations. In addition we created a fund-raising presentation and are rolling this out to congregations.

In addition to responsibilities concerning the congregations and ministers of the Church in accordance with Assembly legislation, the Board also oversees the youth work of the Church through the Youth Committee, and we are grateful to all those who so willingly give their time and resources to engaging in and supporting the youth work of the Church.

We wish to record our thanks in particular to Rev Neil MacMillan, the Development Officer, and to our Clerk, Rev. Angus Howat, and Assistant Clerk, Mr Evan Macdonald, for the power of work they have done for the Board in the past year.

As a result of the experience gained during the first year of the Board’s existence it was agreed in June 2009 that the work would be more satisfactorily undertaken by the Executive undertaking the remits of the Churches and Ministers and of the Church Extension and Redevelopment Committees and by combining the finance, fund-raising and social responsibility aspects of the Board under the oversight of a Finance and Social Responsibility Committee. The Youth Committee continues its work as previously. In practice this new arrangement has proved an improvement on the original and has enabled the Board to cover a wide diversity of business more effectively.

The Board is grateful to the following consultants whose expertise in particular area has contributed to the ongoing work:

Mr Matt Ford, Mr Iain D. Gill, Mrs I. Howat, Dr Graham Keith, Mrs Alison Macdonald, Mr E. Macdonald, Miss M. MacKintosh, Mrs Susan Maclean, Mr Innes Macleod, Rev. Neil MacMillan, Rev. Colin Morison, Mr Tom Muir, and Mr Jonathan Worthington.
(A) ASSEMBLY REMITS

During the year the Board has dealt with a wide variety of remits from the last two General Assemblies and from the Commission of Assembly meeting in October 2008.

1. **Development Officer** The General Assembly of 2009 accepted the Board’s recommendations that in the light of the success of Rev. Neil MacMillan’s period of service as Interim Development Officer to the Board, arrangements be made for a permanent appointment. The Board was greatly pleased in the light of the effective way in which he had carried out his duties during the nine months of his interim appointment that Mr MacMillan was willing to undertake the duties of Development Officer in a permanent capacity with effect from July 2009. Mr MacMillan was loosed from his charge and is now based in Edinburgh, though his duties take him to every part of the Church and furth of Scotland. His Report appears as Appendix One to this Report.

As instructed by last General Assembly the Board has consulted with the Board of Trustees with regard to the conditions of Mr MacMillan’s appointment and the Draft Act anent Appointment of Development Officer is found as Section (A) 1 of the Board’s Deliverance.

2. **Strategy: Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll** The Board continues to liaise with the Presbytery and its Strategy Committee through the Development Officer. The Presbytery has not yet finalised its strategy policy as the current focus has been specifically directed on the situation in Argyll. In December the Presbytery reported its wish to extend the proposed team ministry in Argyll to include the minister and congregation of Oban, with a revised plan for three ministers and one additional worker. The Board has agreed with this proposal and awaits further developments with respect to this and other parts of the Presbytery.

3. **Strategy: Northern Presbytery** The Board was instructed by the Commission of Assembly ‘to consult with the Northern Presbytery in order to develop further its strategic plan along with members of the Strategy Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees’. A very helpful meeting with the Presbytery’s Strategy Committee was held at Tain in November 2009, when views were exchanged and suggestions made as to the way forward. The Presbytery is in the process of formulating its strategy and the Board will continue to liaise with it to monitor its progress. So far it has not been possible to make arrangements for the future ministry in East Sutherland but negotiations are continuing.

4. **Church planting** The Commission of Assembly in October 2008 instructed the Home Missions Board ‘to identify new opportunities for church planting and to explore which models of church planting can best be adapted to the needs of the denomination’. The Board is currently considering a new model that will involve training lay leaders to use small groups as a basis for initiating new church plants from existing congregations. This should provide a flexible method for church planting with low up front costs. Fuller details are given in Appendix One.

5. **Gospel partnerships** Last General Assembly instructed the Board ‘to explore the possibility of congregations entering into local gospel partnerships with other evangelical confessional churches, particularly in instances where the long-term viability of a settled ministry is in question, to consider what new legislation might be required and to report back to the next General Assembly’. The Board agreed to report to the General Assembly that since local congregations are free to enter into gospel partnerships with other local evangelical confessional churches where this can be done without compromising their position, there appears no need of further Assembly legislation.

6. **Part-time ministries** The General Assembly instructed the Board ‘to explore options for part-time ministry in situations where full-time ministry is deemed to be financially unsustainable’. The Board did not consider that part-time ministries provided the best answer to this problem and agreed to recommend to the General Assembly that concentration on the development of team ministry would be of greater value.

7. **Procedure in calling a Minister** The General Assembly instructed the Board ‘to review the regulations and procedure for the calling of a minister with a view to assessing whether or not it would be appropriate to allow ministers to express an interest in vacancies’. The Board gave careful consideration to both sides of the argument and is reporting to the Assembly that, in its view, nothing in the present legislation prevents a minister expressing an interest in a vacancy and that this should not be interpreted as using “undue methods” in procuring a call. At the same time the Board recognises there are potential dangers in this practice and have revised the guidelines drawn up in the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth for interim moderators by Rev. A. G. Ross. Copies of these guidelines have been distributed to presbytery clerks and ministers.

8. **Team ministries** The Commission of Assembly instructed the Board ‘to research and develop proposals allowing the development of team ministries incorporating more than one congregation, in order to enable a more efficient deployment of full-time workers and the sharing of ministers and other personnel between
congregations willing to enter into such an arrangement as a means to greater gospel growth, and to report to the General Assembly of 2011’. Accordingly the Board has proceeded to draw up proposals. More recently, the Strategy Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees expressed concern that this legislation should come to the 2010 Assembly rather than the Assembly of 2011 in view of the urgency of the state of certain vacant congregations. The Board has been advised that since the concept of team ministry is a new one and envisages a new category of relationship between congregations and ministers it will be necessary for the Draft Act to go down to Presbyteries under Barrier Act procedure. The Draft Act is found in Section (A) 8 of the Proposed Deliverance.

(B) CHURCHES AND MINISTERS

1. **Stipend** The stipend was increased to £19,000 in April 2009. As this fell below the level of increase that had been originally hoped for, the intention was that the sum be reconsidered later in the year and further increased if finances permitted. This proved not to be possible, but the Church has been able to increase the stipend to £19,500 as from 1st January 2010.

2. **Legislation on Ministerial Appointments** Act I, 2009, was passed by last General Assembly after Barrier Act procedure and is now being implemented by the Board. Familiarity with the changes in procedures that it contains will take time and no doubt there will be teething difficulties; indeed one is referred to in § 4 below. New Sustentation Schedules have been introduced to reflect the financial arrangements that came into effect at the beginning of 2010.

3. **Schedules** During the course of the year the Board has granted or renewed Schedules for a number of vacant congregations. At the time of writing there are nine vacant congregations authorised to appoint a minister or assistant minister compared with 11 at the same time last year.

4. **Congregations not meeting their Schedule obligations** The new legislation requires that ‘When any congregation given permission to call a minister (whether with or without restriction) fails to remit the percentage of the Equal Dividend as promised on admission to the Platform then the Board shall draw the attention of the Congregation and Presbytery to this fact, and the Presbytery shall report to the Board what steps are being taken to rectify the situation. The Board shall report to the General Assembly annually which congregations, if any, failed to meet their commitment in the previous year’. The Board noted that a number of the congregations fell only slightly short of the required figure. It was also noted that in some cases a considerable length of time had elapsed since the approval of the Schedule and during the intervening period the congregation’s resources had declined to the extent that they were no longer able to meet the original proportion agreed but they were still meeting their obligations to remit the full cost of ministry. The Board has concluded that in the interests of equity, only congregations who have promised full cost of ministry or direct cost of ministry and have failed to meet the appropriate percentage of stipend should be written to and reported to the Assembly and that the Act should be amended accordingly. The proposed amendment is found in Section (B) 2 of the Deliverance.

The Board noted that the following congregations have failed to meet even this revised standard and letters have been sent as stipulated to congregations and presbyteries: Cumbernauld, Lochcarron and Applecross, London City, and Olrig, Watten and Bower.

5. **Congregations not remitting the stipend** The same Act requires that ‘when any congregation, whose minister is appointed under the terms of this Act fails to remit 100% of stipend in any one year, the Home Missions Board shall draw the attention of the Congregation and the Presbytery to this fact. On receipt of such notification the Presbytery shall initiate a Review and Audit of the Congregation as in Section 6.1 below. The Board shall also report to the General Assembly that such a review has been initiated’. The Board has initiated a Review and Audit for the following congregations in terms of this section of the Act: Cumbernauld, Olrig, Watten and Bower, and Sleat and Strath.

6. **Consultations with Presbyteries** In terms of Act X, 2009, the Board met with representatives of the Presbytery of the Western Isles in December 2009 and with the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross in February 2010 to discuss ministerial strategy in their respective areas.

7. **Church Extension Charges** There are four Church Extension charges under the oversight of the Board:

7.1 **Cobham** The Minister (Rev. David Miller) reports that the number of members and children in the congregation has fallen, largely as a result of the departure of the South African families because of the national economic decline. At the same time there have been encouraging additions. The group worshipping at Maidenhead
is also much reduced. A Bible study meeting has replaced the fortnightly evening service there. It is planned that the elders and deacons play a greater role in the work of the congregation. The Board notes that the congregational income is high but this is offset by their large loan repayment for the manse.

7.2 Dunfermline The Minister (Rev. Douglas Campbell) reports encouraging attendances regularly reaching 30 at the weekly morning services in Masterton School. Some folk from the local community have started attending. Expansion is difficult without leaving the area in which the school is located. The introduction of an evening service would also be difficult as a significant number commute from outside or worship in Kirkcaldy on a Sunday evening. Lack of local leadership is a major problem because of the lack of office-bearers on the ground. The Board commends the congregation particularly for their community involvement and for the extent to which outsiders from outwith the Free Church had become involved. It is exploring with the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth ways in which the leadership problem may be overcome.

7.3 St Andrews The Minister (Rev. A. I. Macleod) reports that numbers attending the Sunday services have gone down somewhat following the departure of so many undergraduates in June last year. Morning services, previously held in the BB Hall, have now transferred to the Baptist Church and the congregation has good relations with the Baptist congregation. The Board recognises the unique situation and the particular difficulties of ministry in the university town of St Andrews, but in spite of these difficulties the Board is committed to the continuation of the work in St Andrews. The Board noted with sympathetic concern the news of Mrs Cathie Macleod’s health problems.

7.4 South Uist and Benbecula The congregation, which is in the final year of its ten-year period of Church Extension status, became vacant with the translation of Rev. Iain MacAskill to Rosskeen in August 2009. The Board would like to put on record its appreciation of the sterling work done by Mr MacAskill over the period since his initial appointment to the work in 1997 and its good wishes for his ministry in his new area of service. So far it has not been possible to find a successor to Mr MacAskill.

The Presbytery of the Western Isles report that the congregation has made significant progress towards full status but is not yet able financially to be placed on the Equal Dividend Platform. Accordingly it is petitioning the Assembly to extend the period of Church Extension status for a further five years that the circumstances and context in which the ministry of the Congregation is carried out are exceptional. The Board is supporting the Petition which appears as Appendix Two of the Board’s Report.

8. Redevelopment Charges The Board has oversight of four redevelopment charges with settled ministries; also Gairloch and Kinlochewe which continues vacant. The congregation of Paisley was united with Dowanvale by last General Assembly and is no longer a Redevelopment charge.

8.1 Badenoch The Minister (Rev. Richard MacDonald) reports that the various congregational activities continue, touching the life of the community at a number of points. There is need for more people to help and serve and for better facilities for meetings. At present meetings are held in the Manse which is not an ideal arrangement because of its size. The Board is very grateful to Mr MacDonald for his diligent efforts in a remote and difficult area of service.

8.2 Elgin and Forres The Minister (Rev. Colin Morison), reports on the ongoing work in his congregation. Monthly services continue to be held at Dufftown with encouraging results. A Road to Recovery programme is being developed in Elgin.

8.3 Gairloch and Kinlochewe This congregation continues vacant. Redevelopment status was renewed by the Commission of Assembly in October 2009.

8.4 Glenurquhart and Fort Augustus The Minister (Rev. John A. M. Mackay) presents a positive Report on the progress of his congregation, which is supported by the Presbytery following their recent Visitation. The congregation are hoping to remit a sum equal to the stipend over the next two years. Mr Mackay is completing the first five years of his appointment and the Presbytery is presenting a Petition to the Assembly for the renewal of his appointment for a further period. The Board is happy to support the Petition which appears as Appendix Three to the Board’s Report.

8.5 Harris In his encouraging Report the Minister (Rev. Ruairidh Maclean), states that the new hall is almost completed. A Christianity Explored course had been held and it is proposed to hold a Discipleship Explored course in the spring. In addition the Presbytery has indicated its concern about their lack of support to the congregation and is taking action to offset this.
9.  **Asian Outreach** Encouraging reports from Rev. Duncan Peters and Rev. Colin Macleod record the development of this work in Glasgow. Reference is made to the successful multi-cultural services in Govanhill Church. Mr Peters’s appointment is subject to renewal at this General Assembly: the Board recommends that the Asian Outreach Work in Glasgow be renewed for a further five years and that Mr Peters’s appointment be continued until the General Assembly of 2015. The Board is also taking up a suggestion that Mr Peters and Mr Macleod go on regular deputation to the presbyteries on behalf of AO. It is hoped that a deputation programme will be set up in the near future.

10.  **Service to Overseas Students** Rev. F. H. MacKenzie reports a good year with a much better intake of new students in September/October than at the same time the previous year. The Sunday evening meeting in Strathclyde Chaplaincy Centre has also seen increased numbers with new students from China, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Nigeria. During the year, Mr MacKenzie had the joy of officiating at the wedding of two Chinese students in the Chaplaincy, the first marriage of international students he has conducted. SOS now has a new website, created by one of the Indian students, at www.internationalstudentschurch.com

11.  **Congregations on Special Arrangements**

11.1  **Arran** The congregation contributed a sum equal to 61.6% of the stipend to central funds during 2009, exceeding the Assembly’s figure of 48.5%.

11.2  **East Kilbride** During 2009 the congregation contributed a sum equivalent to 81.3% of the stipend, exceeding the Assembly’s figure of 78%.

11.3  **Lochgilphead and Lochfyneside** The congregation contributed a sum equivalent to 86.9% of the stipend, exceeding the Assembly’s figure of 74%.

11.4  **Dumfries** The congregation of Dumfries remains vacant in spite of various efforts to secure a minister. Their permission to appoint a Minister expires at this Assembly and the Board is recommending that the congregation be continued on the Equal Dividend Platform on condition of remitting a reduced sum of 60% of the stipend.

12.  **Congregational review: Bracadale** In accordance with the requirements of Act I, 2009, the Board has conducted a Review of the congregation of Bracadale where the Minister is on terminable appointment until August 2010 and where the congregation is unable to support a continued ministry. At the time of writing the Board understands the Minister intends to retire at the end of his appointment. The Board is liaising with the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross with regard to the future ministerial arrangements for Bracadale in this event.

13.  **District Ministry charge** The Minister (Rev. A. M. Fraser) reports no great difference in the life of the congregations from previous years. The youth worker employed by the local Christian community, Mr Erick Olsen, left in the spring after doing valuable work among the young people and has been replaced by Mrs Cleone Jarvis who is giving helpful support. Although the numbers are low, the level of giving in a congregation largely made up of pensioners is very commendable.

The Board has to report that Mr Fraser is due to retire later this year. He and Mrs Fraser deserve the thanks of the Church for a ministry in two District Ministry appointments over many years, first in Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale, and latterly in Assynt and Eddrachillis, both remote and scattered charges, cut off from the support and fellowship most ministers enjoy. The good wishes of the whole Church will accompany their retirement.

The future ministerial arrangements for the Assynt and Eddrachillis congregations is currently under review and different options are being considered by the Board and the Presbytery.

14.  **Resident Lay Preacher** The Church has one Resident Lay Preacher (Mr James Morrison) working at Lybster who reports that his congregation has received tokens of God’s blessing during the year in terms of their unity and commitment. There have been two Baptisms, which attracted increased congregations and some of these visitors have returned to services subsequently.

15.  **Dundee: Pastoral Assistant** Mr Bryan Kee was appointed pastoral assistant at St Peter’s, Dundee, in July 2009 in accordance with the terms of Act XV, 2009. The Board contributes to Mr Kee’s funding in the light of his commitment to the outreach / church planting work at St Cyrus / Montrose.
16. **Mission to the World**  
   In 2006 the Free Church entered into an agreement with Mission to the World, the missionary arm of the Presbyterian Church in America, with a view to co-operation in mission and evangelism. No new initiatives have been begun for some time but MTW have expressed a concern to continue their contact with the Free Church. As the appointment of the Free Church’s representatives to the Joint Project Committee is subject to renewal in 2010, the Board has re-appointed Rev. David Robertson, Rev. A. J. MacDonald and Rev. Neil MacMillan to fill this role.

17. **Evangelism Support Working Party**  
   The Working Party continues to function now under the convenerership of Rev. Colin Macleod, Leith. The aim of the Working Party is to facilitate evangelism training and to coordinate outreach and evangelistic projects, as well as providing small grants for approved outreach projects. Five projects have been completed successfully in the period from January 2009 – February 2010 with a further application approved for 2010 and one in the pipeline. The Working Party was encouraged by first time applications from the congregations of Portree, Arran and Dundee. Despite efforts to publicise the activities of the Working Party through the website and *The Record*, the number of applications this year has been less than the previous year, which is disappointing.

A new leaflet outlining the role of the Working Party will shortly be distributed throughout the Church via Presbytery representatives to encourage more congregations to take advantage of the support available. Feedback showing good practice and advice will be added to the web page for evangelism support. It has been especially helpful to local congregations to know that they are being supported spiritually and financially by the wider church in their outreach projects. Priority will be given to supporting outreach projects that are new to a particular congregation - activities that have not been tried before and that form part of a longer term mission plan. Applications for support from struggling congregations to encourage them to reach out with the gospel into their communities will be particularly welcome.

The Board hopes that more congregations will take advantage of the assistance available through the Working Party.

18. **Church and Manse Building Fund**  
   During 2009 awards were made to the following congregations:
   - Lochbroom Grant £5,000
   - Golspie Grant £2,000
   - Loan £3,000

19. **Maintenance of Church Property**  
   Last Assembly approved a proposed Scheme for volunteer work-parties to undertake building repairs in congregations which are unable to carry them out themselves because of lack of resources.

Since then however, following a further report from Mr Iain Gill, the Board agreed that the proposed arrangement for volunteer teams working on church properties could only work successfully if congregations were aware of their properties’ condition and had in hand a plan of action to deal with shortcomings. The Board has a responsibility to ensure that the existing legislation and procedures are properly implemented. This calls for adequate building surveys conducted by suitably qualified persons and more careful supervision by presbyteries at the time of quinquennial visitation reports. The Board agreed its main aim should be to ensure that Deacons’ Courts and Presbyteries are fulfilling their responsibilities and to offer encouragement and help to those who are failing. To this end, the Board plans in consultation with Presbyteries to prepare a Panel of Surveyors from which congregations, especially the smaller ones, could identify professionals in their area who may be willing to survey at reduced cost. As it is felt that this should have priority it has been agreed, that subject to the approval of the General Assembly, the setting up of work parties be postponed until this has been implemented.

(C) **FINANCE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. **Centrally Supported Ministries**  
   The 2008 General Assembly instructed the Home Missions Board, in consultation with the Finance Sub-Committee, ‘to bring forward draft legislation to the 2009 General Assembly in relation to arrangements for centrally supported congregations’. This remit was carried over by the 2009 General Assembly in order to allow the Board more time to complete the exercise. It proved difficult to determine ‘the number of congregations that can reasonably be supported by the Church’ due to the different levels of income from centrally supported congregations and the consequent level of support required varying from year to year. The Board, therefore, focused its attention on the level of financial support required within each category of supported ministry in relation to the overall annual expenditure on Sustentation and Church Extension ministries.

The completed exercise showed that (1) the projected financial burden on the Home Missions Board in 2010 arising from Centrally Supported Ministries is approximately £300,000, equivalent to 14% of the total cost of Sustentation and Church Extension ministries; and that (2) the projected cost of supporting ministries on Special Arrangements
and Renewable/Terminable Appointments in 2010 is approximately £75,000, equivalent to 25% of the total cost of centrally supported ministries.

A by-product of the exercise highlighted that there is an increasing financial burden borne by the Board from congregations where ministers were appointed on the Equal Dividend Platform but now are unable to meet the cost of ministry. The figure is currently around £50,000 and is expected to increase until such time as the full implementation of Act I, 2009, takes effect.

The exercise has proved to be beneficial to the Board in its annual budgetary review and in considering its fundraising aims and objectives. The Board, therefore, recommends that this kind of consultation with the Board of Trustees Finance Sub-Committee becomes an annual exercise so that the Board can monitor carefully the level of expenditure in this area.

The Board’s proposal is found in Section (C) 1 of the Proposed Deliverance.

2. Fund-raising The Board has spent a significant amount of time in the past year preparing for the introduction of the New Remittances Scheme and the associated fund-raising requirement of 30% of its budget in 2010, estimated to be £150,000.

In fulfilling the remit of the 2009 General Assembly to continue discussions with the International Missions Board and the Communications Committee in order to enhance the Church’s fund-raising capabilities, the Board held a number of joint meetings with representatives of the International Missions Board in the past year. The purpose of the meetings was to consider fund-raising methods and practice and to explore ways of sharing the work and the costs of the fundraising exercise.

The outcome of the meetings was two-fold. Firstly, the Boards produced a joint “Mission” fund-raising information Leaflet and an associated PowerPoint Presentation. The purpose of this exercise was to raise awareness of the kind of projects being supported by both Boards and at the same time informing all present and potential contributors of the cost of funding the sample projects. Secondly, the Boards set out a programme of joint meetings with Congregations and Deacons’ Courts in the home Presbyteries. Meetings of this kind have already taken place in the congregations of Back, Bon Accord, Buccleuch and Greyfriars, Dowanvale, Glasgow City, Inverness – Free North, Rosskeen, Poolewe and Aultbea, Portree, Smithton-Culloden, Stornoway and Tain.

The purpose of this exercise is to stimulate prayerful and practical interest on the part of individuals and members of Deacons Courts in the various ministries supported by the Board. There is evidence that this exercise is already bearing fruit with additional contributions received at the Central Office. It is anticipated that this will be boosted by the availability of a revamped on-line giving system through the Free Church Website in the near future.

3 Social Responsibility The Committee has continued to provide limited financial support to various caring initiatives within several Presbyteries: alcohol and addiction recovery projects in the Western Isles and the Inverness area and youth projects in Skye and Wester Ross, the Western Isles and Fife.

(D) QUINQUENNIAL VISITATIONS

1. Social Responsibility forms The Board is in the process of updating the Schedules issued for use by Presbyteries in Quinquennial Visitations. The Social Responsibility Return which is required by Act X, 1994, will be incorporated in the Schedule of Questions for Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees. Since these Schedules are issued for the guidance of Presbyteries and their use is not compulsory, Presbyteries are reminded that the use of this Section of the Schedule is mandatory and a copy should be transmitted to the Clerk of the Board with any relevant comments as soon as it has been approved by the Presbytery.

2. Compliance The Board in revising the Quinquennial Visitation Schedules is introducing a new Schedule specifically dealing with Compliance issues such as Child Protection, Protection of Vulnerable Adults, Data Protection, and Health and Safety. While use of the other schedules is not mandatory, Presbyteries will be required to ensure that the Compliance Schedule is completed and to investigate any aspects where the congregation have failed to comply with the Regulations. Presbyteries will be expected to investigate any such failures and ensure that proper compliance is attained.
(E) YOUTH

The Board continues to be grateful for all those involved in running youth activities throughout the church. In addition to Sunday Schools, Bible Classes, camps and conferences, these include crèches, mother and toddler groups, Campaigners, youth clubs of various sorts and youth fellowships. It is the Board’s prayer that these initiatives will bear fruit in reaching out with the Gospel to local communities, building up our young people in the faith and providing them with Christ-like role models.

1. Sunday School and Bible Class

The Board is grateful to all those who give of their time and talents to teach our children and young people in our Sunday Schools and Bible Classes. More than ever, there is a need to ensure that our youngsters receive Biblical teaching relevant to their age and stage. As a Church, we are thankful to God for the provision of such a comprehensive set of teaching aids at our disposal.

1.1 The Awards System

The number of youngsters participating in the Awards system in 2009 showed an increase on 2008. A total of 385 young people completed Records of Achievement as follows: Infant Grade – 143; Junior Grade – 173; Bible Class Grade – 69. A total of 47 Explorations on Exploring Helping Hands were submitted as follows: Infant Grade: 12; Junior Grade – 26; Bible Class Grade – 9. Many of the Records of Achievement were of a very high standard and were awarded Certificates of Merit and an encouraging number of candidates produced excellent Explorations. The Board congratulates all the youngsters who took part and places on record its thanks to those who so willingly helped with marking the Awards: Mrs Anne Ferrier, Mrs Muriel Amey, Miss Rene Stewart and Mr Innes MacLeod. The Board wishes to acknowledge the many years of helpful service rendered by Miss Stewart who has indicated that she would like to stand down as a marker after this Assembly. The Board is also very indebted to Mrs Sharon Fraser for her administrative efficiency in supervising the distribution of the teaching materials to all the participating congregations.

1.2 Syllabus Revision

The first three years of the syllabus revision have now been completed and a start made on the fourth. The Board is grateful to those involved with this ongoing work: Miss Helen Sharp, Mrs Anne Ferrier (Infant Grade); Mrs Lillian MacDonald, (Junior Grade); and Dr Alan Fraser (Bible Class Grade). The Board continues to be grateful to Mrs Irene Howat for her work in the delivery of the materials.

1.3 Explorations

For some years the children’s Explorations have made up the middle pages of The Instructor over the winter months. This year the September issue will be given over entirely to exploring The Life of Peter with a view to encouraging more children to take part. Bible Class students will be provided with a template which they may use for their Explorations. These changes will be reviewed in October 2011.

1.4 Lyle Orr Awards

Following suggestions made at last year’s General Assembly, the Board has agreed to relax the request for secrecy to Lyle Orr prizewinners and their families prior to the publication of the Supplementary Report.

1.5 Sunday School Teachers’ Conference

Regrettably, owing to insufficient bookings, the Sunday School Teachers’ Conference planned for last October in Falkirk had to be cancelled. Instead of rescheduling the conference, the Board decided to arrange a conference in 2011 with a wider remit involving the role of parents and Kirk Sessions as well as teachers.

2. The Instructor

The Board continues to be in debt to Mrs Irene Howat, for her enthusiasm and efficiency in editing The Instructor. She is pleased to report a year without problems in relation to its compiling, printing and distribution. Once again the middle page spread of the magazine has carried materials that contribute to the Church’s Award System. In 2009-10 children explored the story of William Carey and how the Gospel was taken to India.

In 2009, the Youth Project, which is administered through The Instructor, raised £8,112 to help fund a Sunday School project worker based in Dumsani. Over the last 13 years Youth Projects have raised the magnificent sum of £123,251 for missionary work in India, Kenya, Peru, Cambodia, Southern Africa, Moscow, Uganda and Colombia as well as supporting Tearfund’s relief work.

Friends of The Instructor continue to support the work both prayerfully and financially.

The Editor wishes to thank the Board for its support over the year, those who contribute to the magazine and those who promote and use it. Above all she gives thanks to the Lord for his great goodness.

3. Youth Workers
3.1 Personnel The Home Missions Board helps support the work of several Youth Workers – Mrs Susan MacLean (Youth Work Facilitator in the Skye and Wester Ross Presbytery), Mrs Alison MacDonald (Presbytery Youth Worker in the Western Isles), Mr Jonathan Worthington (Youth Worker in Bon Accord Free Church, Aberdeen) and Miss Mairianne Campbell (Youth Worker and Secretarial Assistant at Stornoway Free Church). Congregations in other Presbyteries also benefit from full or part-time workers who are committed to bringing the Gospel to our young people. The Board intends to arrange meetings with our Youth Workers that their work might be strengthened through mutual encouragement, the sharing of knowledge and practice, and the fellowship of prayer.

3.2 Youth Work Training Following last year’s General Assembly’s instruction to the Board to “engage in a comprehensive survey of suitable Youth Work related training”; the Board has agreed the following recommendations:
1. that formal youth work qualifications be not deemed necessary where a candidate for youth work has other spiritual and theological qualifications;
2. that it should be recognised by congregations and courts of the Church that youth workers are professionals rather than perpetual apprentices and appropriate respect be given to their position;
3. that youth workers should be encouraged to take the College Saturday course;
4. that the College be approached to provide a distant learning module on Church principles;
5. that the Youth Ministry module prepared for use in the College by Professor Donald MacDonald be adapted for use by the Board for youth worker training.

4. Youth Camps

Report from Camps Supervisor, Rev. Colin Morison

4.1 The 2009 Programme Last year’s programme consisted of 14 camps with 381 campers and 140 leaders and cooks. One camp reported a significant number of its young people professing faith in their home churches in the weeks after camp – for which we praise God. Thanksgiving for camps was held in various congregations during September and October; information drawn from individual camp reports was circulated in advance to all ministers.

The financial situation has been very difficult for everyone and such was the state of our ‘reserves’ that we considered it prudent to make an appeal for funds to the church. This was met by wonderful generosity from many different quarters and we are both thankful to God for motivating people to give and for individuals, churches and groups who responded to his divine prompting. The money will be used in the coming years to help young people and leaders attend camps.

4.2. The 2010 Programme The 2010 programme is in place; at the time of writing [end of March], over 300 campers have so far booked – a drop in numbers from previous years. Other organisations doing similar work are experiencing the same thing and it may be that the national economic uncertainty is having its effect in this area as in many others. Due to these low numbers the Dunbar camp has been cancelled; places at alternative camps have been offered to reduce disappointment. The Gaelic camp went ahead at Easter. We are thankful to God that a generous grant from a Gaelic funding organisation has helped to keep the costs down. The Big Free Rally is moving location for 2010 from Culloden Academy to Culduthel Christian Centre. This too, is partially in an effort to reduce costs. By the time this report is published, training events for leaders will have been held in Falkirk, Smithton and Stornoway.

4.3. 50th Anniversary Plans are well in hand to celebrate God’s faithfulness over 50 years of Free Church Camps. A PowerPoint presentation will be made available to congregations and individuals via the church website and used to promote the work of camps as well as encourage people to pray and to give thanks to God for the work he has done through them. It is hoped this will be available in time for the General Assembly. In addition we are looking into the possibility of producing a commemorative booklet and tea towel. As well as this, silicone wrist bands commemorating the dates will be provided to all campers, leaders and any others who wish them. These are being made available through one of our team leaders.

4.4. Miss Mhairi MacKintosh Perhaps the biggest camp news, concerns the change in Camps Administrator. At time of writing Mhairi MacKintosh has tendered her resignation and the process of identifying a suitable replacement has begun. Although she would not wish it – it would be wrong to stop without paying tribute to the work done by Mhairi over the last seven years. Mhairi’s personal care for campers and leaders springs from her love for the Saviour and His work. She has given unstinting service which has gone far beyond the normal boundaries of her employment with the Church. Mhairi has dealt with every situation in gracious fashion. As Camps Supervisor, I have been constantly impressed with her efficiency in maintaining a programme involving 500/600 people across more than a dozen locations in Scotland and beyond. Over and above this, her concern for those under her care is evident; Mhairi has been a huge asset to the work of camps and will be greatly missed.
4.5 As ever, the work of camps is dependent on a great number of people; thanks are due to parents who encourage their children to attend, leaders who give their time year after year, and people who give donations of various kinds, help with transport and pray. Our thanks as a church is offered to all who help; and we give thanks to God for it is by His grace and strength we do what we do, and it is in His name that we do it.

5. Youth Conference

Report from Youth Conference Board Convener, Matt Ford

The 2010 Youth Conference at Lendrick Muir was a roaring success. This year, Dr. Liam Goligher (Duke Street, London) was our main speaker and took the delegates through the “Scandalous Grace” in the book of Jonah. The Conference was more or less sold out (with one bed to spare) at 117, with a dozen additional day visitors. Liam was an exceptional speaker and the delegates had a whale of a time! We followed the usual format of seminars on the Saturday and Sunday. Topics ranged from “God's Sovereignty in the life of Joseph” to “The Hypersexualisation of Culture”. We are hugely grateful for all the speakers who took part. The usual combination of exquisite food and good company made for another very successful year. As ever, the Board is extremely grateful for the continuing support of the Board and wider Free Church. Mr Craig Nicolson has taken on the mantle as Convener for the 2011 Youth Conference.

6. Education

The Board continues to be grateful to Dr Graham Keith for his willingness to keep a watchful brief on educational developments. He represents the Free Church on the Scottish Joint Curriculum for Religious and Moral Education and this year we have been able to make representation to the Scottish Qualifications Authority about the future of RME exams.

7. Chaplains

Many of our ministers enjoy access to our day schools and we are grateful to God, that in a day of increasing secularity and marginalisation of the church, this is still possible in many parts of Scotland. Rev. Finlay Mackenzie has official status as chaplain in the three Glasgow universities and is freely able to hold Bible studies with students, conduct regular services in Glasgow University and participate in chaplaincy meetings. Rev. Dr Bob Akroyd is also a Chaplain at the University of Edinburgh. Other ministers are also members of chaplaincy teams or act as chaplains to Free Church students. The Board is in contact with UCCF and would encourage Free Church students to benefit from the witness and fellowship provided by Christian Unions.

ALEX J. MACDONALD, Chairman
DAVID C. MEREDITH, Vice-Chairman

APPENDIX ONE

Development Officer’s Report

I took up my post full time in July 2009. It was a great loss to us as a family to leave Kirkcaldy and we did so only because we were clear that it was God’s will for us to do so. The time I spent on secondment to the post helped to smooth the transition into the work on a full time basis.

The job is varied, challenging and enjoyable. I am thankful to the Church for its support and the opportunity I have been given. My role covers a number of areas which are outlined below.

Supporting Redevelopment & Church Extension Charges

The Free Church currently has four Church Extension Charges and five Redevelopment Charges. I have a remit to support these congregations and the ministers appointed to serve in them. In October 2009, I enrolled in a training programme to equip me to coach church planters. I felt this would help me to develop skills that would be of use in supporting Free Church ministers in redevelopment or church planting situations. The training is provided by the Acts 29 church planting network and has been very beneficial indeed.

Hub Programme

The Hub Programme provides training to congregations across the country. The purpose of the training is to strengthen local churches in the work of mission and evangelism. This is in support of our denominational strategy for mission in Scotland, ‘mission through the local church.’ There are no financial resources offered through the programme and neither does it offer additional workers to local congregations. The programme provides training to some congregations with the intention that they will then become ‘hubs’ for training in their area.

In 2009, the Hub Scheme was piloted in Cumbernauld, Ferintosh and Resolis, and Thurso Free Churches. I worked with the leaders and members of these congregations with a view to equipping them more thoroughly for the work of mission and evangelism in their local area. This year I hope to continue to work with these churches to help
implement some of the ideas we discussed and also to help extend training to neighbouring congregations. I am also engaging in a review of the training offered in the pilot phase of the Hub Programme.

In 2010, the Hub Programme has been extended and I am now also working with Buccleuch and Greyfriars in Edinburgh and Portree Free Church. I am also hoping to start work with Oban Free Church in the near future and am exploring the possibility of a Hub in the Western Isles Presbytery.

Church Planting  Given the financial constraints limiting the number of Church Extension Charges we need to adopt a method of church planting that marries low costs with flexibility. We also need to give church planters the best level of support and training that we can. We must also plant churches that will be able to reach people who would not naturally have any affinity to the Free Church or any other kind of church.

1.  **Church Planting Model**  The proposed method of church planting involves using bivocational church planters who have been ordained as elders in a ‘mother congregation’ working with house groups to plant daughter churches. Beginning in urban areas it would seem wisest to start the ‘daughter’ plants in areas where we have a number of people living in the same community or in a community to which a core group would be willing to move.

The new church would remain part of the mother church and would worship there at least once on a Sunday but would also have local meetings based in suitable venues. They would seek to increase the new church mainly through relationship-based evangelism and mission in their local community.

If a daughter church grows sufficiently then it should divide into two and repeat the process. We should be committed to a process of planting churches that will plant churches that will plant churches.

A model of small, lay led church plants under the care and oversight of a larger, ‘mother’ church has the flexibility to serve the needs of the Free Church of Scotland in both urban and rural situations. They should also have the flexibility to reach a wide range of cultural groups.

To begin this process we need to recruit suitably gifted people and give them suitable training and support. This training would not aim to train people for full time ministry but to lead church planting groups under the oversight of ‘mother’ churches.

2.  **Church Planting Programme**
- We pilot four church plants in 2010 using the model outlined above.
- We work with four ‘mother’ churches, one each in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen.
- We seek to recruit two leaders and about ten others for each church planting group.
- We source a good church planting training that we can utilise.
- We provide coaching and peer to peer support for those leading the church plants.
- We evaluate the process and if it is fruitful we work to begin another thirty groups in succeeding three years.

Presbytery Strategy  I have been invited to provide input to the Strategy Committees of the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll and to the Northern Presbytery. I am grateful for those opportunities and hope I can be of help in these areas.

Training  Free Church College: I have taught a six week module on Evangelism and Mission for the Free Church College.

Porterbrook Distance Learning  I am in the process of setting in place a distance learning course for people in Scotland with an interest in missional church and church planting. The course will use materials provided by the Porterbrook Network in Sheffield.

Ad Hoc  Visits to congregations on behalf of the Home Missions Board; visits to congregations to provide training or support on a one-off basis; advice and support to Reformission Scotland, mostly in the area of recruitment; working with others to set up the East of Scotland Gospel Partnership and a peer to peer support network for church planters in the East of Scotland.

NEIL MACMILLAN, Development Officer
APPENDIX TWO

Petition: Presbytery of the Western Isles: South Uist and Benbecula: Renewal of Church Extension Status

Unto the Venerable the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on 17th May 2010, the Petition of the Presbytery of the Western Isles shows that:

1. Whereas the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula was designated a Church Extension Charge in 2000, at which time Rev. Iain MacAskill was appointed to the charge under the terms of Act XXVII, 1989;
2. Whereas the Church Extension status of South Uist and Benbecula was extended for a further five years in accordance with Act XXVII, 1989;
3. Whereas the current five year term of the Church Extension status of South Uist and Benbecula congregation comes to an end at the 2010 General Assembly;
4. Whereas the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula was declared vacant in August 2009 with the translation of Rev. Iain MacAskill to the congregation of Rosskeen;
5. Whereas the Presbytery through its Strategy Committee has conducted a recent visitation of the South Uist and Benbecula congregation;
6. Whereas the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula has greatly benefited from the ministry of Rev. Iain MacAskill;
7. Whereas the Presbytery and the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula are both desirous that a new ministry be put in place to develop and expand the work further;
8. Whereas the work and witness of the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula has developed into being an integral part of the structure and fabric of the community;
9. Whereas, while the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula has not made sufficient progress, financially, towards achieving the status a fully sanctioned charge, nevertheless it has made significant progress towards this status;
10. Whereas it is the considered opinion of the Presbytery and of the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula that the circumstances and context in which the ministry of the Congregation is carried out are exceptional;
11. Whereas the Presbytery has consulted with the Home Missions Board and has been encouraged by the Board to Petition the General Assembly for the exceptional extension of Church Extension status for the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula for a further period of five years;

Wherefore may it please your Venerable Court to receive the petition and to grant its crave, to the extent that the General Assembly declare that in the exceptional circumstances prevailing in the South Uist and Benbecula congregation, and in terms of Act XXVII, 1989, the General Assembly grant a further five-year period of Church Extension status to the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula; or do otherwise as in your wisdom you may deem best. And your petitioners will ever pray.

Extracted from the records of the Free Presbytery of The Western Isles on 24th November 2009 by:

MALCOLM MACLEOD, Presbytery Clerk

APPENDIX THREE

Petition: Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross: Glenurquhart and Fort Augustus: Renewal of Redevelopment Status

To the Venerable General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, appointed to meet at Edinburgh on Monday 17th May 2010, the Petition of the Free Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross humbly shows:
1. Whereas the Rev. John A. M. Mackay completes five years of ministry in the Redevelopment Charge of Glen Urquhart and Fort Augustus Free Church in January 2010, and his appointment as minister is subject to review by May 2010;

2. Whereas the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross has visited the congregation in 2009 to hold a Quinquennial Visitation and to consult with the congregation concerning their future ministry;

3. Whereas the congregation maintains an Evangelical and Reformed gospel witness in the growing communities of Glen Urquhart and Fort Augustus, and the congregation enjoys a good reputation in both communities;

4. Whereas the Church wholeheartedly supports two missionary families from within the membership of the congregation;

5. Whereas the congregation has known blessing under the ministry of Rev. John A. M. Mackay, and has seen several additions to the communicant membership including several by profession of faith, and the congregation and office-bearers greatly benefit from the teaching ministry, leadership and pastoral care of their minister;

6. Whereas the congregation has exceeded the financial target set by the Home Missions Board over the last five years;

7. Whereas in the past the congregation has refurbished and modernised the Fort Augustus Church building, and more recently has replaced the manse with a more suitable property, and is in the midst of a substantial refurbishment and modernisation of the church building at Glen Urquhart, and these steps are helpful to the congregation in carrying out mission and ministry;

8. Whereas the congregation strongly desires to continue as a Church Redevelopment Charge under the ministry of Rev. John A. M. Mackay, believing this to be the most appropriate way to build up the church of Christ in the district in the foreseeable future;

9. Whereas the Presbytery and congregation have discussed all possible options for the congregation in the next five years, including linkage with other congregations, and have concluded that at this time linkage is not practicable;

10. Whereas the Presbytery concurs with the wish of the congregation to be continued as a Church Redevelopment Charge believing that there are encouraging signs that a further period of redevelopment may lead under the blessing of God to significant strengthening and progress in the congregation;

11. Whereas the congregation wishes to continue under the much-appreciated ministry of the Rev. John A. M. Mackay and the Presbytery supports this request;

Wherefore the Petition of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross humbly requests that the General Assembly take these matters into consideration, and ordain that the congregation of Glen Urquhart and Fort Augustus be continued as a Church Redevelopment Charge, under the continuing ministry of Rev. John A. M. Mackay, for a further period of five years in accordance with the provisions of Act XXXIV, 1988, section 5.3.1, or do otherwise as shall seem good to the General Assembly.

Extracted from the Records of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross by:

ANGUS MACRAE, Presbytery Clerk
APPENDIX FOUR

Grants and Loans

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PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Home Missions Board and thank the Board especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and the Conveners of Committees.

2. The General Assembly thank the members and adherents of the Church who by their contributions have shown their concern for the maintenance and furtherance of a gospel ministry throughout our land.

3. The General Assembly thank the Chief Administrative Officer and members of the Offices staff for their contribution to the work of the Board.

(A) ASSEMBLY REMITS

1.1 The General Assembly, recognising that the remit of the Home Missions Board is sufficiently wide-ranging to require the services of a full-time worker, approve the appointment of a Development Officer to the Board with the following duties and in accordance with these conditions:

1.1.1 The Development Officer shall be a minister of the Free Church of Scotland with considerable pastoral experience. His appointment shall be for a period of three years, renewable thereafter for a further period of three years.

1.1.2 The Development Officer shall be appointed by the Home Missions Board and shall be inducted to the appointment by the presbytery within whose bounds he takes up residence with a seat in that presbytery. If he removes to a residence in another presbytery his membership shall be transferred to the new presbytery by way of petition.

1.1.3 The Development Officer shall be paid at the rate of the current stipend by the Home Missions Board who shall also be responsible for providing accommodation and reasonable expenses and meet the relevant National Insurance and Pension contributions.

1.1.4 The Development Officer shall report to the Board at each of its ordinary meetings or as the Board may require. He shall also report annually to the General Assembly through the Board.

1.1.5 The Development Officer shall be an adviser to the Board and shall be entitled to attend its meetings and the meetings of its committees as may be desirable. He shall be responsible to the Board and the Chairman of the Board shall be his line-manager.

1.1.6 The Development Officer, like every other ministerial member of presbytery, shall be subject for disciplinary matters to the Presbytery of which he is a member and to the other courts of the Church.
1.1.7 If the appointment is not renewed at the end of any three-year period he shall be treated as a minister without charge and the Board will inform the Principal Clerk so that his name may be included in the Register of ministers without charge. He shall cease to be a member of presbytery. The Board will continue to pay him at the current rate of stipend and provide him with accommodation for a period of six months from the date of the expiry of his appointment or until his induction to another charge if earlier.

1.1.8 During the first three years of his appointment a call may not be addressed to the Development Officer without the approval of the Board.

1.2. The duties of the Development Officer shall be as follows:

1.2.1 to develop mission in local congregations, especially Church Extension and Redevelopment charges, by the provision of suitable training, resources, advice and expertise;

1.2.2 to set up and monitor the growth of ‘hub’ congregations, with particular regard to leadership, multi-member ministry, outreach and discipleship by personal contact and provision of suitable resources;

1.2.3 to give advice and assistance in the setting up of new church plants;

1.2.4 to give assistance and advice to presbyteries with a view to developing their strategy programmes;

1.2.5 to contribute to the development of project-led finance;

1.2.6 to develop sound strategies for church revitalisation;

1.2.7 to carry out such other work as may be allocated to him by the General Assembly directly or through the Home Missions Board.

1.3. The General Assembly note that the Home Missions Board appointed Rev. Neil M. MacMillan to be Development Officer in accordance with the terms of Act XXIV, 2009, with effect from 12th July 2009, and approve the appointment. They instruct the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth to induct Mr MacMillan to the work of his appointment and to a seat in the Presbytery on a date not later than 31st July 2010. They declare that Mr MacMillan’s duties and responsibilities shall be in accordance with the terms of Sections 1.1 and 1.2 above.

2. The General Assembly note that the Board continues to liaise through the Development Officer with the Presbytery of Glasgow and Argyll to prepare a strategy programme for the Presbytery. They instruct the Presbytery to report their progress to the Board regularly through the Development Officer.

3. The General Assembly note that the Board with members of the Strategy Committee of the Board of Trustees has consulted with the Northern Presbytery in order to develop further the Presbytery’s strategic plan as instructed by the Commission of Assembly of October 2008. They instruct the Board to continue to liaise with the Presbytery in order to assist them in the implementation of their strategy policy. The General Assembly further note that negotiations continue to bring about workable ministerial arrangements for the East Sutherland congregations and instruct the Northern Presbytery to report to next General Assembly through the Board their progress with regard to this and also other parts of their bounds.

4. The General Assembly note the steps being taken by the Board to ‘identify new opportunities for church planting and to explore which models of church planting can best be adapted to the needs of the denomination’. They approve the Board’s intention to pilot four church plants in 2010 and instruct the Board to report on the progress of these plants with further proposals to next General Assembly.

5. The General Assembly declare that all congregations of the Free Church of Scotland are free to enter into gospel partnerships with other local evangelical confessional churches without the need of Assembly legislation.

6. The General Assembly note the Board’s view that part-time ministry does not provide the best answer to situations where full-time ministry is deemed to be financially unsustainable and consider that such cases are best served by some form of team-ministry. The General Assembly pass from the proposal.
7. The General Assembly, noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board with regard to procedure in the appointment of a minister, declare nothing in the present legislation prevents a minister expressing an interest in a vacancy and that this should not be interpreted as using “undue methods” in procuring a call.

8. Whereas the Commission of Assembly of October 2008 instructed the Home Missions Board to research and develop proposals allowing the development of team ministries incorporating more than one congregation, in order to enable a more efficient deployment of full time workers and the sharing of ministers and other personnel between congregations willing to enter into such an arrangement as a means to greater gospel growth, and to report on this matter to the General Assembly of 2011;

Whereas the outcome of this research as set out in the proposals below envisages a new category of relationship between congregations and ministers in a Team Ministry situation, thereby requiring the procedure of transmitting these proposals to Presbyteries under the terms of the Barrier Act;

Whereas the proposals are of sufficient importance as to affect the whole Church, and,

Whereas it is advisable “to secure due deliberation and harmony in the enactment of new laws and in the alteration of old ones” (The Practice, chapter III, Part II, par. 4);

Wherefore the General Assembly transmit the following proposed legislation to Presbyteries under the terms of the Barrier Act;

The General Assembly in order to enable a more efficient deployment of full time workers and the sharing of ministers and other personnel between congregations willing to enter into such an arrangement as a means to greater gospel growth, authorise the creation of team ministries in accordance with the following regulations:

8.1 The General Assembly enact and ordain that team ministries shall be established to serve groups of more than one congregation. Such arrangements shall be authorised by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Home Missions Board after consultation with the Presbytery concerned.

Team ministries may be set up in any one of the following situations:
(a) A group of two or more congregations, at least one of which does not qualify for the appointment of a minister under current legislation and where the appointment of a District Minister is not appropriate;
(b) A group of two or more congregations, at least one of which is vacant and at least one of which has a settled ministry;
(c) A charge where two or more congregations have been linked and where the linked charge is of sufficient size to require the appointment of more than one minister but where the appointment of an assistant minister is inappropriate.
(d) A group of two or more congregations which have settled ministries but who wish to cooperate on a team ministry basis.

8.2 The Presbytery

8.2.1 Applications for the approval of a team ministry arrangement shall take the form of a Petition to the General Assembly from the Presbytery / Presbyteries in which the congregations involved are located. The Petition will be accompanied by a Schedule in which the participating congregations’ contributions to the maintenance of the team ministry will be indicated.

8.2.2 The Presbytery shall, through its Strategy Committee, formulate a clear plan for the team ministry arrangement in consultation with the Kirk Sessions and congregations within the area to be covered by the team ministry plan. The plan shall give details of (a) the number and names of the congregations involved; (b) the number of ministers and auxiliary workers which will form the team; and (c) proposals for pulpit ministry, pastoral ministry, and mission/evangelism in the locality served by each congregation. The plan shall be flexible in order to ensure the exercise of all aspects of gospel ministry in the area to be served by the team ministry arrangement. This plan shall be known as the Team Ministry Plan. The number of ministers in the Team Ministry Plan will be limited by the combined annual remittances of the congregations included in the Plan and the annual direct cost of ministry.

8.2.3 The Presbytery shall give careful consideration to the membership of the team with particular consideration given to the appointment of a team leader and the preferred location of the team leader.
8.2.4 Where the proposed group of congregations within the Team Ministry Plan contains one or more settled charges at the time of the creation of the team ministry, the Presbytery shall consult with the Home Missions Board regarding arrangements for ministerial appointments under the proposed Plan.

8.2.5 Each congregation included in the Team Ministry Plan shall have its own Kirk Session and Deacons’ Court / Finance Committee. Kirk Sessions may meet together if they so desire to dispose of matters of common interest.

8.2.6 Where the congregations comprising a team ministry cross presbytery boundaries, the Team Ministry Plan will indicate which Presbytery will be responsible for the general oversight of the team ministry. In the case of a minister in a settled charge being appointed to the team ministry, the Petition shall include a crave for the minister to be a general assessor to the Presbytery within which he does not reside.

8.2.7 Having formulated a detailed plan of the team ministry arrangements, the Presbytery shall bring forward a Petition to the General Assembly through the Home Missions Board. The Petition shall indicate the number of ministers and other workers required, and the general nature of the proposed duties of the members of the team.

8.2.8 The Sustentation Fund Schedule will indicate: (1) the combined remittances of the congregations in the proposed team ministry arrangement over the last three years; (2) the arrangements for the remuneration and financial support of non-ministerial members; (3) the accommodation to be provided for the ministerial members of the team; (4) the amount of financial assistance required from the Home Missions Board. The terms of the Petition, the Sustentation Fund Schedule and the Team Ministry Plan shall be approved by the participating congregations.

8.2.9 Funding for auxiliary workers who are appointed to the team will normally be according to the terms of Act X, 2006, regarding Auxiliary Workers.

8.3 Home Missions Board

8.3.1 The Home Missions Board shall give due consideration to the Team Ministry Plan in the light of the strategy of the Presbytery and the overall strategy of the Board with regard to the development of existing ministries and the potential for new ministries within the Presbytery bounds.

8.3.2 The Home Missions Board shall examine the Sustentation Fund Schedule and give due consideration to the ability of the congregations included in the Team Ministry Plan to meet the financial commitment given in the combined Schedule for the five year term of the Plan. The Board may also, at its discretion, and in the light of its overall strategy, consider whether additional financial support can be given to the proposal in order to help achieve the total number of ministers required to fulfil the objectives of the Plan.

8.3.3 The Board shall give due consideration, in the light of its overall strategy, to the financial support required to fund the appointment of ministerial members of the team and also the level of financial support required to fund the appointment of auxiliary workers to the team in terms of Act X, 2006. If the Plan is approved, the Board shall ensure that annual budgetary provision is made for the five-year term of the Plan.

8.3.4 Where the proposed group of congregations within the Team Ministry Plan contains one or more settled charges at the time of the creation of the team ministry, the Board shall consider the financial viability of the settled charge or charges in terms of Act I, 2009. If a charge is no longer financially viable under the terms of the aforesaid Act, the minister shall be loosed from his charge in terms of the Act, and the minister or ministers will be available for appointment to the Team. A minister in a settled charge which is still financially viable will also have the terms of his appointment adjusted so that his pastoral relationship is extended to include all the congregations in the team ministry plan but without further induction.

8.3.5 The Board shall have further consultation with the Presbytery as necessary in order to establish a clear and definite proposal with regard to the appointment and location of the team leader and the relationship between the members of the team.

8.3.6 The Board shall be fully satisfied with the financial and practical arrangements of the Team Ministry Plan before agreeing to support the Plan.

8.3.7 The Board, after consultation with the Presbytery, may consult with the Board of Ministry with regard to the placement of students entering their year of probation in terms of Act XLVI, 2008, and the possibility of such students being appointed to assist with the Team Ministry Plan.

8.4 Implementation of the Team Ministry Plan
8.4.1 When authority has been granted by the General Assembly for the establishment of a team ministry, the Home Missions Board, in consultation with the Presbytery and the congregations, shall make arrangements for the appointment of members of the Team according to the Team Ministry Plan.

8.4.2 Ministers shall be appointed by the Board with concurrence of the Presbytery and the congregations involved in the Team Ministry Plan.

8.4.3 The Team Leader shall be appointed first. His appointment as such shall be with the concurrence of the Presbytery and the congregations comprising the team ministry. If the Team Leader is a minister in a settled charge within the area covered by the Team Ministry Plan, he will be appointed to the position of Team Leader and retain his seat on the Presbytery. If the Team Leader is a minister not in a settled charge within the area covered by the Team Ministry Plan, the minister will be inducted to the team ministry and granted a seat on the Presbytery. The Team Leader will carry out his duties as leader and as a minister in the team ministry according to the terms of the Team Ministry Plan. A minister not previously serving in one of the Team ministry congregations shall be inducted by the Presbytery to the Team ministry.

8.4.4 The above arrangements for the appointment of the team leader will apply mutatis mutandis to all other ministers appointed to the team ministry. Where a Probationer is appointed he shall be ordained in accordance with the normal practice following ordination trials. Probationers shall not be appointed team leaders.

8.4.5 Auxiliary workers will be appointed to the Team according to the terms of Act X, 2006, and will be dedicated to the work of the Team Ministry Plan.

8.4.6 The Presbytery shall appoint a Team Ministry Council which will have the responsibility of implementing the Team Ministry Plan. The Convener of the Presbytery Strategy Committee shall be a member of the Team Ministry Council and act as Chairman of the Council. The ministers appointed under the Plan will be members of the Council. Auxiliary Workers appointed under the Plan will also be members of the Council. Kirk Sessions served by the Team Ministry Plan will each appoint one representative elder to serve on the Council.

8.4.7 The Presbytery shall make arrangements for the appointment of moderators of the particular Kirk Sessions within the team ministry. All ministers appointed to a team ministry shall be members of each Kirk Session in the Team Ministry Plan. A minister in a settled charge within the area covered by the Team Ministry Plan may continue as Moderator of his previous Kirk Session.

8.4.8 Ministerial members of the team shall receive the Stipend for the current year. Other workers shall be remunerated and their terms of appointment shall conform to the current regulations for Auxiliary Workers in Act X, 2006.

8.4.9 During the first five years of a minister’s initial appointment to the team ministry, no Presbytery shall sustain a call to him without the prior agreement of the Home Missions Board. If his appointment is extended beyond the initial five-year period, he shall be eligible for call to another charge in the normal way.

8.5 Review

8.5.1 The team ministry arrangement will be for an initial period of five years and will be subject to a full and thorough review commencing twelve months before the five year term is due to expire.

8.5.2 The Presbytery shall report on the Team Ministry to the Home Missions Board on an annual basis. The Report shall give details of progress in each area of ministry and shall draw attention to any adjustments that need to be made to the Team Ministry Plan. Any changes to the original Team Ministry Plan shall be made with the joint agreement of the Presbytery and the Board.

8.5.3 In the event of a vacancy occurring in the position of team leader, a review will be immediately put in place by the Presbytery who shall report their recommendations to the Home Missions Board. The Board, in consultation with the Presbytery and the congregations, shall take such steps as they deem necessary for the filling of the vacancy within the terms of the original agreement.

8.5.4 After a team ministry has been operative for four years from the date of its creation, the Board in consultation with the Presbytery will initiate a Review and report to the next General Assembly. The Report will include (1) recommendations as to the continuance of the arrangement when considered appropriate; (2) recommendations as to adjustments or changes to the Team Ministry Plan; or (3) recommendations as to the
terminating of the arrangement and alternative arrangements for ministry in the congregations covered by the arrangement.

8.5.5 All ministerial appointments to the Team Ministry Plan will be five-year terminable or renewable appointments and the general terms of Act I, 2009, will apply to ministers whose appointment is terminated by the General Assembly. A Minister whose appointment is terminated in this way will have his name added to the Register of Ministers without Charge, Eligible for Call. Ministers appointed to the Team Ministry who were ministers in financially viable congregations at the time of appointment will revert to the original terms of their appointment prior to the setting up of the team ministry.

8.5.6 The appointment of auxiliary workers will be for a fixed term and the conditions of employment will be according to the terms of Act X, 2006.

(B) CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

1. The General Assembly declare a stipend of £19,500 from 1st January 2010, this figure being based on the variation permitted by Act XII, 1989. The General Assembly approve the continuance of the other categories of salary that are paid at a fixed proportion of the stipend.

2. The General Assembly amend Act I, 2009, by deleting the existing Paragraph § 3.10 and substituting the following:

When any congregation whose minister is appointed under the terms of this Act fails to remit the full cost or direct cost of ministry as promised when admitted to the Equal Dividend Platform, then the Board shall draw the attention of the Congregation and the Presbytery to this fact, and the Presbytery shall report to the Board what steps are being taken to rectify the situation. The Board shall report to the General Assembly annually which congregations, if any, failed to meet their commitment in the previous year.

3. The General Assembly give thanks for the diligent work of Church Extension in the congregations at Cobham (Rev. David Miller), Dunfermline (Rev. Douglas Campbell), and St Andrews (Rev. Alasdair I. MacLeod). They thank Rev Iain MacAskill for his ministry in South Uist and Benbecula and commend him to the grace of God in his new ministry at Rossvieen. They call on the Church to continue in prayerful support of the work in these congregations.

4. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of the Western Isles requesting exceptional Church Extension status for the congregation of South Uist and Benbecula. Noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board and recognizing that exceptional circumstances exist in this case, they grant its crave. They authorise the Home Missions Board to maintain a ministerial appointment there for a further five years in terms of Act XXXIV, 1988, Section 5.3.1

5. The General Assembly give thanks for the conscientious work being undertaken in Redevelopment Charges and commend the Rev. Ruairidh Maclean (Harris), Rev. Richard MacDonald (Badenoch), Rev. Colin Morison (Elgin) and Rev. John MacKay (Glencurquhart and Fort Augustus) for their faithful labours and entrust them and their congregations to the prayers and support of the Church.

6. The General Assembly receive the Petition of the Presbytery of Inverness, Lochaber and Ross, and noting the recommendation of the Home Missions Board, they grant its crave. They grant to the congregation of Glenurquhart and Fort Augustus renewal of Redevelopment status under the ministry of Rev. John A. M. Mackay for a further five years until the General Assembly of 2015.

7. The General Assembly note the continuing vacancy in the Redevelopment charge of Gairloch and Kinlochewe and commend the congregation to the prayers of the Church.

8. The General Assembly reaffirm their commitment to sensitive outreach to resident Asian communities in Scotland and give thanks for the dedicated ministry of Rev. Duncan Peters and Rev. Colin Macleod and all involved in Asian Outreach. The General Assembly continue the work of Asian Outreach in Glasgow until 2015. They renew the appointment of Rev. Duncan Peters until the General Assembly of 2015. The General Assembly note the proposed deputation work to be undertaken by Mr Peters and Mr Macleod and trust that through these means more presbyteries and congregations will be able to learn directly of their activities.
9. The General Assembly give thanks for continued witness to the international student community and warmly commend the Rev Finlay H. MacKenzie for his diligent work in the strategic ministry of Service to Overseas Students. They commend the use of the new SOS website to the members of the Church.

10. The General Assembly note the continuing vacancy in the charge of Dumfries and commend the congregation to the prayers of the Church. They renew permission for the congregation of Dumfries to call a minister under Special Arrangements under Act I, 2009, § 5, on condition that they remit a sum corresponding to 60% of the stipend to central funds annually.

11. The General Assembly note the work being done by the Rev. A. M. Fraser in the District Ministry charge of Assynt and Eddrachillis. They thank Mr Fraser for his ministry in two District Ministry appointments, first in Tongue, Farr, Strathy and Halladale, and latterly in Assynt and Eddrachillis, both remote and scattered charges, over a period of extending to twenty-six years, and wish him and Mrs Fraser well in their retirement.

12. The General Assembly note the work being done by the Resident Lay Agent, Mr James Morrison, in Lybster, an area of particular difficulty because of remoteness, local circumstances and declining population; and commend his ministry to the prayers of the Church.

13. The General Assembly note the appointment of Mr Bryan Kee as Pastoral Assistant in St Peter’s, Dundee, and commend him to the grace of God in the different aspects of his work.


15. The General Assembly thank the members of the Evangelism Support Working Party for the help and support given to various congregations engaged in evangelistic outreach. They commend the work of the group to the interest and prayers of the Church and invite congregations who can benefit from such help and support to approach the Working Party.

16. The General Assembly approve the awards made by grant and loan from the Church and Manse Building Fund.

17. The General Assembly note proposals of the Board with regard to the maintenance of church property and instruct the Board to bring forward proposals for the more effective implementation of Act XXXI, 1988. They agree that this should be given priority over the setting up of voluntary work parties. To this end they suspend Act XVII, 2009, until such time as the procedures now proposed have been implemented.

(C) FINANCE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. The General Assembly, in seeking to promote the interests of the Sustentation Fund, and in order to ensure the optimum use of available financial and the human resources, ordain as follows with regard to centrally supported ministries:

The General Assembly note that the projected financial burden on the Home Missions Board in 2010 arising from Centrally Supported Ministries is approximately £300,000, equivalent to 14% of the total cost of Sustentation and Church Extension ministries. The Assembly recognise that a certain level of expenditure is necessary in this area in order for the Church to fulfil its gospel vision and mission. However, the Assembly also recognise that such activities of the Church are to be carried out with good stewardship of the resources available, and therefore enact as follows:

1.1 The General Assembly instruct the Home Missions Board, in consultation with the Board of Trustees Finance Sub-Committee, to report annually on (1) the current level of support required to support ministries in the centrally-supported category; (2) on savings made through adjustments and progress in existing ministries; and (3) on any surplus on budgeted income for such ministries arising from increased/surplus income from fundraising activities. They instruct the Board to ensure budgetary provision for potential new ministries in the next year as part of the annual budgetary review.

1.2 The General Assembly reaffirm their commitment to limit the number of Church Extension charges to five. The General Assembly instruct that the number of appointments in the categories of Church Extension, Asian Outreach and Service to Overseas Students be carefully monitored and managed so that the budgetary provision required to support such ministries remains sustainable. The General Assembly also instruct that the number of
workers in other centrally supported ministries is carefully managed in the context of the wider ministry of the Church.

1.3 The General Assembly, whilst noting that the number of congregations on redevelopment status is likely to increase with the implementation of Act I, 2009, Paragraph 6, instruct the Home Missions Board to limit the number of Redevelopment charges to a level that can be sustained within the current budgetary provision. They also instruct the Board to ensure that a full redevelopment plan, including clear support systems, is agreed with Presbyteries before a congregation is granted Redevelopment status, and that the implementation of the redevelopment plan is continually monitored during the term of the minister’s appointment.

1.4 The General Assembly notes that the projected cost of supporting ministries on Special Arrangements and Renewable/Terminable Appointments in 2010 is approximately £75,000, equivalent to 25% of the total cost of centrally supported ministries. The General Assembly instruct the Home Missions Board to reduce the number of ministries in both of the above categories within the existing legislation. They also instruct that there be no additions to ministries in the Special Arrangement category except where the Board considers that alternative arrangements for ministry, such as a union or a form of team ministry, are not realistic due to the geographical location of a congregation.

1.5 In situations where there is no other alternative for ministry but that of Special Arrangements under the terms of Act I, 2009, Paragraph 5, the Home Missions Board shall give due regard to the budgetary implications of granting Special Arrangements, and only after budgetary provision has been made in the light of the overall financial strategy of the Board, shall a final decision be taken.

1.6 The General Assembly instruct the Home Missions Board to give consideration to all current ministries in the centrally-supported category during its annual budgetary review and, where budgeted levels of income have been exceeded, to consider how existing ministries could be given additional support and what new projects could be initiated by the Board.

2. The General Assembly thank the Home Missions Board and International Missions Board for preparing and distributing a fund-raising information Leaflet in connection with the New Remittances Scheme and for arranging a series of awareness-raising meetings with congregations and Deacons’ Courts in each Presbytery and commend the New Remittances Scheme to the prayers of the Church.

3. The General Assembly note the important caring initiatives and youth projects being undertaken in several Presbyteries and commend them and their workers to the prayers of the church.

(D) QUINQUENNIAL VISITATIONS

1. The General Assembly note that the Schedules for use in Quinquennial Visitations are being updated and commend their use to the Presbyteries of the Church when available. They instruct presbyteries who choose not to use these Schedules to ensure nonetheless that the Social Responsibility Section of the Schedule for completion by Deacons’ Courts and Finance Committees is completed in duplicate or in such a way that one copy may be sent to the Home Missions Board; and shall accordingly send this section with any comments from the Presbytery as soon as the Quinquennial Visitation Report has been approved by the Presbytery to the Clerk of the aforesaid Board.


2. The General Assembly approve the action of the Home Missions Board in adding a Compliance Schedule to the existing Schedules for use at Quinquennial Visitations. The General Assembly require all Kirk Sessions and Deacons’ Courts / Finance Committees to complete this Schedule. They instruct Presbyteries to ensure that this Schedule is completed. Furthermore they instruct Presbyteries to investigate any failures to comply with the appropriate Regulations and to make certain that proper compliance is attained. The Presbytery shall report any outstanding compliance issues to the Chief Administrative Officer who shall give further assistance and guidance as required.

(E) YOUTH

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Supplementary Report of the Home Missions Board.
2. The General Assembly congratulate all the young people who have gained awards and certificates and who have completed Explorations. They thank the teachers and parents for their work in our Sunday Schools and Bible Classes and at home. They encourage Sunday Schools to participate in the Awards system.

3. The General Assembly thank those who marked the Explorations for the various grades: Mrs Anne Ferrier, Mrs Muriel Amey, Miss Rene Stewart and Mr Innes MacLeod.

4. The General Assembly acknowledge with gratitude the work done as a marker by Miss Rene Stewart and wish her well as she steps down from this piece of service so willingly offered over many years.

5. The General Assembly thank the office staff, especially Mrs Sharon Fraser, who is responsible for the processing and distribution of materials relating to the syllabus.

6. The General Assembly thank Miss Helen Sharp, Mrs Anne Ferrier, Mrs Lilian MacDonald, and Dr Alan Fraser for their work on the revision of the Sunday School Syllabus and congratulate them on their progress. They commend this work to the prayers of the Church. They especially thank Mrs Irene Howat for coordinating and processing this work. They urge Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to encourage Sunday Schools to make use of the new materials.

7. The General Assembly thank the Editor of The Instructor, Mrs Irene Howat, for her work and commend her to the prayers of the Church.

8. The General Assembly acknowledge the sterling work being done by all our Youth Workers throughout the Church and commend them to the prayers of the Church.

9. The General Assembly thank the Camps Supervisor, Rev. Colin Morison, and all who serve on the Camps Working Group along with the Office staff who help with the Camps administration. They especially thank Miss Mhairi MacKintosh for her unstinting service, commitment and efficiency as Camps Administrator over the past seven years. They also thank all leaders, cooks and other helpers and those who arranged and took part in Camps Training days. They urge Presbyteries and congregations to be active in promoting the Youth Camps and they commend the 2010 programme to the prayers of the Church. They give thanks to God for the blessing the past 50 years of Free Church Camps have brought to children and young people, to congregations and to the whole denomination. They thank Deacons’ Courts and individuals who have contributed to sponsorship for campers and leaders and encourage others who have not already done so to consider this form of help.

10. The General Assembly thank the Youth Conference Committee, especially the Convener, Mr Matt Ford. They urge congregations to encourage their young people to attend the Conference.

11. The General Assembly thank Dr Graham Keith for his faithful work as the Church’s representative on the Scottish Joint Board for Religious and Moral Education and for his regular updating of the Youth Board on developments in RME and on other issues of concern in Education more generally.

12. The General Assembly thank all ministers who serve as chaplains in schools and universities and commend them to the prayers of the Church.
V.

REPORT

OF THE

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Remit from the General Assembly

- To assume oversight of all matters relating to the working conditions of ministers (including stipend) and other staff members.
- To develop contracts of service for staff where required and, working with other committees and boards to take responsibility for recruitment, training and development (for non-ministerial staff).
- To oversee pension arrangements.
- To work with Presbyteries in seeking to further equip ministers in areas such as leadership and management skills.
- To provide a forum for development of meaningful pastoral support mechanisms.
- To be consulted by the Board of Ministry regarding the oversight of the Student Finance Scheme.
- To be consulted by the International Missions Board on all matters relating to conditions of service, including remuneration and payment of expenses for missionaries and other personnel.
- To be consulted by the College Board on matters relating to the remuneration and working conditions of Professors.
- To review annually its Memorandum of Procedure.

The Committee, in its second year of existence, met four times since the 2009 Assembly. During the year the Committee, which totals six in number, lost the services of Rev. Alasdair Macleod who resigned as a result of extra responsibilities within his Presbytery. Additionally, Mr Neil MacLeod has had to tender his resignation as Clerk as a consequence of his increasing work responsibilities. The Committee is thankful for their contributions. The Committee continues to be indebted to Mr Rod Morrison for his support and the advice he provides.

(A) WORKING CONDITIONS OF MINISTERS

1. Stipend The Personnel Committee reported on the Ministers’ stipend to the 2009 General Assembly that it had made the following recommendation to the Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees:

As a short term target, the stipend should approximate to the median gross weekly earnings for males in full employment in Scotland, after allowing for benefits received. This should be achieved, as follows:

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1st April 2010</td>
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<td>21,250</td>
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The stipend set as at 1st April 2009 amounted to £19,000, which was less than envisaged originally. Subsequently, it having been determined that no further increase could be afforded during the year, it was agreed to bring forward the date for stipend review to 1st January of each year and the stipend was increased to £19,500 from 1st January 2010. No further work has been undertaken to date on the review of stipend level. The Personnel Committee consider however, that the conclusions reached on the short term target remain valid.

Consequently, the Personnel Committee have recommended to the Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees that the stipend should be increased from the current level of £19,500 to £21,000 as from 1st January 2011, an increase of £1,500. This will be part of the staged increase to meet the short term target.

We realise that affordability remains a major issue. However, as a Personnel Committee we must recommend what is considered equitable.

2. Absence due to Illness Arrangements The former Committee on Sustentation and Ministry had commenced a review of existing legislation entitled Sick Leave Arrangements for Ministers in Pastoral Charges (Act
IV, 2001). This review has now been completed and been subject to scrutiny by both the Home Missions Board and the Board of Trustees. The major changes relate, firstly, to long term absence where it is proposed to shorten the maximum period before a Presbytery determines that it must loose the minister from his charge from 18 months to 15 months; additionally, the maximum period for payment of stipend in the case of long term absence is reduced from 24 months to 18 months. Secondly, a greater emphasis is placed on the care of the minister (and the responsibility of the Presbytery’s Pastoral Committee) and the congregation.

The terms of the Draft Act appear as Paragraph 3 of the Committee’s Deliverance.

3. Annual Leave and Leave of Absence for Reasons other than Illness The Committee reviewed the existing legislation entitled Leave of Absence (Act IV, 1994, Section 2). Section 1, relating to Sick Leave for Ministers, was repealed by Act IV, 2001, and the remaining sections relate to Professors and other categories. The review was subject to scrutiny by the Home Missions Board. The issue of Compassionate Leave has been elaborated and the restriction on sabbatical leave, where holiday entitlement is fully taken, has been removed.

The terms of the Draft Act appear as Paragraph 4 of the Committee’s Deliverance.

4. Statement of Good Practice The existing Statement of Good Practice, drawn from current Assembly legislation, seeks to “provide useful guidance to ministers and Kirk Sessions in terms of the standards that the Free Church of Scotland aims to achieve for its ministers”. The Statement was issued in May 2006; the review of the document is in process. It is planned to issue a revised document, following consultation with the Home Missions Board.

5. Ministers’ Starter Pack A Ministers’ Starter Pack is made available to new ministers. A review is in process as to the contents of the pack, with the intention of making an initial distribution of the revised pack to all ministers. Again, there will be consultation with the Home Missions Board.

6. Manse and long term accommodation needs In response to a suggestion by the Personnel Committee, the Board of Trustees “welcomed the suggestion that an anonymous survey should be carried out to assess the extent of personal concern amongst ministers over housing provision for their own retirement or for their family in the event of their death. Following consideration, the Board took the view that the Personnel Committee would be better placed to undertake this exercise itself.” It is noted that the Board has also requested the Finance Committee to give attention to “issues relating to ministers’ retirement accommodation.”

A Questionnaire regarding retirement accommodation was sent out to all Free Church Ministers. Of the 76 circulated, 62 responses were received which represents a response rate of 82%. The data from the responses to each question has been collated and is attached as an Appendix to the Report.

It was only possible to commence analysis of the questionnaire shortly before the draft Assembly Report was due, without the benefit of the Committee meeting to discuss it; however, the Committee has had the opportunity to express comment on this initial report. Given the high response rate, which indicates the importance attached to the issue, the Committee considered it appropriate to share now the raw data with the Assembly. The following responses are highlighted:

- Over half of those responding have no provision in the event of illness or death and most of those responding felt that the Church should help in the event of unforeseen circumstances.
- There was more divergence on whether the church should provide accommodation in retirement. 37% agreed that the church has a responsibility, while 26% disagreed. 37% did not have a strong opinion on the question.
- Approximately 40% of those responding registered the highest degree of concern regarding accommodation after retirement, which co-ordinates with approximately 50% having no current provision. Of those retiring prior to 2016, at least three ministers have no provision currently.
- Well over half had no other source of income; some 45% indicated that they would be unable to finance the purchase of a retirement home. The comparatively low stipend and the level of pension provision were often cited as an issue.
- It was recognised that the Church was limited in what it could do but there was appreciation that consideration was being given to possible options and a number of helpful suggestions were made.

It is clear that the issue of retirement accommodation, and particularly the issue of housing provision in the event of unforeseen circumstances, are of significant concern. This will require appropriate consideration and the Personnel
Committee will be undertaking further detailed analysis. The results of the survey are being shared with the Finance Committee, which has the remit to consider if there are any practical options which may help to alleviate concern.

7. **Seats on Presbyteries**

It has been remitted to the Committee by the Board of Trustees to consider “bringing forward draft legislation in relation to the circumstances in which a minister loosed from his pastoral tie where the ministry has been declared to be financially unsustainable might, by petition to the General Assembly, be granted a seat on Presbytery.” The Committee is reviewing the existing legislation on Seats on Presbyteries (Act XIX, 2004), with a view to incorporating, additionally, reference to chaplains.

**(B) WORKING CONDITIONS OF STAFF**

1. **Progress**

The Chief Administrative Officer has been requested recently to list all relevant areas of employment legislation and attach any existing employment policies, for review by the Committee. It may be that specialist advice will have to be sought in some instances; if this is deemed necessary, and the advice is not available within the church, financial authority will be sought.

A **pro forma** contract of employment is available from the Chief Administrative Officer. Deacons’ Courts and Presbyteries are reminded that both the CAO and the Committee are available to advise and ensure consistency of wording in contracts across the church.

**(C) PENSION ARRANGEMENTS**

1. **Approach**

The Personnel Committee has reviewed the level of employer contribution of 10% to the Defined Contribution scheme with Standard Life. The conclusion reached was similar to the previous year, namely:

*It remains the view of the Committee that the current employer’s contribution of 10% is inadequate to generate a reasonable level of pension. However, the employer’s contribution should remain at 10%, with the emphasis continuing to be stressed on the need to increase stipend.*

This approach leaves the financial decision on pension contribution with the individual.

The Committee remind ministers that they can make their own additional contributions to their Pension Scheme.

Ministers and staff are reminded that they should seek independent financial advice regarding options for their pension plans, including their pension plan with Standard Life and any other pension provider, some months prior to their decision to retire.

**(D) EQUIPPING MINISTERS**

*Leadership and management skills* Any work in this field is to be in conjunction with Presbyteries. No work has been undertaken to date; it is considered that the issue of managing any presbytery staff may be a matter to address.

**(E) PASTORAL SUPPORT MECHANISM**

*A forum for development of meaningful pastoral support mechanisms* The Personnel Committee, in conjunction with the Panel of Pastoral Advice, and stemming from the questionnaire on Pastoral Care of Ministers and their Families, undertook the following two initiatives in the year:

(i) A letter was written to the Board of Ministry suggesting that the need for pastoral care and mentoring of ministers should have some emphasis in the annual In-service Training event.

(ii) Additionally, a letter was written to each Presbytery suggesting that the Pastoral Committee should have an annual informal meeting with each minister; depending upon resources a bi-annual pattern may be more appropriate. It was emphasised that the approach must aim to be beneficial and encouraging, rather than starting with a “problems and difficulties” approach. A considerable number of generic issues were suggested; it was noted that the issues will also be appropriate for the mentoring of new ministers.

The Committee awaits any feedback from Presbyteries.
(F) CHANGES IN PERSONNEL

1. The following changes in Personnel are brought to the attention of the General Assembly:

Deaths
Rev. Hugh MacCallum  formerly of Kilchoan  3rd February 2009
Rev. John J. Adamson  formerly of Burghead  23rd March 2009
Rev. Ronald G. Mackay  formerly of Free North Church, Inverness  4th April 2009

Retirements
Rev. Robert M. Sinclair  Dumbarton  7th February 2009
Rev. Professor Donald M. MacDonald  Chair of Apologetics & Practical Theology, Free Church College  30th June 2009
Rev. Angus J. Howat  Campbeltown, Tarbert & Islay  5th August 2009

Resignations
Rev. Neil M. MacMillan  Kirkcaldy, Kinglassie & Glenrothes (on appointment as Development Officer, HMB)  12th July 2009
Rev. Richard Muir  Coatbridge  3rd August 2009

Translations
Rev. Nigel Anderson  from Ayr to Livingston  4th July 2009
Rev. Iain MacAskill  from South Uist & Benbecula to Rosskeen  14th August 2009
Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell  from Back to Point  21st August 2009
Rev. Angus Lamont  from Dornoch to London  12th September 2009

Ordinations and inductions
Rev. Calum MacMillan  Assistant, Rosskeen  16th October 2009
Rev. John Johnstone  Kirkcaldy, Kinglassie & Glenrothes  13th November 2009

Inductions
Rev. Gordon Matheson  Sleat and Strath  20th February 2009

2. Register of Ministers without charge available for call
None

3. Register of Probationers
Mr James Eglinton  37(1F2) Stewart Terrace, Edinburgh
Licensed by Presbytery of Edinburgh & Perth  26th June 2007

(G) PREACHING FEES AND EXPENSES

Preaching Fees, Travelling Expenses and Residential Supply

The Committee reviewed the rate for preaching fees and travelling expenses. It was agreed to recommend that the standard fee for weekend supply be increased from £40 to £50 as from 1st January 2011. It was agreed, additionally, to recommend that there be no change to the current mileage rate of 30p per mile.

Draft consolidating legislation appears as Paragraph 7 of the Committee’s Deliverance.

(H) CONSULTATION WITH OTHER COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

There is a willingness on the part of the Personnel Committee to be consulted on any personnel issues which present on other Committees or Boards.

NORMAN CUMMING, Convener
DUNCAN MACLEOD, Vice-Convener
APPENDIX

Responses to Questionnaire on Retirement Accommodation

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<td>Q2 Circumstances in event of illness or death?</td>
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<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4 Concerns as to where to stay after retirement on a scale 1 to 10 (10 most concerned)?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5 Arrangements for where to stay already made?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6 If no provision - anticipated date of retiring</td>
<td>2010-2015</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After 2015</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No date provided</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7 Mortgage finance - ability to purchase retirement home?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 Responsibility of church to provide accommodation in retirement?

- Strongly agree: 13
- Agree: 10
- Neither agree nor disagree: 23
- Disagree: 13
- Strongly disagree: 3

Q9 Special living requirements which may complicate retirement provision?

The response of the overwhelming majority was negative; this can change as retirement approaches.

Q10 Other sources of income?

- Yes: 26
- No: 36

Q11 Adequate pension/insurance/financial security?

- Strongly agree: 2
- Agree: 13
- Neither agree nor disagree: 23
- Disagree: 18
- Strongly disagree: 6

Q12 Additional comments?

- Yes: 31
- No: 31

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Personnel Committee, and thank the Committee, especially the Convener and Vice-Convener.

2. The General Assembly note the recommendation of the Personnel Committee that the stipend be increased to £21,000 as from 1st January 2011 and instruct that this be transmitted to the Board of Trustees and the Home Missions Board for their consideration in the light of the Church’s financial position.

3. The General Assembly re-enact the regulations relating to the management of absence due to illness for ministers in pastoral charges as follows:

   3.1 *Short-term Absence*

   3.1.1 All illness in excess of seven consecutive days shall be reported to the Presbytery Clerk and a medical certificate shall be provided. The minister shall continue to provide such certificates, covering the whole period of absence, and a final certificate showing the date of return to work. The Presbytery Clerk shall:

   (a) record the dates of commencement and end of absence in a record apart;
   (b) inform the Presbytery of the minister’s absence;
   (c) inform the Chief Administrative Officer of the minister’s absence;
   (d) inform the Chief Administrative Officer, within seven days, of the minister’s return to work; and inform the Convener of the Presbytery’s Pastoral Committee as soon as possible so that the appropriate support for the minister and his family may be set in motion.
3.1.2 Presbyteries should at all times when dealing with the illness of ministers bear in mind their obligation to exercise pastoral care toward ministers, and toward congregations where many pastoral and other needs may arise in the absence of the minister. Presbyteries are reminded of the central role of their Pastoral Committee in providing support to the Minister.

3.1.3 If the illness is expected to exceed four weeks, the Presbytery shall consult with the minister through its Pastoral Committee. The Minister shall not undertake any duties in relation to his Office. The Presbytery shall consider the pastoral needs of the congregation, and will take appropriate action for the welfare of the congregation.

3.1.4 If the absence of the Minister exceeds, or is expected to exceed, eight weeks:

(a) Presbytery shall appoint an Interim Moderator in consultation with the Kirk Session, if this step has not already been taken.

(b) The Presbytery’s Pastoral Committee shall continue to monitor the minister’s progress throughout the term of his absence.

(c) The Presbytery, having informed the Home Missions Board, should also seek an Occupational Health Medical Report from an Occupational Health professional. The Occupational Health Report should address issues such as the minister’s health and prognosis, any work related factors which may delay a return to work, and an assessment of the minister’s capability to return to work. The costs of the report are to be paid for by the Home Missions Board. The Board would have no need to see the report; the Presbytery would merely need to exhibit the letter of instruction and the invoice to the Board, together with the minute of how it is intended to manage the ministerial absence, and how it will facilitate a return to work, where possible. Further update reports should be obtained bi-monthly until and including the sixth month of absence.

3.1.5 If the illness is expected to exceed 28 weeks, the Chief Administrative Officer shall be provided with the medical certificate by the end of the 28th week with a view to the completion of the appropriate HMRC forms. The Chief Administrative Officer shall deduct from stipend a sum equivalent to HMRC allowances to which the minister is entitled.

3.1.6 If the illness exceeds four months the Presbytery shall report to the Chief Administrative Officer and to the Clerk of the Home Missions Board by the end of the sixth month of illness. The report shall consider the needs of the congregation as well as the minister.

3.2 Long-term absence

3.2.1 If the illness exceeds six months the Presbytery shall obtain a further independent medical report and shall, by the end of the seventh month, meet with the congregation to ascertain (a) their condition in the light of their minister’s absence; and (b) their views on the most satisfactory way of meeting their pastoral and other needs. As a result of this meeting the Presbytery will make recommendations to the Home Missions Board as to the appropriate ministerial arrangements for the congregation in the continuing absence of the minister. In so doing the Presbytery will seek to balance the needs of the congregation with the particular circumstances of the minister and his family.

3.2.2 In the event of a minister returning to work after six months on a part-time basis, payment of stipend will be made at the full rate for a period up to twelve months from the first date of absence. If at the end of the twelve months the minister is unable to resume full-time duties the provisions of Section 3.2.5 onwards will apply.

3.2.3 If the illness exceeds nine months the Presbytery shall obtain a further occupational health medical report, the terms of which will be communicated to the Chief Administrative Officer and to the Clerk of the Home Missions Board by the end of the eleventh month.

3.2.4 If in the light of this report the illness is expected to exceed twelve months the Presbytery shall (a) meet with the congregation to give an update on the current situation with regard to the minister’s absence and to consider the way ahead; (b) assess the congregational needs and its spiritual health and (c) report on the present situation to the Home Missions Board.

3.2.5 If at the end of the twelfth month of absence the minister is still unable to resume his duties the Presbytery shall, in agreement with the Home Missions Board, either (a) inform the minister that his pastoral tie shall be dissolved, on a date that is determined by the Presbytery with due regard to all the circumstances; or (b) declare that
exceptional circumstances exist, having obtained a further medical report, that justify a decision not to dissolve the pastoral tie.

3.2.6 If the pastoral tie is to be dissolved the Presbytery shall proceed to loose the minister from his charge and his name will be placed on the Roll of Resigned and Retired Ministers. A minister loosed from his charge under these re-enacted regulations shall be eligible to receive the full stipend for a period of six months or until taking up another appointment if earlier. If exceptional circumstances exist the Presbytery shall record in its minutes the reasons which constitute the exceptional circumstances. The Presbytery shall, in either case, report its finding to the Home Missions Board.

3.2.7 If, in the case of exceptional circumstances, the minister is unable to resume his duties after three months, the Presbytery shall (a) inform the minister that his pastoral tie shall be dissolved, on a date that is determined by the Presbytery with due regard to all the circumstances; and (b) proceed to loose the minister from his charge and place his name on the Roll of Resigned and Retired Ministers. The minister shall be paid the full stipend for a further three months.

3.2.8 In the event of a minister being absent through illness intermittently for more than three months in total over a period of two years, the Presbytery shall prepare a report for the Home Missions Board with a view to deciding on a plan of action appropriate to the case.

3.2.9 In the case of exceptional circumstances and in the event of a minister returning to work after twelve months of absence on a part-time basis payment of stipend will be made at the full rate for a period of three months. The Presbytery shall report to the Chief Administrative Officer and to the Clerk of the Home Missions Board of the implementation of this procedure. If at the end of this period the minister is unable to resume full duties he shall be loosed from his charge, and the minister shall be paid his full stipend for a further three months.

3.2.10 Act IV, 2001, is hereby repealed.

4. The General Assembly re-enact the regulations for Annual Leave and Leave of Absence for Ministers in Pastoral Charges for reasons other than Illness as follows:
Absence from duty under this Act will fall into three categories as follows: (1) Annual Leave; (2) Compassionate Leave; (3) Special Leave.

4.1  **Annual leave**

Ministers are encouraged to take at least one day of rest a week. Presbyteries should encourage ministers to follow this practice through the normal course of the activities of its Pastoral Committee. Kirk Sessions should also encourage the minister to follow this practice and should make every effort to relieve the minister of regular pastoral duties on the designated day of rest. In addition to the weekly day of rest, ministers shall be entitled to annual leave as follows:

4.1.1  Ministers are entitled to 42 days annual leave of which six may be Sundays, in any one calendar year.

4.1.2  Any one holiday period shall not exceed 28 successive days without the minister informing the Presbytery of his proposed arrangements.

4.1.3  All holiday entitlement shall be taken up before 31st December, or extended to 28th February of the following year with the agreement of the Presbytery.

Ministers are encouraged to plan their holidays well in advance and to make timely arrangements for cover. Deacons’ Courts are expected to pay for pulpit supply during the minister’s holiday periods as per Act XXVII, 2005.

4.2  **Compassionate leave**

Compassionate leave on grounds of bereavement, family illness or special circumstances may be granted to the minister by the Presbytery. The Presbytery Clerk (or other appointed Presbytery representative) is to be authorised to make interim arrangements after consultation with the minister and then report to the Presbytery. The Presbytery, acting through its Pastoral Committee, will take all reasonable pastoral care of the minister and his family during such occasions where Compassionate Leave is considered appropriate.

4.2.1  **Bereavement**

In the event of a death in the minister’s family, or of a near relative, or of a dependant, the Minister shall be entitled to receive bereavement leave with pay for up to five working days.

4.2.2  **Family Illness**

In the event of serious family illness where the minister’s ability to focus wholly on his duties is impaired, he shall be entitled to compassionate leave. The period of compassionate leave shall be determined by the Presbytery in consultation with the minister and giving due regard to the personal circumstances prevailing at the time.

4.2.3  **Special Circumstances**

Where special circumstances apply, it will be open to the Presbytery to extend the period of compassionate leave. The Presbytery, through its Pastoral Committee, shall monitor closely the specific circumstances in each case. The Pastoral Committee may be authorised to make interim arrangements (e.g. appoint Interim Moderator or arrange supply), after consultation with the minister, and then report to Presbytery.

4.3  **Special leave**

Special Leave for ministers in pastoral charges may be granted by the Presbytery under the following conditions:

4.3.1  To undertake work within the Free Church of Scotland, e.g. as a delegate, at the specific request of a department of the Church. In each case the department shall obtain the permission of the Presbytery and the concurrence of the Congregation. The full cost of the minister’s absence shall be borne by the department concerned.

4.3.2  To undertake work for any organisations outside the Free Church of Scotland. This would involve secondment to an organisation and the organisation concerned would meet the full cost of the minister’s absence, including pension costs. In granting such leave the Presbytery shall have the concurrence of the Congregation.

4.3.3  To undertake sabbatical leave for study, writing or extra-denominational work.

(a)  A minister shall be entitled to sabbatical leave for every ten years of service in the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland.

(b)  Such leave may be granted where the minister has served at least three years in his present charge.
(c) Such leave of absence, on full stipend, may be granted up to a maximum of four months. The Presbytery shall consult with the Kirk Session and the Home Missions Board before a final decision is taken. The Congregation and the Home Missions Board shall have the right of appeal.

Ministers in Redevelopment Charges, Church Extension Charges, and Church Planting appointments (cf. Act XXXIV, 1988; Act XXVII, 1989; Act XXVIII, 1989; Act XXX, 2006) are precluded from leave of absence under the above Paragraphs 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 above. A minister shall, at all times, inform his congregation of his proposed absence and of pastoral arrangements during such absence.

The pension rights of ministers shall be conserved as long as paid leave extends.

The General Assembly repeal Act IV, 1994, Section 2.

5. The General Assembly instruct the Personnel Committee to share the results of the Retirement Accommodation Questionnaire with the Finance Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees.

6. The General Assembly remind Deacons’ Courts and Presbyteries that a pro forma contract of employment is available from the Chief Administrative Officer, and that both the Chief Administrative Officer and the Committee are available to advise and ensure consistency of wording in contracts across the church.

7. The General Assembly re-enact the Regulations relating to Preaching Fees, Travelling Expenses and Residential Supply as follows:

7.1 In all vacant congregations preaching fees shall be not less than the Scale of Fees approved by the General Assembly.

7.2 Congregations shall be responsible for providing accommodation and board for weekend supply; and accommodation and travelling expenses for Temporary Resident Supply.

7.3 Where supply involves the conduct of only one service on the Lord’s Day the fee to be paid shall be at half the level that would otherwise obtain.

7.4 Travelling expenses of Supply Preachers All congregations shall be responsible for meeting the travelling expenses of supply preachers in full. Such preachers shall make use of public transport wherever available. When such transport is not available and suitable, payment shall be at the rate of 30p per mile.

7.5 Scale of Fees from 1st January 2011 As from 1st January 2011 a standard fee of £50 shall be paid by the congregation to a weekend supply preacher. This fee shall not be paid to a Minister in a settled charge.

7.6 The General Assembly, while recognising the rights of interim moderators to make appropriate arrangements for the supply of vacant congregations, including residential supply where this is seen to be desirable, enact that no such appointment involving the occupation of the manse for a period of longer than three months shall be entered into without prior approval of the Presbytery. In all such cases, a formal lease should be drawn up by the Deacons’ Court or Finance Committee, subject to the terms of the Title Deeds. In the case of properties held under the Model Trust Deed, the Presbytery shall ensure, prior to granting approval for the resident supply arrangement, that a lease is drawn up in proper form to safeguard the rights of the Church, such lease to be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.


9. The General Assembly thank Mr Rod Morrison, the Chief Administrative Officer, for his contribution to the work of the Personnel Committee.
VI.

REPORT

OF THE

PANEL OF PASTORAL ADVICE

Over the last few years this Committee has been endeavouring to make their presence and function more widely known. There was a recognition that the Pastoral Panel needed to be more pro-active. Some progress has been made but in the light of the perceived need the Panel is still under-used. It may well be that problems are being dealt with at the local level, which is encouraging as this is one of the main aims of the Committee.

It was felt by the Panel that the pastoral care and mentoring of ministers should be included in the in-service training event. This took place and was appreciated.

During the year members of the Panel sensitively contacted those ministers who might appreciate encouragement. These were mostly by informal conversations and visits. The on-going work of the Rev. W. D. and Mrs Elizabeth Graham is much appreciated among ministers and their wives, as well as ministers who have left the church for various reasons.

As the work of the Panel of Pastoral Advice and the Personnel Committee have areas of common concern, we have joined them in sending a letter to presbyteries in the hope of providing better care. Some very helpful suggestions were proposed.

As the personnel of the Panel does not appear in the Nominations Committee’s list of Boards and Committees, it was thought it helpful to remind the Church of the membership of the Panel. They are: Rev. A. MacDonald (Chairman), Rev. W. D. Graham, Rev. J. Maciver, Rev. F. Renwick, Dr. Marten Walker and Dr. James Skinner. These men can be contacted any time in complete confidence.

The Panel exists to give support and advice to ministers and their families. Please do not hesitate to speak to one of the members at any time. Sometimes a telephone call can be extremely helpful. The Panel realises also that it may have missed someone out and they rightly feel aggrieved. Any suggestions as to how this may be prevented would be appreciated.

ALASDAIR MACDONALD, Chairman

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive the Report.

2. The General Assembly remind all ministers and presbyteries that the Panel of Pastoral Advice is always willing to be consulted on any perplexing problems.

3. The General Assembly encourage Presbytery Pastoral Committees to continue their support of ministers and ask them to communicate with one another for the purpose of encouragement.

4. The General Assembly thank Rev. W. D. Graham and Mrs. Elizabeth Graham for agreeing to give confidential help and support to ministers and their wives and commend this special ministry to the prayers of the Church.
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VII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Report summarises various matters that the Committee dealt with in the past year. Summaries usually fail to reveal the amount of work involved, but allow me to assure you that each matter required a great deal of input and the Church should be grateful to the various people who serve it in the ways mentioned below. The Committee is grateful to Mrs. Heather Akroyd for her work as clerk this year (we are also grateful for the work that the previous clerk, Mrs. Catherine Pearson, at that time also the Communications Officer, did for the Committee). In addition to brief reports describing the regular responsibilities of the Communications Committee, there are two longer items: one, written by retired Professor Donald MacDonald, considers our response to current attempts connected to the End-of-Life Assistance Bill and the other is an assessment of a prominent element of contemporary life, the Celebrity Culture. I would like to thank Professor MacDonald for his help in responding to issues of moral concern that are drawn to the Committee’s notice.

(A) WEBSITE

1. Website
   The new Free Church website became ‘live’ last Autumn. It is a ‘content managed’ site which means that content can be added and modified without recourse to specialist software. This makes for a more flexible arrangement than the previous one and creates the opportunity to utilise the site as a primary means of communication. We are now able to post news and information on a fast and more professional basis. The two drawbacks have been that adding content is perhaps not as easy as originally anticipated as well as the departure of our Communications Officer, Mrs Catherine Pearson. By the time that the new site came on line, she had taken maternity leave and has now decided not to return. We congratulate Mrs Pearson and her husband on the birth of their son, thank for her several years of service to the Free Church and wish her well.

2. Getting information online
   The absence of a Communications Officer has meant that the site has been under-utilised since it went live. The Committee is aware of this and will do everything in its power to improve it as well as continue to climb the learning curve. At the same time, it is important that news and other interesting items be communicated to the offices as quickly as possible. It is also important that photographs should always accompany such items. The site will be what we make it.

(B) MEDIA

The main item of media interest over the last year was the possibility of fracture within the Church of Scotland. At the time of the 2009 General Assembly the question was raised by the media as to whether the Free Church would welcome individuals or groups disaffected within the Kirk. This was an impossible question which forced the Media Officer into the difficulty of expressing the positive wish for greater union without appearing at the same time to be opportunistic.

(C) THE RECORD

The Record is a team effort – involving a significant number of people. Mrs Catherine Pearson (Design and Layout), as mentioned above, has left and her place has been taken by Mr Al McInnes whose work is also greatly appreciated. The rest of the team who work on The Record are Rev. Malcolm Maclean (Review editor), Mrs Janet MacPhail (Gaelic), Mr Charles and Mrs Daphne Douglas (From the Frontiers), Mrs Alison MacDonald (WFM Editor) and Mrs Dayspring Macleod (Proof reading and Prayer Diary).

1. Circulation
   The circulation at the end of the year (2009) was 3244 congregational subscriptions (2008 - 3317), and 404 individual subscriptions (398), giving a total of 3648 (3715). Given that the price of the magazine increased from £1.25 to £1.50 at the beginning of the year this is a cause to be thankful.

2. Website
   We are working on getting a website subscription service set up.
3. **Content.** During the course of the year a number of new regular writers were taken on. Rev. David Meredith provides a consistent and stimulating biblical commentary entitled *Word for Today*. On the 400th anniversary of Calvin’s death Rev. James Eglinton has been writing a popular summary of *The Institutes* entitled *Calvin for Dummies*. Mrs Barbara Cross provides interesting historical Christian biographies. Mrs Graham Weeks from the IPC in England provides commentary on the church scene in England entitled *Across the Border*.

4. **New Name** *The Monthly Record* has changed to *The Record* and has now been registered as such. The change has either not been noticed or commented on positively.

5. **Feedback** Most of the feedback is positive with a wide variety of people who write either expressing appreciation or offering constructive criticism. There are others who are less happy but we are grateful for their patience.

6. **Problems** The biggest problem is that although there is plenty material to fill the pages we do not receive sufficient news from Free Church congregations. The Editor does not have time to be a reporter or news gatherer and relies on congregations and individuals to provide information. The Committee would remind congregations that they have a well designed and contemporary magazine which is free for Free Church congregations to publicise their activities and news for prayer.

7. **Future Plans** We will continue to look to develop both design and content. We also intend to have a couple of editions per year which are more evangelistic and we intend to stop the free online edition and instead introduce an online subscription edition. As usual all feedback and ideas are gratefully received.

(D) **FREE**

The Editor, Mrs Chris Nicolson, is about to enter her fifth year in post. It has been a privilege to do this work – to be involved with the youth work of the Church and to come into contact with so many committed individuals who have become friends over the years. Contact with the Church’s young people has been a special treat.

1. **Production** Printed by Woods of Perth, *Free* now has a print run of 1,400 copies, with six issues per year and 20 pages per issue. Communications Officer Catherine Pearson’s maternity leave meant that the design of the magazine was taken over in August 2010 by Al MacInnes and the changeover proved seamless. Al has brought his own distinctive style to the magazine. Mrs Pearson hopes to return to designing *Free* later this year and the Editor looks forward to working with her again. The plan will be to keep the current look as far as possible, to minimise the number of changes in a short period.

2. **Content** The content of *Free* continues to evolve – some regular features have been retained, and new ones introduced. Rev. Derek Lamont’s column ended after several years, and the Editor would like to thank him for his work with the magazine. Mr Colin Ross and Miss Mary Louise Stone are now regular contributors, and Fiona MacArthur from Nairn continues to proof read and be a valued source of encouragement and good sense.

3. **Circulation** Circulation continues to drop very slowly and this is a source of concern and disappointment. Efforts have been made to raise the profile of the magazine. Each Deacons’ Court was contacted with a request that they publicise *Free* within their church and the wider community, while recognising that many churches already do an excellent job of getting the magazine ‘out there’. Contact was also made with the United Free Church through the Ecumenical Relations Committee, and the UFC distributed 100 copies among their congregations. It is hoped that this will encourage a wider readership.

4. **Readership** Comments on the magazine are generally very positive. The reason for the decline in readership is unclear. Are there fewer young people in the Church? Is it that the content does not appeal? Or is it simply that teenagers don’t read as much as they used to? A conscious effort is always made to include articles by the Church’s own young people, along with photographs and camp features, as it’s known that readers enjoy seeing people they recognise or know in the magazine.

5. **Promotion** The Editor feels that it would be useful to have a designated person to publicise *Free* – someone with marketing experience perhaps. Also, contributions are always sought, and it is worth remembering that *Free* is a useful tool when promoting the work among young people that the church undertakes, whether as a whole or by individual congregations. Ideas and article are always very welcome.
The Editor would like to say how much she enjoys working on *Free* and how conscious she is of God’s help each step of the way. The support and encouragement of the Communications Committee and the Edinburgh office staff is very much appreciated.

(E) BOOKSHOP

1. **Sales**

   On the whole 2009 was a good year for sales. The biggest factor that shook the Christian trade during the year was that STL went into administration. This meant that many books that come from USA were not available. Most of the Wesley Owen bookshops in Scotland have now closed down, including the one in Edinburgh. Although sales so far during 2010 have been slow the Bookshop is beginning to pick up some new customers due to this closure.

   The usual conferences were supplied with bookstalls. These events remain a good way of selling books as do Free Church Youth Camps. Books by Free Church authors continue to sell well. Popular volumes included *Isaiah* (vol. 2) by Professor John L. Mackay, Rev. Iain D. Campbell’s books on *Ruth* and on *Psalm 23* and Rev. Malcolm Maclean’s *The Lord’s Supper*.

   A big help to sales was the release of the ESV Study Bible and Tim Keller’s books continue to sell well. Sales to students are still a big part of bookshop income with students receiving a £150 book voucher each year for their studies. Many Church of Scotland candidates for the ministry redeemed their voucher in the bookshop. It is hoped that Hope Trust will continue to produce vouchers and that this will not be affected by the closure of Wesley Owen.

2. **Future**

   Many people now order on-line and it would be an advantage for customers if they could order and pay on line.

(F) SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Rev. Dr Fergus MacDonald represents the Committee at relevant meetings with the Scottish Parliament. The main involvement has been in connection with end of life issues. Dr MacDonald attended a meeting on 25th February 2010 with the Deputy First Minister (DFM) Nicola Sturgeon and representatives of Scottish Churches regarding palliative care. The DFM welcomed the Churches’ involvement. The Churches thanked the Government for producing its ‘Living Well Dying Well: a national action plan for palliative and end of life care’, and urged it to make spiritual care central and ensure that appropriate training in this area is provided for all medical staff. The Churches also stressed the need for adequately funded provision of palliative (including spiritual) care services in the NHS. Some gaps in existing services in health board areas were highlighted as was the need for sharing information about children receiving palliative care across health, education and social work services.

The DFM indicated that the Government would give MSPs a free vote on Margo MacDonald’s End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill, but indicated that both she and the First Minister would not be voting for it. When asked how the churches might help make the ‘Living and Dying Well’ framework a reality, the DFM, welcoming this initiative, promised that one of her officials would duly respond with some concrete suggestions.

(G) THE END OF LIFE ASSISTANCE (SCOTLAND) BILL

1.1 **Introduction**

   This Bill is the latest attempt to legalise euthanasia or assisted suicide in Britain. In 2006-07 Lord Joffe’s Bill was unsuccessful in the House of Lords and Jeremy Purvis MSPs Bill failed to gain the signature of the 18 MSPs necessary for it to be introduced into the Scottish Parliament. In England the Director of Public Prosecutions, following a ruling of the House of Lords in response to the request of Debby Purdy (MS patient) for clarification of the law on assisted suicide, has issued guidelines about the likelihood of prosecution in cases of assisted suicide. These state that assisting suicide is still a crime in England and Wales and that prosecution would normally follow unless there are compelling public interest factors against prosecution. Although the final guidelines are not as objectionable as the draft guidelines, this is a worrying development, as it may well be used by campaigners in their attempts to change the law (see Care Not Killing website). Meanwhile there is a determined media campaign orchestrated by the former Voluntary Euthanasia Society (now euphemistically called Dignity in Dying). Sir Terry Pratchett, the popular fantasy novelist who has early Alzheimer’s disease, has delivered the prestigious Richard Dimbleby lecture advocating the setting up of a tribunal to decide who would qualify for “assisted death”. There have been several high profile cases of people with incurable diseases or disabilities going to the Dignitas clinic near Zurich here assisted suicide is carried out legally. The patient drinks a lethal dose of barbiturate and dies as a result. A sympathetic television drama was made of the story of Dr Anne Turner, a retired GP with an incurable, progressive neurological disease, who followed this path.
1.2 The End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill was introduced into the Scottish Parliament on 20th January and is currently before a Committee of MSPs. It received the signature of over 20 MSPs. Some of these might not support the Bill but they considered that the matter ought to be debated in Parliament. The Committee asked for written evidence from the public on 4th March. The consultation period was due to end on 12th May. The Committee will call some people for oral evidence and then examine the general principles of the Bill before reporting to Parliament later in the year, when there will be a parliamentary debate and the first vote on the general principle of the Bill. The Free Church, through the Communications Committee, has submitted a response to the Bill strongly opposing it.

1.3 The Bill is sponsored by Margo MacDonald MSP, who has Parkinson’s disease and wants the law to be changed to allow a doctor to help end her life should she find her life become intolerable as the disease progresses. She believes that the majority of people support her view and that this choice should be available to all under certain circumstances and conditions. She has received considerable sympathetic media coverage. The Bill began life as the “End of Life Choices (Scotland) Bill” and was subject to public consultation last year. The Free Church, along with many other churches, bodies and individuals, responded to the consultation, opposing the Bill in principle, as well as pointing out many serious flaws in its drafting. Despite these criticisms the final version of the Bill is still poorly drafted and, on this ground alone, should be summarily rejected.

1.4 We oppose the Bill primarily on the principles of the sanctity of human life as made in the image of God and the duty of care and protection for the weakest and most vulnerable to the very end of natural life. However, we also use other arguments of a more practical nature, relating to the liability of such legislation to lead to abuses and to a general lessening of respect for human life at its weakest and most vulnerable. Many of our criticisms of the Draft Bill are still applicable. In particular we quote from paragraph 6 of our submission:

**Individual autonomy.** The foundation of the proposed Bill is clearly stated on page 2 [of the Consultation Document] to be “the principle of autonomy, that the person has the right to determine the quality of his or her own life and its value, unrestricted by the moral, cultural, religious, or personal beliefs of others”. This would appear to give the individual an absolute right to decide when his/her life has such a quality and value that it should be ended. This extreme individualism ignores the importance of the fact that we humans exist in relationships and in community. We come into the world as completely dependent creatures and we remain dependent on one another to a greater or lesser extent throughout our lives. As well as rights we have responsibilities and duties towards others. The care we exercise towards one another is part of what makes us fully human. We should also learn to receive care as well as give it. It should not be regarded as loss of dignity to be dependent on others. We have no right to demand that someone help to end our life. Deliberately taking a human life is so serious that only extremely grave reasons can be used to justify it, such as, for example, a just war, and even that concept has many problems. Ending an innocent person’s life, even with the purpose of reducing the amount and length of suffering is not justified, especially when good palliative care is available. Our common humanity is best represented and supported by that kind of care and not by deliberately ending a life. We fear that this Bill, if it comes into force, would lessen people’s willingness to care sacrificially for those suffering from disabling, debilitating and terminal illnesses.

2.1 **Title of the Bill** The Bill as introduced to the Scottish Parliament is now the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill. The change of title is significant. Whereas the emphasis was initially on arguing for individual autonomy and freedom of choice as to how and when to end one’s life, this is now subtly assumed and the emphasis is on the duty of others, including registered medical practitioners, to help people end their lives when they have decided they do not want to go on living. This euphemistic language is characteristic of the Bill. Instead of euthanasia or assisted suicide, or even “assisted dying”, the preferred term is “end of life assistance”.

2.2 **End of life assistance – what is it?** This phrase is ambiguous. It could mean “assistance at the end of life”, which could just signify all the usual help and care, including palliative care, that people need as they approach death. It could also mean “assistance to end life”, which could encompass both euthanasia and assisted suicide. These latter are two well-known and well-defined terms which lack ambiguity, but they are not used in the Bill. However, the following definition is given in Section 1.2 of the Bill:

In this Act “end of life assistance” means assistance, including the provision or administration of appropriate means, to enable a person to die with dignity and a minimum of distress.

2.3 This definition is so vague that it actually conceals the meaning which it is supposed to convey! In itself it could just mean palliative care. The phrase “to enable a person to die with dignity and a minimum of distress” is subjective and means different things to different people. The clue to the intended meaning is given in the opening sentence of the Bill. We are told that the purpose of the Bill is “to permit assistance to be given to persons who wish their lives to be ended; and for connected purposes”. The assistance is not limited to help to end one’s life oneself, but...
for one’s life to be ended – obviously by someone else if necessary. The inference is that this is the best (or indeed the only) way to “die with dignity and a minimum of distress” – an inference we strongly dispute.

2.4 Furthermore the mention of “administration” as well as “provision” of “appropriate means” would confirm that euthanasia (the administration of fatal means to end someone’s life) as well as assisted suicide (the provision of means to end one’s own life) is permitted. In other words this Bill is a Netherlands-type, rather than an Oregon-type, Bill and encompasses euthanasia as well as assisted suicide.

2.5 Appropriate Means (of ending life) Nowhere in the Bill are these means defined. There are many means of causing death. Do these “appropriate means” include administering a poison such as a large dose of a barbiturate, an opiate, intravenous potassium chloride or a muscle relaxant, or the introduction of an air embolus into a vein, or suffocation with a pillow or plastic bag? Who is to judge what is “appropriate”? It appears that it is down to an agreement between the “requesting person” and the “designated practitioner” (10.1.d). Again a large amount of subjectivity is apparent, leaving a wide degree of latitude in the choice of means. This naively assumes that people and practitioners will choose some kind of “dignified” and efficient means of ending life. What if the agreed means fails? Can another means be used without another agreement between the person and the practitioner? The hint is given in 11.1 that the end of life assistance must, “as far as reasonably practicable”, be provided in accordance with the agreement between the requesting person and the designated practitioner. This vagueness is inappropriate in a legislative instrument.

3.1 Eligibility requirements The conditions of eligibility and the categories of people eligible for end of life assistance are set out in Section 4 of the Bill. The conditions include a minimum age and a residential requirement. The minimum age is set at sixteen years and not the age of majority, surely too young for such a momentous decision. The residential requirement is that the person must have been registered with a medical practice in Scotland for eighteen months. This, presumably, is intended as a deterrent to people coming from outside Scotland to avail themselves of the proposed change of legislation. However, there is no stipulation in the Bill that registration must be with an NHS General Practice. This requirement could be circumvented in various ways – for example, non-residents could register in advance with a private practice set up for this specific purpose.

3.2 The two categories of person eligible are (1) a person who “has been diagnosed as terminally ill and finds life intolerable” and (2) a person who is “permanently physically incapacitated to such an extent as not to be able to live independently and finds life intolerable.” These definitions are extremely loose. “Terminally ill” is defined in Section 4.4 as six months’ life expectancy, but this is notoriously difficult to predict accurately. The category of persons with permanent physical incapacity who are not able to live independently would include a very large number of people with, for example, progressive neurological disorders, paralysis, severe heart or lung disease and people with many other disabilities, both congenital and acquired. This widens the ambit of the Bill to include people whose life expectancy may not be significantly reduced and is really an affront to all persons with disabilities who are dependent on others. “Finding life intolerable” is a very subjective judgement and depends on many unspecified factors – psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual and social. This is very unsatisfactory, as this state of mind may well fluctuate over time. Yet, as the Explanatory Notes accompanying the Bill (Note 21) makes clear, the phrase is deliberately vague and not further defined.

4.1 The procedure for requesting “end of life assistance” The procedure is set out in Sections 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Bill. The “requesting person” has to make two formal, written requests, signed by two witnesses, to a “designated practitioner”, who must be a registered medical practitioner. After each of these a psychiatrist has to agree to the designated practitioner, even through a third party, if the requesting person was very ill and the designated practitioner no longer wishes it. This appears to be one of the “safeguards” which are supplied. However it is not at all clear how effective this would be in practice. It is difficult to see how an “informal” notice could be given to the designated practitioner, even through a third party, if the requesting person was very ill and the designated practitioner no longer wishes it. It could all too easily be ignored.

4.2 Revocability of a request for assistance Section 3.1 states that “end of life assistance may not be provided if, at any time, the requesting person gives notice, however informal, to the designated practitioner that the requesting person no longer wishes it.” This appears to be one of the “safeguards” which are supplied. However it is not at all clear how effective this would be in practice. It is difficult to see how an “informal” notice could be given to the designated practitioner, even through a third party, if the requesting person was very ill and the designated practitioner not readily available. It could all too easily be ignored.

4.3 The “designated practitioner” It appears that the designated practitioner does not need to be the GP with whom the person is registered. This practitioner will not know the requesting person well and will obviously be predisposed to granting such a request, or he/she would not be involved in the first place. Since it is well known that the majority of doctors in Scotland are not in favour of euthanasia and assisted suicide, would the person’s GP have a duty to refer the “requesting person” to a practitioner who is in favour of them? The answer appears to be yes,
although not specifically stated in the Bill. There is no mention of a conscience clause for doctors and other health workers who do not wish to partake in “end of life assistance” on conscientious grounds. The unacceptable inference is that it is a doctor’s duty to consider a request for “end of life assistance” and to refer the person to a doctor who has no objection to the procedure. This is confirmed in the accompanying Memorandum (paragraphs 113-115) which states that the existing General Medical Council guidelines are sufficient to cover this situation: “The GMC guidance is clear, however, and there would be a duty on registered medical practitioners who object to participating to make arrangements to see a registered medical practitioner who would be prepared to consider a request for end of life assistance” (Memorandum, 115). This is an unwarranted assumption, as this precise situation was not envisaged at the time the guidelines were drawn up. Indeed “end of life assistance” is such a radical departure from the accepted role of a medical practitioner that it cannot be regarded simply as a “certain procedure” or one of “all the options”. This is a further example of the highly unsatisfactory drafting of this Bill.

4.4 Requirements relating to designated practitioners and psychiatrists These requirements (Section 5) exclude from acting in this capacity practitioners who are relatives of the person, potential beneficiaries of the person’s death and others with an interest in the person’s death. Such practitioners are disqualified only if they know of the “relationship, benefit or interest”. Who is to judge whether the professed ignorance is genuine? A further cause for concern is that, at the moment, doctors are, quite rightly, not trained to kill patients. Every procedure requires training. Is it envisaged that there would be specialist training in “End of Life Assistance Medicine” with its own qualifications and protocols? This Orwellian concept is too horrific to contemplate.

4.5 Requirements relating to first formal request (Section 6) The request is “for end of life assistance under this Act” and has to be in writing and signed by the requesting person and two witnesses. Given the vague wording of the proposed Act this is like signing a blank cheque! How can a witness, however knowledgeable and impartial, certify that the person “understands the nature of the request”? We cannot envisage anyone quizzing the requesting person in such circumstances. Those who would know the person’s state of mind best, such as close relatives, are, quite rightly, excluded from being witnesses. Close friends should also be excluded. The requirements relating to care home residents and their carers are also unsatisfactory. We can envisage this requirement for witnesses becoming a formality, like witnessing any other document that does not have the life and death implications of this request.

4.6 Consideration of first formal request by designated practitioner (Section 7) The designated practitioner has to “physically meet” and “discuss” certain things with the requesting person but there is no requirement to examine the person or to medically assess his/her condition. It is not clear whether the designated practitioner would have full access to all records and to relatives and carers who might be able to assist his/her assessment. Despite the conditions to be met it is all too easy to envisage this approval becoming a perfunctory procedure. Mere discussion of alternatives such as palliative care is not sufficient. Surely palliative care must be provided for and experienced by terminally ill people. It is well known that experience of palliative care usually leads to the person withdrawing a request to have life ended. Again, “forms of end of life assistance” are not specified. Are there no limits? This is unacceptable.

4.7 Consideration relating to second formal request (section 8) The time-limits between the two requests are far too short – a minimum of 15 and maximum of 30 days. These limits would put extra pressure on vulnerable people. The first limit should be at least doubled and the second at least trebled. Only a small minority of people have a steely determination which is unalterable. The second request should be processed by a different practitioner in order to provide a second opinion; otherwise it could well become a routine endorsement of the first request.

4.8 Consideration of capacity etc. by psychiatrist (section 9) The role of the psychiatrist is fairly circumscribed and yet ought to require a full psychiatric assessment to make it meaningful. “Discussion” with the person is not enough on which to make such a momentous decision. For instance assessment of the possible presence of a depressive illness ought to be looked for specifically as well as evidence of internal pressure (feeling of being a burden on others) as well as external pressure (from relatives and others). The effects of drugs or alcohol are specifically excluded because they are not included under the rubric of “mental disorder” as defined in the Mental Health (Scotland) Act, 2003. This is unacceptable, as these could well be important factors in making such a request. The psychiatrist for the second request should be a different one from the one who examined the person for the first request as a further safeguard.

4.9 Granting of request The psychiatrist has only to give a “positive” report (that the person has capacity, is making the request voluntarily and is not acting under any undue influence) and the designated practitioner appears to be able to approve the request. This assumes that every situation will be clear-cut. There appears to be no requirement for consultation and agreement between practitioner and psychiatrist, despite the accompanying
Memorandum stating, “The designated practitioner will consider the request along with a psychiatrist …” (173). The burden of decision is on the designated practitioner alone, which is both unfair and unsafe.

5.1 Agreement on provision of assistance (Section 10) Once the second formal request is approved, the designated practitioner and the requesting person must agree on who is to provide “end of life assistance”, where it is to be given and what means are to be used. These have to be recorded in writing and signed by both the person and the practitioner. Although the Bill specifies who may not provide “end of life assistance” it does not state positively who may do so. Can they be people who are not registered medical practitioners? Will the name of the person who administers the means of causing death be recorded? A “cooling off” period of two days is specified – surely far too short in such a momentous decision.

5.2 Requirements relating to the actual provision of assistance (Section 11) The place in which “end of life assistance” is provided is not clearly specified. Will it normally be an NHS clinic or hospital? The Financial Memorandum in the Explanatory Notes (96-101) would suggest that this is to be a new service provided by the NHS. The thought fills us with horror, especially as the Memorandum casually suggests that this could actually result in savings for Health Boards (the definite inference of paragraph 97). If private ‘end of life assistance clinics’ spring up, are they to be registered, inspected and controlled or can anyone get into the business? Who will regulate “assisted deaths” at home?

5.3 Administration of end of life assistance While there are some details about provision, there is nothing about the actual administration of the means of ending life, surely a glaring omission. This encourages suspicion that the Bill is intentionally vaguely worded in order to allow a wide variety of approaches. This is further confirmed by the Memorandum, paragraph 109, which states, “The means to be used and the method of delivery is [sic] not specified in the Bill.” The reasons given are unsatisfactory, largely centring on individual choice of the requesting person and the “expertise” of the designated practitioner.

5.4 Although the designated practitioner has to be present, there is no mention of who actually administers the fatal means to end life (11.6). This omission must be intentional, because the Explanatory Notes (79) say “regardless of who administers the means to bring about the end of life … the designated practitioner must be present when the end of life occurs.” The Bill treats this central and most serious part of the procedure with complete indifference. This omission underlines the grossly unsatisfactory nature of the Bill.

5.5 There is no mention in the Bill of the procedure following death. Would the immediate cause of death be euphemistically recorded as “end of life assistance” or “assisted death”, or would it more accurately be recorded as “lethal dose of …”? The Explanatory Notes (104) state, “It can be expected that COPFS (Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service) will consider each case of assisted death and instruct investigation into the death.” In the case of suicide this would be so, but if the Bill includes euthanasia as seems likely, this is not immediately apparent from current guidelines. No doubt the Lord Advocate would develop new guidelines for COPFS as necessary, but this omission highlights the deliberate understatement of the radically important the introduction of this legislation would signify.

6. Financial implications The Financial Memorandum (96-101) accompanying the Bill grossly underestimates the number of people who may avail themselves of the provisions of this legislation. Estimates (55 cases per year, Note 88) are based on figures from Oregon (where reporting is voluntary and therefore not exact) rather than on figures from the Netherlands, which would be more realistic given the nature of the Bill, which appears to permit euthanasia as well as assisted suicide. The number of people applying for “end of life assistance” could very quickly run into hundreds and then even more, as it becomes a routine procedure. Because of this underestimate the framers of the Financial Memorandum play down both the financial and time implications for Health Boards, GPs and Psychiatrists and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service. They even make the suggestion that money may be saved by the Health Boards (Note 97): “The costs required to deliver an assisted death will be minimal and will inevitably be less than those associated with providing ongoing medication and care.” That, of course, is not the motive of the sponsor the Bill, but it could very quickly become a major factor in decision making, given the financial pressures on the NHS and on individuals and families.

7. Conclusion While we maintain our opposition to the Bill on principle, we also strongly believe that, because of the many defects highlighted above, this Bill should be rejected by the Scottish Parliament. If this Bill were to become law, it would have a detrimental effect on society’s respect for human life, would irrevocably change the role of the medical profession, would damage the doctor-patient relationship, would be difficult to administer without widespread abuse and would lead to a devaluing of the lives of people who are dependent on others because of disability or chronic illness. We urge Members of the Scottish Parliament to reject it. Instead we would encourage
Parliament to continue the excellent work it is doing in promoting the availability of palliative care for all who need it.

(H) THE CELEBRITY CULTURE

1. Definition One of the obvious features of contemporary society is the presence of the celebrity culture. The individuals identified as celebrities usually come from the arts world – actors, singers, and musicians, although others may be sportspersons or individuals connected to fashion or other walks of life that allow high public profile. What identifies them is the place they are given by observers and the interest engineered in such by the actions and words of the celebrities, even if many of these actions can be categorized as idiosyncratic, unhelpful and even lamentable. Of course, not every activity by a celebrity can be classified so – some of them are involved long-term in helping fight various diseases and others have set up charitable trusts that should survive them if the financial system does not collapse. (In order to clarify subsequent descriptions, the terms ‘observers’ and ‘audience’ are used to portray those influenced by the celebrity culture. Other terms such as ‘participants’ could have been used. In fact, the number of possible terms is many.)

2. Origin It is not clear when the celebrity culture began – athletes and philosophers were famous in ancient Greece and, jumping over three millennia to the nineteenth century, we find that Charles Dickens went on tour of the United States to promote his writings. Nevertheless the development of the celebrity culture was speeded up in the twentieth century by the onset of suitable media such as magazines, television and the cinema (since the 1980s, it has increased even more rapidly because of the availability of CDs and DVDs, not to mention the opportunities afforded by satellite and cable television channels and the Internet). In the past, observers and celebrities had to travel to meet one another; now observers in their own living rooms can meet their favourite celebrities many times a day.

It is important to note that contemporary celebrity culture is not an isolated movement – alongside it are consumerism and hedonism (love of pleasure). We live in a society where many values of previous generations have been abandoned. Usually such contemporary trends come under the umbrella of that slippery and ubiquitous term, postmodernity. Whatever way we wish to describe the contemporary western world it is obvious that there are a variety of powerful trends at work, sometimes running with one another, at times hostile to one another. So at any given period, the celebrity culture may be linked with other trends influencing public behaviour.

It is recognised by many commentators that previous periods preferred heroes to celebrities (this is not say that the equivalents of contemporary celebrities did not exist at such times, but in the main they did not have the opportunities to achieve public recognition). In earlier times individuals were admired because of benefits they brought to society, perhaps at the cost of their lives or by giving a great deal of their time to help others. It is not denied that the private lives of such heroes could be as sinful as those of contemporary icons, but they generally were not as shallow or self-centred as many current celebrities.

3. Extent of influence One has only to spend a short time in a newsagent or bookstore to discover the pervasiveness of the celebrity culture today. Scores of magazines and books detail the opinions, impressions, activities and intentions of the famous (perhaps even infamous) stars of our time, without giving any evidence that they have any particular qualification for stating their thoughts, apart from being recognisable by the public. In addition, celebrities regularly appear on television chat shows where they inform the watching audience about their eating habits, their sexual preferences, the football teams they support, and various other personal details – without such celebrities the audience figures would decrease markedly, a factor that ensures the continual appearances of celebrities. They even appear on television programmes usually connected to serious issues, such as BBC’s Question Time, where despite often revealing that they have little understanding of the topic they still receive hearty applause from the audience (that is until they reveal they have a political party line and then the applause diminishes). Advertisements would not be so interesting to the target audience if the actors were unknown, and many a person has purchased an unnecessary item merely because it was commended by a celebrity – how many of the audience check out if the celebrity personally owns the advertised make of car or uses the advertised after shave lotion or perfume regularly?

Of course, the celebrity is not the only participant in the game. As Ellis Cashmore observes, ‘Consumers know that the accomplishments of many of the people they follow are insubstantial and that their effects on society are inconsequential…. We know these things: we just choose not to dwell on them for long or see them as reasons to stop following them. It’s more enjoyable to participate in the joys of celebrity culture’ (p.5). The famous may be in the spotlight, but how long they remain there often depends on the whim of the observers. If shallowness marks many of the celebrities, curiosity followed by boredom marks many of the audience and often the period in which a celebrity is famous is relatively short unless he or she can maintain public interest, which they frequently do by claiming to
have had previously unrevealed experiences that intrigue the observers and retain their interest. Yet, for every individual whose fame persists, there are several who were in the limelight for a short time and then disappeared from the public gaze, replaced by the next set of celebrities.

4. **Reasons for popularity** Many books and articles have been written on the celebrity culture with the intention of identifying underlying reasons for its popularity. The pursuit of celebrity can be seen as a search for significance in a world that undervalues the normal, regarding it as mundane. Or the actions of a celebrity can be perceived as an expression of individual choice, with the celebrity possessing the right to inform others of his or her gifts, experiences and interests (and the audience also exercises its choice by listening to the celebrity). The celebrity culture can be regarded as a valid form of escapism which allows the public to get away from the stress of everyday life and instead provides some relaxation and fun for pressurised people.

5. **Disturbing aspects** The above reasons could be regarded as acceptable, although only in a sense. In contrast, it is possible to assess the celebrity culture from other perspectives and these will reveal disturbing aspects. There is no doubt that the celebrity culture is an expression of power over the public (not in the sense of coercion but in the sense of influence). Management of prominent businesses, for example, know the financial benefits that can be accumulated by the endorsement of products by celebrities. Children, as many parents are aware, are affected by advertisements and television programmes in which stars appear. The celebrity culture has also contributed to the trivialisation of the notion of leadership (instead of a leader having a plan, he or she is reduced to having an opinion, or alternatively a person with an opinion, no matter how ludicrous, is regarded as a leader). Further, the desire for fame has become a goal in itself in the celebrity culture. In the past, fame (as opposed to infamy) was an accidental by-product or consequence of an action (for example, a researcher discovered a cure for an illness or a soldier showed bravery in battle and such became famous as a result); now the action, whatever it is, is merely a step to fame and adulation.

6. **Responding to the celebrity culture** The presence of the celebrity culture has to be recognised by the church. It is likely that members and adherents are affected to some degree by celebrities, and it is inevitable that most individuals we contact through evangelism will have been influenced by the celebrity culture.

There are several ways of reacting to the celebrity culture. One response is to act as if it did not exist. The obvious criticism of such a reaction is that it is a failure to critique biblically a powerful influence that participates in the shaping of current thinking and living. Not only is it a failure to critique a powerful influence, such a reaction ignores the outlook of many we are trying to reach with the gospel. If we make no effort to understand them, we are likely to fail in communicating the gospel to them.

7. **Recognising idolatry** It has been observed that the celebrity culture has features similar to religion, with the celebrities playing the role of the gods. Cooper Lawrence, in her book *The Cult of Celebrity*, observes that celebrity possesses the equivalents of omnipresence (it is everywhere), omnipotence (it influences all kinds of movements) and omniscience (it gives its opinion(s) on all types of topics). Of course, an idol in order to be effective needs worshippers and celebrities have them in their wide range of fans (they come from different backgrounds and social levels but are united around their interest in particular celebrities) who hang on every word said, sung or written by the celebrity. Our initial response to the linking of celebrity culture and idolatry might be to suggest that the notion suggests a peculiar imagination in the commentator. Yet we should not be surprised at the presence of idolatrous features in the celebrity culture. Humans were made to worship God, and when they fail to worship him, then they will worship someone or something else. In the gospel we have the way by which celebrities and observers will find real worship.

8. **Meaningful relationships** We should also recognise that many of the observers in the celebrity culture are crying out for meaningful relationships in which they can express approval and esteem for those deserving of admiration (for many people, the television is not a piece of furniture but a means of seeing friends and characters they admire). It is an important aspect of authentic human nature to think positively about other people. In the gospel we have the message that can give such outlooks to individuals – by the transformation that God’s grace performs in wrecked lives such can find relationships in which mutual love and appreciation become the norm.

9. **Longing for certainty** Connected to the longing for relationships is the longing for certainty. As has often been stated, one of the distinctions between moderns and postmoderns is the suspicion the latter have for the assured benefits of technology. Despite its many inventions, technology has failed to provide security; indeed it has contributed to the sense of insecurity whether in weapons of mass destruction or in information held on data systems that can be stolen. For the celebrity culture, technology is useful in the present because it conveys the message of the celebrity to the observer. Sooner or later, the observer will realise that the celebrity culture is no more able to provide certainty than it is to create meaningful relationships. The church has a message for such in that Jesus can give...
meaningful relationships in the present (with other Christians on earth) and hope for the future (with other Christians in heaven).

It is also true that a longing for significance is part of the celebrity culture. This longing can be expressed in the celebrity’s search for fame or in the observer’s decision to identify with the celebrity. The gospel offers real significance to such. It tells them that they are significant as image-bearers of God, that he is able to use them in his service for the benefit of other people and so give them meaningful actions to engage in, and that through grace they become forgiven members of his family.

10. **Opportunity for witness**

Other aspects of the celebrity culture could be commented on. Yet enough has been said to show that its presence is an opportunity for Christians to take the gospel to those who are looking for authentic relationships, for certainty about the future, for real significance, and for the experience of worship for which they were created by God.

11. **Conclusion**

It is inevitable that the celebrity culture will affect to some degree every institution in society, including the evangelical church. Therefore we should be on our guard for its appearance, even in our own denomination.

It is hard to deny that many Christian conferences come close to exhibiting aspects of the celebrity culture. Pastors and church leaders, including worship leaders, are sometimes elevated to a position of prominence that is hard to justify from the Bible. Usually this is not the fault of the pastors and leaders themselves. What is wrong with elevating Christian leaders into celebrities (even if we do not use that word)? Firstly, we are in danger of ensuring disappointments for the future. No leader is perfect and each has flaws. Second, focussing on gifted leaders can mean taking our eyes of Christ.

The fact is, the church has the true Celebrity, a real Hero who deserves endless adulation from all His followers. Jesus is the one who has the perfect story – He is the pattern for us to imitate and to present to the world with the aim that they will see his Beauty as well. He is a Role-model about whom we will never have a reason to be ashamed. Whatever else we do, we have to ensure that we don’t hide His Glory. His path to Glory was the road of humble service, prepared to be a Nobody, and because He made that journey, His Father exalted Him to the highest place.

**Suggested reading**

The list of possible titles is long, but here are ones that were helpful:

Cooper Lawrence (2009), *The Cult of Celebrity*, Skirt.

MALCOLM MACLEAN, Convener
RODDIE RANKIN, Vice-Convener

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly are grateful to Mrs Heather Akroyd for taking on the position of clerk to the Communications Committee. It also expresses its gratitude to Mrs. Catherine Pearson for her work as clerk and as Communications Officer and wish her well in the future.

2. The General Assembly thank Rev. M. Iver Martin for his work in developing the website and for his work as media officer.

3. The General Assembly thank Rev. David Robertson for his work as editor of *The Record* and also those who provide material for the magazine.

4. The General Assembly urges the congregations of the denomination to make use of *The Record* by sharing information of local events and by giving copies to individuals and organisations outside the Free Church.

5. The General Assembly thanks Mrs. Chris Nicolson for her work as editor of *Free*, and also those who help her to produce the magazine. The General Assembly also encourages congregations and individuals to promote *Free* to groups and persons both inside and outside the Free Church.
6. The General Assembly reaffirm their opposition to the legalisation of euthanasia or physician assisted suicide. In particular they call on Members of the Scottish Parliament to reject the End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill at present before Parliament. They also encourage the Scottish Parliament to continue its improvement and widening of the provision of palliative care.

7. The General Assembly commends Rev. Charles Douglas for his work as manager of the Free Church bookshop.

8. The General Assembly thank Rev. Dr Fergus Macdonald for representing the Communications Committee at meetings connected to the Scottish Parliament.

9. The General Assembly note with approval that *The Monthly Record* has been renamed *The Record*. 
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VIII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

1. Introduction The Lord’s praise is one of the Christian’s primary concerns, and so, as the Psalmody Committee meets to consult on matters of praise, the members pray and then sing together in harmony some verses of a psalm chosen beforehand, often to one of the more unusual tunes. Some of us wish we could just spend the rest of the evening in this most enjoyable and edifying activity. But there’s work to be done. Our vision of the work is to promote the joy of singing God’s praise in the Church, the satisfaction of doing it well, and the pleasure of harmonising as we sing. May we recommend this manner of opening meetings to other Committees and Boards of the Church? We do so with the testimony that this practice raises our gaze far beyond the minutiae of items to be dealt with.

2. Sales of Psalmody Resources Once again, pleasingly, sales of the Committee’s materials during the past year have been steady. Since April 2009, 581 copies of the Sing Psalms words-only edition have been sold, and 472 of the Sing Psalms/Scottish Psalter combined edition. In the music editions, Sing Psalms has sold 68 copies in Staff, and 23 copies in Sol-fa, while the Scottish Psalter has sold 87 copies in Staff, and 49 copies in Sol-fa. The Psalms for All Seasons CD has sold 56 copies, and the Festival CD has sold 26 copies. The Sing A New Song DVD (previously video format) has sold 9 copies. An item which has created interest among the precentors of the Church is the Manual for Precentors, which has an accompanying CD. Over the past year, 23 copies have been sold and 10 copies were given to Free Church students. The Manual in its updated form is an excellent resource, which provides very practical help for precentors of all abilities. The popularity of this item has meant that the Committee has had to pay careful heed to the matter of maintaining supplies. Also very popular is the Gaelic Precenting Booklet, of which 76 copies have been sold.

3. PCA Assembly The 2009 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, which was held in June in Orlando, Florida, was attended by over a thousand delegates, and the wives and families of many of them came as well. One of the side features of the event was a large exhibition area in which many Christian organisations displayed their products. As in previous years, the Free Church had a booth for its Sing Psalms material, and a good deal of interest in our range of worship manuals and CDs was shown. There is a threefold purpose for the booth: one is to explain the biblical reasons for singing psalms in public worship, the second is to encourage congregations to use the editions of our psalter, and the third is to sell the items on show. Many delegates stopped by, and with regard to some it has taken several years to persuade them of the value of singing psalms. The Assembly this year will be in Nashville, and perhaps that city’s connection to music will open other doors for our psalter. Once again, Rev. Malcolm Maclean of Greyfriars/Stratherrick Free Church will represent the Church? We do so with the testimony that this practice raises our gaze far beyond the minutiae of items to be dealt with.

4. Book Agency in the USA For some time now, the Committee has been looking for ways to maximise its opportunities to promote the sale of its products in the USA. A promising development has taken place through negotiations with the Banner of Truth Trust. The Trust has confirmed that they would be happy to act as agents for the Free Church of Scotland with regard to the sale and distribution of our products in the USA, on the basis that there would be no cost to the Trust, and that it would not be a diversion to their own activities. They send shipments to the USA two or three times a year, and plans are in progress for copies of Sing Psalms, words only and Staff music editions, plus some copies of the Scottish Psalter Staff music edition, to be included in the Trust’s consignment of April 2010. The Trust has also provided helpful advice on dollar price-setting. They do not wish to pass on any carriage-charge to the Church, and hope that their insurance will cover the Free Church component of their consignments. They are looking into this question with their insurer. The Committee and the Trust have agreed to run this arrangement for two years initially, and then conduct a review to see how things have worked out. The Committee is tremendously grateful to the Banner of Truth Trust for their partnership in the Lord’s work.

5. Praise Network The medium of a Praise Network was proving a very useful handmaiden to the Committee, in disseminating information on psalmody recitals, workshops and other psalmody initiatives up and down the country. A recent example of this was the visit of the Northern Presbytery Choir of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The Committee was able to advertise the details of the Choir’s visit to Edinburgh, and also to North Kessock, by means of the Praise Network. E-mail is a tremendously useful tool in the Lord’s work,
and the Committee is committed to encouraging praise personnel in every congregation to subscribing to the Praise Network, for the purposes of better communication and mutual encouragement in matters of praise. So far, 60% of congregations (i.e. 60 out of 99) are represented on the Network, and those whose precentors have not so far subscribed are encouraged to do so, by communication with the Clerk, Mr Colin Rogerson.

6. Conference on Precenting and Congregational Singing As reported to the 2009 Assembly, the Conference had been a great success in terms of support for precentors, and a focus on what was really important for congregations as they sing the Lord’s praise. A report on the Conference was published in the January 2010 edition of The Record, and files of the different talks given at the Conference were available from the Clerk. One very useful outcome of the Conference was the decision that the Committee should invite and support the setting up of local initiatives for psalmody improvement. The Committee had agreed the notional arrangement of a national conference every three years, interspersed with regional mini-conferences and workshops in the intervening years.

7. Mini-Conferences and Workshops The Committee was committed to supporting regional initiatives for psalmody improvement. The Clerk had circulated, via the Praise Network, a letter to ministers and precentors inviting applications for mini-conferences/workshops on psalm-singing and precenting to be held throughout the country. Interest in this has been expressed by the Western Isles Presbytery, and the Committee are presently working with them on the details. The Committee is very anxious to provide a service to the Church in this matter, and hope that many such training events may be possible, which will result in improvements in congregational singing and precenting.

8. Praise Pages on the Church’s Website Following the setting-up of the revamped Church website, the Committee has been trying, not without some difficulty, to streamline and improve the pages devoted to matters of praise. There is now a direct link from the Church’s Home page to the Psalmody pages where a bank of useful resources is gradually being added. A link to ‘Audio Resources’ provides files of 18 psalms and tunes. The Committee is grateful for the help of Mr John MacPhail in servicing the Praise section of the website. The Committee would encourage visits to the Psalmody pages.

9. Young People and Psalm-Singing Mindful of the need to provide psalmody resources appropriate for all ages and stages of people in the Church, the Committee is pursuing an initiative of identifying psalms and psalm-portions which are suitable for children of upper pre-school age to Primary 4 level, inclusive. So far, 25 provisional items have been identified for this age-group, and are under consideration, together with their accompanying melodies. It is intended that these should be developed into a booklet, similar to the Millenium Edition, for the very young. Another Committee initiative underway, at an earlier stage of development, is the compilation of portions of Sing Psalms for use in student work, university chaplaincy, and general evangelistic purposes, including the unchurched, and those for whom English is a second language.

10. Tutor CD Over the past year, a follow-up to the Sing Psalms CD Vol. 1 has been in production. This is a collection of some of the less well-known tunes in Sing Psalms, sung to a simple accompaniment for better familiarisation. The main purpose of this enterprise is to provide a valuable resource for precentors and others wishing to increase their repertoire of tunes for congregational singing. Despite some practical difficulties, the project has now been driven forward by Mr Colin Mackay, Dundee, and is in the final stages of production. It is hoped that the Sing Psalms CD Vol. 2 will be available sometime during the Autumn of 2010.

11. Gaelic CD Since last Assembly, the digitally remastered recording Gaelic Psalm Singing from Lewis, has been in production, thanks to Mr Donnie Maclean of Lewis Recordings. The Committee is following this project with interest, and have stated to Mr Maclean their willingness to assist him in its promotion. They will be in a position to report on the success of the project at the 2011 Assembly.

12. Relationship of Psalmody Committee to Committee on Worship In October 2009, a letter was sent by the Committee to the Board of Trustees, requesting that, in light of the clear relationship which existed between the work done by the Psalmody Committee and the Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of Trustees to deal with worship issues, consideration be given to appointing the Convener of the Psalmody Committee as a member of the Sub-Committee on worship. The Board’s response was not to accede to the Committee’s request, on the ground that most Committees and Boards could argue an interest in the matter.

13. Psalmody Recital Following ECRC Conference Service In March, during the European Conference of Reformed Churches, a service of thanksgiving was held at Buccleuch and Greyfriars Free Church, followed by a recital of psalms, conducted by Mr Evan Macdonald. A choir, drawn from congregations in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dunfermline, sang selections of psalms using tunes from the 16th to the 20th centuries, interspersed with a commentary from Mr Macdonald. One very encouraging feature of this occasion is that the choir had only one
practice together, one hour before the service, and it is an indication of what can be accomplished at very short notice. It is the hope of the Committee that groups such as this might be ready to come together on an ad hoc basis throughout the Church, to support other worthy ventures, including evangelistic outreach. We do not realise as much as we should, what a powerful weapon in the Church’s testimony and armoury, praise can be.

14. Congregational Psalmody Practices During the year, in communication with presbyteries, and through the Praise Network, the Committee has sought to encourage in congregations, at some suitable time, the setting-up of a regular psalmody practice-session, for the purposes of teaching and learning new tunes, practice for precentors, and congregational fellowship.

FINLAY H. MACKENZIE, Convener

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report and thank the Committee.

2. The General Assembly acknowledge with gratitude the steady sales of the Church’s psalmody products, and thank Mr Charles Douglas, Bookshop Manager, for his hard work and commitment to this cause.

3. The General Assembly once again thank Rev. Dr Malcolm Maclean for attending the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, for his perseverance in commending to the delegates there the value of singing psalms, and for his efforts in promoting the publications of the Psalmody Committee.

4. The General Assembly acknowledge with grateful thanks the thoughtfulness and consideration of the Banner of Truth Trust in the arrangements which have been made for them to act as agents for the shipment, transit, sale and distribution of the Church’s psalmody products in the USA. The Assembly direct the Committee to bring a report on the progress of this initiative to the 2012 General Assembly.

5. The General Assembly thank the Committee for continuing to expand the Praise Network to disseminate information on psalmody matters to precentors, and ask ministers to encourage their precentors who have not already done so to subscribe to this initiative.

6. The General Assembly thank all those who have arranged and participated in local psalm-singing initiatives up and down the country, and encourage Presbyteries to make use of the service offered by the Committee to provide training for the improvement of precenting and congregational singing.

7. The General Assembly recommend the Praise pages and the Audio Resources pages of the Free Church website to the Church.

8. The General Assembly commend the vision of the Committee for the production of a Psalm selection for young people, and for use in special events, and encourage them in this ongoing task.

9. The General Assembly thank Mr Colin Mackay for all his efforts in the finalising of the Sing Psalms Tutor CD Vol. 2, and wish him and the Committee every success in the final production and marketing of this very useful product.

10. The General Assembly commend Mr Donnie Maclean for his initiative in restoring and marketing the recording Gaelic Psalm Singing from Lewis, and direct the Committee to bring a final report on the success of this project to the 2011 General Assembly.

11. The General Assembly thank Mr Evan Macdonald for organising the recital of psalms following the thanksgiving service of the European Conference of Reformed Churches in Edinburgh in March 2010, and also the choir-members who devoted their time, energy and talents to making the event such a success.

12. The General Assembly encourage congregations everywhere to set up a regular session for psalmody practice, for the purposes of teaching and learning new tunes, practice for precentors, and congregational fellowship.

13. The General Assembly thank the Convener, Rev. Finlay Mackenzie, and Clerk, Mr Colin Rogerson, for all their efforts in carrying forward the work of the Committee.
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IX.

REPORT

OF THE

STUDY PANEL

The Panel met twice during the year and made some considerable progress in the area of the study of divorce and remarriage in the Bible, despite the heavy workloads of most of the members. This was particularly with regard to the relevance of the writings of Dr David Instone-Brewer to the interpretation of the Biblical material. As explained in last year’s report, his original research in Old Testament background and in Second Temple Judaism throws considerable light on the background to the New Testament in this area. The Panel believes that this material will contribute significantly to our final report.

The study of the concept of accommodation in the writings of John Calvin was also taken up in order to assess its relevance today in the area of divorce and remarriage. While Calvin never wrote systematically about accommodation, his use of the concept can be seen in his writings and in his dealings with cases of divorce which came before the Geneva Consistory. This concept was known to the early church fathers and was further developed by Calvin. God accommodates himself to our feeble human capacities in the way he communicates with us in human language and in the Incarnation of his Son. He also accommodated himself to “the rudeness [barbarity] of his ancient people” by, for instance, permitting divorce because of the hardness of the human heart. His intention for marriage was that marriage should be life-long, but he provided legislation for divorce in certain circumstances. This area will undergo further study.

The Panel intends to produce a substantive report on these matters to the 2011 General Assembly. This would then be considered by Presbyteries before a final report in 2012.

In the area of marriage preparation, some progress has been made and we intend to produce a definitive report to the 2011 General Assembly.

DONALD M. MACDONALD, Convener and Clerk

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Study Panel and thank the Panel, especially the Convener.

2. The General Assembly reappoint the membership of the Panel and instruct them to report to the General Assembly of May 2011.
X.

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF MINISTRY

The task committed to the Board by the Assembly is to recognize students called to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and to supervise their training before and during their entry to the Free Church College up to the point of being licensed to preach the Gospel.

Undoubtedly this is a vitally important area of responsibility, for the future of ministry of the Word will determine the spiritual well being of the church. It is as the Word of God is faithfully preached and heard that the church is sustained as the body of Christ. As both a kerygmatic and acoustic community, the church can exist only as the mighty deeds of God are faithfully proclaimed and received with the ‘hearing of faith.’

Ministers of the Word are both heralds and stewards; heralds of what God has done and stewards of what God has said. To be effective heralds they must be convinced of the trustworthiness of the Scriptural record that relates the historical events constituting the drama of redemption. To be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4.1) revealed in the Scriptures, ministers of the Word are required to expound biblical texts and demonstrate their relevance to the lived experience of their congregations. In addition, God calls on ministers to witness to the power of the Word in their own lives.

The Board is convinced from its examination of the work of current students in the Free Church College who are under its supervision, that the College is providing a high standard of training in Biblical studies, systematic theology, apologetics, practical theology, church history and church principles, which is equipping all its students to face the challenges and rigours of the Christian ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Board recognizes that, in addition to the equipping of the mind, there must also be the anointing of the soul with the power of the Holy Spirit, and is thankful that spiritual devotions continue to play a central role in the life of the College. For this reason, in expressing its sincere gratitude to the Senate and other lecturers for all they do, the Board appeals to the Church to uphold in regular prayer both College staff and students.

The Board is deeply grateful to Almighty God that it continues to receive from Presbyteries applications for recognition of gifted young men responding to the divine call to serve the kingdom of God through the ministry of Word and Sacrament.

(A) IN-SERVICE TRAINING

The customary In-Service Training Conference took place in the Free Church College from 11th – 14th January. Thirty ministers booked; twenty-five attended.

Excellent fellowship was enjoyed over the three days and a very good spirit prevailed in all the sessions. Analysis of the evaluation forms indicates that every session was considered by participants to be either helpful or very helpful.

The College facilities were excellent, as also was the service provided by the Holyrood Hotel. The Board is greatly indebted to Principal Donald Macleod for use of the College, and to Mr Donald Macdonald for the generous terms on which the Holyrood Hotel is made available.

A number of helpful suggestions were received from members regarding possible topics for future courses. It was suggested that the two North American Presbyteries would appreciate an invitation to send a minister to the course every alternate year, and the Board has agreed to follow up this suggestion.

Unfortunately Mr Angus Campbell, the new logistics coordinator, was unable at the last moment to attend due to a deterioration in his wife’s health. However, Rev. Dr Bob Akroyd very willingly stepped in to fulfill this role, and the Board has expressed its thanks to him for doing so.
(B) TRAINING OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

Work has proceeded slowly on the Handbook for Elders and Deacons. The Board has decided that further work is required before publication with a view to make the completed work more widely usable and take account of new developments in the life of the Church. It is anticipated that this work will be completed before the next General Assembly. The Board wishes publicly to acknowledge the work of Mr Norman Cumming who prepared the initial draft of the Handbook.

(C) ACCOMMODATION FOR FREE CHURCH STUDENTS

The Board is convinced that the Church has a special responsibility for the welfare of those training for the Ministry, and over the past two years has expressed its concern to the Board of Trustees about the scarcity of accommodation for students. The Board of Trustees has indicated that some of the proceeds from the sale of church flats might be set aside in a fund to provide grants to Free Church students that would help subsidize the cost of rented accommodation. While such a step would be welcomed by the Board of Ministry, the Board is of the view that this would not be a realistic long-term strategy. The Board maintains that it would be better for the Church to retain as many church flats as are likely to be necessary to house students attending the Free Church College. However, the Board welcomes the verbal assurance given in March by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Chief Administrative Officer that sufficient properties will be retained for use by Free Church students.

(D) SCHOOL IN THEOLOGY

The School in Theology took place at Larbert in the form of a three day conference at the end of August and beginning of September. The Chairman of the Board had some input into its organisation, and from all accounts everything went very well.

(E) MODULES ON CHURCH PLANTING, LEADERSHIP AND EVANGELISM

The Board is pleased to report that modules on Church Planting, Leadership and Evangelism have been incorporated into the part of the Practical Theology course at present being taught by Rev. Neil MacMillan. The Board is grateful to Mr MacMillan for helping them to fulfil their remit concerning this matter.

(F) ORGANISATION OF STUDENT PLACEMENTS

The Board expresses its gratitude to Professor John McIntosh (with assistance from Professor John A. Macleod) for taking responsibility for all aspects of the student placement scheme. It is most heartening that there are more congregations willing to take students than there are students at present – hopefully a provision in place for the day that prayers will be answered concerning more men responding to the call of the ministry. It is also encouraging to note from the feedback received how much both congregations and students benefit from these six week placements.

(G) STUDENT MATTERS

It is becoming increasingly apparent that in the present economic climate our students are under greater financial pressure. The Board is aware of this and is making it a matter of priority to look into ways in which this burden can be eased.

The Board notes the retirement of Miss Anne Macleod as College Secretary on grounds of ill health, and take this opportunity to express profound gratitude to Anne for all her assistance to the Board over the past number of years.

(H) CLERK

The Board is deeply grateful to Rev. Kenneth Macleod for his assiduous service as Clerk over the past five years. He has served the Board faithfully and diligently, and the students have found him to be a wise and empathetic counsellor. Mr Macleod has indicated his decision to resign in the face of heavy pastoral and presbyterial duties. While regretting Mr Macleod’s decision, the Board is grateful that he will remain as an elected member enabling it to continue to benefit from his considerable experience. The Board gives thanks to the Lord for delivering Mr Macleod from his serious car accident in November and rejoices that he continues to recuperate well. The Board is delighted that Rev. Nigel Anderson has accepted the invitation of the Nominations Committee to take over the Clerkship from September and it looks forward to working with him.
(I) FREE CHURCH STUDENTS

Final Year: William Paterson
Third Year: Alexander Stewart
Second Year: Donald Mackinnon, Calum Smith, Rory Stott
First Year: Hugh Ferrier, Alasdair MacAulay, Andrew Pearson

FERGUS MACDONALD, Chairman
JAMES BEATON, Vice-Chairman

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive the Report and thank the Board especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

2. The General Assembly encourage congregations to uphold the Board in its work to give adequate support and nurture to those men recognised by the courts of the Church and accepted by the Board as candidates for the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland.

3. The General Assembly encourage congregations to uphold in regular prayer both College staff and students.

4. The General Assembly note with gratitude the work of Rev. Dr Fergus Macdonald and Mr Angus Campbell in their capacity as organisers of the In-Service Training programme. They also thank the Free Church College, Mr Donald Macdonald and everyone who contributed to the smooth running of the course in January 2010. They also thank Rev. Professor John A. Macleod for his work in making the recording of lectures from the course available online, and Rev. Dr Bob Akroyd for his help with the logistical arrangements.

5. The General Assembly note that the Training Manual for Elders and Deacons has not been completed and instruct the Board to make this a matter of priority.

6. The General Assembly note the continued concern expressed by the Board about the scarcity of accommodation for Free Church students and their ongoing dialogue with the Board of Trustees on this matter.

7. The General Assembly note that modules on Church Planting, Leadership and Evangelism have been incorporated into the Practical Theology course at the College.

8. The General Assembly expresses its gratitude to Rev. Professors John McIntosh and John A. Macleod for taking responsibility for all aspects of the student placement scheme.

9. The General Assembly note the resolution of the Board to explore ways in which the financial burdens on students can be eased and instruct them to bring proposals to next General Assembly.

10. The General Assembly express their gratitude to Miss Anne Macleod for all her assistance to the Board of Ministry. They commend her in her retirement to the prayerful support of the Church at large.

11. The General Assembly thank Rev. Kenneth Macleod for his faithful and diligent service as Clerk, and express gratitude to Almighty God for his survival in the serious car accident he incurred while travelling on church duties.

12. The General Assembly thank the Office staff and the Board’s medical and external examiners for their helpful and efficient services.
XI.

REPORT

OF THE

COLLEGE BOARD

In a day of financial stringency and economic hardship, when many small Colleges are struggling to survive, it continues to be a matter for praise and for thankfulness that a small denomination like the Free Church of Scotland has managed to maintain a well-equipped and resourced theological College for the purpose of training its own ministers, and of extending the opportunity of theological study to others.

The Free Church College is fast becoming an ancient institution, and in this 450th anniversary year of the Scottish Reformation, reminding us of the Reformation’s emphasis on education and on confessional evangelicalism, it is important to continue maintaining this aspect of our heritage and legacy. Sometimes the College is perceived by the Church as being divorced from its mainstream life and work; sometimes the Church is perceived by the College as being uninterested in the maintenance of its provision in the field of theological learning, and its presence in the heart of our capital city.

Both perceptions are quite misguided. There is a great deal of affection and support within the wider Church for the College and its Professors, and the response to the part-time course, for example, shows how the people of the Church respond to the opportunity to learn and study important theological subjects. No doubt there is still much work to be done in making young people aware of what the College course has to offer them, and in encouraging others to take up the taught and research programmes within the College; but if there is a climate of suspicion at all it ought to be laid to rest and our gratitude to God for the ministry of the College made explicit.

It is not, after all, as if we were operating in a vacuum. The recent European Conference of Reformed Churches in Edinburgh (16th to 19th March 2010), drew the attention of the delegates to the importance of theological education in Europe, and did so from two different angles. On the one hand, the conference was reminded of the need for an integrative and co-operative venture; there is value, support and strength in linking together centres of Reformed training and theological study. Ministers, missionaries and others can benefit, for example, from cross-cultural study, and from doing part of their course in institutions other than their Mother college.

On the other hand, the conference was challenged to think about how such theological education may be given. According to plenary speaker Dr Richard Pratt, we are, to a large extent, still operating on a medieval philosophy of training, in which the teacher reads his manuscript from the front of the class, processing data which the students write down and then regurgitate. The assessment comes by measuring precisely how much information has been absorbed and can be recalled.

Is this a realistic way of delivering cutting edge theological training a thousand years later? Ought we to be following the methods of medieval scholasticism? What about the rise of new technology and the development of new teaching methods? What about the cost of such training: is there a case to be made for reducing fees to an absolute minimum in order to maximise the benefit? This is to say nothing of the changing ethnic demography of our cities and our modern European context; how are we addressing the provision of theological training for the people on our doorstep?

One of the most pointed and sobering questions at the Conference was the issue of what we are actually training our ministers for. How does the army train soldiers for battle? It does so by simulating the very situations in which they will find themselves on the battlefield. Only if they have been around exploding bombs and whizzing bullets before will soldiers be ready to face them with all their real-life horror and danger. Only if they have been exposed to these conditions will they have the courage to remain and to stand their ground in times of stress and of danger.

Like any serious provider of theological training, the Free Church College is in the business of training men for the battlefield. Ephesians 6 counsels us to stand firm in battle, wearing the whole armour of God; this is necessary for every Christian, but is also an urgent call to every ministerial candidate and potential Christian worker. Soldiers of the cross are exposed constantly to the fiery darts and devouring tactics of Satan; if they are not adequately trained in the need, the methodology and the purpose of warfare, how will they remain standing in the evil day?

The apostolic example is stated by Paul in his letter to Timothy:
You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra - which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:10-15).

The context is a familiar one: in the last days, society will crumble as a consequence of its love of self, and people will listen to all the gurus of self-help and self-improvement. It will be a time when ‘people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths’ (2 Timothy 4:3–4). The College exists precisely to train men who will give proof of their ministry, by preaching the word and doing the work of evangelists.

The College Board is the interface between the Church and the College, and is responsible for the implementation of the Assembly’s directives regarding theological training, as well as for reporting the College’s work to the Church. The Principal’s report will cover the internal aspects of the College’s life and work; this report will summarise the main issues which have occupied the Board over the past year.

Retirement of Principal Macleod

The College Board received intimation that Donald Macleod intends to resign as Principal in June 2010. Professor Macleod has been a member of the College Senate since 1978, and was appointed Principal in 1999.

During his tenure of office as Principal, he has been responsible for several key changes in the College’s life and work. The most important of these has been the validation by the University of Glasgow of the College’s programme of theological training. The fact that the College course is now recognised for a Bachelor of Theology degree was a great step forward in bringing the College into mainstream theological provision, and now represents not only the possibility of students coming to the College for a degree course, but building on that foundation and going on to do further theological research and study.

In addition, Professor Macleod developed the Master of Theology courses in the College, and the hugely successful part-time course, which is available not only to students on the College premises, but to a wide range of people in scattered geographical areas interested in studying theological subjects. The opening up of the College as a resource for part-time distance learning has been a very welcome development.

The Board received news of Professor Macleod’s intention to resign with great regret. It wishes to acknowledge the work that Professor Macleod has done in the administration of the College, and his input into the life of the College in many ways that will probably go unacknowledged and of which many people are not aware. Happily, he is to remain as Professor of Systematic Theology for another year.

College Secretary

Although the appointment of the College Secretary is a matter for the Senate rather than for the College Board, the Board has been grateful to Miss Anne Macleod for her assistance in secretarial matters, as well as for her work in the administration of the College. Successive reports of the College Board have expressed that gratitude, and have drawn attention to the matter of Anne’s help.

In recent months, Anne’s health has not improved as we would have hoped, and it was with a great sense of sadness that the Board was informed that she had resigned from her post, and that an advertisement had appeared for the vacancy at the College. The Board wishes to express its gratitude to Anne for all her help, and to wish her God’s blessing in her own life at this time.

The Appointment of a new Principal

In accordance with the current legislation, the Board sought nominations for the College Principalship. Act XXV, 1999, directs that such nominations be brought to the Assembly in a Supplementary Report, but the Board, on the advice of the Assembly Clerk, considered that it would expedite the business of making an appointment if the nominations were simply presented in the main report. Act XXV, 1999, is being amended in order to facilitate the reporting of nominations in the future.
The Board is aware of the fact that the legislation governing this appointment gives little guidance as to what is expected of the College Principal, beyond his role as Chairman of the Senate and representative of the College; and that the current legislation also stipulates that the Principal need not be a member of the full-time academic staff of the College. There is precedent in our history for the appointment of a non-teaching Principal, but that has not been invoked since 1927.

The Board took the view that, having sought for nominations for Principal under the existing legislation, it should follow that process through, and not change the rules midway through the process. It may be, however, that the nature of such key appointments, and the way they are made, needs to be revised. The Board is aware of the fact that the world of theological education has changed radically over the past generation, and that the Principal’s role must involve networking with other Colleges and institutions, as well as liaising with the wider Church, in order to attract more students and to integrate the College’s ministry within the life of the denomination and of the Reformed world.

There is no doubt, however, that this is an important appointment. The administrative duties of the Principal will be in addition to his ministry either as Professor or minister. Clearly, it is in the interests of the Church to appoint a Principal who can build on the foundation of the past, expand the College’s ministry in the future, and explore new ways of providing theological education in Europe and beyond.

The following nominations to the Principalship of the Free Church College were received from Presbyteries:

- Rev. Professor John L. Mackay - nominated by seven Presbyteries
- Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell - nominated by four Presbyteries
- Rev. Alasdair I. MacLeod - nominated by two Presbyteries
- Rev. David Meredith - nominated by one Presbytery

**Student Accommodation**

Following the discussion and findings of last year’s General Assembly, the College Board has been exercised over the matter of accommodation for students. Up until now, the portfolio of properties in Edinburgh owned by the Free Church has been a huge asset in attracting students; to be able to say to students at the point of first enquiry that the Church is in a position to provide accommodation is of enormous benefit. However, it was unclear from last Assembly whether the Board of Trustees wished to sell these flats, and the Board has been in discussion with the Board of Trustees over this matter.

The College Board has no official role in the management of these properties, and appreciates that there are difficulties in administering the flats. The Board also acknowledges that often these administrative problems adversely affect some of the occupants of the flats, who may not know when they can take up occupancy, who may apply for occupancy but then be unable to come to study in any given year, or who may find themselves having to vacate a property when they are unsure of their next location or sphere of service.

Notwithstanding these managerial issues, however, the College Board has always taken the view that it is better to retain as many church flats as possible. The Board is grateful to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and to the Church’s Administrative Officer, for their willingness to meet and discuss this particular matter; and also for the verbal assurance that sufficient properties will be retained for the benefit of students coming to study at the Free Church College. The suggestion that monies realised from the sale of some of the flats will be channeled towards helping students with housing costs is also welcome.

**Teaching of Practical Theology**

This particular area of training is one in which future Christian workers need relevant, clear and helpful guidance. We all appreciate that there are problems common to the human condition in every town and city; but we also realise that the cultural contexts in which our ministers and Christian workers are operating changes constantly. Yesterday’s norms are today’s options, and we need to be a Church with Reformed backbone and conviction, but with enough flexibility to respond to the needs of those around us. Dr Richard Pratt, speaking at the recent European Conference, made the point that while everyone needs to hear the Gospel, not everyone needs to hear the same thing. The message to the modern businessman and to the street prostitute is the same gospel, but has to be presented in ways that are challenging and that are relevant to whomever may be addressed.

The College Board is grateful to the men who have been willing to teach in the College on a part-time basis, covering the main areas of the practical theology course: Rev. Duncan Peters (World Religions), Rev. Neil MacMillan (Evangelism and Mission), Rev. Alasdair I. MacLeod (Hermeneutics; Pastoral Care), and Rev. Professor Donald M.
MacDonald (Christian Ethics). Other aspects of the Department, including apologetics and preaching, are covered by the Course Organiser, Professor Donald Macleod.

The permission from the Assembly to administer the work of the department in this way will be evaluated after three years, and the Board has always had in its view the desirability of a full-time appointment to teach apologetics and pastoral subjects. Nevertheless, the Board also recognises the valuable contribution made to training by those who are themselves preachers, pastors and practitioners, and is grateful to those who are willing to use their gifts and talents in this way.

The 1560 Initiative

Noting that this year marks the 450th anniversary of the Scottish Reformation, the College Board considers it an opportune moment to highlight the College as a centre - if not the only centre - of Reformed, confessional theological training in Scotland. To this end, the Board is launching a new advertising initiative to draw attention to the strengths of the College as a place where theological training is offered from a consistently Reformed perspective and worldview. Such advertising would not seek to confine student recruitment to those of explicitly Reformed convictions, but would be a means of highlighting the core values of the institution. In addition to producing flyers and leaflets advertising the College from this aspect, it is hoped that some video content can be added to the website in order to stimulate interest and attract students.

Other Matters

1. **UK Border Immigration** In common with other Colleges and Universities in the UK, the Free Church College had applied to become a Licensed Sponsor for international students. This involved the College in a great deal of extra work of form-filling and meeting bureaucratic requirements of various kinds. The Board is grateful to Mr Adam de Jong and to Miss Christina Maciver for the work that they put into this exercise, and were glad to receive intimation of a successful outcome to this application in August of last year. The news that this status had been granted was too late for some international students.

2. **College Refurbishment** Part of the responsibility of the College Board is the refurbishment of the College building. During the course of the past year, the College kitchen has been upgraded, and currently the Board, through the Principal, is investigating the possibility of having the lighting in the Chalmers Hall improved.

3. **Professor Donald Macdonald** In previous years, it was customary that, following the retirement of a Professor, the Assembly grant him the status and title of *Professor Emeritus*. This was not included in last year’s College Report, and the Board is happy to address and correct this particular omission. We are glad that Professor MacDonald has continued to be actively involved in teaching in the College, and that he is enjoying a good measure of health.

4. **Student Recruitment** The Board is always concerned about attracting more students to the College, and has been actively considering ways of extending the College’s ministry of theological education. The Board is aware that there are men in the Church of Scotland and elsewhere who might welcome some level of theological training at the College, although the possibility of having the Free Church College recognised as an institution for denominational training outwith the Free Church is remote at present.

   However, we are encouraged by the possibility that the European Conference of Reformed Churches, through its theological education committee, is also looking at ways of integrating theological colleges throughout Europe so that there may be opportunities for cross-cultural experience and training in particular areas (such as missiology, for example). The Board would welcome any suggestions for extending the College’s role beyond our own denominational borders.

5. **E-zine** Professor John A. Macleod has been continuing to develop an online forum for the publication of theological articles by members of Senate and others. It is hoped that this will go onstream soon. A new College website is also due to be launched later in the year.

6. **Gaelic-speaking students and ministers** The Chairman has been involved in discussions with ministers of the Church of Scotland who have been exploring the possibility of delivering courses to help Gaelic speakers - including ministers - to understand the Gaelic Bible better, as well as to deepen their understanding of the history of Gaelic spirituality and theology. Such a course would probably be delivered by Professor Donald Meek through Highland Theological College, and the Board welcomes the opportunity for input into these discussions.
7. **New Video Equipment**  
The Board is grateful to the Senate, and in particular to Professor John A. Macleod, for upgrading the equipment and the technology available for video conferencing. This equipment has many uses, not least in the delivery of the part-time course, which can now be accessed online.

The Board has been occupied with several other routine matters, including College budgets, semester dates, and the receiving of Professors’ reports. It is hoped that as the Board continues to oversee the work of the College within the wider Church context, that we will all continue to pray that God will use this asset of his Church to extend his kingdom and to train a new generation of gospel workers who will not be ashamed either of our Reformed heritage or our confessional Presbyterianism, but who will become faithful servants of Christ and his Church.

IAIN D. CAMPBELL, Chairman
PETER MORRISON, Vice-Chairman

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**APPENDIX**

**REPORT OF THE COLLEGE PRINCIPAL**

**(A) OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR**

The year proceeded smoothly with few complications. The student cohort remained small, though with a strong international flavour. Overall performance was very good, and the feedback encouraging.

Two events dominated the year. One was the accreditation process. This was conducted by ASIC (the Accreditation Service for International Colleges) and the Certificate of Accreditation was awarded on 7th June 2009. Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Mr Adam de Jong, a former student, and Miss Christina MacIver, our former Secretary, we were able to submit most of the documentation on-line, and this greatly expedited the process. The College received Commendations in the following areas: Premises and Health and Safety; Management and Staff Resources; Learning and Teaching; Course Delivery.

Following upon the Accreditation, application was made to the United Kingdom Border Agency for a Sponsor Licence for Tier 4/Students. The application was straightforward, but due to pressure on the UKBA the Licence was granted only on 21st August 2009. This was too late for international students hoping to begin their College programmes on 7th September. It is hoped that three disappointed applicants will be able to join us in September 2010.

The other significant development was the retirement of Professor MacDonald on 30th June 2009. Appropriate recognition of his sterling services to Church, College and International Missions was made at the College Closing Service in May. The Chair of Practical Theology is being left vacant in the meantime, but the PT Syllabus remains substantially unchanged, the only significant alteration being the discontinuance of the 6-week Youth Ministry module, and the extension of the Homiletics and Liturgy module from 6 weeks to 12. The Professor of Systematic Theology will serve as Course Organiser; and we have been fortunate to secure the services of four competent and well-qualified part-time lecturers:

- Rev. Alasdair I. MacLeod (Hermeneutics, Pastoral Care)
- Rev. Duncan Peters (World Religions)
- Rev. Neil MacMillan (Evangelism and Mission)
- Rev. Professor Donald MacDonald (Christian Ethics)

These part-time lecturers have all been recognised as teachers of Glasgow University.

The Professor of Systematic Theology has taught two Modules: Homiletics and Liturgy, and Ecclesiology.

**(B) STATISTICAL DATA**

The following BTh students graduated in July 2009:

- John Johnstone  
  BTh with Distinction
- Calum Macmillan  
  BTh with Distinction
- Fumiko Nakamura  
  BTh
- Robin Tso  
  BTh
The following MTh students are due to graduate in July 2010:
Matthew Ford
Rev. Koji Harada

The following new students registered for the BTh programme at the beginning of Session 2009/10:
Hugh Ferrier MA (St Andrews)
Hyoonjoon Hong
Chun Woo Lim
Alasdair MacAulay
Andrew Pearson BA (Edinburgh)
John R. Duffy BMus (Napier)

Two new part-time students registered for the Master of Theology degree:
John Reid BA (International Christian College/Aberdeen)
Henry Smith BA (London)

The total number of students registered for degree programmes is 26. The total number of candidates for the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland is 8.

About 90 students are registered for the part-time courses. Besides Edinburgh, the other centres are Aberdeen, Glasgow (Dowanvale), Kilmallie and Stornoway. A number of international students participate on-line.

The perennial challenge facing the College is the small size of the student body, but despite various adjustments to the degree programme the cohort remains small. While it is tempting to reduce standards (particularly by dispensing with the biblical languages) in order to attract more students, all involved with the College are convinced that this would be a retrograde step. Almost all our students, including overseas students, are either already ministers or candidates for the ministry, and the programme must remain focused on their professional needs. The situation is not helped by the fact that all churches are currently experiencing a dearth of candidates for the ministry. However, it is hoped that the new immigration arrangements will work smoothly and that there will be no repeat of last year’s experience, when three international students were unable to take up the places offered to them because of the delay in securing the Sponsor Licence.

(C) PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

The new arrangements for delivering the Practical Theology courses appear to be working satisfactorily. Concern has been expressed (from outwith the College) about the omission of Apologetics from the Syllabus, but the omission is more apparent than real. The concern of Apologetics is to explore the basis of Christian certainty, as faith seeks to understand itself and to share that understanding with the world we are commissioned to evangelise. The first six weeks of Systematic Theology are accordingly devoted to the question, Can God be known? The approaches of such influential thinkers as Aquinas (pure reason), Kant (practical reason) and Schleiermacher (religious experience) are examined before moving on to the Reformed doctrine that God can be known only through his own self-revelation. This is developed along the general lines suggested by John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck and Cornelius Van Til. The essence of this approach is that God has planted an awareness of himself (sensus deitatis) in every human heart. This means, in the tradition of Augustine and Anselm, that the existence of God is self-evident, or, in the later formulation of Van Til, that knowledge as such presuppose the existence of God (“If knowledge, then God”). This does not mean that there is no place for theistic arguments, but it does mean that such arguments presuppose that human beings already have the seed of religion in their hearts and that such arguments as we use are addressed to that knowledge of God’s eternal power and godhead which humans already possess. Even the atheist has to have some idea of the God whose existence he denies. But as Anselm also argued, without faith there can be no understanding. We “believe in order to understand”, and we can argue that such faith is vindicated by the principle of coherence: that is, belief in the God of Genesis One to Three enables us to understand both ourselves (what is best about us and what is worst about us) and the world we live in.

This approach differs from the sort of Apologetics represented by Aquinas, Butler and Chalmers by insisting that we cannot begin the study of theology by first laying a foundation in philosophy and then proceeding to theology: This was the method often attributed, rightly or wrongly, to Aquinas: first, establish the truths of reason (for example, the existence of God) and then move on to the truths of revelation (for example the trinity and the incarnation). This would be like asking physicists to prove the existence of the universe before getting to work in their laboratories. The proper study of theology is God; and he is there before our study begins. Here, more than anywhere, the opening words of Scripture are of supreme importance: “in the beginning, God …” God is there before the new-born child; and God is there before the theologian. Theology must lay its own foundation, justify its own methodology and
provide its own reasons. In the last analysis, we know God only because he bears witness to himself, and that witness deals not in probabilities but in certainties. As Cornelius Van Til was wont to remark, Psalm Nineteen does not tell us that the heavens probably declare the glory of God. It states categorically, “The heavens declare the glory of God.”

By the same token it is only within the framework of a comprehensive Christian theology that the evidence for such doctrines as the Virgin Birth and Resurrection of Christ (traditionally covered in Apologetics) can be presented meaningfully. All objections evaporate in the face of the existence of the God who created the heavens and the earth. In our College programme the evidence for these doctrines is covered as part of Christology, as are such other questions as the divine identity of Jesus, the Messiah. Similarly, the question of science and religion, including the challenges posed to Christianity by both geology and biology, are treated in connection with the doctrine of creation. It should not be forgotten, however, that science is no enemy of Christianity, and that some comparatively recent scientific theories (such as Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle) may have interesting light to shine on some of our theological tenets.

Apologetics has not been eliminated, then. It has merely been re-positioned where its organic link with theology can be more clearly seen, and where the strength of the whole becomes the strength of every part.

(D) COLLEGE SECRETARY

For the whole of her ten years’ service, Anne Macleod, our College Secretary, has been suffering from a life-limiting illness. A few months ago, though there was no traumatic change for the worse, it became clear that it was no longer safe for her to live alone, and she reluctantly submitted her resignation. Anne has shown remarkable faith and serenity in the face of chronic fatigue, repeated set-backs and a demanding medical regime. During her years as Secretary, the role became more and more demanding, but she succeeded in steering the College through aspects of the administration (such as the Student Awards Agency) which still remain a mystery to the Principal; who suffered further and regular mortification in that he was never able to prepare a document in which Anne’s eagle eye did not detect a need for at least minor corrections.

But it was in her people-skills, in her role as sympathetic listener and robust encourager, that Anne excelled, and it is here that she will be most missed, not only by our full-time students, but also by those who attended the part-time courses, and who really appreciated the attention she bestowed on them.

We commend Anne to the prayers of the Assembly and of the whole Church. The God who made us remains sovereign over every cell in our bodies. May he continue to hold the illness at bay; and may he long preserve Anne’s precious smile.

We hope to have a new Secretary appointed by the time the Assembly meets. In the meantime, I am grateful to Christina MacIver, our former Secretary, who has been willing, once again, to step in as needed; and for doing so, so efficiently and with so little fuss. More than 40 years ago Christina was Congregational Treasurer in my first charge, Kilmallie. She continues to serve her Saviour as loyally as ever, and I owe her an immense personal debt.

(E) PROFESSORS’ ANNUAL REPORTS

The full-time teaching staff continue to carry the usual burden of undergraduate teaching and postgraduate supervision, along with normal involvement in church affairs. Professor McIntosh continues to serve as a member of the University’s Faculty of Arts Higher Degrees Committee, and also as External Examiner in Church History at Queen’s University Belfast. Professor Mackay published the second volume of his impressive Commentary on Isaiah. Professor D. Macleod contributed two articles to a symposium, Worship and Liturgy in Context, and some further articles to journals. He also delivered one of this year’s Cunningham Lectures at New College (on “Reformed Theology in Scotland”). Professor John A. MacLeod continues in his invaluable role as College Computing Officer; and following the retirement of Professor MacDonald he took on the additional responsibility of Disability Coordinator.

(F) THE MASTER OF THEOLOGY DEGREE

The MTh programme continued to run smoothly under the oversight of Professor McIntosh, and the University has now devolved to the College most of the administrative work which was previously done by its Faculty of Arts office. However, on the College’s insistence, candidates will still be “signed off” by the Convener of the Faculty of Arts Higher Degrees Committee. This will secure the value of the degree.
The MTh degree continues to appeal mainly to part-time students. Up-take by Scottish ministers, and particularly by ministers of the Free Church, has been disappointing. One or two have recently made tentative enquiries and it is hoped that these will come to something. The degree can be taken part-time, off-campus, and it should serve as a real stimulus and framework for ministers who want to stay in touch with pastorally relevant theology by pursuing a guided programme of personal research. Perhaps local churches (or the Board of Ministry) could be persuaded to pay the tuition fees? Even more important, congregations should grudge nothing that enhances their ministers’ understanding of the gospel. Only constant, life-long learning can maintain the freshness of our pulpits. As C. H. Spurgeon remarked long ago, time spent whetting the scythe is not time wasted.

Meanwhile, arrangements are well advanced for a new degree, a taught MTh in Scottish Church History and Theology. This is designed for those whose background knowledge of Scottish Christianity is not sufficient to enable them to proceed directly to a research programme. The new degree will consist of four taught modules. One of these will be a module in research study skills, the other three will be in the student’s chosen field of study. Candidates will also be required to submit a 20,000 word dissertation.

(F) PRINCIPAL’S RETIRAL

This is my last report as Principal, and all that remains is for me to thank all those on whom I came to rely so heavily over the last eleven years. Foremost among these must be my Senate colleagues. Each has been a complete professional, deeply committed to the College, personally interested in every student, willing to play his part as a member of a team-ministry and unfailingly diligent in keeping abreast of his subject. I am particularly grateful for the harmony that has prevailed, and for the warm and relaxed working environment that has existed as a result. In addition to their teaching and pastoral roles, each Professor also had additional delegated responsibilities: Professor Mackay as Senate Treasurer; Professors John A. MacLeod and Donald M. MacDonald as, successively, Chairman of the Board of Studies; Professor MacDonald and Professor MacLeod as Disability Coordinator; Professor McIntosh as Director of Postgraduate Studies; and Professor MacLeod as Computer Officer. For my successor as Principal I can wish no more than that he will receive the same level of cordial cooperation as I have enjoyed myself.

I must also thank my non-teaching colleagues for all their support during these years. Bill Anderson, though retired, has cheerfully acted as janitor on the Saturdays of our part-time courses. Sheena MacInnes has been a virtually unpaid Library Assistant. Staff in the Free Church Offices, particularly the Cashier, Lisa MacMillan, have been unfailingly helpful. Above all, I am indebted to John Scoales, our College Officer, who saw things to be done before he was asked, and who over the years has been not only a faithful colleague but a loyal friend and a wise counsellor. And special thanks to him for enlisting the help of his wife, Kirsty, along with other friends from the Leith congregation, as brilliant outside caterers for College Openings and Closings.

Finally, a word of special thanks to staff at Glasgow University, particularly to Andrew Nash and Graham Caie, successively Secretaries to the Senate; to Jackie McCluskey and Rhona Miller of the Senate Office; and to Professor David Jasper, without whom we would never have even dreamed of Glasgow University validation. Collectively, these colleagues have given unsparingly of their expertise, while carefully respecting our academic freedom and theological independence.

Looking back, one can only echo the words of the dying Cecil Rhodes: “So much to do, so little accomplished.” But perhaps I can hope that a foundation has been laid on which the College can build for the future.

The wisest heads in the Church of Scotland now bitterly regret giving up their theological colleges. My prayer is that the Free Church will long cherish hers, and continue to support it in its mission to provide a rigorous and reverent education and training for Christian professionals from all over the world. May we never forget John Calvin’s insistence that preaching, so long as it limits itself to explaining the biblical text, is nothing less than the very word of God. Long may we continue, then, to provide those called to this great work with the linguistic, exegetical, theological, liturgical, historical and practical skills they need if they are to be true heralds of God. Short-cuts will lead only to a new Dark Age.

DONALD MACLEOD, Principal, Free Church of Scotland College

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report, and thank the Board for its work, especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
2. The General Assembly express their thankfulness to God for the ongoing work of the College. They commend the work of the College, its staff and students, to the prayers and support of the Church.

3. The General Assembly thank the Senate for the consistently high standards of delivery of the BTh course, and thank the part-time teachers of practical theology for their input into the life of the College over the past session.

4. The General Assembly receive with regret the resignation of Professor Donald Macleod from the post of Principal of the Free Church College with effect from 30th June 2010. They thank Professor Macleod for his hard work and labour for the College as Principal from 1999 to 2010. They acknowledge with gratitude the ways in which he has been instrumental in expanding the College curriculum, not only in securing degree validation, but in making provision for part-time courses and for the taught Masters programme at the College. The Assembly is gratified to know that he will continue to teach Systematic Theology, and pray that this will be a comparatively lighter year without the burden and responsibility of administration.

5. The General Assembly note the nominations from Presbyteries to the Principalship of the Free Church College. They ordain that a new appointment, to take effect from 1st July 2010, be made before the rising of the 2010 General Assembly.

6. The General Assembly amend Act XXV – Act anent Procedure on Appointment of College Principal, Paragraph 1 (3) to read as follows:

The College Board shall tabulate the returns made by Presbyteries and Synods and report these to the General Assembly. In appointing to the Principalship, the General Assembly shall not be limited to the names included in the College Board’s Report.

7. The General Assembly, noting Miss Anne Macleod’s resignation as College Secretary, commit her to the prayerful good wishes of the Church, and pray that God will bless her at this time of recurring illness and anxiety. They thank Miss Macleod for her contribution to the life and work of the College and for all her practical contributions and secretarial assistance to the College Board.

8. The General Assembly congratulate the Free Church College on its successful registration with the UK Border and Immigration Authority.

9. The General Assembly authorise the College Board to have continued involvement with the initiative of the European Conference of Reformed Churches to integrate theological provision throughout Europe through increased networking between theological colleges and training centres. They thank Professor John McIntosh for his work on the organising committee attending to this matter, and encourage the Free Church College to play a full role in providing theological education within Europe.

10. The General Assembly bestow the title of Professor-Emeritus on Professor Donald Macdonald, former Professor of Apologetics and Pastoral Theology, with immediate effect.

11. The General Assembly thank Professor John A. Macleod for his work in the area of IT equipment, and encourage him in the development of a College E-zine. The Assembly encourage suitably equipped persons throughout the church to consider submitting academic articles for publication in this electronic format.

12. The General Assembly thank all those who are involved in facilitating the College part-time course in the various centres in which it is located. Their contribution to the successful running of this aspect of the College’s work is greatly appreciated. The General Assembly commend the College part-time course to the prayers of the Church, giving thanks for the number of those outwith the denomination who avail themselves of this opportunity for study, but encourage further participation by members and adherents within the Church.

13. The General Assembly, noting the strength of the College as a centre for Reformed theological study, commend the Board on the 1560 Initiative, and encourage the Board to proceed with a new advertising campaign for the College and its curriculum.

14. The General Assembly thank Miss Sheena Macinnes for her work as Library Assistant; Mrs Catriona Cazaly, Board Treasurer; Mr John Scoales, College Officer; and all office staff for administrative assistance.
XII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE TO REVIEW DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. **Judicial Commission** The 2009 General Assembly, having given approval in principle to the appointment of a Judicial Commission, resolved to pass the proposed measures to Presbyteries under the terms of the Barrier Act. The Committee considered the returns from Presbyteries to the same noting the following responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh and Perth</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow and Argyll</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Not Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness, Lochaber and Ross</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Isles</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skye and Wester Ross</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Lakes and Western Canada</td>
<td>Not Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>Response not received - equivalent to “not approved” (Standing Order II.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking account of the returns the Committee is now recommending that the General Assembly pass these measures into a standing law of the Church. Should the Assembly now approve of these measures the Committee will propose a set of names for appointment to the Judicial Commission before the Assembly concludes its business. The Committee will also be required to produce the formal documentation specified at various points in the proposals together with a set of guidelines for help with implementing the legislation.

2. **Other Matters** The Committee held two meetings in the course of the year and gave consideration to the following: (1) the place of legal representation on behalf of a client in any formal process before a church court; (2) a revision of *The Practice*, in the light of changes in church legislation over the past decade. The Committee wish to carry out this task with some urgency as there are very few copies of the most recent edition of *The Practice* (8th edition, 1995) currently available. Consequently the Committee is asking the Assembly to continue its existence so that these and any other matters within its remit may be attended to.

JAMES MACIVER, Convener

**PROPOSED DELIVERANCE**

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report of the Committee and thank the Committee.

2. The General Assembly continue the remit of the Committee in order to examine other issues which may require the amendment of current, or the creation of new, legislation, and to carry out a revision of *The Practice*.

The General Assembly recognise the risk of exposing the Church to criticism or legal action where procedure allows a Church Court to act as investigator, prosecutor, jury and judge, involving the same personnel in the initial investigation, the prosecution of the charges, the consideration of the evidence and the final verdict.

The General Assembly consider that the small size of the Free Church is liable to give rise to concerns and difficulties in the processing of cases, and in particular that objective, detached, and just procedure may not be achievable or clearly demonstrated.

The General Assembly note, in regard to the processing of accusations against Professors in the Free Church, that present legislation does not specify what should happen should it be decided after precognitions that there is no case
to answer and that the role of the College Board in the process may involve a conflict of interests and may give rise to the independency of the Board being questioned in these circumstances.

Wherefore, the General Assembly, with the consent of Presbyteries enact and ordain:

A. The Judicial Commission

1. Composition

1.1 The Judicial Commission (JC) shall be appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation in the first instance of the Committee to Review Disciplinary Procedures and thereafter on the recommendation of the Board of Trustees. The JC shall be comprised of 24 members, 2 ministers and 2 elders from each of the home Presbyteries, appointed for a term of four years, renewable for a second term of four years. The maximum term of continuous service shall be eight years after which no member of the JC shall be eligible for further service until one year has elapsed. Those appointed shall be senior ministers and elders of the church with at least 10 years experience of active service. The General Assembly shall appoint one of the members of the JC as Chairman.

1.2 The quorum for the JC shall be 12 members. Members of the JC who are also parties with an interest in any case which shall come before the JC shall not sit as members of the JC in these circumstances during any part of the proceedings.

2. Powers

2.1 The JC shall have full powers to take up and dispose of any formal complaint against a Minister, Probationer, Elder, or Deacon, as shall be passed to them by any Presbytery of the church and shall have powers to pass sentence, always in accordance with the laws of the church. The JC shall also have powers to issue formal citations to those accused and to all witnesses who may competently be cited. The JC shall have access to the services of the Church's Law Agent.

2.2 In unopposed findings of the Commission (ie where all parties acquiesce and no Appeal or Dissent and Complaint is lodged) wherein sentence has been passed upon an accused after due process, or else an accused has been acquitted, the Commission’s decision shall be regarded as a judicial decision and final, and the Commission shall report their finding to the General Assembly. Appeals from, or Dissents and Complaints against, any finding of the Commission, shall only be allowed on points of law or against severity of censure, but not against the finding itself, and shall be referred to the General Assembly. The Commission and parties appealing or dissenting shall be heard at the bar of the Assembly in the usual way. The Assembly’s decision shall be regarded as a judicial decision and final and shall be recorded in the minutes in these terms.

B. Investigative Procedure Applying to All Cases

1. Accusations against Elders and Deacons Accusations against an Elder of Deacon shall be investigated by their own Kirk Session. In investigating accusations against an Elder or Deacon the Kirk Session shall be required to follow the general principles of procedure set out in Chapter V, Parts I - III inclusive, of The Practice of the Free Church of Scotland.

2. Accusations against Ministers, Professors and Probationers Accusations against Ministers, Professors and Probationers shall be investigated by the Presbytery having jurisdiction over them at the time such accusations are made. In investigating accusations against Ministers, Professors and Probationers the Presbytery shall be required to follow the general principles of procedure set out in Chapter V, Parts I - IV inclusive, of The Practice of the Free Church of Scotland (hereafter referred to as “TP”).

3. Initial Inquiry

3.1 As a first step in dealing with all accusations of censurable conduct or a rumour to that effect concerning an Elder or Deacon brought to the notice of the Kirk Session, the Session shall appoint a Committee comprising the Minister (or Interim Moderator) and at least one elder to interview those making complaint or those thought to have knowledge of the facts underlying a rumour to ascertain what weight should be accorded to these and they shall report the outcome to the Session.

3.2 In regard to accusations of censurable conduct or a rumour to that effect brought to the notice of Presbytery against a Minister, Professor or Probationer, the Presbytery shall appoint a Committee comprising at least one
minister and one elder to interview those making complaint or those thought to have knowledge of the facts underlying a rumour to ascertain what weight should be accorded to these and they shall report the outcome to the Presbytery.

3.3 If the Session or Presbytery see cause they may terminate the inquiry at this stage and inform all parties involved accordingly, in which case the accuser shall then be informed that he or she must petition the relevant church Court should they wish to take the matter further. Should the Session or Presbytery have reason to carry out further investigation this must be done formally by way of a Formal Investigation as detailed in 4. below.

4. Formal Investigation (precognition) In proceeding to make formal investigation of allegations against an Elder, Deacon, Minister, Professor or Probationer the investigating Court shall have regard to all the relevant facts, and in particular:

(a) the bona fides of any person making an allegation that a disciplinary offence may have been committed;

(b) any representation made by the person who is the subject of the allegation; and

(c) the gravity of the alleged offence and in particular whether it be censurable according to Scripture and the laws of the church (Presbyteries should note Chapter V., Section IV, par. 2.5 of TP).

In all instances of proceeding to Formal Investigation the investigating Court shall:

(a) give details in writing to the accused of the substance of the complaint made against him and the nature of the evidence existing in support of the allegation and shall offer him the opportunity to make any answer thereto, but he shall not be obliged to do so, and may exercise the right to demand that he be formally charged with offensive conduct before agreeing to discuss the matter further with members of the investigating Court;

(b) make such arrangements as appear to be appropriate for the provision of pastoral support for the accused and his family, for the person or persons who made the allegation and for any witnesses who may be called to give evidence; and

(c) declare that the accused is meantime suspended from the duties of office. Even prior to the formulating of a charge, an Elder, Deacon, Minister, Professor or Probationer accused of censurable conduct should consider himself temporarily relieved of his duties. This suspension is not itself a censure, being merely a recognition of what is appropriate in the circumstances, and shall be termed an “administrative suspension” as distinct from any suspension involving censure. Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries must take care to minute all such distinctions carefully.

4.1 In all instances of Formal Investigation the investigating Court shall keep a Record Apart of the proceedings which shall be kept in retenis so that it may be produced should the need for formal process arise. The Record Apart shall comprise all evidence obtained by the Court including witness statements and the regular records of the investigating Court shall make reference to it as required.

4.2 If the Court find that the accusation is false or frivolous or that the rumour is groundless, or that there is no evidence capable of proving censurable conduct against the accused, unless this finding be remitted to the Presbytery or JC by Dissent and Complaint, the enquiry shall be terminated and his temporary relief from his duties shall be recalled. If the Court find that there appear to be grounds for a formal charge to be drawn up against the accused, unless this finding be remitted to the Presbytery or JC by or Dissent and Complaint, they must proceed by way of Libel as detailed in 4.3 below. As soon as the Formal Investigation is ended the accused shall be informed of the outcome.

4.3 In deciding to proceed with a formal charge after Formal Investigation the Kirk Session or Presbytery shall ensure that at least one of the following circumstances is present, without which no Court of the Church shall proceed to frame a Libel even to the extent of citing the person concerned.

(1) A written and signed complaint lodged by some person charging a minister with immoral conduct or heresy, providing some prima facie evidence. Since a scandal against an Elder, Deacon, Minister, Professor or Probationer, once raised, cannot be easily wiped off, the Kirk Session or Presbytery must exactly ponder by whose information and complaint it comes before them. And in judging the probability that would justify them in proceeding, they are called upon to weigh well the measure of credit due to the quarter from which an allegation of scandal proceeds;

(2) The lodging of a Private Libel by an accuser who asserts that attention to it is requisite for the due exercise of discipline. No Kirk Session or Presbytery shall receive a Private Libel unless the person lodging it is a Member of the Free Church of Scotland since the liability to censure referred to below can only competently apply to such as are Members of the Free Church. The Kirk Session or Presbytery with which a Private Libel is lodged shall declare that
the accuser shall be liable to censure as a slanderer if he or she should fail to satisfy the relevant church Court of its truth being reasonably probable. Moreover the accuser shall be required to formally state that he or she accepts the said liability without which formal statement the Libel shall not be received. If the accuser allows this declaration and statement to be minuted, and he or she signs it, the church Court shall be obliged to proceed.

(3) The prevalence of a widespread rumour (fama clamosa) which lays a Kirk Session or Presbytery under an obligation to take action for its own vindication. Before beginning a process against an Elder, Deacon, Minister, Professor or Probationer on the ground of a fama clamosa involving serious scandal or manifest heresy, such as persistent opposition to the doctrine of the Confession of Faith, the Kirk Session or Presbytery must be careful to inquire into the rise, occasion, broachers and grounds of such a fama.

4.4 Whenever a Kirk Session arrives at a finding to proceed to formal process by Libel against an Elder or Deacon, or should this finding be subject to a Dissent and Complaint to the higher Court, the Session shall communicate the decision in writing to the accused, informing him that he ought to wait upon further notice from the Presbytery, as the matter must now be passed into their hands.

4.5 Whenever a Presbytery arrives at a finding to proceed to formal process by Libel against a Minister, Professor or Probationer, or should this finding be subject to a Dissent and Complaint to the higher Court, the Presbytery shall communicate the decision in writing to the accused, informing him that he ought to wait upon further notice from the Judicial Commission, as the matter must now be passed into their hands.

5. Dealing with a view to Confession If a Kirk Session or Presbytery find that there is good reason for entertaining or framing a Libel against an Elder, Deacon, Minister, Professor or Probationer subject to their jurisdiction, they shall firstly seek in the spirit of love and faithfulness to bring him to a confession. He may either deny the charge or, before committing himself at all by answering the inquiries of his brethren, he may demand that the accusations against him be set out formally. In either case the framing of a Libel shall be required.

C. Procedure to be followed in Processing a Libel

1. Formulating a Charge: Whenever a Kirk Session or Presbytery, after due investigation in terms of 4. above, concludes that a formal process must be undertaken they shall proceed to formulate a record of charges against the accused in the form of a Libel as specified in 4.3 - 4.5 above. The Principal Clerk of Assembly shall make available a standard Form which must be used in all cases.

The Libel, forming a regular syllogism, must set forth the following:

Proposition 1 - the nature of the alleged offence, declaring its contrariety to the Word of God and the laws of the Church, and indicating the kind of consequences which ought to follow from it;

Proposition 2 - a summary of the evidence, whether from witnesses, documents or otherwise, incriminating the accused could be established, specifying what are believed to be the principal facts of the case, and particularising time, place and other circumstances relating to each alleged offence. This proposition may contain one or more counts of indictment;

Conclusion - the connection of Propositions 1 and 2 together and thereby arriving at the conclusion that the accused, as guilty of the offence mentioned in Proposition 1, ought to be subjected to the consequences indicated provided Proposition 2 be made good either by confession or by adequate evidence.

1.2 The Court which resolves to prosecute shall be responsible for processing the Libel. It is of great importance that care be taken to frame the Libel with accuracy so as to avoid grounds for questioning its relevancy. In all cases which may lead to a Libel, the prosecuting party shall carefully examine the proposed evidence to ensure that a charge incapable of proof be not proceeded with. Such examination shall comply with Act I, Class I, 2008 (Act anent the interviewing of women, children and vulnerable adults). In every case, including that in which a Private Libel is insisted on, before a Libel is adopted it shall be submitted to the Law Agent of the Church in accordance with Act VI, 1912. A Libel shall be signed by the party or parties prosecuting, and a list of witnesses and documents adduced in support of the charge embodied in it shall be appended to it.

1.3 In addition to the Libel the Kirk Session or Presbytery, as also an accuser in the case of a Private Libel (see B 4.3 (2) above), in proceeding to process the case shall also:

(a) draw up a list of the names and addresses of all witnesses to be adduced by the Session or Presbytery;
(b) provide a list of the productions to be put in evidence by the Kirk Session or Presbytery;
(c) forward the Libel together with the above-mentioned documents (a) and (b) to the Clerk of Presbytery or Judicial Commission as appropriate, with a request that they take up consideration of the case at their earliest opportunity;

(d) appoint representatives to prosecute the case before Presbytery or the Judicial Commission.

2. **Hearing**

2.1 The following procedure shall apply to the hearing of cases before Presbytery and/or Judicial Commission

2.2 **Preliminary Requirements** The Presbytery or JC, having received notification in terms of C1.3 (c) above, shall take cognisance of all the documents relating to the case passed to them, ensuring that all required documents are present and in order. They shall not proceed further unless they are satisfied that all documents are present and in order and in the event that documents are missing or not in due form they shall inform the submitting Kirk Session or Presbytery of the same, requiring that they rectify all deficiencies before returning the documents to the relevant Clerk;

3. When all documents are present and in order the Presbytery or JC shall:

(a) fix a date and place for the hearing of the case at the earliest opportunity, always allowing due time to all parties to make adequate preparations. The accused is entitled to a minimum of ten clear days’ notice of the date on which the Presbytery or JC is to consider the relevancy of a Libel;

(b) serve upon the accused by recorded delivery post or by means of a person appointed by the Presbytery: (1) a copy of the Libel and the lists of all productions and witnesses; (2) the date appointed for the hearing; and (3) formal citation instructing the accused to be in attendance at the hearing upon the date fixed by the Presbytery or JC;

(c) serve formal citation upon all witnesses listed at (b) above and belonging to the Free Church of Scotland, by recorded delivery post or by means of a person appointed by the Presbytery or JC, instructing them to be in attendance at the hearing upon the date fixed. Witnesses listed but not belonging to the Free Church of Scotland cannot be cited but the Presbytery or JC must inform them of the date appointed for the hearing and should aim to bring all moral suasion upon them to attend.

3. **Conducting of Hearing**

3.1 **Challenge** It shall be competent at the very commencement of formal proceedings by Presbytery or JC for the accused to challenge the competency of witnesses on the grounds that they do not understand the charge or charges, or are known to be prejudiced against him. The accused must ensure that intimation of the grounds of his challenge be given to the Presbytery or JC not later than twenty four hours before the hearing is due to begin, otherwise his challenge shall not be received. The basic requirements for a competent witness shall be (a) Capacity (that they are able to understand the facts to which they bear testimony; (b) Honesty (that they can be regarded as seriously aiming to provide objective testimony); and (c) Opportunity (that they were in a position to witness the facts they testify). Such witnesses as the Presbytery or JC may deem to be not competent shall be dismissed. The Presbytery or JC shall dispose of any such challenge immediately unless they decide that the matter cannot be decided without proof, in which case they shall adjourn proceedings until such time as the challenge may competently be disposed of.

3.2 **Relevancy of a Libel** In proceeding to take up consideration of a Libel the Presbytery or JC shall firstly consider the relevancy of the Libel, which shall involve examination as to:

(1) Whether Proposition 1 (see C1 above) is true or not, that is, whether the offence or offences referred to are truly a subject of Church censure inferring the indicated penalty according to the Word of God and the standards of the Church; and

(2) Whether the conclusion is fairly deducible or not from the premises, that is, whether the facts specified in Proposition 2 (see C. 1 above) really amount to the offence or offences charged in the major proposition.

3.3 **Fresh Dealing toward Confession** After a Libel against an Elder, Deacon, Minister or Probationer has been found relevant, the Presbytery or JC shall deal with him anew to ascertain if he be willing to confess the truth of the charge or charges, in order to persuade him that since a well-founded accusation against him exists it is his duty, both for his own sake and for the interests of Christ’s cause, to save his brethren or other parties the trouble of adducing proof against him either by witnesses or by documents.
3.4 **Serving of a Libel** If the Libel be adjudged to be relevant and the accused be not willing to confess the truth of the charge or charges therein, the Libel shall be served upon him by being formally placed in his hands. Once the resolution to serve the Libel as relevant has been agreed the accused becomes a party at the Bar.

3.5 **Libel framed by other parties** A Libel against an Elder or Deacon prepared and prosecuted by any other party than the Kirk Session shall be presented to the Kirk Session in the first instance who shall then pass it to the Presbytery. Such a Libel can only be served by authority of the Presbytery. Similarly when a Libel against a Minister or Probationer is prepared and prosecuted by any other party than the Presbytery, it shall be presented to the Presbytery and can only be served by authority of the Presbytery. For all such Libels the specifications listed in C1 - 3.4 above shall apply mutatis mutandis.

3.6 **Sisting of Procedure** No Appeal or Dissent and Complaint at any stage of Presbyterial action in a case of charge or *fama* which involves a Libel, or may lead to the necessity of serving a Libel against an Elder, Deacon, Minister or Probationer, shall have the effect of sisting procedure, until the Libel has both been served and found relevant (see Act IV, 1853).

3.7 **Irrelevancy of Libel** If Presbytery or JC judge a Libel to be irrelevant the whole proceedings shall fall to the ground, unless the decision regarding irrelevancy is brought before the superior Court by appeal, complaint or reference. If the intervention of the superior Court is required, it may correct the irrelevancy and return the process to the Presbytery or JC. If the decision of Presbytery or JC, or in due course the Superior Court, is that only part of the Libel is irrelevant, the case may proceed with reference to the part which has been found relevant.

3.8 **Taking of Proof** If the accused persists in his denial of the charge or charges after the Libel has been found relevant, the Presbytery or JC shall proceed to take the proof after hearing the Libel read over again and after hearing also any answers that may have been given in on the part of the accused. Each interested party shall be allowed to state their case fully. The whole procedure shall be carefully minuted in a Record Apart in case a Superior Court should order the whole or any part of it to be deleted or destroyed. The Record Apart shall be considered in the meantime as an integral part of the minutes of the Presbytery or JC and shall be subject to examination according to the normal procedure.

3.9 **Solemn Assurance** All who are about to give evidence before a Presbytery or the JC shall be required to give a solemn assurance before doing so that they will speak the truth, that they have no malicious motive and are not knowingly biased. Such solemn assurance shall be accepted as equivalent to an oath and all evidence received shall be given on that understanding.

3.10 **Cross-examination** An accused person shall have the right to cross-examine witnesses testifying against him, always subject to the agreement of the Presbytery or JC as to the relevance of the questions in cross-examination.

3.11 **Record of Testimony** The testimony given by each witness and his or her answers to questions shall be accurately written down and shall subsequently be read and signed by the witness. To accomplish this, the Presbytery or JC shall have authority to arrange for an audio recording of the proceedings, such recordings to be kept in secure possession by the Clerks until such time as the Presbytery or JC may order them to be destroyed. The JC may employ such professional services as may be required to create a transcription of the recordings, the costs to be included in the budgetary arrangements specified in (E) 2 below.

3.12 **Deposition or Suspension after Confession or Proof** If a Minister or Probationer confesses himself, or by Formal Process shall be found, guilty of any scandalous offence - such as flagrant or habitual intemperance, or violation of the Seventh Commandment - the Presbytery or JC shall depose such a Minister *instanter* from his office, or shall deprive such a Probationer *instanter* of his licence, and shall deal with him otherwise as the ordinary discipline of the Church requires and as may be most for edification. In all instances of deposeing a Minister from office the sentencing judicatory shall report this to the ensuing General Assembly. Where an offence by a Minister has not been very flagrant or aggravated, suspension from office *sine die*, that is, indefinitely as to time, may be considered sufficient censure, but such a suspension shall always be accompanied by a declaration loosing the suspended Minister from his Pastoral Charge. Even if he be reponed to the status of a Minister, he shall not be restored to that Charge.

3.13 **Elder or Deacon not appearing** If an accused Elder or Deacon, when duly cited, does not appear, and either leaves the locality, or shows himself otherwise contumacious, without any relevant excuse, his non-appearance shall be deemed to be a confession of guilt, and the judiciary which cited him shall suspend him *sine die* from office and from sealing ordinances.
3.14 **Minister not appearing** If an accused Minister, when duly cited, does not appear, and either leaves the locality, or shows himself otherwise contumacious, without any relevant excuse, his non-appearance shall be deemed to be a confession of guilt, and the judicatory which cited him shall either suspend him *sine die* from the duties of office and from sealing ordinances, or else recommend that the General Assembly depose him from office, as suits the gravity of the case. The General Assembly alone shall have authority to depose a Minister in his absence.

3.15 **Resignation** A Kirk Session or Presbytery shall not accept resignation of his office by an Elder, Deacon, Minister or Probationer unless they are satisfied that no charge of scandal or heresy can be reasonably brought against him.

**(D) Legislation repealed and amended**


2. The General Assembly amend Act VI, 1979, paragraph 5, to the extent that the following be deleted: “and further, reserving the rights of parties, they are empowered to originate and prosecute before the Courts of the Church processes against any of the Professors for heresy or immorality, and to make enquiries for that purpose”.

3. The General Assembly amend Act XXIV, 2007, paragraph 1.6, to the extent that the following be deleted: “to take up consideration of allegations of heresy or immorality against any of the Professors (in accordance with the terms of Act VI, 1979, Act XXIV, 1993, and Act XV, 2004)”.

**(E) Other**

1. The General Assembly direct that proceedings of the JC shall be clerked by the Assembly Clerks and that the records shall be submitted to the General Assembly for examination in the usual manner.

2. The General Assembly direct that a budget for sittings of the JC shall be allocated to the Board of Trustees on the advice of the Chief Administrative Officer, and approved annually, in the same manner as the budgets of Committees and Boards of the Church. Parties called to appear before the JC shall be liable to meet their own costs. Members of the JC shall be entitled to claim expenses incurred in attending sittings of the JC and meetings directly related to this in the same manner as claims by members of Committees and Boards of the Church.
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XIII.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF DEACONS

1. Introduction  This Committee was appointed by the 2007 General Assembly following a report and recommendation from the then Stewardship and Policy Committee. The Stewardship & Policy Committee noted the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of elders available to serve on Assembly Boards and Committees and also noted that some of the matters dealt with by some of the Boards and Committees were of a diaconal nature. They asked that an ad hoc group be appointed to examine the potential role of deacons on these Boards and Committees. Due to a heavy workload the then Convener was unable to convene a meeting and thus it was only following the 2009 Assembly that the Committee met and started its work.

The following Assembly Boards and Committees have diaconal responsibilities:

- Board of Trustees Sub-Committees:
  - Compliance, Audit & Risk Management
  - Finance
- Joint Investment Committee of Free Church of Scotland Board of Trustees and Free Church of Scotland Pension Scheme Trustees
- Home Missions Board Sub-Committee: Finance and Social Responsibility

2. The Remit  The question before the Committee was, “Is the appointment of deacons to Assembly Boards and Committees Biblically warranted?” According to our Presbyterian structure, only ministers and elders are eligible to serve on Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assembly and therefore, only they can serve as members of Assembly Boards and Committees. Others (presumably including deacons) who may have special skills and experience in specific areas may be appointed as consultants or advisers, having voice but no vote (Act XXV, Class 2, 2006). So the question now becomes, “May deacons serve as members of the higher courts of the church and thus qualify to serve as full members of Boards and Committees?”


3.1  The word deacon is derived from the Greek word diakonos, servant. Together with the related words diakoneo, to serve, and diakonia, service or ministry, this word group appears over 100 times in the New Testament. In only four instances is the word diakonos definitely used in the technical sense of deacon as a church officer, in Philippians 1:1 and in 1 Timothy 3:8,10,12. The word group is used most often in the context of meeting material needs such as table-service – for example, Martha in Luke 10:40, Peter's mother-in-law in Mark 1:31 and the servants at the wedding feast in John 2:5.

3.2  The word group is also used to describe the service of Christ and the apostles: “The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45) and “I am among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27). Paul applies the word to his own ministry when he calls himself a servant of the gospel and of the church (Colossians 1:23,25). This reminds us that leadership in the church is servant leadership.

3.3  It is likely that the diaconate originated in the incident recorded in Acts 6:1-6, in which the Seven were appointed to look after the daily distribution of food to the widows. Although the Seven are not called deacons here, this word group was used by the apostles when they said that it was not right (areston, pleasing or fitting) for them to neglect the word of God in order to wait on (diakonein) tables. This did not mean that it was wrong for them to supervise the distribution to the widows. Rather it was not fitting that they had to neglect the ministry of the Word to do it. At least two of the Seven, Stephen and Philip, proved to be effective apologists and evangelists as they exercised gifts other than their diaconal gifts. Paul the great missionary apostle was very much involved in the diaconal matter of organising the collection for the poor believers in Jerusalem, showing that this was a matter worthy of the attention of a minister of the Word, though not his main responsibility. This gives support for ministers and elders today being members of Deacons’ Courts in their capacity as spiritual leaders and overseers.

3.4  In the Letter to the Philippians 1:1 (c. AD 61 or even earlier) Paul addresses the overseers and deacons, showing that already deacons were being appointed in the young churches. In the more settled situation reflected in
the Pastoral Letters, Paul sets out qualifications for overseers and deacons in 1 Timothy 3. While both offices demand a high standard of Christian faith, character and conduct, it is only the overseers who are required to be “able to teach” (verse 2). Passages such as Acts 20:17-34 and Titus 1:5,7 show that the terms elders (presbyteroi) and overseers (episcopoi) refer to the same group of men. They are expected to serve by leading, ruling, teaching and caring for the church. Presumably the deacons continued to concentrate on care of the poor and there is no mention of them partaking in the work of oversight of the church.

3.5 The Biblical evidence, though sketchy, is sufficient to support the present practice of deacons not having a ruling or oversight function, unless they have the gifts requisite for the eldership. The New Testament, with its emphasis on the exercise of spiritual gifts rather than on rigid structures, would seem to give ample scope to elders who have particular diaconal gifts to continue to exercise these alongside their role as overseers.

4. Deacons in history

4.1 In the early Christian centuries deacons became less involved in charitable work and became administrative assistants to bishops and then liturgical assistants to priests, so that by the fifth century the office had largely fallen into disuse in the Western church. The work of caring for the poor and sick was carried on by monks and nuns.

4.2 It was only at the Reformation that the office was revived by John Calvin in Geneva. In the Institutes 4.3.9 he distinguishes two kinds of deacons, based on his interpretation of Romans 12:8, “…if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; … if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” He deduced from this that the two kinds of deacons were those who distributed the church’s alms to the poor and those who actually cared for the poor and sick. So the office was both financial and practical in its scope. Calvin set up an organised system of relief for the poor and the sick in Geneva.

4.3 This obviously influenced John Knox and the Scottish Reformers, as they emphasised the importance of “distribution” to the poor and needy as an essential part of the “policy of the kirk” along with doctrine and discipline (Second Book of Discipline, Chapter 2, section 2). The (first) Book of Discipline (1560) defined the role of deacons in the Eighth Head as follows (spelling modernised):

The office of the deacons, as is before declared, is to receive the rents and gather the alms of the church, to keep and distribute the same, as by the ministry of the kirk shall be appointed. They may also assist in judgment with the ministers and elders, and may be admitted to read in the assembly if they are required, and are found able thereto.

The deacons, under the direction and supervision of the ministry, had to collect, account for and distribute the moneys collected by the church for the upkeep of the ministry, relief of the poor and maintenance of schools (Sixth Head). They were to provide audited accounts to the ministers and elders annually. Elders and deacons were to be elected annually. This was both to prevent any from domineering in the church and also to allow them time to pursue their own livelihood in years when they were not elected. It was envisaged that they would be very busy in the work of their office! The same men could be elected every year, but they were not to be compelled to serve continually. This annual election persisted for some time.

4.4 The picture is of a church feeling its way towards a fully Presbyterian system of government, with the temporary expedients of the appointment of district superintendents, the continuance of some of the bishops and the allowance of deacons assisting ministers and elders in judgement. This latter provision was approved of by Beza in a letter of 15761 but was not accepted by the Second Book of Discipline (1578). When presbyteries were formed, deacons did not sit in them.

4.5 A more settled Presbyterian structure is reflected in the Second Book of Discipline. Chapter 8 section 3 reads:

Their [the deacons’] office and power is to receive and to distribute the whole ecclesiastical goods unto them to whom they are appointed. This they ought to do according to the judgement and appointment of the presbyteries or elderships (of which the deacons are not), that the patrimony of the kirk and poor be not converted to private men’s uses, nor wrongfully distributed.

This clarifies that the presbyteries or elderships were in over-all charge and that the deacons did not belong to the same order as the elders. It was some time before presbyteries were established and in some towns sessions consisted

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of elders from several congregations. Chapter 9 makes it clear that the church’s patrimony consisted of all money and goods, including property, belonging to the church and that the duty of the deacons was to ensure that these were used for the work of the church and the relief of the poor.

4.6 Gordon Donaldson points out that the office of deacon did not fulfill the expectations of the reformers, especially with regard to comprehensive control of church property and the role was confined to administration of alms. Towards the end of the 17th century the office of the deacon began to fall into abeyance in many congregations and their financial duties were taken over by the eldership, despite directives of the General Assembly. The Dictionary of Scottish Church History says that by the beginning of the 19th century there was “an almost universal neglect of the office”. It goes on to say that it was Thomas Chalmers who revived it in the 19th century.

4.7 Following the Disruption the Free Church General Assembly of October 1843 (Act V) ordained “that Deacons be forthwith elected in every congregation, and that kirk-sessions be enjoined to take immediate steps towards the election of an adequate number of Deacons by each congregation … the allowance granted by last Assembly to Elders to exercise the function of deacons being still continued where necessary in the circumstances of the congregation”. The rest of the Act makes it clear that Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries were to have a supervisory role, even in financial matters.

5. The present situation

5.1 According to the 2008 statistical schedules there were approximately 420 elders and 230 deacons in the Free Church, excluding the North American Synod. On the face of it, it seems strange that it is difficult to find a sufficient number of elders to serve on Boards and Committees. Is this due to old age, work commitments or some other reason?

5.2 What about the argument that since some of the Boards and Committees deal with diaconal matters such as finance, pensions, investments, building maintenance and social responsibility, deacons should be involved? Deacons sign the same formula as the elders and ministers, so why should they not be eligible? This ignores the basic difference between the offices of presbyter and deacon. The presbyters are to rule and care for (and some to teach) the people, while the deacons are to manage the material affairs of the congregation, including the distribution of aid to the poor. The presbyters, both ruling and teaching elders, have the oversight of the congregation in a way that the deacons do not have and therefore only they are qualified to serve on the higher courts of the church. Obviously those presbyters who have particular diaconal experience and gifts should be appointed to the Boards and Committees where these gifts are especially needed.

5.3 As noted above, Boards and Committees already have powers to appoint non-elders, including deacons, as advisers. The Committee believe, however, that if a deacon is thought to have the gifts qualifying him for the oversight role of the Courts and Committees of the Church, he should be elected as an elder and thus will be able to serve on the higher courts and on Assembly Boards and Committees and in this way contribute his expertise in diaconal affairs to the wider church.

5.4 The Committee also believes that, while it is right for elders to be involved in diaconal matters, sometimes out of necessity when there is a shortage of deacons, Kirk Sessions should be careful to ensure that elders are not overburdened by diaconal duties to the detriment of their pastoral and oversight duties. It is also important for the Session to mobilise all the members of the church, both male and female, to contribute their gifts to the fellowship, work and witness of the congregation.

6. Conclusion The Committee believe there are sufficient Biblical, theological and historical reasons for maintaining the present practice of only ministers and elders being eligible to serve as full members of Assembly Boards and Committees.

DONALD M. MACDONALD, Convener

3 Donaldson, 222
4 Dictionary of Scottish Church History, article on Diaconate, Deacons and Deaconesses, 240
5 Some returns were incomplete and the most recent available figures were used.
PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the report and thank the Committee, especially the Convener.

2. The General Assembly reaffirm the present practice that only ministers and elders are eligible to serve as full members of Boards and Committees of the General Assembly.

3. The General Assembly discharge the Committee.
XIV.

REPORT

OF THE

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS BOARD

INTRODUCTION

This year is a year of change and challenge for the International Missions Board. We no longer can rely on “a slice of the cake” to meet all of our budget costs, but now need to raise (£150,000 initially) a percentage of our budget ourselves. However, we see this as an opportunity to make our own people better aware of the exciting projects with which we are involved as a denomination. We, along with our colleagues in the Home Missions Board, have produced a Missions brochure highlighting the different places and people that comprise our work. As a Board, we now need to “sell” our work alongside established Mission organisations who visit our congregations throughout the year. We have arranged a series of “Road Shows” to promote our work and to ask Deacons’ Courts to consider supporting us.

The Free Church of Scotland has traditionally been very mission-minded and over the years, has provided funds not only to our denominational work, but also to other agencies. We already work closely with established and respected organisations who specialise in particular fields. One such group is Latin Link and we look forward to a shared conference in Inverness in June of this year. We are aware that our people who are called to the mission field may not find opportunities of service in our traditional fields so we have developed a policy to establish good practice when Free Church people wish to work with other organisations. This will enable the “mother church” to have a vital and important part in supporting prayerfully and sometimes financially such people as well as publicising their work.

We also face change and challenges as far as International Mission itself is concerned. We have to adapt to the fact that our work doesn’t necessarily have to be “over there”. We are involved in Frontier work on our own doorstep. Due to concerns about confidentiality and security, we have re-named one area of service as the “Martyn Project”. The IMB wants to emulate the pioneering spirit of Henry Martin (1781-1812) who brought the gospel to the least reached people on earth from South, West and Central Asia. The “Martyn Project” report is not as detailed as before as we have to be sensitive to publicising this material. We encourage our personnel involved in this work to visit local congregations so that our people can be more informed and excited about the different aspects of the work.

As we explore new opportunities, we are also very thankful for the stability and growth in our more traditional fields of service, the details of which are given later in this report.

As we respond to these challenges we are reminded of the greatest challenge of all set by our Lord himself where he first tells us his disciples that “the harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields,” Matthew 9:37 – 38.

He then says - “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18 – 20.

(A) INDIA

Strategy

Our strategy for India is to support our Indian colleagues in building a strong, fully independent, indigenous Church conscious of its own identity and reaching out to its communities through the preaching of the Gospel and related humanitarian ministries. To achieve this we are committed, by agreement with the Presbyterian Free Church (PFC), to a progressive annual reduction in its grant whilst offsetting this reduction through the support of appropriate development projects. We also provide financial support for Christian education and medical work.

Update

Following the report to the 2009 General Assembly, we provide these updates:

- New financial systems were introduced to improve procedures in Church and Schools. An Accountant is monitoring progress. There is an expectation of increased use of technology. The Board considers this to be a critical factor in the future potential of Church and Schools.
- Work is proceeding on a new Constitution and Procedures Manual for the PFC. The Board also considers good administration to be vital for the future stability and harmony of the Church.
Available funds from the sale of the Toriya Building and Land in Lakhnadon have been split between Church and Schools as agreed with our recommendation that they be used to improve employees’ terms and conditions.

Church

The PFC has four congregations, Premnagar and Vijainagar in the city of Jabalpur and one in each of the small towns of Lakhnadon and Chhapara, 50 - 70 miles to the SE - the original location of the Free Church Mission.

At the end of 2009, the Premnagar (Jabalpur) congregation effectively separated from PFC, mainly over Rev. David John's unwillingness, with his Session’s support, to retire as required by the Church's constitution and a direct injunction of Presbytery. This has marred the Church's harmony and witness and has raised several related and emotive issues. The Board’s advice to the Church is to proceed graciously and patiently with the view to healing this division over time. The matter needs much prayer and wisdom from God for the whole Church and for David John who could exercise an outstandingly effective ministry in the Church in key areas during his retirement years.

Bereavement

Mrs Lalin John, Rev. David John's wife, went to be with the Lord on 9th February 2010. She had suffered from Parkinson’s disease and had borne her illness quietly and courageously. She had remained active in the work, particularly in the Church Library in Premnagar where she took many opportunities to witness. The Board has written to Mr John expressing sympathy and thankfulness for her life and testimony.

Personnel

Rev. Emmanuel Ekka moved to Vijainagar (Jabalpur) to succeed Rev. S K Lal who retired. Rev. Samit Mishra, Assistant Minister at Lakhnadon, replaced Mr Ekka at Chhapara. We wish these men every blessing from God in their new charges and we extend the same good wishes to Rev. and Mrs Lal in their retirement. Mr Yohan Malche, former Administrator at Lakhnadon Christian Hospital, continues to help the Church in his retirement, particularly with its finances. He and his wife plan to move to Jabalpur to help in one of the congregations there.

Outreach

The outreach work of the Church continues to be greatly encouraging particularly in Chhapara. Our 2009 Report noted the work of a team of village missionaries led by a former orphan, Mr Vinay Das and a meeting in October 2008 which some 60 professing new believers attended of whom 22 had been baptised. The Chhapara Church has experienced similar blessing in 2009/10 advising us that there are now about 300 new believers and seekers in contact through the village outreach programme, with 12 house churches, 30 prayer cells and 12 Sunday Schools. There were 26 baptisms on profession of faith and 25 new members. The Church is now focusing its efforts on 30 of its 158 surrounding villages. It also held its first Seekers Camp in December 2009 where 180 attended.

Mission Support

Mission work has been developing also in the Lakhnadon villages of Dhuma and Purva and support for this work has been taken up by the Southern Support Group in 2010/11. Mr Fakir Chand who has applied to PFC as a Student for the Ministry is leading the work at Dhuma, a large village between Jabalpur and Lakhnadon.

Education

The Christian Schools at Lakhnadon and Chhapara have 1,300 pupils in total from infants to higher education. Their reputations are high in terms of educational and sporting achievements and the Church has opportunity daily to teach the Word of God. We urge the Church to maximise these openings. They are now adding English Medium streams to their curriculums. They have no government support and their need for new classrooms and equipment continues.

During 2009 a potentially serious issue arose over 'Provident Funds' for school employees - a compulsory social security arrangement to which employers and employees contribute. The schools had understood that they were exempt but they now face the possibility of huge arrears. Their Accountant is taking action to have the bill significantly reduced but it may mean that the Schools’ proportion of the Toriya proceeds will have to be used.

Medical

We continue to support and pray for the work of Emmanuel Hospital Association at Lakhnadon Hospital and Chhapara Christian Health Centre with their ministries to surrounding villages. There are plans to rebuild the Hospital when funding permits.

(B) LATIN AMERICA

Overview

"Ask me my three main priorities for government, and I tell you: education, education, education.” (Tony Blair, 1st October, 1996). The Board’s three main priorities in Latin America are “education, education, education.” The Free Church of Scotland is a significant partner in providing excellent education in Peru and Colombia. From the Colegio San Andres in Lima, to the proposed University of Moyobamba to theological studies at
Seminaries in Lima and Medellin, the Board has focused its personnel and finance on equipping a new generation of Peruvians and Colombians to contribute to the Christian good of their countries.

1. Perú

Lima Evangelical Seminary (www.sel.edu)
Rev. Donnie Smith was given a two year extension on his current term of office as Rector – a further recognition of the esteem in which he is held. The Seminary exercises a wide ministry. In 2009, there were 76 training workshops for pastors and other leaders all over the country with 770 pastors and 1481 others participating.

In a recent e-mail, Dr Smith highlights the following points for prayer and praise:

- The project to achieve SEL university status is ongoing
- We have record numbers matriculated this year: 22 on the MTh, 108 on the BTh dayshift and 67 on other shifts, and 270 so far this year at workshops. We need the numbers as our budget target is up 15% on 2009
- Cesar Morales, associate-Rector, is beginning a doctorate in education with Biola, and Tomás Saenz may be going to FC College.

Colegio San Andrés (www.sanandres.edu.pe)
Clive and Ruth Bailey have completed their second year of service. The pupil roll has risen from 475 in 2008 to 525 in 2009 to 629 in 2010. Mr Bailey’s recent newsletter recognises the obvious source of these blessings:

- God has blessed this school by sending us over 629 pupils this year
- God has blessed us with 18 new members of staff to deal with the expansion, all of whom are Christians
- God has blessed the senior pupils: the majority of pupils in the 5th year profess Christ as their Saviour; they are a wonderful group of youngsters
- This is your school and we thank God for your faithfulness in prayer.

The transfer of governance to a Peruvian Board has been delayed due to the on-going legal case against the church and school. The Board renews its call to the Church to pray fervently for a fair and rapid settlement of this case.

Moyobamba Presbyterian Church (www.presbimoyo.org)
David MacPherson reports from a recent trip to Moyobamba:

“The Moyobamba congregation has planted a new church on the outskirts of the town in the Lluyllucucha neighbourhood. The core of the new congregation is made up of 70 members of the mother church who agreed to be involved in this church plant and so more effectively reach the neighbours in this part of town. The Tarapoto church plant is now under the direction of Pastor Oscar Briones. The Annie Soper Christian School began the 2010 school year with c. 300 pupils and under the direction of a new headmaster, Mr. Arturo Solis.”

2. Colombia

Fundación Universitaria Seminario Bíblico de Colombia (www.unisbc.edu.co)
The IMB supports the seminary in Medellín and funds Rev. Dr Manuel Reaño, the Principal of the College, and Rev. Dr David Ford, one of its Lecturers. Manuel raises the following points:

“This year and the next we will be facing an acute faculty crisis. We are facing a somewhat unexpected shortage of professors; as some have fallen ill, others have retired and one has gone on study leave. Our young professors, recruited from among our graduates are doing very well, but they are all still working for their masters degrees... so we need to find alternative solutions.”

The Seminary has “become consultants for other seminaries in Latin America in areas like academic extension, research and virtual education... we are really grateful for that grace. However, although all three can also become important sources of income, so far they are only bringing in academic reputation and recognition... we need both.”

Conclusion There is an open door for the Gospel in Latin America. The IMB has key people in key institutions to provide key education for the next generation. The work is strategic and visionary; the blessings are obvious.

(C) SOUTH AFRICA

Overview The IMB joint strategy for South Africa is to work with Dumisani Theological Institute and the Free Church in South Africa (FCSA) in achieving their financial independence progressively by 2017-18; to facilitate
Dumisani in serving the Church in South Africa as it provides training and theological education, and the FCSA in its spiritual growth and outreach to its own and other people groups; to support these bodies by appropriate projects.

1. **Dumisani Theological Institute**

   (See www.dumisani.org for to date information on Dumisani’s prospectus, staff and activity)

   Dumisani celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2009. It began as Dimbaza Reformed Bible School in 1979 and became 'Dumisani' in 1987 on moving to King William's Town, Eastern Cape. We thank God for its continuous development, for its stand for the reformed faith, for the local and missionary staff who have served in it and for all the students who have profited from its training. On 13th September 2009, 200 people gathered at Bethany Emmanuel Church in King William's Town for a service of worship and thanksgiving. We pray that the wider church in South Africa will not cease to profit from Dumisani's ministry of teaching and publication.

   **New Premises Project** The Dumisani Board marked this event by an 'Anniversary Challenge' to raise 30,000 rand (ZAR) per month from its supporters towards a target of ZAR 4,000,000 (say £350,000) to build and fit out new two-story premises on the current Teaching Centre site. The Board is working with the Dumisani Board to manage this very important appeal in a way that is compatible with its own fund raising needs for South Africa and other fields.

   **New Logo** The Institute adopted a new logo in 2009. It has retained the essential features of its predecessor, particularly the open Bible, but now the arc of light above the Bible includes the theme message, 'Preach the Word', in Xhosa, English and Afrikaans. Formerly it was in Xhosa alone.

   **Staff** Rev. Victor Nkatha, a trained lawyer and now an honours graduate of Dumisani, was given a two-year appointment as Sunday School Project Worker and Junior Lecturer in Dumisani from 1st January 2010. He has a great love for the church's youth and is the first Xhosa member of Dumisani's full-time academic staff.

   **Future** Dumisani must prepare for the retirement of the Vice-Principal, Rev. Norman Reid in 2011 and of Rev. Dr John Ross in 2012. An advertisement has been placed in The Record and the Dumisani Board is exploring other options.

   **Thanksgiving and Prayer** The Board acknowledges and appreciates the ancillary and social work carried out by Dumisani staff and their wives. Prayer is required for safety of our missionaries as violent attacks are still frequent in the Eastern Cape and in King William's Town itself.

   **Students** In 2010, 20 new students enrolled in Dumisani, a marked increase over the 15 of the previous year, and the staff are encouraged by their spiritual seriousness. There are currently about 60 students attending lectures this year, including five from FCSA. The Wednesday evening class, Ministry and Leadership, is open to the public and six additional students attend. There is the ever-pressing need for computers as more students take the computer course.

   **Supplementary Training** Dumisani has long been committed to training Sunday School Teachers through workshops at Dumisani, 2-3 times a year, and by travelling to various locations, recently including Lesotho. The most recent workshop was attended by 115 teachers, causing the good but very real problem of accommodating them. The training material is available as a stand-alone correspondence course as a supplementary means of training.

   Dumisani's teaching strategy includes training people where they are by correspondence courses in English and isiXhosa. Many of the correspondents are in South Africa's prisons. In 2009, a small bookshop and coffee shop, the Mustard Seed, was set up in the Dumisani premises. Through it, many have visited the College for the first time.

2. **The Free Church in South Africa**

   **Challenges** In some respects the FCSA has gone through a difficult period losing several of its prominent men through death, including one of its Ministers, Rev. Avery Ngaki, Port Elizabeth. The shortage of ministers has contributed to a lack a spiritual instruction and allied to this, the Church has found it difficult to retain its youth.

   **Blessings** In an encouraging contrast, we have recent reports of the Lord's blessing at a communion service at Somerset East, 150 miles east of King William's Town, where there is a vacant congregation of 70; at Lloyd, Dewar District where membership has increased; at King and Gwaba, King District. A new Sunday School of 24 children meets in the new King building in King William's Town, and new people from the community are attending services.

   **Embo District** The Board received an appeal from the Northern Presbytery in Transkei for financial help with the building of a new manse at Nozibele, Embo District, currently vacant. Work is already in progress. The Board has allocated this project to one of the Support Groups.
Appreciation  The Board acknowledges and appreciates the work of our Dumisani missionaries in the FCSA - preaching, location teaching, serving in Church Courts and helping with practical matters.

The Ochre and the Blue  2010 saw the publication of the history of the missionary work of the Free Church of Scotland in South Africa in the 20th century - the planting and development of the Free Church in South Africa and the emergence and development of Dumisani. The wider church will remain in the debt of Rev. Bill and Mrs Elizabeth Graham for this outstanding book. The Board has acknowledged their work appropriately and encourages Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions to maximise the sale and distribution of the 1,000 copies that were printed.

(D) MARTYN PROJECT

Overview  To quote one of our advisers to the project – “this work can be messy and difficult but the Board needed to recognise that this is a frontier that you need to invest in.” He considers the Martyn Project work to be a unique work with suitably gifted individuals working at the “cutting edge” of this challenging field of service.

Local Opportunities  International mission is no longer ‘over there’. Our church structures still operate on a model where foreigners are ‘over there’ and we are ‘here.’ But now the nations have come to us. Add to this, the communication revolution and the opportunities afforded by a global village and we see that Mission has changed.

Central Asia  Due to safety issues, the Board decided not to allow S and S to return to their studies last year. They have been far from inactive, however, as they have joined the team working in Glasgow. Our advisor sees their base in Glasgow as being vital at the moment “as ethnic minorities in Glasgow are in constant contact with countries of origin through communications media, visits and marriage. You drop a stone into the water here and ripples reach the other side of the world”. The Board along with S and S continue to monitor the situation in Central Asia.

Adam recently visited Central Asia and we are thankful for his continued commitment and courage in this frontier work. His service entails real sacrifice for himself and his family and we commend them to your prayers.

India  Rahmat and his family still suffer from Irshadi’s sudden death. She was a co-worker as well as a wife and mother. We were privileged to have Rahmat with us in 2009 and one of our advisors visited him in January 2010. The visit helped us to understand the pressures he faces and to demonstrate our support for him, his family and work.

Turkey  The move of Gurhan and Elcin from Turkey to Austria last year has resulted in Rev. Colin MacLeod having to make new connections on his visits there. This has opened up new opportunities for teaching and mentoring in different parts of the country.

Deputation & Prayer  The sensitive nature of the work of the project means that we can’t publicise our work as much as we would like but we would encourage our congregations to invite those involved in the Martyn Project to speak about their work. Please continue to pray for our workers in this exciting and frontier work.

(E) CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO ISRAEL

The Council of Management of Christian Witness to Israel has sent greetings to the 2010 General Assembly and asked that we convey to the Assembly their grateful thanks for the prayerful and material support received from the Free Church of Scotland during the last year. The following details of the ministry of CWI are selected for the interest of the General Assembly.

A Kosher Encounter  The 2009 Summer School of Jewish Evangelism (A Kosher Encounter) took place from 21st to 30th July and was attended by the largest number of students ever. The programme included teaching on Jewish history, culture and religion, and sharing the gospel with Jewish people. In spite of bad weather, as at every Summer School, the sun shone for the sessions of evangelism and a good number of Jewish contacts were made. Several people invited missionaries and students into their homes and one particular Jewish lady, who claimed to be an atheist, requested a large-print Bible. When it was delivered to her in the evening, she told two people who gave it to her that, having considered what they shared with her, she was no longer an atheist.

Shabbat Nachamu Outreach  At the time of Shabbat Nachamu (“Sabbath of Comfort”) in August, Rev. Ferenc Kozma organised a summer school and outreach in Budapest. Mr Kozma and the General Secretary taught at the event and led the students in street evangelism, preaching and distributing tracts. People listened intently to the preaching and came forward to receive evangelistic literature after the messages. A number of people asked Feri to visit them and the event was so successful that another is planned for the coming summer.
Outreach to Orthodox Jews  Orthodox Jews are notoriously difficult to reach with the gospel. They have been programmed to believe that Jesus was a false Messiah, that Christians hate them for killing Christ and that Jews who follow Jesus are traitors to their people. Hundreds of Orthodox Jews holiday in Aberystwyth every year and a door of opportunity opened for the General Secretary to make contact with some Jewish men after they had ritually immersed themselves in the sea before their morning prayers. In August this year the mission plans to launch a pioneer effort to reach these spiritually needy people. The venture must remain low key because if the Jewish community learns of our plans, the outreach will be ruined.

Mr Nick Stead  On 1st December, Mr Nick Stead became a member of our field staff. Mr Stead worked with the London City Mission for 24 years, five of those years reaching out to Jews and New Agers. He is one of the coordinators of The Jesus Experience, a stand that is erected at the Vitality and Mind, Body & Spirit New Age exhibitions in London. In March, 1,000 people including a good number of Jewish people, visited The Jesus Experience at the Vitality exhibition and over 40 made a profession of faith in Jesus.

Israel  Last year, two outreaches – one in May and the other in October – took place in Israel using an evangelistic booklet produced by CWI, The Power to Change. A major advertising campaign offered the booklet in Hebrew and Russian and many people, including two students from a rabbinic academy, contacted the HaGefen offices. Some 2,000 requested a copy of The Power to Change.

Among the other publications produced by HaGefen last year was a translation of Sinclair Ferguson’s Let’s Study Mark. Matthew Henry’s commentary on John’s Gospel is now at the editing stage and volume 4 of the Children’s Illustrated Bible (Job, Psalms and Proverbs) is due for publication this summer. Translation of the Westminster Confession is in preparation for publication in 2011.

Staff illness  It is a cause of concern to us that several staff members are suffering serious ill health. Mrs Susan Brodsky, the accountant at HaGefen Publishing, is undergoing a second course of chemotherapy for cancer. Mrs May Foo has been diagnosed with acute lymphatic leukaemia and is undergoing chemotherapy. She and her husband Jonathan were due to return to the UK in March, but were unable to due to May’s condition. Miss Grace Lan was unable to return to Glasgow from Taiwan in Glasgow due to acute pain.

(F) GENERAL

1. Publications  We appreciate the excellent work done by Rev. Charles and Mrs Daphne Douglas in editing From the Frontiers and also the faithful work done by Mrs Douglas in preparing the Prayer Notes every month. The Board also thanks the editors of The Record, The Instructor and Free for promoting missionary interest.

2. Women for Mission (www.freechurch.org/missions/wfm) The Board acknowledges the excellent work done by Women for Mission (WfM) in fundraising and in supporting our missionaries. The following is a brief report from the WfM Committee:

Committee  Mrs Kirsty Boyd has adapted quickly to her new role as Chairwoman of the 14-member Committee.

Day Away  Planning is well underway for the 2010 WfM Away Day in Aviemore’s Macdonald Conference centre. The date is the 26th of September and we look forward to having Ann Benton speak on Reflecting God’s glory.

Recipe Books  Since the last Annual Meeting, sales of both books 1 and 2 have enabled WfM to give the following donations through the disaster and relief Fund to areas of natural disaster:

£5,000 in 2009 to the Philippines & Indonesia
£5,000 in 2010 to Tearfund for Haiti

IMB  Mrs Margaret Smith and Mrs Christine Mackenzie represent WfM at International Missions Board meetings. Along with Mrs Kirsty Boyd they have also been involved in interviewing Mrs Jenny Wilson, Mrs Angela Reid and Mrs Julia Smith on home leave from the church’s mission fields.

Support a Volunteer  In 2009/10, four young Free Church members received financial support to help them serve as volunteers in mission areas. More information can be found on the website.
At the time of writing, the ‘Lighting up Learning’ project has already provided needed funds to SU Peru for deaf children, as well as already contributing 2 quarterly salaries for the BINCO librarian.

The Annual Theme for this year has been ‘Where your treasure is...’. Bible Study material is available on the website.

Each year excellent work is done by the three Mission Support Groups in raising awareness and funding for mission projects. The Board greatly values their contribution. The young people of the church are also commended for their tremendous efforts in raising funds for Mission through the Youth Project.

The Board most gratefully acknowledges the work of Mrs. Mary MacMillan and Miss Anna MacDonald in looking after the furlough flat in Edinburgh. Our missionaries always find it warm and welcoming and this is due in no small part to the work done by Mary and Anna.

Rev. Kenny Macleod, Carloway, will be representing the Board at the meeting of the North American Synod in April 2010.

The Board continued its annual support of the excellent work of EEFC providing them with a grant of £3,000.

The Board values highly our continued relationship in mission with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Northern Ireland and the excellent contribution made by their representative on the Board, Mr. Ernest Brown. The Board also greatly appreciates the continued support of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia.

The Principal of the Free Church College has enquired whether the International Missions Board was aware of anyone in our daughter/sister churches who might be interested in doing a Master of Theology degree. Rev. Donnie Smith has proposed a candidate from SEL and Rev. Manuel Reano has proposed a candidate from Medellin. It is hoped that one candidate will soon take up this opportunity to study at the Free Church College.

A joint Missions Conference with Latin Link will take place in Greyfriars, Inverness Friday 18th June from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and Saturday 19th June from 9.30am to 1.00pm. The speakers will include Rev. Manuel Reano, Rev. Dr John and Mrs Elizabeth Ross and Mr Clive and Mrs Ruth Bailey.

The following amounts were received and paid out during 2009:

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IAIN MACASKILL, Chairman

DAVID MACPHERSON, Vice-Chairman
PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receives and adopts the Report of the International Missions Board and thank the Board, especially the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

2. The General Assembly records their year-by-year appreciation of the dedicated work of the Secretary to the Board, Mr Calum Ferguson. His knowledge of the whole of the work, his love for the people of other lands, his efficiency, hard work and stamina are foundational to the Board’s operation. The General Assembly wishes him the Lord’s blessing, rich fulfilment and good health as he carries out this demanding work. The General Assembly also acknowledges the total support, such as providing regular hospitality, of his wife, Mrs Liz Ferguson.

3. The General Assembly greet all our missionary personnel and assures them of our continued support. They give thanks for safety and security for all the mission workers over the last year. They commend their ongoing well-being in circumstances that can be precarious to the prayers of the Church.

4. The General Assembly commends the work of the gospel in ‘closed’ countries and among migrants and refugees who now live in the United Kingdom.

5. The General Assembly commends S and S and their family to the prayers of the Church.

6. The General Assembly sends greetings to Adam and his family, thanking them for the personal sacrifices that they make to serve the Lord in this work and to assure them of the continued prayers of the Church.

7. The General Assembly sends greetings to Rahmat and his family, thanking them for the personal sacrifices that they make to serve the Lord in this work and to assure them of the continued prayers of the Church.

8. The General Assembly commends Rev. Colin MacLeod and his family to the prayers of the Church.

9. The General Assembly sends greetings to the Presbytery of the Presbyterian Free Church in India and encourages them as they establish a strong and fully independent indigenous church.

10. The General Assembly sends greetings to the Education Committee in India and commends them for their excellent work in the mission schools in Chhapara and Lakhnadon.

11. The General Assembly commends the work of outreach and mission especially in the villages of Chhapara and Lakhnadon and shares in the joy of seeing many come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

12. The General Assembly commends the work of Emmanuel Hospital Association at Lakhnadon Hospital and Chhapara Christian Health Centre with their ministries to surrounding villages.

13. The General Assembly sends expressions of sympathy to Rev. David John and his family following the death of his wife Mrs Lalin John.

14. The General Assembly commends Lima Evangelical Seminary for training and equipping a new generation of church leaders in Peru and throughout Latin America.

15. The General Assembly commends Rev. Dr Donnie and Mrs Julia Smith for their lifelong commitment to serving the church of Jesus Christ in Peru.


17. The General Assembly expresses its gratitude to God that 629 pupils have matriculated at Colegio San Andrés and that 18 new members of staff have been hired.

18. The General Assembly commends the work of the Annie Soper School and the Moyobamba congregation with its vision for church planting and prays for the establishment of a Christian university in Moyobamba.

19. The General Assembly commends the work of Medellín Seminary and expresses their appreciation to Rev. Dr Manuel and Mrs Patty Reaño and Rev. Dr David and Mrs Olwen Ford.
20. The General Assembly commends the work of Women for Mission and expresses their gratitude for raising funds for mission and raising the profile of mission in the church.

21. The General Assembly congratulates Dumisani Theological Institute on completing its first 30 years of service to the church in South Africa in 2009.


23. The General Assembly encourages the Dumisani Board, its Principal and staff, in the full range of their responsibilities from teaching and publication to planning for expansion to new premises.

24. The General Assembly rejoices in the appointment of Rev. Victor Nkatha as Sunday School Project Worker and Junior Lecturer in Dumisani and wishes him every blessing from God in this work.

25. The General Assembly assures the Dumisani Board of our prayer and support in appointing replacement lecturers for Rev. Norman Reid and Rev. Dr John Ross as they approach retirement.

26. The General Assembly gives thanks for the safety of the Dumisani staff and their families in situations that can be dangerous and prays for the Lord's watchful care over them.

27. The General Assembly sends greetings to the Free Church in South Africa assuring our brothers and sisters of our love, fellowship, prayer and appropriate support.

28. The General Assembly encourages the Free Church in South Africa to pray for the Lord's reviving blessing and for a continuous supply of Ministers, Elders and Deacons to lead the Church's work.

29. The General Assembly thanks Rev. Bill and Mrs Elizabeth Graham for writing the history of the Free Church mission work in South Africa in the 20th century and commends The Ochre and the Blue to the Lord for his richest blessing upon it.

30. The General Assembly greets our missionaries serving in Dumisani, Rev. Dr Alistair Wilson, Rev. Dr John Ross and Rev. Norman Reid and assures them of the prayers of the Church as they continue in this vital ministry.

31. The General Assembly greets all the staff, students and Board of Governors of the Dumisani Theological Institute, give thanks for their dedication, and encourage them to maintain the present range of activities associated with Dumisani.

32. The General Assembly acknowledges the valuable contribution made to mission life and work by Mrs Angela Reid, Mrs Jenny Wilson and Mrs Elizabeth Ross.

33. The General Assembly greets Mr Mike Moore and all the CWI workers expressing appreciation for their work in Jewish evangelism, and prayerfully commends the work of the society to the Lord.

34. The General Assembly encourage members of the Free Church of Scotland to give prayerful consideration to the opportunities for service within CWI.

35. The General Assembly greets all the Free Church members working outwith areas of direct Free Church missionary operation and assures them of our prayerful and practical support.

36. The General Assembly thanks Rev. Charles and Mrs Daphne Douglas for editing material for From the Frontiers. They also thank Mrs. Douglas for her diligent and faithful service in producing the monthly Prayer Notes.

37. The General Assembly acknowledges with gratitude the part played by the Mission Support Groups in raising funds and fostering an awareness of the special needs found in all areas of our missionary activity.

38. The General Assembly gratefully acknowledges the value of the work done by Women for Mission and commends them for their outstanding fund-raising efforts. They express their appreciation for the help and advice given by their representatives, Mrs Christine Mackenzie and Mrs Margaret Smith, who attend Board meetings and support missionaries while on home leave.
39. The General Assembly commends the joint missionary conference with Latin Link from 18th to 19th June. They further commend the work of the gospel in Latin America to the prayers of the Church.
XV.

REPORT

OF

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee carried out its consultation with Presbyteries in December 2009. The Committee met in March of this year to consider nominations received from Presbyteries, having been in correspondence by e-mail for four months previously.

(A) RESIGNATIONS

The Committee noted with regret the resignation of the following members: Rev. Angus Lamont, Communications Committee; Rev. Ian M. Allan, Home Missions Board; Rev. Alasdair M. Macleod, Personnel Committee; Mr Donald N. Morrison, Communications Committee. The Committee also noted the resignation from the clerkship of Rev. Kenneth A. Macleod, Clerk to Board of Ministry, and Mr Neil D. M. Macleod, Clerk to the Personnel Committee, and records its thanks to them for their contribution to the work of the Church.

JAMES MACIVER, Convener

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

(A) GENERAL

1. The General Assembly thank Rev. Kenneth A. Macleod and Mr Neil D. M. Macleod for their services to the Board of Ministry and the Personnel Committee respectively.

(B) APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

The General Assembly appoint the following membership of Committees and Boards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of Trustees</th>
<th>Chairman: Mr James M. Fraser</th>
<th>Clerk: Chief Administrative Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr James M. Fraser</td>
<td>ILR [1/1]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Iain K. Macleod</td>
<td>GA [1/1]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo Murchison</td>
<td>GA [1/1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Neil Campbell</td>
<td>EP [4/2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Iain Gillies</td>
<td>W1 [4/2]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Donald A. Macdonald</td>
<td>W1 [4/2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Allan Macpherson</td>
<td>GA [3/2]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr John Morrison</td>
<td>N [3/2]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. John H. Maclean</td>
<td>SWR [2/1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Ronald F. Morrison</td>
<td>N [1/1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth Stewart</td>
<td>GA [2/1]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk ex officio</td>
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<tr>
<th>Board of Trustees Sub-Committees</th>
<th>Committee Chair</th>
<th>Sub-Committee Chair</th>
<th>Sub-Committee Chair</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Mr Colin Macdonald</td>
<td>GA [3]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit &amp; Risk</td>
<td>Mr Iain MacLeod</td>
<td>EP [1]</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Rev. Angus Macrae</td>
<td>ILR [1]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Mr Iain D. Gill</td>
<td>EP [1]</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mr John Murray</td>
<td>GA [2]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rev. David C. Meredith</td>
<td>ILR</td>
<td>[1]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Note:** additional personnel are required by Act XXIII, 2007, par.2.1, 2.2, and 2.3, and members of the Sub-Committees are appointed annually by the General Assembly and additional members who are not members of the Board can serve for maximum of four years.

### Assembly Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Clerk</td>
<td>Mr John Scoales</td>
<td>EP [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
<td>Dr Allan MacPherson</td>
<td>GA [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator Designate</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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**Convener:** Rev. D Meredith  
**Clerk:** Principal Clerk

### Board of Ministry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. James Beaton</td>
<td></td>
<td>GA [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Donald G. Macdonald</td>
<td></td>
<td>SWR [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Chris Macrae</td>
<td></td>
<td>ILR [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 members appointed by Senate</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Joe MacPhee</td>
<td></td>
<td>WI [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. George Maclean</td>
<td></td>
<td>ILR [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr David Lipp</td>
<td></td>
<td>N [1]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chairman:** Rev. Fergus A. J. Macdonald  
**Clerk:** Rev. Nigel Anderson

### College Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal Donald Macleod</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 other members of Senatus</td>
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<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman Board of Ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice-Chairman Board of Ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>President SRC</td>
<td></td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell</td>
<td></td>
<td>WI [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Colin Dow</td>
<td></td>
<td>GA [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Iain A. Mackinnon</td>
<td></td>
<td>WI [2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ian A. Macdonald</td>
<td></td>
<td>SWR [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Peter Morrison</td>
<td></td>
<td>GA [2]</td>
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**Chairman:** Rev. Dr Iain D. Campbell  
**Clerk:** College Secretary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Roderick M. Rankin</td>
<td>[1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Colin Macleod</td>
<td>[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister from HMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elder from IMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr James Morrison</td>
<td>[1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo Macleod</td>
<td>[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Stephen Allan</td>
<td>[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “The Record” ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “Free” ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Officer ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Convener:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr Malcolm M. Maclean</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clerk:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs Heather Akroyd</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ecumenical Relations Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair or Vice Chair HMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair or Vice Chair IMB</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Allan MacPherson</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Convener:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. K. M. Ferguson</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Clerk:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Principal Clerk</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Missions Board</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alex MacDonald</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Calum I. Macleod</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. David C. Meredith</td>
<td>ILR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Angus J. Howat</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Gordon Martin</td>
<td>ILR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Daniel Sladek</td>
<td>SWR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Campbell Brown</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Malcolm Mackay</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Roderick Macleod</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Donald Mackenzie</td>
<td>SWR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr James Skinner</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr James Macarthur</td>
<td>ILR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor “The Instructor” ex officio</td>
<td>[n/a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chairman:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alex Macdonald</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clerk:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Angus J. Howat</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Missions Board</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth M. Ferguson</td>
<td>WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. R. J. Akroyd</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Angus Morrison</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Murdo H. Macleod</td>
<td>SWR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Tim Donachie</td>
<td>GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. David MacPherson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Kenneth J. Macleod</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Martin Cameron</td>
<td>ILR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Norman Macleod</td>
<td>ILR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr Finlay MacKenzie</td>
<td>ILR</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chairman:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Clerk:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman:</td>
<td>Rev. Iain MacAskill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk:</td>
<td>Mr Calum Ferguson</td>
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### Nominations Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Clerk</th>
<th>ex officio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Clerk of each home Presbytery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chairman of the Board of Trustees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Moderator of the General Assembly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Convener: | Principal Clerk |
| Clerk: | Rev. Malcolm Macleod |

### Panel of Pastoral Advice

| Rev. Alasdair Macdonald | GA |
| Rev. William D. Graham | EP |
| Rev. Farquhar Renwick | ILR |
| Rev. James Maciver | WI |
| Dr James Skinner | N |
| Dr Marten Walker | WI |

| Convener: | Rev. Alasdair Macdonald |
| Clerk: | Rev. James Maciver |

The Panel of Pastoral Advice is appointed according to the terms of Act XVII, 2008. There is no fixed term of service for members of the Panel.

### Personnel Committee

| Mr Neil D. M. Macleod | EP [2] |
| Mr Murdo A. Murray | WI [1] |
| Mr Callum Macdonald | ILR [4] |

| Convener: | Mr Murdo A. Murray |
| Clerk: | Mr Norman Cumming |

### Psalmody Committee

| Mr David O. Sutherland | ILR [3] |
| Rev. Finlay H. Mackenzie | GA [3] |
| Dr Donald G. Mackay | N [3] |
| Mr Colin Mackay | EP [3] |
| Rev. Alasdair Macleod | WI [2] |

| Convener: | Rev. Finlay H. Mackenzie |
| Clerk: | Mr Colin Rogerson |

### Notes

1. With regard to membership of the Boards and Committees where membership is for one four year term, single numbers in square brackets show the number of years remaining of this one four-year term.

2. With regard to membership of Boards and Committees where membership may be for a second four-year term, there are two numbers within the square brackets; the first number indicates the years remaining of a four-year term; the second number indicates which of the two four-year terms the first number applies to.
MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE COMMISSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

At Edinburgh and within the Free Presbytery Hall there on
Wednesday 7th October 2009

1 Commission constituted Which day a quorum of the Commission appointed by last General Assembly being met, Rev. John H. MacLean was called to the Chair, and the meeting was constituted with devotional exercises.

2 Note of Business The Clerk submitted a note of the business to come before the Commission.

3 Clerk pro tem It was moved, seconded and agreed that, in the absence of the Principal Clerk, Rev. Malcolm Macleod be appointed Assistant Clerk pro tem for this meeting of the Commission.

4 Tabling of Acts of Assembly A printed copy of the Acts and Proceedings of last General Assembly was laid on the table.

5 Appointment of Moderator-Designate The Clerk reported the appointment of Rev. David C. Meredith as Moderator-Designate for the General Assembly of 2010.

6 Board of Trustees: Budget for 2009 The Commission took up consideration of Report of the Board of Trustees on the Budget for 2010 in the following terms:

At the 2009 General Assembly, the Board of Trustees was asked to draw up final income and expenditure budgets for 2010 and to present these to the Commission of Assembly for approval.

The Board remains strongly of the view that the Church has a responsibility to strive to balance its budget and, in recognition of this, it has consulted with other Committees and Boards to ensure that anticipated income matches planned expenditure. The Board is grateful for the assistance of these Committees and Boards and for their willingness to identify possible savings in their own budget areas.

The 2010 expenditure budgets have been prepared following analysis of actual expenditure in 2008 and the 2009 budgeted expenditure figures. Income forecasts have been based on congregational remittances in the year to date together with analysis of income patterns in previous years. Overall, it is assumed that congregational remittances will increase slightly in 2010 when compared to the 2009 budget. Interest income from cash deposits is assumed to remain low in 2010 although it is expected that income from other investments will remain reasonably stable.

Built into the expenditure budgets is a proposed increase in stipend of £500 from 1st January, 2010. This will bring stipend up to a level of £19,500 per annum. It had been hoped that an increase could have been applied to stipend in October 2009 if finances had permitted. However, unless there is a substantial increase in income in the remainder of the year, it seems likely that the Church will record a substantial shortfall in 2009 and therefore, the Board considered that a further increase in 2009 was not possible. The acceleration of the 2010 increase from April to January is designed to offset this somewhat. A small increase has also been assumed in other staff salaries.

A major sensitivity in the budgets is the projected income for 2010. Remittances from congregations are vulnerable to the difficulties being experienced in the wider economy, particularly as these affect the finances of individual contributors. In addition, as noted above, it is assumed that interest income will remain under pressure throughout 2010. The Board is hopeful that the new congregational remittance system will encourage congregations to remit sufficient income to meet the needs of the Church by increasing transparency of ministry costs and building greater understanding of the various projects that the Church is engaged in. The Board will continue to monitor remittances carefully as the new system comes into force from January 2010.

A summarised version of the various budgets, including a total budget for the Church, is attached as an Appendix to this Report. The Board recommends this budget to the Commission of Assembly for approval.
Dr Allan Macpherson addressed the Commission thereanent.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

1. The Commission of Assembly receive the report of the Board of Trustees and thank the Board.

2. The Commission of Assembly support the principle that the Church should prepare budgets with the aim of balancing anticipated income with anticipated expenditure.

3. The Commission of Assembly approve the Committee and Board budgets included as an Appendix to the Board’s Report, which Appendix is appended to this Minute, and instruct budget holders to operate within the constraints of these budgets.

7. Board of Trustees: Manse Titles and Constitutions for London and Cobham congregations

The Commission took up consideration of a Report from the Board of Trustees: Manse Titles and Constitutions for London and Cobham congregations in the following terms:

The 2009 General Assembly asked the Board of Trustees to bring forward a report in relation to the manner in which Titles to the manse properties of the London City and Cobham congregations are held. In addition, the Assembly asked the Board to prepare a suitable constitution for the congregations in order to allow registration with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

As reported to the General Assembly, the Board was made aware of concerns over the manner in which title to the manse properties of the London City and Cobham congregations is held. In the main, these concerns arose out of the different legal system in England.

The Board has taken advice through the Church’s Law Agents from an English law firm as to the options for holding title to property in England. The options appear to be that unincorporated associations (which the Church and its congregations are) can take title to properties in the name of appointed trustees or through a corporate trustee. This is similar to the situation in Scotland but there are some technical differences. However, at the time of writing, the legal advisers had not reached a firm position as to the most appropriate course of action and, as a result, the Board is unable to present a firm proposal. Therefore, the Board is seeking the authority of the Commission of Assembly to take such steps as it deems appropriate following the receipt of further legal advice. In addition, the congregations have suggested that the titles to the manses should be transferred to them. Such a transfer requires the consent of the General Assembly or its Commission and in this regard, the Board is seeking the permission of the Commission of Assembly to transfer title to the properties to the congregations if the Board considers such a course of action to be appropriate.

The Board is of the view that the London City and Cobham congregations should adopt a constitution that is substantially based on that adopted by congregations in Scotland as amended by the General Assembly in May 2009 (Act XXXI, 2009). However, there are some small changes that will need to be made dependent on the conclusions reached in terms of how title to property should be held. Therefore, the Board is seeking the authority of the Commission of Assembly to adjust the constitutions as required in order that the congregations can adopt these and complete their registration with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

1. The Commission of Assembly receive the report of the Board of Trustees and thank the Board.

2. The Commission of Assembly instruct the Board to seek further legal advice in relation to concerns over the title to the manse properties of London City Presbyterian Church and Cobham Free Church. They authorise the Board to take such steps as it deems appropriate following the receipt of this advice.

3. The Commission of Assembly authorise the Board to transfer the titles to the manse properties of London City Presbyterian Church and Cobham Free Church to the congregations if the Board considers such a course of
action to be appropriate.

4 The Commission of Assembly continue the remit to the Board to formulate a constitution to be adopted by the London City Presbyterian Church and Cobham Free Church. They instruct the Board to base this constitution on that approved under Act V, Commission of Assembly, January 2007, as amended by Act XXXI, 2009, and to adjust this as appropriate based on advice in relation to specific considerations for charities in England and Wales and in relation to the manner in which title to property should be held by such charities.

8 Report of Board of Trustees – 2008 Accounts Dr Allan Macpherson made a statement on behalf of the Board of Trustees to explain that the 2008 Accounts had not yet been audited but that the audit would be complete within a few days. A draft copy of the Accounts was made available to Commissioners.

9 International Missions Board: Reformed Educational Association San Andres The Commission took up consideration of Report of the International Missions Board: Reformed Educational Association San Andres in the following terms:

**REFORMED EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION SAN ANDRES: CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution, as approved by the General Assembly in May 2009, requires the following:

Appointment of the initial membership of the Association, apart from elected members, shall be made by the Free Church of Scotland in Commission of Assembly upon recommendations from the International Missions Board, which shall consult with the Head Teacher of the Colegio (Title Twelve, Final Dispositions - Transitory Dispositions 3).

The list of names appearing in the Deliverance was drawn up with the help of Mr Clive Bailey and Rev. Donnie Smith, was approved by the International Missions Board at its meeting on 8th September 2009. It is now submitted to the Commission of Assembly for their approval.

IAIN MACASKILL, Chairman

Rev. David MacPherson addressed the Commission thereanent.

**Finding:** It was moved, seconded, and agreed to that:

1. The Commission of Assembly, on the recommendation of the International Missions Board, appoint the following to the membership of the Reformed Educational Association San Andres, as required by Act XXVII, Class II, 2009, § Title Twelve, Final Dispositions, Transitory Disposition 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victor Arroyo</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Former senator of the republic; former executive director of CONEP (National Evangelical Council of Peru); former San Andres parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Ayllon</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Pastor Presbyterian church of La Molina; co-ordinator of AGEUP (Christian student association); member of CONEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin Castaneda</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Pastor IEPP; member of SEL Board; chair of Los Olivos school board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rene Castro</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Pastor; lecturer in Lima Evangelical Seminary; University lecturer and author; former President of CONEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margarita de la Colina</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Educational administrator; previously Annie Soper School, Moyobamba, currently SEL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedro Ferreira</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Businessman; former executive director of Radio del Pacifico (Christian radio station)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Fonseca</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Historian and writer; former San Andres pupil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8  Rev Dr David Ford  M  FC missionary
9  Rafael Goto  M  Pastor; former President of CONEP; journalist
10  Pablo Gutierrez  M  Administrator; middle management Peruvian Bible Society; former San Andres pupil
11  Lucen Hashimoto  M  Industrial engineer; former San Andres pupil
12  Marcos Ignacio  M  Civil Engineer; former administrator of PROESA project in Cajamarca in conjunction with IEPP
13  Carmen Limaco  F  Educator; Director of Diego Thomson Teacher Training College
14  Pedro Merino  M  Former executive director of CONEP; member of governing board of Scripture Union, Peru
15  Roberto Miranda  M  Lawyer; current executive secretary of Peruvian Bible Society; former pupil San Andres
16  Cesar Morales  M  Pastor, educator and administrator. Deputy Rector of SEL; parent in San Andres
17  Arwin Rammel  M  Executive president of Governing Board, Gutenberg Christian School
18  Rev Dr Manuel Reano  M  FC missionary
19  Maria Reyes  F  Head of human resources; member Presbyterian church of Surco; on executive board of Libreria El Inca (Christian bookshops)
20  Rosa Scherb  F  Educator; Director of Primary in Gutenberg Christian School
21  Rev Dr Donald Smith  M  FC missionary
22  Ruben Tejada  M  Architect; former San Andres pupil
23  Gustavo Yabar  M  Middle management Peruvian Bible Society; former San Andres pupil

2. The Commission of Assembly recommend that other men and women be invited by the Association as cooperating members, once the Association is formed, who are supporters of Colegio San Andres, such as Pedro Arana (retired) and Luis Campos (lives in USA).

10  Custodian of Titles

A Report was submitted from the Custodian of Titles with reference to a Petition from the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth in the following terms:

A Petition from the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth, with supporting documents, has been received and examined. Supporting documents are in order and the proposed deliverance has been drafted with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees. The Petition is in the following terms:

Unto the Venerable the Commission of General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland appointed to meet in Edinburgh on 7th October 2009, the Petition of the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the Free Church congregation in Aberfeldy ceased to hold meetings subsequent to 29th May 2002 when it was united with Perth and Pitlochry under Act XIII, Class II, 2002;
2. Whereas there have been no members or adherents in Aberfeldy since the said union;
3. Whereas no communicant members of the former congregation of Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry now survive and the only two adherents of the said congregation have aligned themselves with another denomination since the linkage;
4. Whereas the church and manse in Aberfeldy were sold and the proceeds from both sales retained and restricted in the name of the Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry section of the linked congregation;
5. Whereas all aspects of the functions of the congregation relating to Aberfeldy and Pitlochry are covered by the Minister, Kirk Session, and congregation almost entirely centred in Perth;

Wherefore your petitioners request, with the concurrence of the Kirk Session, Deacons' Court and congregation of Perth and Pitlochry, that the Commission of Assembly authorise:

1. the release of funds held in the name of Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry, for the use of the united congregation of Perth and Pitlochry as required;

2. the funds to be used for the maintenance of existing church and manse properties and to finance gospel outreach;

3. the Perth and Pitlochry Deacons’ Court to administer the use of the said funds.

Accompanying Extracts:

(1) **Presbytery**

At Edinburgh and within the Chalmers Hall there, on Tuesday the 25th of August 2009, which day the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth met and was constituted.

*Inter alia:*

**Perth & Pitlochry Petition**

a) A Petition was tabled by the Perth & Pitlochry congregation, seeking support for its submission to the forthcoming Commission of Assembly. This was for the release of funds from the sale of property in the Aberfeldy part of the congregation, to help with the maintenance of the Perth church and manse properties, and to finance gospel outreach. It was unanimously agreed to support this petition and to forward it with necessary documentation, for consideration by the Commission of Assembly on 7th October 2009.

Extracted from the minutes by Rev. D. D. Miller, Clerk

(2) **Congregation**

At Knox Free Church Perth on the 19th August 2009 the Deacons’ Court met with the Congregation to discuss accessing some of the restricted funds for Aberfeldy.

*Sederent* Rev. Duncan Macleod Chairman (DM), Tom Maclean, Bill Duthie, Donald MacCaskill and Calum McGregor Finlay MacSween ruling elders.

Seonag MacCaskill – Treasurer (SM)

The meeting was opened with prayer.

DM explained to the meeting the background to the proposal and what the Deacons Court intentions were. DM explained the purpose was to gain access to some of the restricted funds from Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry.

Murdo Macleod asked who restricted it? DM responded The trustees of the Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry.

DM read out the proposed petition and summarised the request and defined some of the terms, in particular what property it referred to and some idea as to the kind of things meant by gospel outreach.

SM explained that there were 4 funds in Edinburgh, and gave an explanation as to workings of the four funds and explained we were focusing on one of the funds, SM advised there was almost £44,000 in the Deacons Court were seeking to get access to. DM advised if we had gone for the whole amount we would have as a congregation over £100,000 but that this may result in the congregation having to adhere to more complicated accountancy requirements.

Jim Wither asked if there was any idea as to why the money was restricted. DM advised it was not clear it may be they wanted to open a Church in Aberfeldy, DM advised there was no longer any people left with a link to the Aberfeldy congregation.
DM advised that we needed someone to propose and second the petition.

Richard Talloch moved that the congregation would concur, Imelda Ramage seconded the petition.

There being no other competent business the meeting was closed with prayer.

Rev. Duncan Macleod addressed the Commission thereanent.

Finding: It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

The Commission of Assembly receive the Petition from the Presbytery of Edinburgh and Perth and grant its crave. They authorise the release of funds held in the name of Aberfeldy, Glenlyon and Pitlochry, for the use of the united congregation of Perth and Pitlochry as required, the funds to be used for the maintenance of existing church and manse properties and to finance gospel outreach. The Commission of Assembly also authorise the Perth and Pitlochry Deacons’ Court to administer the use of the said funds.

11 Petition: Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross – Gairloch and Kinlochewe, renewal of Redevelopment Status The Commission of Assembly took up consideration of a Petition from the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross: Renewal of Redevelopment status for Gairloch and Kinlochewe in the following terms:

Unto the Venerable the Commission of Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Wednesday 7th October 2009 the Petition of the Presbytery of Skye and Western Ross humbly shows that:


2. Whereas the reasons supporting the petition of the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross to the General Assembly of 2007 seeking Redevelopment Status for the congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe have not been altered;

3. Whereas the two year period since the congregation was granted Redevelopment Status ended in May 2009, and according to Act XXXIV, 1988, 2.9, it is necessary to reapply for Redevelopment Status for the congregation;

4. Whereas since Redevelopment Status was granted, the congregation has had a number of encouragements: (a) an increase in the numbers attending the services, especially at the prayer meeting; (b) new members have been welcomed into the fellowship of the congregation by profession of faith and others are showing such interest; (c) the Sunday School has continued to encourage; (d) there is also a monthly after school club in Kinlochewe; (e) there is now a greater desire amongst the people to work in the congregation; (f) there is now potential for increasing the number of office bearers; (g) there is now a ‘package of support’ in place for a potential new ministry;

5. Whereas the need to ask the May 2009 Assembly to renew the Redevelopment Status of the congregation was inadvertently overlooked, and having to wait till the 2010 Assembly would likely prejudice the interests of the congregation and Presbytery in the appointment of a new ministry in the congregation;

Wherefore the Free Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross humbly request the Commission of Assembly to take these premises into consideration and grant renewal of Redevelopment Status to the congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe, in accordance with Act XXXIV, 1988.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray

(2) Supporting Extract

At Lochcarron and within the Free Church there on the 30th June 2009, the Free Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross met and was constituted.

Inter alia:
GAIRLOCH and KINLOCHEWE

It was noted by receipt of a letter from the Home Missions Board that the Redevelopment Status of Gairloch and Kinlochewe required to be renewed and it was agreed to Petition the Commission of Assembly to be held in October in the following terms:

Unto the Venerable the Commission of Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland indicted to meet in Edinburgh on Wednesday 7th October 2009 the Petition of the Presbytery of Skye and Western Ross humbly shows that:

1. Whereas the General Assembly of 2007 granted Redevelopment Status to the congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe in accordance with Act XXXIV, 1988, as amended by Act XIV, 1992, and Act XIV, 1993; (Act No. XVII of Class II, Granting Redevelopment Status to the Congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe; 2005);

2. Whereas the reasons supporting the petition of the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross to the General Assembly of 2007 seeking Redevelopment Status for the congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe have not been altered;

3. Whereas the two year period since the congregation was granted Redevelopment Status ended in May 2009, and according to Act XXXIV, 1988, 2.9, it is necessary to reapply for Redevelopment Status for the congregation;

4. Whereas since Redevelopment Status was granted, the congregation has had a number of encouragements: (a) an increase in the numbers attending the services, especially at the prayer meeting; (b) new members have been welcomed into the fellowship of the congregation by profession of faith and others are showing such interest; (c) the Sunday School has continued to encourage; (d) there is also a monthly after school club in Kinlochewe; (e) there is now a greater desire amongst the people to work in the congregation; (f) there is now potential for increasing the number of office bearers; (g) there is now a ‘package of support’ in place for a potential new ministry;

5. Whereas the need to ask the May 2009 Assembly to renew the Redevelopment Status of the congregation was inadvertently overlooked, and having to wait till the 2010 Assembly would likely prejudice the interests of the congregation and Presbytery in the appointment of a new ministry in the congregation;

Wherefore the Free Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross humbly request the Commission of Assembly to take these premises into consideration and grant renewal of Redevelopment Status to the congregation of Gairloch and Kinlochewe, in accordance with Act XXXIV, 1988.

Or do otherwise as in their wisdom may seem best.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

Rev. J. H. MacLean agreed to speak in support of the Petition

Extracted from the records of Presbytery by John H. MacLean, Clerk of Presbytery

Rev. A. J. Howat addressed the Commission thereanent.

Finding:

It was moved, seconded, and agreed to that the Commission of Assembly receive the Petition from the Presbytery of Skye and Wester Ross, on the grounds of the reasons stated in Clause 5 of the Petition, and grant its crave. They renew the Redevelopment Status of Gairloch and Kinlochewe Free Church, in accordance with Act XXIV, 1988, the term of renewal to run until the General Assembly of 2011.

Minutes

The Minutes of this sederunt were read and approved.

Close

There being no further business, the meeting was closed with prayer.
Appendix to Minute

Budget 2010

<table>
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<th>Communications</th>
<th>IMB</th>
<th>Ecumenical</th>
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<td>730</td>
<td>1,822</td>
<td>15,244</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Expenditure</td>
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<td>2,436,525</td>
<td>518,668</td>
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<td>(15,447)</td>
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<td>(1,419,340)</td>
<td>(206,842)</td>
<td>(16,464)</td>
<td>(118,298)</td>
<td>(6,230)</td>
<td>(61)</td>
<td>(24,459)</td>
<td>4,826</td>
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</table>
STANDING ORDERS OF ASSEMBLY


It is ordered -

I. AS TO REPRESENTATION OF PRESBYTERIES

1. That all Commissions, transmitted to the Clerk of Assembly, shall be revised by him, in so far as regards their regularity in point of form, and that the Clerk shall prepare a Report on the subject and submit the same to the Committee appointed by the Assembly for the revising of Commissions.

2. That the Clerk of the Assembly shall furnish all Presbytery Clerks with printed copies of the form of Commission to Representatives hitherto in use, and also printed copies of the bona fide Certificates to be used by Kirk Sessions, according to Act VIII, Assembly 1853, and Act IX, Assembly 1863, for certifying elders who are chosen to be Commissioners to the General Assembly.

3. That there shall be attached to Commissions a statement, certified by the Presbytery Clerk, of the number of charges in each Presbytery at the date of the Commission, and of any changes that have taken place during the previous year.

4. That Clerks of Presbyteries shall send intimation to the Clerk of Assembly on the death of a colleague, or of the induction of a colleague immediately after that event has taken place.

5. That the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall meet in the month of January annually, for the purpose of considering and ascertaining the effects as regards representation of any changes in Presbyteries which may have occurred in the course of the previous year, by the death or removal, or by the induction of Colleague-ministers, or by the sanctioning or the reduction of charges by the preceding General Assembly or its Commission, or by any other cause, and shall immediately thereafter intimate to the Presbyteries concerned what will be their representation in the ensuing General Assembly.

6. That the decision of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, so intimated to Presbyteries, shall be subject to review by the General Assembly, if appealed against or dissented from.

7. That should any question arise between the month of January and the meeting of Assembly, not provided for by these Orders, the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall meet for the consideration and disposal of such questions.

II. AS TO THE TRANSMISSION TO THE CLERK OF ASSEMBLY for the Committee on Bills, Commissions, Overtures, Returns to Overtures and Petitions

1. That the names and full postal addresses of the Representatives of Presbyteries shall be transmitted by Presbytery Clerks to the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of May in each year, so far as they have been elected by that time.
2. That all Commissions shall be sent up by Clerks of their respective Presbyteries, so as to be in the hands of the Clerk of the General Assembly at least one week before the Assembly meets.

3. That all Overtures from Presbyteries and Synods, passed by the first day of May, be sent to the Clerk of Assembly not later than that date each year, in order that they may be duly arranged and printed, at the expense of the Assembly, for the use of the members, and that said Overtures be in the form of certified extracts from the Minutes of the Court by which the Overtures are transmitted.

4. That Presbyteries shall transmit to the Clerk of Assembly their Returns to Overtures not later than the first day of May in each year; that said Presbyterial Returns shall consist of certified extracts from the Minutes of Presbytery; and that a separate leaf of paper shall be used for the Return on each Overture sent down by the General Assembly.

5. That papers and cases intended to be transmitted to the Assembly through the Committee on Bills, shall be laid before that Committee by the Clerk of Assembly, and parties concerned shall be in attendance at that meeting.

6. That all such papers shall be printed by the Clerk, except such papers as he may consider undesirable to print; that papers not printed shall be submitted in manuscript; and that if the Committee does not endorse the view of the Clerk, the papers shall forthwith be printed for the use of the Assembly.

7. That these regulations shall not apply to Petitions for authority to sell congregational property, which Petitions shall not be transmitted through the Bills and Overtures Committee, but in the case of those addressed to the General Assembly shall be forwarded through the regular channels so as to be in the hands of the Principal Clerk not later than 28th February in each year. In the case of such Petitions addressed to the Commission of Assembly, they shall be forwarded so as to be in the hands of the Principal Clerk not later than one month before the date of the meeting of Commission to which it is proposed to submit them. The Principal Clerk shall lay each Petition before the Committee on Custody of Titles with a view to a report thereon being timeously prepared.

8. That in regard to returns from Presbyteries to any Overture transmitted to them under the Barrier Act the total number of Presbyteries in the Church shall constitute the appropriate base for calculating a majority and a non-return shall be taken as signifying disapproval of the matter contained in the Overture.

III. AS TO COMMITTEE FOR BILLS AND OVERTURES

1. That the Committee on Bills and Overtures appointed by the Assembly at their first diet, shall meet at the close of the first sederunt that day, and again if necessary on the following day before the meeting of Assembly.

2. That there shall be no other meeting of the Committee except by leave of the Assembly on special cause shown.

3. That the Committee shall see that all papers presented to them in Cases from Inferior Courts, whether forming part of the Record, or produced in evidence before said Courts, have been duly dated and numbered by the Clerk of said Courts, and marked with his initial; and that the Committee shall not receive any paper which is not authenticated, unless upon special cause shown, to be reported by them to the General Assembly.

IV. AS TO PRINTING OF PAPERS IN CASES COMING UP TO THE ASSEMBLY

1. That all papers coming before the Assembly - viz. Memorials, Petitions (excepting those for power to sell property), Applications, References, Complaints and Appeals, with Extracts of Minutes of Inferior Courts, relative thereto, as also Reasons of Complaint or Appeal; and in cases of Libel with the Defences and Evidence adduced - which are passed by the Inferior Court before the first of May, shall be transmitted in manuscript to the Clerk of Assembly not later than that date in each year, in order to be printed in sufficient numbers for the use of the members of Assembly; and that papers passed by the Inferior Courts at a later date shall be transmitted to the Clerk without delay.

2. That all such papers shall be printed by the Clerk, except any papers which he considers may lead to discussions in the Committee on Bills and Overtures; that he shall retain these in manuscript, and submit them in that form to the Committee, and that a list of them shall be appended to the volume containing the papers passing the Clerk.
3. That in cases of discipline brought before the Assembly by reference from a Presbytery or Synod, or by complaint by a minority of the Court, the expense of printing shall be borne by the Assembly Arrangements Committee; in other circumstances by the Complainer or Appellant; and that in all other cases, such as Petitions, References not in Causes, Memorials, etc. the expense shall be borne by the party having interest in same, or desiring a deliverance from the Assembly.

4. That all such papers be printed in a form corresponding to pages of the volume of Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland.

5. That all such papers shall be stitched together, and provided with an alphabetical index; and that a copy thereof shall be placed in the hands of each member of the Assembly.

6. That a copy of every printed paper shall be kept by the Clerk of Assembly to be bound up and kept among the Records of Assembly.

V. AS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Devotional Exercises

1. That a bell shall be rung for one minute; and members shall take their places in the House before the Moderator takes the Chair; that the Assembly Hall doors shall be closed each day during the opening exercises to prevent interruption by persons entering the House during that time; and that the Assembly shall spend the first hour or more of the first diet of the second full day of their meeting in devotional exercises.

2. That any proposal for a pause in the Assembly’s proceedings with a view to engage in special devotional exercise, shall be made to the Assembly only through the Moderator.

2. Business Committee and Committee for Printing the Acts

1. That the Assembly shall, at their first diet, appoint a Committee to arrange the Business of the House (other than the Report A of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, which hereafter shall be considered at the first sederunt of the Assembly, the proposed Deliverance on said Report to be free from the application of Standing Order V.3.4); that the Business Committee shall be prepared to make their first Report to the Assembly at the first diet of the first full day, immediately after the report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures has been read; and further, that the Business Committee shall report from time to time to the Assembly till the whole business has been disposed of.

2. That the Business Committee shall in their Report indicate such petitions as are of routine nature; that motions and amendments regarding such petitions shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the first adjournment on the day before they are intended to be moved; and that if at the time of consideration of such a Petition there is no objection to it being classified as of a routine nature, the motion regarding it will be formally moved and seconded.

3. That the Assembly shall, at their first diet, appoint a Committee for printing the Acts of Assembly and that the Committee shall arrange that the Acts be divided into two classes - Class I: those which have passed the Barrier Act; Class II: Acts which are of General Interest to the Church.

3. Reports of Committees

1. That the Reports of the International Missions Board and of all Committees reporting to the General Assembly (excepting only (1) that part of the Report of the Youth Committee which sets forth the results of the Youth Examinations, and (2) any report from the Nominations Committees which complies with Standing Order VI.5.10) shall, together with Deliverances to be proposed, be transmitted for printing to the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of April. All Reports, inclusive of the Report in terms of Standing Orders VI.5.10, shall be stitched together, and sent to Commissioners to the General Assembly not later than ten days before the meeting of the Assembly.

2. That Reports shall not be engrossed in the Record, but, after being printed, a copy of each, certified by the Clerk as being that given in to the Assembly, shall be kept in retentis, and the Reports shall be appended to the printed volume of the Acts and Proceedings of Assembly.

3. That verbal Reports shall not be received, and no Sub-Committee shall give in any Report to the Assembly.
4. That amendments to the proposed deliverances on the Report of the Committee on Assembly Arrangements may be moved without previous notice and amendments relating to Ecumenical Relations shall be handed to the Clerk and read by him before the adjournment of the first sederunt; that amendments to Reports to be taken during the second and third sederunts shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the suspension of the second sederunt: amendments to deliverances on all other Reports shall be handed in and read by the Clerk before the first adjournment on the day before they are intended to be moved.

5. That paragraphs of a proposed Deliverance on the Report of a Standing Committee shall be numbered, and the mover shall not be required to read it when it is already in the hands of members of Assembly.

6. That when any Committee is appointed during the Assembly’s sittings it shall be competent to move amendments to the proposed Deliverance on its report without previous notice.

7. That it shall be competent for commissioners to give notice in writing of questions to be put to the person presenting a Report to the General Assembly - this without prejudice to the right to add supplementary questions or the right of members generally to propose questions from the floor.

4. The Reading of Speeches and Length of Speeches

1. That in the discussion of any subject brought before the Assembly, by Overture or by the Report of a Committee, it shall not be allowable, without leave granted by the House, for any member to read his speech from a Manuscript prepared previously to the discussion, except in the case of a member introducing an important subject to the attention of the House.

2. That, previously to the discussion of any question which does not arise upon or contemplate the approval or disapproval of the Report of a Committee, the House shall determine, in such manner as may seem expedient, the order of priority belonging to the motions given notice of, and that, when a motion approving of a Report has been made and seconded, the House shall determine in the same manner the order of priority belonging to any other motions given notice of.

3. That in the discussion of any question the proposer of each motion may address the House for not longer than 25 minutes, and the seconder for 15 minutes; and no subsequent speaker shall address the House for a longer period than 10 minutes; and that these limits shall only be exceeded when the Moderator shall have ascertained that the House desires any speaker to continue, and shall intimate the ascertained desire to that effect.

4. That when a Convener, not being a member of Assembly, is permitted to present the Report of his Committee or Board, the Convener and the mover of the Deliverance shall be required to come to an arrangement by which their combined speeches shall not exceed the time normally granted to the mover of a motion in terms of Standing Order V.4.3, or as that Order may be amended by this or any subsequent Assembly. It shall be competent for the person who presents a Committee’s Report to answer questions relating to the Report and to reply to the discussion, even if he be not a member of Assembly.

5. That a member of the Assembly in moving or seconding an amendment shall confine himself to the matter of the amendment, and shall have the right to speak at a later stage to other matters in the Report and other amendments, provided that the total time taken in speaking shall conform to Standing Order V.4.3.

6. That with the exception of those permitted to present a Committee’s Report, or an Overture, Petition or Reference, it shall not be competent for anyone other than a member of the Assembly to ask questions or take part in the discussion, although the Assembly may call on persons who are not members of Assembly to answer questions on specific items of business for reasons of information and clarification. Persons called upon in such instances shall confine themselves strictly to answering the questions put.

5. The Conducting of Causes

1. That Counsel shall not be heard at the Bar in any Causes which may come before the House.

2. That when a Presbytery acquiesces in the sentence of a Synod, it shall not be entitled to appear as a separate party at the Bar of the Assembly, but the members of Presbytery may nevertheless be heard as members of Synod.

3. That in no case shall there be more than two speakers for each party at the Bar, including the reply to which the appellant or complainer shall be entitled; and when there are more than two parties, there shall only be one
speaker, and one speech for each, besides the reply - it being understood that where there is more than one complainant, each shall be considered as a different party only in case of its appearing to the Assembly that the complaints rest upon distinctly separate grounds.

4. That, previously to hearing the parties in any Cause, the Clerk shall read the following announcement, - viz., "The members are reminded that justice requires the pleadings as at the Bar to be heard by all those who vote in the Cause, and that, in particular, no member ought to vote against either side of the Bar who has not heard the pleadings on that side".

5.1 That the Clerk of Assembly shall not issue the papers to the members of Assembly, with reference to cases which he thinks require to be conducted with closed doors until specially instructed by the Assembly to do so; but he shall report such cases to the Convener of the Business Committee, for its information immediately after its appointment;

5.2 That the Business Committee shall, in their first Report, specify any case which, in their judgment, requires to be conducted with closed doors; and any case which does not appear to them of that character, although the Clerk may have reported it as such;

5.3 That, in all cases thus reported on by the Business Committee the Assembly shall itself determine, by a special deliverance, at what stage of the proceedings the papers shall be issued to the members; and

5.4 That in every case which the Assembly appoints to be conducted with closed doors, the instruction to issue the papers shall be accompanied by a special exhortation to the members to keep them private.

6. Motions and Votes

1. That every motion, whether original or amended, if not already in the hands of the Clerk, shall be given into the Clerk in writing, as soon as it shall have been made to the House.

2. That the person who makes the first motion shall be entitled to the privilege of giving a reply, in which new matter must not be introduced; and that thereafter the debate shall be held to be definitely closed, and no other person shall be entitled to speak excepting with regard to the manner of putting a vote.

3. That all motions after the first that are truly amendments on the first motion shall be disposed of in accordance with Standing Order No. V.6.6, and that when an amendment raises an issue different from that in other amendments, it shall be dealt with as a direct counter-motion.

4. That where there are only two motions before the House, the question put to the vote shall be second or first motion.

5. That when there are three motions, the first question shall be, whether the second or third motion shall be put as amendment against the first; and the second question shall be, whether the first motion or the amendment so fixed shall be the decision of the House.

6. That when there are more than three motions, the first question shall be whether the last proposed shall be put as the amendment, and so till only three remain, when the procedure shall be as prescribed in the immediately preceding sub-section.

7. That in Causes, it shall not be competent to move an amendment to the motion, unless it be of such a nature as to decide the case, or to forward it in its progress.

8. That when any proposal has been submitted in the Report of a Committee any motion for approval of such proposal shall take precedence of any counter-motion or amendment.

7. Mode of taking the Vote

1. That on a division being called for, all parties who are not members, but have the privilege of entering the House, shall withdraw.

2. That on a division being called for the Clerk shall announce that no member ought to vote against a motion or amendment who has not been in attendance during the discussion thereof; that thereafter no one shall be permitted
to enter the House till the vote has been taken and the result declared; that two or four Tellers shall be appointed by the Moderator, drawn equally from supporters of each motion before the House; and that these Tellers shall take their place at the Clerk’s table. But when the issue of a vote by show of hands is not immediately obvious the Tellers shall count the votes seat by seat taking up their positions at the ends of each seat in turn in order to do so.

3. That the vote shall, in the discretion of the House, be taken either by calling of the Roll or by a show of hands, or by card.

4. That as soon as the vote shall have been taken, the Tellers shall report the state of vote to the Clerk of Assembly, who shall write it down, and announce it to the House.

5. That the Report of the Tellers, when announced to the House, shall be held as final and conclusive, and not subject to any revision by scrutiny or otherwise.

8. Dissents

1. That no dissents against any deliverance of the Assembly shall be given in until the matter in which it is pronounced is, for that sederunt, disposed of, the Minutes are completed and adjusted, and the House is ready to proceed to other business.

2. That prepared reasons for dissent or complaint be not engrossed in the Minutes of the Assembly or its Commission but held in retentis. Where a brief statement is written at the time of lodging a dissent, it may at the discretion of the Court be engrossed in the Minute. At meetings of the Commission, members of the Commission shall have the right to request permission for leave to Complain by submitting to the Assembly Clerk reasons for a Complaint within ten days, such reasons to be held in retentis. Both the Commission and Assembly may refuse to receive Reasons if they are not couched in respectful language. Where Reasons for Dissent are held in retentis, the General Assembly or their Commission shall appoint a Committee to answer Reasons, except where the Reasons are deemed frivolous or unspecific. When the Assembly appoints such a Committee, it shall report to the Commission of Assembly at its October meeting. If such a Committee is appointed by the Commission, it shall report to the next stated meeting of the Commission, or to the following General Assembly, whichever falls first. The Committee's Report shall contain both the Reasons and the Answers, and, if the Report is adopted, it shall be engrossed in the Minutes.

9. Drafts of Declaratory or Interim Acts and Overtures

That the Draft of any proposed Declaratory or Interim Act, as also the Draft of any Overture which it is proposed to transmit to Presbyteries for their opinion in terms of the Barrier Act, shall be laid on the Table of the Assembly, and printed and circulated among the members, at least one diet before a motion be made for the passing of such Declaratory or Interim Act, or for the transmission of such Overture to the Presbyteries of the Church.

10. Letters addressed to the Moderator

That all letters addressed to the Moderator for the purpose of being communicated to the Assembly, shall, in the first instance, be laid by him before the Business Committee, who shall advise the Moderator as to the way of disposing of them.

11. Deputations from other Churches, etc.

1. That the list of corresponding Churches and Societies shall be as determined by the General Assembly from time to time on the recommendation of the Ecumenical Relations Committee.

2. That deputies from corresponding Churches or Societies shall forward their commission or letters of introduction so as to reach the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of May in each year; and he shall submit the same to the Business Committee so that arrangements may be made for the deputies to address the General Assembly.

3. That deputies from Churches and Societies other than those aforesaid shall likewise forward Commissions or letters of introduction to reach the Clerk of Assembly not later than the first day of March, and he shall report the same to the Commission of Assembly meeting in that month, who shall be empowered to decide which of the deputies shall be received by, and invited to address the Assembly. In the event of failure of the Commission to meet,
the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall meet at the earliest opportunity, and shall decide which deputies shall be received by, and invited to address the Assembly.

4. That in the case of strangers who may be desirous of being introduced to the Assembly and addressing the House, notice thereof shall be conveyed to the Moderator, who shall report the same to the Business Committee, that they may advise in the matter.

12. Visitation of Synod Records, and Examinations of Minutes of Committees

1. That the Synod Books shall be called for at the first diet of the Assembly, and that a Committee or Committees shall be appointed for visiting the same, who shall fill up a schedule with the information required by the Assembly regarding each book - said schedule to be returned when the Report of the Visitors shall be called for.

2. That a copy of the Report, as sustained by the Assembly, shall be transmitted to the Synod, and engrossed in their Record.

3. That the Minutes of Committees and Boards, with the exception of the Panel of Pastoral Advice, shall be laid annually on the Table of the Assembly, and visited in the same manner as the Synod Books.

13. Printing of Assembly’s Proceedings, etc.

1. That the Minutes of Commission, together with roll of matters to be taken up on the following days, and lists of members of Committees, be printed and placed in the hands of the Members of Assembly on the opening day.

2. That when a motion is duly seconded, and in possession of the Assembly it shall not be competent to make any alterations upon it without the permission of the House, excepting in the shape of an amendment, or second or third motion, as the case may be, regularly proposed to the Assembly.

14. Minutes

That the minutes adopted at any of the diets be read over and approved of only at a morning diet, with the exception of the Minutes of the last day of the Assembly’s sittings, which Minutes shall be read over and approved of before the rising of the Assembly.

15. Standing Orders

That the Standing Orders be read, or, by vote, be held as read immediately before the appointment of the Business Committee, and that they be printed in the first day’s proceedings.

16. Conduct of Commissioners

1. That courtesy demands that all diets of the Assembly be attended by Commissioners, and that private meetings should not be held during the sederunts of the Assembly.

2. That with the exception of comfort breaks the Moderator shall require the permission of the Assembly for absence from the chair during sittings of the Assembly. The Moderator shall not undertake visits on behalf of the Assembly without their prior authority.

17. Recording of Assembly Proceedings

1. Recording of Assembly proceedings by video recorder etc, by television companies, or by sections of the media shall not be permitted unless prior permission has been received from the Assembly Media Officer acting in accordance with guidelines provided by the Assembly Arrangements Committee.

2. Use of flash photography by private individuals during the proceedings of the General Assembly shall not ordinarily be permitted, though exception will be made in cases such as the installation of the Moderator, reception of delegates, and presentation of individuals to the Moderator.

3. Notwithstanding the above, the Assembly Arrangements Committee shall have the power to make arrangements at any time for the recording in any way of any part of the Assembly proceedings by any means they consider appropriate.
18. **Media Officer**

The General Assembly shall have the Church's Media Officer act as their Media Officer. The Assembly Media Officer shall be responsible *inter alia* for liaison with representatives of the media and giving such guidance as may be necessary for them to carry out their duties.

**VI. AS TO COMMITTEES**

1. **Types of Committee**

That the business of the Church between one Assembly and the next ensuing shall be carried on by Standing Committees and Boards together with a Panel of Pastoral Advice and a Nominations Committee. Membership of committees, boards and panels in all cases of *ex officio* appointments shall be confined to ministers holding a seat in a Presbytery of the Church or to *bona fide* acting elders of the Church. In all other cases of *ex officio* involvement in the work of Committees and Boards those appointed shall be regarded as consultants to the relevant Committee or Board.

2. **Composition of Standing Boards and Committees**

That Standing Boards and Committees shall consist of the following:

1. **A Board of Trustees**, consisting of thirteen members, including the Principal Clerk *ex officio*, comprising at least four ministerial members and at least six elders, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term, renewable by the Assembly for one further term of four years. Board members shall be appointed in order that at least one Board member comes from within the bounds of each Presbytery in Scotland. If a Board member should move outside the bounds of the Presbytery from which he was appointed as a representative, he shall continue to serve on the Board, and its Sub-Committees where relevant, for the remainder of his term of office. On the occasion of subsequent vacancies in Board membership, the Nominations Committee shall act to adjust the Presbyterial balance. The General Assembly shall appoint one of the Board, who shall always be an elder, as Chairman, for a four year term, renewable by the General Assembly for one further term of four years. The quorum shall be three trustees.

The Board of Trustees shall be served by the following Sub-Committees:

*Compliance, Audit and Risk Management*, consisting of at least three members of the Board of Trustees, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairman by the Board; the Chief Administrative Officer *ex officio*, if an elder of the Church; up to four additional members, who need not be restricted to members of the Board, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee after consultation with the Board of Trustees for a period of four years;

*Finance*, consisting of at least three members of the Board of Trustees, one of whom shall be appointed as Chairman by the Board; a representative from each of the Personnel Committee, the Home Missions Board, the College Board, and the International Missions Board, as appointed by the said Committee and Boards; the Chief Administrative Officer and Finance Manager both *ex officio*, if elders of the Church; up to two additional members, who need not be restricted to members of the Board, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee after consultation with the Board of Trustees for a period of four years;

*Strategy*, consisting of at least three members of the Board of Trustees, one of whom shall be appointed by the Board as Chairman; the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of each of the Personnel Committee, the Home Missions Board and the International Missions Board, as appointed by the said Committee and Boards; the Chief Administrative Officer *ex officio*, if an elder of the Church; up to two additional members, who need not be restricted to members of the Board, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee after consultation with the Board of Trustees for a period of four years;

*Legal Group*, to be appointed by the Board of Trustees who shall appoint one of their number as the Chairman.

The termination of appointment of any member of the Board of Trustees or its Sub-Committees by death, resignation, or discipline, shall be reported as soon as possible after the event to the Nominations Committee by the Board of Trustees. Upon notification the Nominations Committee shall proceed to appoint a replacement who shall serve until the ensuing General Assembly at which the Committee shall report on the same.
The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for reporting on Custody of Titles and processing petitions relating to properties whether addressed to the General Assembly or its Commission. The Principal Clerk of Assembly shall act as Custodian of Titles and report regularly to the Committee.

2. **A Board of Ministry**, consisting of eight members (five ministers and three elders) appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term, with the addition of two members *ex officio* from the College Senate appointed annually by them. The Chairman shall be appointed from the membership of the Board by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Board shall have powers to appoint a Vice-chairman, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Board.

3. **A Home Missions Board**, consisting of twelve members in total, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term. The total membership will comprise six ministers and six elders. The Chairman shall be appointed from the membership of the Board by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Board shall have powers to appoint a Vice-chairman, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Board.

4. **A College Board**, consisting of up to twelve members in total, comprising the Principal of the College *ex officio*; two additional members of the Senate appointed by the Senate; the Chairman of the Board of Ministry *ex officio*; the President of the Students’ Representative Council of the College *ex officio*; three additional ministers and up to four additional elders appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four-year term, the elders to have suitable qualifications or experience in education, preferably tertiary education, or in the administration or promotion of education. The Chairman, who shall be a member of the Board but not a member of the College Senate, shall be appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Board shall have powers to appoint a Vice-chairman, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Board.

5. **An International Missions Board**, consisting of eight members (four ministers and four elders) appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term, with the addition *ex officio* of the Editor of *From the Frontiers*. The Chairman shall be appointed from the membership of the Board by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Board shall have powers to appoint a Vice-chairman, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Board.

6. **A Personnel Committee**, consisting of six members in total, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term. The total membership shall comprise three ministers and three elders. The Convener shall be appointed from the membership of the Committee by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations. The Committee shall have powers to appoint a Vice-convener, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

7. **A Committee on Communications**, consisting of eight members (four ministers and four elders) appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term, which membership shall include a representative from each of the Home Missions Board and the International Missions Board nominated by the said Boards, with the addition of the following *ex officio*; the Editor of *The Record*, the Editor of *Free*, and the Media Officer if eligible in terms of VI.1 above. The total membership shall include a representative from each of the Home Missions Board and the International Missions Board appointed by the said Boards. The Convener shall be appointed from the membership of the Committee by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Committee shall have powers to appoint a Vice-Convener, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

8. **A Committee on Ecumenical Relations**, consisting of up to eight members in total, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term, comprising the Moderator and previous Moderator of the General Assembly, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Home Missions Board and of the International Missions Board as appointed by the said Boards, the Principal Clerk of Assembly, and at least two additional members, at least one of whom should be an elder, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four-year term. The Convener shall be appointed from the membership of the Committee by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Committee shall have powers to appoint a Vice-convener, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.
9. **A Committee on Psalmody**, consisting of six members in total, appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four-year term. The Convener shall be appointed from the membership of the Committee by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee. The Committee shall have powers to appoint a Vice-convener, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

10. **A Committee on Assembly Arrangements**, comprising the Principal Clerk of Assembly, the Assistant Clerk of Assembly, the Moderator and past Moderator of the Assembly, with the addition of one minister and one elder appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee for a four year term. The Moderator-designate shall become a member of the committee following the announcement of his acceptance of nomination. The Moderator of the General Assembly will be the Chairman. In the case of a Moderator whose usual residence is outwith the United Kingdom the Committee shall be chaired by the Moderator of the previous Assembly. The Committee shall have powers to appoint a Vice-Convener, an executive and Sub-Committees from its own membership. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

3. **The Serving Committee**

1. That there be a **Nominations Committee**, which shall act as the serving Committee, comprising the Principal Clerk of Assembly as Convener, the Clerk of each home Presbytery, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Moderator of the General Assembly. The quorum shall be three members of the Committee.

2. With the exceptions of the Assembly Arrangements Committee, the College Board, the International Missions Board, the Personnel Committee, and the Psalmody Committee, or unless otherwise provided for in Acts of Assembly, the Nominations Committee shall ensure that each Presbytery is represented on a Committee or Board. The Committee when seeking nominations from Presbyteries shall outline for their information the skills and expertise expected of nominees for each vacancy. Presbyteries shall nominate candidates from within their own bounds. However, if a Presbytery is unable to identify a suitable candidate from within its own bounds, the Nominations Committee shall arrange to fill such a vacancy from elsewhere. Appointments made in these cases shall exist for the duration of the term of service specified, unless terminated by death, resignation, translation to another Presbytery or discipline. The Nominations Committee shall instruct Presbyteries to ensure that nominees are available, willing and able to serve before submitting their names. In addition, the Nominations Committee shall seek evidence from Presbyteries of the suitability of nominees to fill vacancies.

3. In accordance with Act XXIV, 2003, paragraph 5, the Nominations Committee shall not normally nominate any minister to membership of an Assembly Board or Committee during the first three years of his ministry. Where under exceptional circumstances a minister is nominated for such an appointment during the first three years of his ministry, the Nominations Committee shall record the reasons in their minutes, and the circumstances shall be reported to the General Assembly.

4. The Nominations Committee shall meet in October annually to consider impending vacancies to Committees and Boards due at the ensuing General Assembly. After this meeting, and not later than 31st October, the Committee shall notify Presbyteries, indicating the vacancies which require nomination from within their bounds, as well as the skills required for these positions and inviting them to submit names of suitably qualified personnel by 31st December. In January the Clerk to the Nominations Committee shall collate the returns from Presbyteries and any other parties consulted and shall prepare these for the Committee in summary form. Not later than 15th March the Committee shall meet to formulate its Report to the ensuing General Assembly giving due consideration to these submissions and any other matters affecting Board and Committee appointments.

4. **Terms of Appointment to, and Meetings of, Boards and Standing Committees**

1. That in all cases, unless specially authorized by the General Assembly, a person serving a full term on any Committee or Board shall not be eligible for nomination to any Committee or Board until at least one year has elapsed from the date at which the full term of appointment ended.

2. That the termination of appointment of any member of a Committee or Board by death, resignation, translation to another Presbytery, or discipline, shall be reported as soon as possible after the event to the Nominations Committee by the committee or board affected. Upon notification the Nominations Committee shall proceed to appoint a replacement who shall serve until the ensuing General Assembly at which the Committee shall report on the same.
3. That consistent absence from meetings by any member of a Committee or Board during the period from the General Assembly to 31st December in any calendar year, without good reason given by him and sustained by the relevant Committee or Board, shall be considered a resignation of his membership of that Committee or Board, who shall inform the Nominations Committee accordingly before 31st January of the ensuing year. Upon notification the Nominations Committee shall proceed to appoint a replacement who shall serve until the ensuing General Assembly at which the Committee shall report on the same.

4. That, with the exception of the Nominations, Board of Trustees, Assembly Arrangements, and Psalmody Committee, each Committee and Board shall hold three statutory meetings per annum. Except for the International Missions Board and the College Board these meetings shall be held on the first Wednesday of March and October or Tuesday immediately preceding and on a date in June as each Committee and Board shall find suitable for themselves, with the liberty to arrange additional meetings as required. The International Missions Board and the College Board shall hold their statutory and other meetings as they shall find suitable but seeking to avoid dates on which other Committees and Boards are due to meet.

5. That it shall be competent for any Member of Assembly to move an amendment or amendments to the recommendations of the Nominations Committee, provided that notice of such amendment shall have been given to the Clerk of Assembly in writing, not later than the second last day of Assembly, and provided that such amendments are in conformity with such Standing Orders as apply to the composition of Committees.

6. That in the selection of names of Ministers and Elders to form any Special Committee, which is to report to a subsequent Assembly, the Assembly shall not be restricted to its own members.

7. That when the appointment of a Special Committee has been resolved on, the Committee shall not be nominated till the following day, except in cases the urgency of which does not admit of a day’s delay.

8. That no Committee shall sit while the Moderator is in the Chair at any diet of the Assembly’s meeting.